

University of Latvia

Faculty of Theology

PhD Thesis

**Dimensions of Mystical Anthropology
of the XX Century:
Hesychasm and Tibetan Buddhism Compared**

Elizabete Taivāne

Rīga

2005

In remembrance of Brother Roger
from Taizé

Contents

	Page
INTRODUCTION	5
The Interspiritual Age: The Aims of Dialogue among Religions.....	5
The Starting-point of Dialogue: Quest for Appropriate Methodology	18
The Phenomenological Approach of Mircea Eliade and Its Links to the Psychological School of C.G. Jung	25
Mysticism as the Universal Core of Religions	38
Searching for a Clue to Differences	58
The Notion of Mystical Anthropology.....	63
A Survey of Sources in the Context of the History of Hesychasm and Tibetan Buddhism	67
THE DOCTRINE OF MAN IN CHRISTIANITY AND BUDDHISM.....	96
Christian Theology and Buddhist Philosophy	96
Christian Anthropology and Buddhist Psychology.....	103
Two Types of Holism: Christian and Buddhist.....	121
The Constitution of Man in Abhidharma.....	132
The Constitution of Man in Hesychasm	142
The Ālaya-Vijñāna as the Link between the Abhidharmic Notion of Anātman and the Tantric Doctrine of Light	155
The Doctrine of Man in Tantric Buddhism.....	166
The Concept of Heart in Hesychasm and Tibetan Buddhism	176
THE PSYCHIC INTROVERSION AS A SOTERIOLOGICAL MEANS	202
Introspection and Introversion: General Considerations	204
The Dissolution of Gross Winds and Its Hesychast Parallels	225
Entering Mysterious Darkness	272
The Experience of Light in Hesychasm and Tibetan Buddhism	282
The Perception of Light in Hesychasm and Tantric Buddhism	303
The Experience of Christian Deification and Buddhist Liberation.....	313

THE SOMATIC CONSEQUENCES OF THE LIGHT EXPERIENCE	325
The Effulgent Body in Christian Hagiography	326
The Rainbow Body in Tibetan Hagiography	334
Lumenophany and Reabsorption: From Symbols to Archetypes	344
The Theory of the Rainbow Body as a Return to the Primordial State.....	357
The Doctrine of a Salvific Body in Hesychasm and Tantric Buddhism	366
The Concept of the Resurrection of the Body in Christianity	371
THE CONCLUSION	379
THE BIBLIOGRAPHY	386

Introduction

The Interspiritual Age: Aims of Dialogue among Religions

We have entered the XXI century, the age when different cultures and religions meet. An author of several books and dozens of articles on mysticism and religion, Brother Wayne Teasdale, has denoted the new age as the *interspiritual* one. He underscores that it “is a radically new period of human history where the barriers between and among the great world’s religions are breaking down.”¹

The situation of Asian religions introduced to the West is perfectly presented by Geoffrey Parrinder, “Not only visitors but immigrants and missions come from Asia to Europe and America; Gurus and Swamis, Sufis and Dervishes, attract large audiences and often become established teachers of religious experimentation. Meanwhile the disappearance of old political empires has brought decline to some formal structures of the churches and has led to a reassessment of their role and message. The world becomes increasingly unified, religiously as well as commercially or politically, and this brings a shift away from exclusive organizations of former times.”²

In unison with Geoffrey Parrinder, Wayne Teasdale speaks about the dawn of a new consciousness in the situation of new historical circumstances entailing a number of shifts in our understanding. Beside a shift in our ecological, social, military etc. thinking, “a deep evolving experience of community between and among the religions” takes place. Now the way for a universal civilization, i.e., the civilization with a heart, is being prepared.³

A reason for the promising forward look to the dawn of the universal consciousness is, obviously, the commonplace knowledge now available of Eastern religions as well as the fact of serious academic studies of the religions of Asia in the West. As Geoffrey Parrinder contends, this influx of information was “one of the most significant factors in the religious scene of the twentieth century” creating “a new situation for traditional religion and theology”.⁴

¹ Wayne Teasdale, “Foreword” in Marco Pallis, *A Buddhist Spectrum: Contributions to Buddhist-Christian Dialogue* (Bloomington: World Wisdom, 2003), p. vii.

² Geoffrey Parrinder, *Mysticism in the World’s Religions* (London: Sheldon Press, 1976), p. 4.

³ Wayne Teasdale, *The Mystic Heart: Discovering a Universal Spirituality in the World’s Religions* (Novato: New World Library, 2001), pp. 4-5.

⁴ Geoffrey Parrinder, *Mysticism in the World’s Religions*, p. 3.

It is discernible that an interest of Western people in Eastern religions is not just a curiosity neither Eastern religious traditions are only an object of academic studies. As Mircea Eliade asserts, the discovery of a non-European and his spiritual world became the central event of the XX century because religion concerns the most important human value, i.e., his relationship with the sacred. The quest for this relationship is none other than an endeavor to find a meaning of human life. The Western interest in Eastern religions is a mark of a deep inward crisis of European civilization wherein man is not any longer aware of his life's meaning. As the scholar contends, any crisis of a modern man is of religious nature. History of religions is intended to make a contribution in getting over this very crisis.⁵

A crisis of cultural identity in the Euro-American sector of Christianity was discussed also by Aloysius Pieris, S.J. He observes that now a decisive moment for the church, being an occasion for a “third reformation”, takes place. The term of the “third reformation” is borrowed by Pieris from Geoffrey Parrinder, who, in turn, “suggests on the analogy of the first reformation in the sixteenth century and the second, which came in response to the Enlightenment and the scientific revolution in subsequent centuries.” Aloysius Pieris continues, “My suspicion, therefore, is that the contemporary West, in allowing itself to be seduced by the mystique of the East, may probably be indulging in a massive sociological ritualization of a deep psychological need to sharpen its Oriental instinct blunted by centuries of disuses. This itself is the third reformation *in germine*.”⁶ According to Pieris, Thomas Merton was “a sensitive Christian whose life and works embody the third reformation”. During all his life he was searching for “the Eastern half of his own being”.⁷

As Harvey D. Egan, S.J., observes, for Thomas Merton Christianity represented a supernaturally revealed religion which “needs nothing from the East, but it must incarnate itself in specific social and cultural contexts, that is, assimilate elements from the East in the same way that Greek culture and Roman law were so important for Christianity.”⁸ Thomas Merton taught that “oriental religions could open a Westerner to

⁵ М. Ф. Альбедиль, *Зерцало традиций: Человек в духовных традициях Востока* (Санкт-Петербург: Азбука классика: Петербургское Востоковедение, 2003), с. 14.

⁶ Aloysius Pieris, S.J., *Love Meets Wisdom: A Christian Experience of Buddhism* (Mariknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1990), p. 8.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

⁸ Harvey D. Egan, S.J., *Christian Mysticism: The Future of a Tradition* (New York: Pueblo Publishing Company, 1984), p. 239.

the depths of his own Christian tradition, qualitatively improve upon it, and might even be necessary for the West's physical and spiritual survival.”⁹

The increasing interest of Westerners in doctrines of ‘non-duality’ has been discussed by the defender and protector of the Tibetan tradition in the West, Marco Pallis. He admits that the idea of ‘non-duality’ has come to the West from India and beyond. Islam also has made its contribution through the teaching of Sufi masters. In the same way as Wayne Teasdale does, Marco Pallis, obviously, looks forward to the new universal awareness, contending that “a long-continued dualistic habit of viewing reality dies hard”.¹⁰

Nowadays, when different cultures and religions are in encounter, scholars of World Religions and spiritual leaders of various traditions feel a growing necessity for dialogue between and among religions. As has already become obvious from the previous discussion, the aim of the dialogue is formulated by researchers in different ways. It can vary from a mere improvement of a native tradition to the foundation of a new universal civilization. For this reason we need to discuss these various options and to formulate our own idea of the aims of the interreligious dialogue determining its limits.

We shall start with a relatively syncretistic proposal of such a scholar as Wayne Teasdale. Suggesting the idea of the “interspiritual approach” he writes, “We require a spirituality that promotes the unity of the human family, not one that further divides us or maintains old antagonisms. At the same time, this interspiritual approach must not submerge our differences; it must see traditions in relationship to each other, and provide options. The truth itself is big enough to include our diversity of views. They are based on authentic inner experience, and so are all valid.”¹¹

The idea of authentic inner experience as the universal core of all religions is very close to our position. Nevertheless, Teasdale's respect of our differences found in various traditions is not explicit as it can seem in the beginning. The appeal of the scholar to use in our inner journey “all the resources from all the traditions available to us”¹², is a derivative of an idea about imperfection of religious traditions. That one

⁹ See: *The Asian Journal of Thomas Merton*, ed. from his original notebooks by Naomi Burton, Brother Patrick Hart, and James Laughlin (New York: New Dimensions, 1973), pp. 313, 342; Thomas Merton, “Christian Culture Needs Oriental Wisdom” in *Catholic World* (May 1962), pp. 77-78. (in Harvey D. Egan, S.J., *Christian Mysticism: The Future of a Tradition*, p. 239.

¹⁰ Marco Pallis, *A Buddhist Spectrum: Contributions to Buddhist-Christian Dialogue*, p. 193.

¹¹ Wayne Teasdale, *The Mystic Heart: Discovering a Universal Spirituality in the World's Religions*, p. 12.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 19.

needs anything from a foreign religious tradition means that his own tradition is imperfect.

Nevertheless, in spite of the fact that nowadays there exist eclectic religious groups, trying to combine spiritual values of various traditions, the major religious traditions, such as Christianity, Islam or Buddhism, are still alive and rather conservative. Obviously, any denomination reflects the idea of its own self-sufficiency. For instance, Orthodox Christianity may insist that it doesn't need any Buddhist meditative methods because it is rich with contemplative methods of its own.

Further, Wayne Teasdale calls us to relate to our tradition "in a healthy manner, avoiding overdependence", and thus to remain able to grow into our "full potential". As the scholar admits, "religious people without authentic spiritual paths often merely go through the motions of being part of a church, synagogue, mosque, or temple. Instead of looking for inner direction, they sink "into external religiosity and the safe routines of liturgy or ritual". According to Teasdale, everybody should understand that we take the spiritual journey alone, and no institution can essentially help us in the process of spiritual perfection.¹³

The consideration of the scholar, however, can be questioned because, according to Christian doctrine, no spiritual self-perfection can take place outside the common body of the Church. The Church for a Christian is something more than a local parish to which he belongs. Church represents the body of Christ. Hence, nobody inside Christian tradition takes his spiritual journey alone rather the salvation of man is a result of cooperation (*theandry*). Salvation of a certain man is going to be fulfilled in the future age together with other deified human beings. Therefore, man in Christian understanding can never be fully independent in his salvific path. A mystical path can't be imagined without Liturgy which is a tangible sign of the Divine Grace and of our salvation in Christ. All this means that it is possible for a Christian to grow into his full potential only inside the Church. It is not enough to be rooted in the tradition, it is necessary to be faithful to it till the end.

Although we agree with Wayne Teasdale that it is not enough to practice only the external forms of religion, the idea of the interspiritual religion of the third millennium, wherein the sharing of ultimate experiences across traditions will take place¹⁴, can be contested. Nowadays, when the major religious traditions are yet of great vitality, it is early to speak about a mass religious syncretism.

¹³ Ibid., pp. 18, 20.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 26.

Wayne Teasdale is not alone in his looking forward to a universal “planet-wide enlightened culture”¹⁵. John Hick and Wilfred Cantwell Smith both stand on the boundary of syncretism. As John B. Cobb, JR. observes, their programs would move in the direction of attempts to create a new religion composed of elements from different religions. The scholar contends that other twentieth-century thinkers go even further in the syncretic direction. “Many who survey the scene of completing religions believe that the position from which to think religiously is not within any one religious community but from an independent stance. From that stance they can judge which elements of which traditions meet the needs of contemporary people and can undertake to weave them together into a new unity.”¹⁶

John B. Cobb, JR. mentions also fully syncretistic proposals. As he observes, one of representatives of this view is Nicholas Yonker who in his *God, Man, and the Planetary Age: Preface for a Theistic Humanism* admits that human awareness has already passed through four major ages: the primitive age, early civilization, the axial age, and modernity. It “is now in the process of initiating a fifth or Planetary Period, which has the possibility of drawing on the insights of the earlier periods.”¹⁷ Cobb testifies that “Yonker spells out in some detail those insights which can be drawn from the several traditions arising in the axial age and also from modernity. He offers a symbol, which he calls the “integrator” which shows how these complementary values can be jointly balanced and realized in a new whole. It is indeed a “global theology” that he proposes, and although it has obvious and undeniable Christian roots, it is presented not as the next step of Christian development but as the “new religion composed of elements from different religions”.”¹⁸

In the context of dialogue between and among religions the position of evolutionary syncretism may be objected. The idea of evolution, incorporated into the body of classical religions, seems to be rather pretentious. It is common knowledge that a blend of the theory of evolution with the Hindu idea of reincarnation, grown up under the patronage of Theosophy, is extraneous for classical Hinduism and Buddhism. In favor of a successful dialogue we, however, need to employ the notions which are

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ John B. Cobb, JR., *Beyond Dialogue: Toward a Mutual Transformation of Christianity and Buddhism* (Eugene: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1998), p. 38.

¹⁷ Nicholas Yonker, *God, Man and the Planetary Age: Preface for a Theistic Humanism* (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 1978), p. 129. (In John B. Cobb, JR., *Beyond Dialogue: Toward a Mutual Transformation of Christianity and Buddhism*, p. 38.)

¹⁸ John B. Cobb, JR., *Beyond Dialogue: Toward a Mutual Transformation of Christianity and Buddhism*, p. 38.

acceptable for all the participants of the discussion. Also the target of a dialogue should be very well known and shared by the both sides.

Our position in this question is close to that expressed by Hans Kung who recognizes that various religious traditions can be sufficient bearers of salvation even to the end.¹⁹ The scholar contends that he can't detect any dynamic orientation among Buddhists or Hindus for they are happy to remain what they are. Nevertheless, the endeavor of Hans Kung to apply the absolute norm of Christ to other religions and to make Christianity the necessary critical catalyst for all other faiths²⁰, can't be acceptable for representatives of these very faiths. Therefore, the consideration of the scholar seems to be subjective.

Although Hans Kung underscores the tremendous value of a native tradition for an adept, he also proposes some sort of eschatological unification of religions. He contends that the permanent validity of other religions is perhaps what it means to take Christian eschatology seriously. The fullness of the kingdom, in which all will be one, is something that will be realized after the transformation of this earth.²¹ The consideration of the scholar, however, also should be contested because, even if the idea of the unified kingdom of the future age is acceptable for Christians, it may still be extraneous for Hinduists and Buddhists. In Buddhism and Hinduism there is no space for eschatology. The cyclic view of time category doesn't allow the adherents of these Asian religions to distinguish between past and future, between the modern age and the future age. The cosmos is eternal; creation and destruction of the cosmos is a process without beginning and end. For this reason the idea of the future age as well as of the fullness of kingdom can never be accepted by representatives of classical Indian reflection.

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 40.

²⁰ Paul F. Knitter, *No Other Name? A Critical Survey of Christian Attitudes Toward the World Religions* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1991), pp. 131, 133.

²¹ Ibid., p. 131.

The perfect summa of different Christian attitudes to religions, written by Knitter, has induced us to write the present sections which do not exactly deal with the main topic of the dissertation and were not at all planned by the author in the beginning. The sections have been spontaneously composed under the influence of the research suggested by Knitter who, in turn, has given us a completely fresh look at the comparative methodology and helped us to motivate our own approach to the Christian-Buddhist studies. Hence, the purpose of the present sections of the chapter is not to explore the field of comparative methodology as such. This pretentious task has already been performed by the theologian. The aim is to give our own evaluation to the described positions and to include the present Christian-Buddhist comparative analysis into the common context of Christian attitudes to other religions, utilizing the researches of Knitter and others in this field.

Alongside with the hope to create a new universal religion of the future, there is a moderate position of representatives of the Process theology. John B. Cobb, JR, for instance, accepting Wolfhart Pannenberg's fully historical approach to religions, proposes the idea of a mutual transformation of different religions. According to the mentioned historical approach, religions are in the process of change throughout history. Those win and survive in the competition which contribute to new situations and assimilate from others. It means that Christianity also is involved in the process of change and needs to assimilate the elements of truth in all other traditions.²²

Christianity is constantly changing. According to Pannenberg, "we are faithful to Christ not by resisting change but by sensitively participating in the change which God is working in the world."²³ The historical approach to the religions allows John B. Cobb to suggest an idea of a mutual transformation of religions. As the scholar claims, dialogue with the representatives of other religions can enrich our lives and purify our faith. The aim of dialogue, however, is not only to improve one religion. As a result of dialogue between Christianity and Buddhism, both partners would grow. Buddhists have a depth of insight into the nature of things which we lack. Hence our need is to improve Christianity through the employment of Buddhist psycho-techniques. On the other hand, Christianity can make its contribution in the improvement of Buddhism by incorporation of the figure of Jesus Christ in Buddhism. Cobb writes, "A Christianity which has been transformed by the incorporation of the Buddhist insight into the nature of reality will be a very different Christianity from any we know now. A Buddhism that has incorporated Jesus Christ will be a very different Buddhism from any we know now. That will not obliterate the difference between the two traditions, but it will provide a new basis for fresh dialogue and fresh transformation."²⁴

The idea of a mutual transformation of religions, however, also may be contested. We believe that neither Christianity, nor Buddhism needs any improvement. For instance, Christian tradition has wonderful mystics both in its Eastern as well as in its Western manifestations. It is curious that during their exercises contemporary Jesuits make use of psycho-techniques which have much in common with those practiced by Theravada Buddhists. Strong affinities can also be found in Theravada meditation and Jesus Prayer of Hesychasts. And all these Christian psycho-techniques are not borrowed from Asia, they are originated inside Christian tradition. The psycho-

²² John B. Cobb, JR., *Beyond Dialogue: Toward a Mutual Transformation of Christianity and Buddhism*, pp. 40-41.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 46.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 51-52.

techniques, proposed by Christian masters of prayer, are much better accommodated to the Christian mentality. They are sophisticated enough and need nothing from foreign traditions. Our position is that every major religion, Christianity or Buddhism, is self-sufficient in psycho-techniques as well as in doctrine. Really, does Buddhism have any necessity for Jesus Christ, when his role is perfectly played by innumerable buddhas and bodhisattvas of Mahāyāna tradition?

Obviously, major religious traditions, such as Buddhism, Christianity or Islam, are not yet ready to re-interpret their tremendous values in favor of dialogue. It means that for Christians it is very difficult to deny the unique role of Jesus Christ or to change their attitude to Scriptures. For Buddhists, in turn, it is so hard to accept an equality of the Divine Person in theism and Emptiness in monism. This is a situation when an aim of dialogue should be altered from syncretism to something else. At the moment it is clear that a desire of many modern people to attain spiritual perfection inside their native traditions without any borrowing from the other religions can't be ignored.

Not exactly sharing the historical approach of Ernst Troeltsch, we agree with him in the question of the aims of dialogue. The scholar suggests the idea of “polymorphous truth”. As Paul F. Knitter observes, for Troeltsch “truth will always have many cultural expressions, and it is impossible to judge one to be better than the other. Truths that are “universally valid” and can be accepted interculturally Troeltsch found to be “at bottom exceedingly little.” He foresaw the religions of the world developing on quite parallel tracks. He felt that it is probable that “the great revelations to the various civilizations will remain distinct” and the question of their several relative values will never be capable of objective determination, since every proof thereof will presuppose the special characteristics of the civilization in which it arises.”²⁵

Implied in these final conclusions of Troeltsch is a certain cultural and religious isolation. He felt that we are so caught in our cultural skins that we really cannot understand and appreciate another culture. In another image, Troeltsch felt that we cannot be culturally or religiously “bilingual”. We can learn the language of another culture sufficiently to make some historical study of it, but we can never learn to speak it well enough fully to understand and evaluate it. Really to understand and judge another culture or religion, we would have to join it — and leave our own behind. In drawing these conclusions Troeltsch was not encouraging individual religions to go their own isolated ways without any concern for each other. “If each [religion] strives to

²⁵ Wilfred Cantwell Smith, *Towards a World Theology* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1981), p. 102; see also pp. 59-79. (In Paul F. Knitter, *No Other Name*, p. 30.)

fulfill its own highest potentialities and allows itself to be influenced therein by the similar striving of the rest, they may approach and find contact with each other.” In this contact there can be “no conversion or transformation of one into the other, but only a measure of agreement and mutual understanding.” The contact, in other words, will be quite limited in its effects.”²⁶

In favor of a successful dialogue we can't accept Troeltsch's idea of the Divine revelation manifesting only in history when the religious *apriori* can't realize itself merely in the inward experience of the individual. As we shall see, the term “history” may be extraneous for Indian mentality. However, the approach to the question of different cultures and religions, which can't be mixed together, seems to be rather sensible and can hardly be denied. We believe, that the aim of dialogue formulated as the agreement and mutual understanding, is quite enough for the modern situation of the World's religions. Yet, Troeltsch's idea of a unity of religions as a matter of the next world, which is quite in unison with his historical approach, can't be taken for granted for the reason of eschatology's absence in Hinduism or Buddhism.

In unison with Troeltsch, Carl Gustav Jung has invited us not to confuse different religious traditions and to be aware of cultural borders²⁷. As Paul Knitter observes, “Jung warned Westerners against trying to become Buddhists or Hindus. We are limited by our cultural experiences. The differences between East and West are stark; they dare not be brought together into a simplistic unity. [...] Jung's very complex psychological framework for understanding religious experience and the religions ends with a very practical payoff. It convinces many contemporaries of the essential sameness of all religions and the contemporary need for interreligious dialogue.”²⁸ Providing us with the idea of collective unconscious as the common basis of all religions, he invites us to save the cultural borders and search the commonality of the traditions beyond the external forms of religious behavior.

Obviously, understanding the problematic character of dialogue, he admits that it is possible to reconcile different religions only in an irrational way, “It is much better to

²⁶ Nicholas Lash, *Theology on Dover Beach* (New York:Paulist, 1979), p. 71. (In Paul F. Knitter, *No Other Name*, p. 30.)

²⁷ See, for instance, Carl G. Jung, *Conscious, Unconscious, and Individuation* in *The Collected Works of C. G. Jung*, ed. †Sir Herbert Read, Michael Fordham, Gerhard Adler, William McGuire, trans. R.F.C.Hull (Princeton University Press, 1968), vol. 9, part 1, pp. 287-288.

²⁸ Paul F. Knitter, *No Other Name*, pp. 62-63.

accept the conflict [between East and West], for it admits only of an irrational solution, if any.”²⁹

What was Jung speaking about? He wanted to say that it is not possible to reconcile different religious traditions at the doctrinal level, i.e., at the level of Aristotelian logic. It is not possible, for example, to accept simultaneously an idea of Jesus Christ as the only path and soteriological effectiveness of other religious traditions. The only way of reconciliation at the doctrinal level is to accept the idea of relativity of all doctrines. But the question is if this relativity is acceptable for adherents of these very doctrines. On the other hand, if we desire to save the idea of absoluteness, we need to accept a logical conclusion, i.e., there can be only one absolute religion whereas other ones are just anonymous forms of the only absolute religion. The latter option, obviously, is rather subjective and can be accepted only by one of the two or more partners of dialogue.

In order to respect the absoluteness of any religion, the irrational solution should be found. In this context the consideration of Arnold Toynbee is helpful, “Logic cannot admit that two statements, two beliefs, or even two experiences can both be true if they are contradictory, incompatible, inconsistent, or incongruous with each other. The logical thinker, when faced with incompatible alternatives, has to make a choice between them. ‘He will hold to the one and despise the other.’ [...] The field of logic as well as the field of Newtonian physics is not co-existent with the whole of the universe but is only a narrow zone of the total field of possible experience. Other zones were coming into view in which two experiences that were incompatible with each other might nevertheless both have to be recognized as being equally valid glimpses of the truth.”³⁰

The irrational and even non-academic character of a solution is mentioned by Aloysius Pieris. He admits that this is a religious issue which needs a resolution at the practical level. Beside the religious level there exists the transcendent dimension. Both are of tremendous value in an interfaith dialogue. The scholar contends that “the academic approach, guided by intellectual honesty, consists in affirming both an evangelical zeal for one’s religious commitment and a certain amount of dialogical accommodation to a given pluralism. But there can be a nonacademic approach that

²⁹ “Differences between East and West”, in *Portable Jung*, Joseph Campbell, ed. (New York: Viking, 1971), p. 489. (Paul F. Knitter, *No Other Name*, p. 62.)

³⁰ Arnold Toynbee, “Man’s Concern with Life after Death” in Arnold Toynbee, Arthur Koestler et al., *Life After Death* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1976), p. 35.

transcends this tension, allowing one to meet another in the very depth of the *secular* — which could be a child, or a flower, or even a pebble!”³¹

A consideration of Mircea Eliade can also be helpful for our attempt to formulate the aims of dialogue among religions. In unison with Aloysius Pieris, the famous historian of religions writes about some other than the intellectual level of religious studies. He contends that religious conduct of different nations all together represent typically human situations which all belong to the common spiritual culture. These very situations should be explored by an intelligent co-experience of the interpreter rather than through the objective prism of a naturalist. Our approach to the matter should be completely shifted. Symbols of other cultures should not be analyzed in the same way as a content of our dreams is explored. They must be understood by a scholar from inside of his own being.³² Similarly a dialogue between two religions must develop. One partner of a dialogue should try to understand the other partner intuitively from inside. We shall return to the “intuitive” and participatory approach of Mircea Eliade later. At the moment it is sufficient to resume that the aim of dialogue which can be defined as a reconciliation of religions, can’t be started at the doctrinal (logical) level. The reconciliation must be performed at the level of religious intuition. Partners of dialogue need to search for common frontiers, making use of the mentioned participatory method, and not to borrow anything from another tradition.

Again, the aim of dialogue between and among religions is not a creating of a new universal religion neither it is a mutual transformation of various religious traditions. The purpose of dialogue as well as of this statement is 1) to search for the common basis of the religions beyond the external forms of religious conduct; and 2) to attain, if ever possible, a complete knowledge and respect among traditions. The academic studies of the introversive religious experience together with an intelligent and sometimes intuitive co-experience of an interpreter then should provide the basis for interreligious dialogue and cooperation of religions in the modern intercultural world.

³¹ Aloysius Pieris, S.J., *Love Meets Wisdom: A Christian Experience of Buddhism* (Mariknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1990), pp. 6-7.

³² Мирча Элиаде, “Мефистофель и Андрогин”, пер. А. В. Нестерова // Мирча Элиаде, *Азиатская алхимия* (Москва: Янус-К, 1998), сс. 326-327.

The Starting-point of Dialogue: Quest for Appropriate Methodology

There are different approaches to the interreligious matter, nevertheless they all have something in common, and it is their search for a commonality of religions. Any scholar making an endeavor to reconcile religions, quests for a universal agent of all religious traditions. The subject is rather wide to be discussed here, yet we shall mention several approaches which seem to be fruitful for the dialogue. In the process of critical analysis of the ideas we shall try to determine the approach of our own.

The first approach, known as *Historical Relativism*, is proposed by Ernst Troeltsch. As Paul F. Knitter observes, according to him, man is a historical being. It means that any human activity is limited by the historical context. Historical contexts are many, besides they are changing all the time. What is so in one historical situation is different in another. The historical quality of all human achievements excludes all absolutes, and it means that all cultures are just relative. As for the religious context, Troeltsch proposes the metaphysics of *immanent transcendence*. God is transcendent, yet his presence or life is found within the unfolding of finite history. History is the “march of God through the world” or “mask of God”, expressing the infinitely creative life of God. The Absolute is present in finite things. We can know it through our own desire for more, for trust and love. This very *religious apriori*, built into human nature, can't be perceived and become real merely in the inward experience of the individual — that is, only in the relation between an individual and God. We are historical beings and can experience ourselves only within history. Different religions are vehicles through which our *religious apriori* takes concrete form within history. The religions are various manifestations of the universal revelation at work within mankind. Hence, all religions share the divine presence or revelation. That is what they have in common. No historical manifestation of God can be absolute. For this reason all religions are relative, i.e., limited bearers of the divine.³³

We shall not contest the concept of the great scholar, yet it is necessary to note that the historical approach can't be a perfect means for mutual dialogue between Christians and Buddhists. It is common knowledge that unlike Europeans the inhabitants of Asia do not share the historical type of thinking. History as unique events of the past, present or future is not at all important for them for the reason of the notion

³³ James Luther Adams, “Ernst Troeltsch as Analyst of Religion,” in *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, 1 (1961/62) 109; Paul H. Santmire, “Ernst Troeltsch: Modern Historical Thought and the Challenge to Individual Religions,” (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1973), p. 367. (In Paul F. Knitter, *No Other Name*, pp. 24-26.)

of a cyclic rhythm of time. Historical events outside myth are without any meaning for Indians. Instead of clinging to the changeable entity called by Hindus *māyā* and by Buddhists *samsāra*, they search for the imperishable values beyond life and death, we would say, also beyond history. *Brahman* for Hinduists is beyond any change, as well as Buddhist *nirvana* is an expressible going out of the chain of existence.

Although Troeltsch speaks about God as transcendent immanence, being simultaneously here and beyond, he admits that God can't be experienced by man beyond history, i.e., beyond change. Troeltsch's notion of God inside change has affinities to the Buddhist idea of *pratītya-samutpāda* or "eternal" change which, in turn, has substituted the Hindu idea of unchangeable *Brahman*. Nevertheless, unlike Troeltsch's man who experiences God in changeability of historical events, a human being of the early Buddhism is able to experience the ultimate reality only outside the circle of dependent co-arising.

Latvian philosopher Roberts Mūks in his book *Mircea Eliade's Conception of the Polarity "Sacred — Profane" in Archaic Religions and in Christianity* identifies Western historicism with the *dialectics of māyā*. Indian concept of the cyclic time, in its turn, represents a genuine thirst for the ontological values, being an endeavor to overcome the same history.³⁴ That is why Troeltsch's position can't be acceptable by Buddhists and, thus, is not appropriate for Christian-Buddhist dialogue.

Although in another shape, the historical approach is important also for the Process Theology. Accepting Pannenberg's "fully historical approach", John B. Cobb, Jr, admits that this very approach shows that religions are all in the process of change throughout history. Religions survive in the competition which adjust to new situations and assimilate from others. Cobb and Pannenberg claim that to be faithful to Christ means not to resist change but to participate in the change which God is working in the world.³⁵

The idea of the universal Christ fully involved in the process of change again can hardly be accommodated to the Indian type of thinking. Again, the principle of change can be somehow identified with Tao in Chinese religions, but never with Hindu *Brahman* or Buddhist ultimate reality.

The second fruitful approach to religions is the Catholic model of Karl Rahner, S.J. He insists upon the idea of Divine grace, offered to all nations. Becoming a part of

³⁴ The ontological is defined by the scholar as the intransitive basis of all. (Roberts Mūks, *Sakrālā un profānā polaritāte Mirčas Eliades darbos un kristietībā* (Rīga: Zinātne, 2002), 25., 50., 32. lpp.)

³⁵ John B. Cobb, JR., *Beyond Dialogue: Toward a Mutual Transformation of Christianity and Buddhism*, pp. 40, 46.

human consciousness Grace communicates anybody to the Divine. Rahner tries to soften the Christian idea of exclusivism making use of the so called anonymous Christianity. The adherents of other religions are those in whom Jesus Christ operates through His Spirit. That is why they can be called “Christians without a name.”³⁶

Rahner writes that “such a “presence” of Jesus Christ throughout the whole history of salvation and in relation to all people cannot be denied or overlooked by Christians if they believe in Jesus Christ as the salvation of *all* people, and do not think that the salvation of non-Christians is brought about by God and His mercy independently of Jesus Christ. This presupposes only that these non-Christians are of good will, even when this good will has absolutely nothing to do with Jesus Christ”.³⁷ Rahner suggests an idea of “the supernatural salvific will of God” which reveals itself everywhere and hence “throughout the whole length and breadth of the history of the human race.” But at the same time this revelation of God through Spirit can’t be perfect if it is not “oriented towards the high point of its historical mediation” in Jesus Christ.³⁸

The idea of anonymous Christianity exhibits a similarity to the idea of “anonymous Buddhism”. Aloysius Pieris witnesses that he has often heard well-meaning Buddhists refer to Jesus Christ as a *bodhisattva*“. This is the greatest tribute a Buddhist could give the founder of Christianity. But Christians may not be impressed by such a concession.” The scholar continues that the late Prof. K. N. Jayatilleke was “ascribing an absolute character to the truth that the Buddha proclaimed, though conceding that this truth could be discovered, fully or partially, by a non-Buddhist.” Aloysius Pieris underscores that the idea of Jayatilleke is rather similar to the theory of anonymous Christianity gaining currency in certain theological circles.³⁹

An illustration of the idea of anonymous Buddhism is given by Jayatilleke in his *Buddhist Attitude to Other Religion*. Discussing the question in the context of the Buddha’s teaching found in Dīgha Nikāya, the scholar asserts, “He [the Buddha] says that any religion is true to the extent to which it would incorporate the noble eight-fold path: “In whatever religion the noble eight-fold path is not found, that religion would not have a first saint, the second, the third, and the forth; in whatever religion the noble eight-fold path is found, that religion would have, the first, second, third and fourth

³⁶ See about the topic Karl Rahner, “Observations on the Concept of revelation,” in *Revelation and Tradition* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1966), pp. 9ff.

³⁷ Karl Rahner, *Foundations of Christian Faith: An Introduction to the Idea of Christianity*, trans. William V. Dych (New York: the Seabury Press, 1978), pp. 312-313.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 313, 318.

³⁹ Aloysius Pieris, S.J., *Love Meets Wisdom: A Christian Experience of Buddhism* (Mariknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1990), pp. 4-5.

saints. [...]” (Dīgha Nikāya, II, 151)”. The four saints are interpreted by Jayatilleke as the four main stages of the Buddhist ortho-praxis.⁴⁰

The ideas of anonymous Buddhism are proclaimed also by W.Y. Evans-Wentz in the *Tibetan Book of the Dead*, edited and compiled by him.⁴¹ Obviously, this sort of approach may be acceptable by one partner of dialogue, but extraneous for the other partner. Christians will never accept an idea of anonymous Buddhism, as well as Buddhists will not share the idea of anonymous Buddhism. Hence, this approach lacks a common ground of dialogue.

The fourth approach to religions in favor of dialogue is the theocentric model, proposed by an English philosopher of religion, John Hick. He asserts that “the different encounters with the transcendent within the different religious traditions may all be encounters with the one infinite reality, though with partially different and overlapping aspects of reality.”⁴²

Commenting the concept of the scholar, Cobb stresses that Buddhists, representing the nontheistic world view, would not accept the idea of the “transcendent ground of all existence, including personal existence”. Formulations of Hick are too determined by Western experience. We believe that in this “ideological” conflict we deal just with a secondary question, i.e., of how to call this ultimate reality. Of course, it is very important to find an appropriate term which would be acceptable to the both partners of dialogue, i.e., to Christians and to Buddhists. This necessity, however, doesn’t create a serious threat to the theory of Hick on the whole.

Yet, it seems that in the position of Hick there is another serious problem, if to employ Hick’s methodology for the interests of the interreligious dialogue. Hick’s idea of the relative character of any religious expression entails the shift from the Christological model to the theocentric one. For Hick Christian belief in the incarnation

⁴⁰ Jayatilleke admits that Buddhism has much in common with theistic religions, for instance a belief in a Transcendent, survival, moral recompense and responsibility. “The early Buddhist conception of the nature and destiny of man in the universe is, therefore, not in basic conflict with the beliefs and values of the founders of the great religions”. (K. N. Jayatilleke, *The Buddhist Attitude to Other Religions*, ed. Dr. Boon Nilakesh (Chiangmai: The Buddhist Publication Foundation Wat Phrattatdoisuter, n.d.), pp. 25-26.)

⁴¹ W. Y. Evans-Wentz, “Preface to the Third edition,” in *The Tibetan Book of the dead or After-Death Experiences on the Bardo Plane, according to Lāma Kazi Dawa-Samdup’s English Rendering*, ed. W. Y. Evans-Wentz (London, Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1960), p. x.

⁴² John Hick, *God and the Universe of Faiths: Essay in the Philosophy of religion* (London: Macmillan, 1980), p. 139. (In John B. Cobb, JR., *Beyond Dialogue: Toward a Mutual Transformation of Christianity and Buddhism*, p. 36.)

and the divinity of Jesus is just mythic and therefore demands reinterpretation.⁴³ It is obvious that such a notion of mythical Jesus may appear to many Christians as a blasphemy. Unfortunately, Hick has ignored what is considered to be the most precious value of Christian faith.

Nevertheless, what must be acceptable in the theory of Hick, is his brilliant idea of the soteriological structure common to all religions. He understands that this common ideal arises from the fact that the adherents of all religions are animated by and in search of the same ultimate reality.⁴⁴ The soteriological basis of all religions is a perfect solution in the search for a commonality of religions. We shall mention it once more in the context of mysticism.

Stanley Samartha is another representative of the theocentric approach to religions. He makes a conclusion about the relativity of all religions, employing some other premises. He claims, "The Other relativizes everything else. In fact, the willingness to accept such relativization is probably the only real guarantee that one has encountered the Other as ultimate real." For Samartha, God alone is Absolute whereas religions are just relative expressions of God.⁴⁵ The position of Samartha is close to our own view. However, the idea of relativity of religions including Christianity may be contested by "orthodox" partners of the interreligious dialogue and, therefore, can't completely satisfy our purpose to reconcile religions.

Obviously, being aware of the problem, Samartha proposes one more important idea. He asserts, that "a particular religion can claim to be decisive for some people, and some people can claim that a particular religion is decisive for them, but no religion is justified in claiming that it is decisive for all."⁴⁶ A similar view is proposed also by Troeltsch who is facing us with a question: Do we need absolute certainty about truth before we can fully committed to it? "A truth which, in the first instance, is a *truth for us* does not cease, because of this, to be very truth and Life."⁴⁷ It means that a representative of any religion needs not make any shifts in his faith or world view. For him his own religious tradition will ever be a unique way.

⁴³ Paul F. Knitter, *No Other Name*, pp. 149-150.

⁴⁴ "Toward a Philosophy of Religious Pluralism," *Neue Zeitschrift für systematische Theologie und Religionsphilosophie*, 22 (1980) 133. (In Paul F. Knitter, *No Other Name*, p. 148.)

⁴⁵ S. J. Samartha, *Courage for Dialogue: Ecumenical Issues in Inter-Religious Relationships* (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 1982), pp. 151-52.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 153.

⁴⁷ Ernst Troeltsch, "The Place of Christianity among the World Religions," in *Christianity and Other Religions*, John Hick and Brian Hebblethwaite, eds. (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980), p. 31. (In Paul F. Knitter, *No Other Name*, p. 31.)

Our own position concerns the ideas of another Indian, Dr. Sivaraman. He admits that all religions are “alternative absolutes”: “Religions are not equivalent definitions of one absolute, and cannot be reduced to each other. Neither are they all “relative.” They are alternative absolutes, excluding each other in any but in a transcendental sense. The sense of oneness is not sacrificed in so far as it is not maintained that the goal defined alternatively has also to be divided against itself. There are, indeed, no *goals* in the plural. Using the metaphor of circle and center (to borrow from my own writing), we may say that there are infinite approaches to the center from the periphery, which may be described as *alternative lines of approach* in the sense that they are *incommensurable*. To each line the center is, surely, “its” center, the terminus of “its” length. But who can deny that the periphery in its entirety is the periphery of one center?”⁴⁸

The position of Sivaraman is confirmed by that of Dalailama the XIV. He, in turn, doesn’t believe in the creating of one universal religion either. Any religion is, really, unique. That every religion proclaims its own ultimate truth can’t become a reason for the idea of religious relativism. In Buddhism there exist several philosophical schools which accept the idea of simultaneous validity of many ultimate truths.⁴⁹ Of course, this view contradicts the principles of Aristotelian logic, yet it is relevant to remember that religious matters can’t always be resolved by logic operations.

Although all mentioned approaches seem to have their advantages, the argument of Sivaraman may be the most fruitful one for the matters of interreligious dialogue. Dialogue’s strategy should satisfy all partners. That is why Christian theology can’t become a basis of this very dialogue between and among religions. Buddhism, for instance, hasn’t got a theology of its own and can’t share Christian theological views. Neither the categories of Buddhist philosophy, such as *anātman* or *śūnyatā*, can become a basis of dialogue because they are extraneous for Christians. Yet the adherents of both traditions need to save the absolute character of their traditions and, simultaneously, to establish the dialogue.

The only way to accept the idea of alternative absolutes is to look at the problem not from outside, i.e., from the tower of theology or philosophy, but from within. All human beings, even atheists, have their own religious convictions, and even when we try to be objective, we can nor completely get rid of our religious background, nor to

⁴⁸ In Aloysius Pieris, S.J., *Love Meets Wisdom: A Christian Experience of Buddhism* (Mariknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1990), pp. 5-6.

⁴⁹ Viņa svētība Dalailama, *Labā sirds: Dalailama lasa evaņģēlijus*, tulk. Ilze Dika (Rīga: Atēna, 2001), 31. lpp.

avoid our restricted human capacities to evaluate things. Here the argument of the Buddhist philosophical school called *Sautrantika* can be helpful. According to it man is not able to experience the reality as it is because it is always perceived indirectly, i.e., through a prism of conventional notions. The consideration can help us to grasp that we always shall be only human beings; our perception of reality is in all times subjective and human. It is not possible for man to evaluate ultimate reality objectively. For this reason we make choice in favor of anthropology and not theology as an appropriate basic field of our research. Only from the anthropological point of view, the common basis for dialogue and the space for many alternative absolutes can be found. This very anthropological approach is, obviously, related to phenomenology.

Phenomenological Approach of Mircea Eliade and Its Links to the Psychological School of Carl. G. Jung

In order to find the best methodology of dialogue the Process theologian, John B. Cobb debates with two theologians, i.e., with Paul Tillich and Wolfhart Pannenberg. The proposal of the former scholar is that Christianity is interpreted in the context of the whole *global phenomenon* of religion. Cobb observes that “strictly speaking it is not the *history* of religions but the *phenomenology* of religion [...]” Tillich “favored a “dynamic-typological” approach. He judged that all religions have a sacramental base and also mystical and prophetic elements. When these elements are appropriately unified the result is “the Religion of the Concrete Spirit.”⁵⁰ Tillich believed that this norm was fulfilled in Paul’s doctrine of the Spirit.”⁵¹

Wolfhart Pannenberg, in turn, “means history and argues against the phenomenological and typological approach for one that takes seriously the actual course of events in the many religions of the world. Indeed, Pannenberg’s most distinctive contribution to the discussion is the unqualifiedly historical approach which he affirms and adopts.”⁵²

⁵⁰ Paul Tillich, *The Future of Religions*, ed. Jerald C. Brauer (New York: Harper&Row, 1966), pp. 86-87. (In John B. Cobb, JR., *Beyond Dialogue: Toward a Mutual Transformation of Christianity and Buddhism*, p. 33.)

⁵¹ John B. Cobb, JR., *Beyond Dialogue: Toward a Mutual Transformation of Christianity and Buddhism*, p. 33.

⁵² *Ibid.*

Commenting the approaches of theologians, John B. Cobb agrees with historicism of Pannenberg and recognizes the phenomenological methodology of Tillich as failing.⁵³ Our position, vice versa, is in the favor of the phenomenological approach.

As Roberts Mūks observes, the phenomenological method, introduced by Rudolf Otto and employed afterwards by a famous historian of religions Mircea Eliade, is based upon two principles: the first one is *epochē*, i.e., to abstain from the evaluation; the second one is the 'eidetic' vision (Gr. *eidōs*).⁵⁴ The late Prof. Visvaldis Klīve has explained that the aims of *epochē* is to overcome various interpretations and to achieve a direct vision or unmediated experience, that is the basis of our conceptual activity. Our experience is usually darkened by interpretations and explanations that are an obstacle of the direct perception of a phenomenon. As Edmund Husserl formulated, the purpose of the method is to put the explanations into brackets, unclosing in this way the genuine experience of the reality and ourselves.⁵⁵

A representative of phenomenology tries to get a vision of a neutral hearer, being interested only in *eidōs*, i.e., in a structure which might be common for religious phenomena of a certain group. A researcher makes an endeavor to refrain from the evaluation of a religion as being genuine or not. Only structure can help us to explain the meaning of religious phenomena correctly.⁵⁶

We believe, that the non-evaluation of a researcher means that we should not evaluate a symbol of a foreign religion according to the explanation of similar images in our own religious tradition. For instance, the apparition of wrathful deities in *Bar do thos grol* can be erroneously interpreted by a Westerner as a manifestation of the demonic reality. The incorrect understanding of *Chonyid bardo* apparitions may entail a negative evaluation of the Tibetan spirituality as such. On the contrary, the researcher who doesn't allow any premature evaluation of a symbol deepens a foreign tradition and realizes that symbolism in different cultures can differ whereas the ideas represented by different symbols can coincide. A horrible image of a Tantric deity doesn't embody the demonic reality, still it is a symbol of a deity's infuriated readiness to destroy our affections, and can be compared with the wrath of God in Christian Orthodox tradition.

⁵³ Ibid., p. 40.

⁵⁴ C. J. Bleeker, *The Sacred Bridge: Researches in the nature and Structure of Religion* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1963), p. 3. (In Roberts Mūks, *Sakrālā un profānā polaritāte Mirčas Eliades darbos un kristietībā*, 13. lpp.)

⁵⁵ Visvaldis Klīve, *Pa kuru ceļu?* (LELBA Apgāds, 1988), 177. lpp.

⁵⁶ Roberts Mūks, *Sakrālā un profānā polaritāte Mirčas Eliades darbos un kristietībā*, 13. lpp.

One more example: a shocking image of a Hindu deity *Chinnamasta* cutting off her own head is a symbol of enlightenment. Head embodies our intellection which should be annihilated in order to get the direct and releasing vision of reality.⁵⁷ Again, the image of *Chinnamasta*, although horrible in its presentation, is not demonic, rather it illustrates a psycho-technique known in the Orthodox Christian tradition as the *apophatic* way towards God when any mental activity ceases. Hence, only after a scrupulous analysis of a symbol and after the disclosing of its structure a symbol can be interpreted adequately. In order to grasp a meaning of a symbol, we need in the beginning avoid any explanation of this very symbol.

According to R. Pettazzoni, the aim of phenomenology is to separate different structures from the innumerable different religious phenomena. Only structure can help us to explain a meaning of a religious phenomenon independently of its manifestation in time and space and of a certain cultural situation. Phenomenology in this manner gets rid of historicism and becomes a science *sui generis* — that which completely differs from the History of Religions.⁵⁸ Mircea Eliade is interested in pre-systematic ontology which transcends history. For him history is none other than the degradation of religious values or the decrease of the sacred.⁵⁹ At the same time religious data disclose their meaning only in the historical context. That is why the historical manifestation of religious phenomena is an object wherein a deep meaning of phenomena is realized by a scholar.⁶⁰

As is evident, the notion of history is connected with that of time. It goes without saying that history manifests in time. That is why the mentioned two categories, i.e., those of history and time, are inseparable. According to the late Professor V. S. Semencov, a famous figure in Russian Sanskritology, any religious tradition is an effective machine which is intended to struggle against time.⁶¹ It means that an endeavor to save tangible forms of religious tradition from any innovation is the same attempt to transcend history that is a natural human instinct of preservation of the link to the

⁵⁷ Георг Ферштайн, *Энциклопедия йоги* (Москва: Гранд, 2002), с. 178.

⁵⁸ R. Pettazzoni, "History and Phenomenology in the science of Religion" in *Essays on the History of Religions* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1963), p. 217. (Roberts Mūks, *Sakrālā un profānā polaritāte Mirčas Eliades darbos un kristietībā*, 13. lpp.)

⁵⁹ Mircea Eliade, *History of Religions and a New Humanism in History of religions*, IV (Summer, 1964), p. 168. (In Roberts Mūks, *Sakrālā un profānā polaritāte Mirčas Eliades darbos un kristietībā*, 15., 20. lpp.)

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 17. lpp.

⁶¹ В. С. Семенов, "Проблема трансляции традиционной культуры на примере судьбы Бхагавадгиты" // *Восток - Запад: исследования, переводы, публикации* (Москва: Наука, 1988), с. 19.

essential core of religion. At the same time, when adherents of a tradition try to preserve and translate only external forms of religion forgetting the reality which is expressed in these forms, the tradition dies out. Therefore, externals of religion are destroyed allowing the essential core of religion to express itself in other ones, more vital in a certain historical period. External forms of religion can't be preserved for ever whilst its inner core is unchangeable.⁶² As V. V. Malyavin comments, the method of Semencov is to "learn tradition" discovering the primordial essence of man beyond cultural phenomena.⁶³

Although phenomenological method presupposes a neutral analysis of religious phenomena, it can't be utilized by a person who lacks a firm position in questions concerning religion. A religious life of another man can be only understood by a scholar to whom religion is valuable. As is observed in the first section, Mircea Eliade tries to get some sort of co-experience, exploring religious beliefs of another man. By doing so, he strengthens his own attitude to the ultimate reality. Phenomenological method is a religious activity with a soteriological function. Hence, this sort of hermeneutics transforms into therapeutic methodology.⁶⁴

The consideration of Mircea Eliade is, to some extent, shared by a christologically oriented position of Karl Rahner who, on the one hand speaks about the experiential methodology of religious studies, and on the other hand points out that a starting point of these very studies for a Christian historian of religion is his knowledge in the field of dogmatic theology, "Compared then with the task of a historian of religion, which is to discover Christ a posteriori in non-Christian religions insofar as this is possible, the reflections of a dogmatic theologian to be presented here are a priori. They can only give something like provisional hints to the historian of religion, and perhaps he can then direct and sharpen his search and his inquiry for a task which the dogmatic theologian cannot assume."⁶⁵

The position of Mircea Eliade is shared also by Pannikar. As Aloysius Pieris observes, he considers, that "students of other religions should intuit the self-understanding of the other religions — something quite impossible unless they adopt [...] the "participatory approach".⁶⁶ A French philosopher, Paul Ricoeur, however,

⁶² Ibid., c. 19-20.

⁶³ В. В. Малявин, "В поисках традиции" // *Восток - Запад: исследования, переводы, публикации* (Москва: Наука, 1988), сс. 33.

⁶⁴ Roberts Mūks, *Sakrālā un profānā polaritāte Mirčas Eliades darbos un kristietībā*, 17.-26. lpp.

⁶⁵ Karl Rahner, *Foundations of Christian Faith: An Introduction to the Idea of Christianity*, p. 312.

⁶⁶ Aloysius Pieris, S.J., *Love Meets Wisdom: A Christian Experience of Buddhism*, p. 20.

makes an important remark. He asserts that a scholar, making use of the methodology of participation, should become related to an adherent of a foreign tradition in ideas rather than in life.⁶⁷ If translated into Sanskrit, the participation in life is the same *sādhana*. Hence, not *sādhana* but *darśana* is the field of the interreligious dialogue.

Mircea Eliade, making use of the phenomenological methodology, tries to translate the archaic symbols into the modern notional language. We shall act analogically. Utilizing the phenomenological method we are going to interpret or to translate notions of Tantric Buddhism into the language of Orthodox Christian tradition and by this to reconcile the both traditions.

The reason for the comparative analysis of such “exotic” poles is simple. Both traditions are mystical (the term will be discussed below) in their presentation; the both are making a strong accent on the *photism* as the basic state when ‘historicism’ is completely transcended. At the same time, symbols, represented here as doctrinal notions of the traditions, are completely different. That is why they are of an extreme interest for an adherent of the phenomenological method of Mircea Eliade. We shall make an endeavor not only to show that a Russian monk and a Tibetan lama go through analogical forms of introversion (*enstasis*), but also to illustrate how the same ‘archetypes’ or structures manifest in completely different doctrinal systems.

It is common knowledge that Mircea Eliade has adapted several ideas of Jung’s psychology, yet it goes without saying that Mircea Eliade himself has moved away from Jung, claiming that he is not able to share completely Jung’s idea of archetypes. But before we discuss this question, it is useful to remember the concepts proposed by Carl Gustav Jung.

The main notions of Jung are of *the collective unconscious*, *archetypes* and *symbols*. As Paul F. Knitter observes, “below and in vital connection with our “consciousness” there is what has come to be called the “unconscious” or “subconscious”. This unknown part of us is as much what we are as is our self-consciousness. In fact, as Jung argues, it contains our true selves. He compared the conscious part of us to an island surrounded and sustained by the ocean of the unconscious. [...] Jung admitted that he could never fully and clearly say just what the unconscious was and what it contained. He called it a *Grenzbegriff*, a limit concept, a pointer to something that is as real to our experience as it is impervious to our full

⁶⁷ P. Ricoeur, *The Symbolism of Evil*, trans. from the French by Emerson Buchanan (New York: Harper and Row, 1967), pp. 351-352. (In Roberts Mūks, *Sakrālā un profānā polaritāte Mirčas Eliades darbos un kristietībā*, 27. lpp.)

comprehension.”⁶⁸ As Jung himself writes, “the concept of the collective unconscious is neither a speculative nor a philosophical but an empirical matter.”⁶⁹

To the question, how can we come to contact with it, Jung answers that rational processes, i.e., our intellect and logical reason, can't help. The *unconscious* represents the mysterious, the suprarational element within us. The content of the *unconscious*, which is common to all human beings, are so called *archetypes* which also are common to all of us. The archetypes are not innate ideas rather they are predispositions toward the formation of images. They can be called messages-in-code, which we must decode and bring to our conscious awareness.⁷⁰

The Greek ἀρχότυπον, literally, primeval images or signs, is a combination of two roots: ἡ ἀρχή — a beginning, and ἡ τῆς εἰκόνος — a sign, an image, an imprint. Archetypes are not accessible for a grasping if not manifested in symbols.⁷¹ Besides, as Jung asserts, “the archetype is essentially an unconscious content that is altered by becoming conscious and by being perceived, and it takes its color from the individual consciousness in which it happens to appear.”⁷² Archetypes are the primordial signs with a content which is hardly differentiated. They have to do with light and darkness, death and rebirth, wholeness, sacrifice and redemption. The archetypes are the common seedbed of all religions.⁷³

Speaking about the universal character of archetypes, Jung compares them to the limbs of a human body, “Archetypal fantasy-forms are, in fact, reproduced spontaneously anytime and anywhere, without there being any conceivable trace of different transmission. The original structural components of the psyche are of no less surprising a uniformity than are those of the visible body. The archetypes are, so to speak, organs of the pre-rational psyche. They are eternally inherited forms and ideas

⁶⁸ Paul F. Knitter, *No Other Name*, p. 56.

⁶⁹ C. G. Jung, *The Concept of the Collective Unconscious* in *The Collected Works of C. G. Jung*, ed. †Sir Herbert Read, Michael Fordham, Gerhard Adler, William McGuire (trans. R.F.C.Hull (Princeton University Press, 1968), vol. 9, part 1, p. 44.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 57.

⁷¹ И. Н. Яблоков, *Религиоведение: учебный словарь-минимум по религиоведению* (Москва: Гардарики, 1998), с. 173.

⁷² C. G. Jung, *Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious* in *The Collected Works of C. G. Jung*, vol. 9, part 1, p. 44.

⁷³ C. G. Jung, *Psychology and Religion* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1938), p. 63. (In Paul F. Knitter, *No Other Name*, p. 57.)

which have at first no specific content. Their specific content only appears in the course of the individual's life, when personal experiences taken up in precisely these forms."⁷⁴

According to Jung the archetypes are decoded through symbols and myths. The archetypes are common to all religions whereas symbols and myths are different; they depend on the cultural and historical context. It is through symbols that we are in contact with our unconscious. Hence, the unconscious is collective, and if it can be looked upon as a deeper well or source within each of us, then all the individual wells lead down to a common underground stream.⁷⁵

Mircea Eliade evaluates the discovery of the unconscious positively. Eliade as well as Jung admits that symbols express a paradoxical situation which can't be resolved by a logical discourse. Although Mircea Eliade shares Jungian idea of a content of these very archetypes, i.e., as pre-existent mental structures, he yet doesn't accept a Jungian notion of the source of archetypes. They are not produced by the unconscious, he argues, but rather by a transpersonal reality. Mircea Eliade doesn't want to de-mystify *homo religiosus* and proclaims that archetypes are endowed with a religious meaning and deal with the experience of the sacred that is the transpersonal reality. Symbols, in turn, disclose their true meaning only if understood as an intensive religious (ontological) experience. The scholar treats the unconscious of Jung as being close to the world of animals, whereas the religious potency of man is oriented upwards.⁷⁶ In other words Mircea Eliade in his framework has re-interpreted the Jungian unconscious, projecting it outward and, simultaneously, rejecting the idea that human religious life may be a mere psychological phenomenon.

Although the scholar is convinced that there are essential differences between his own concept of the ontological entity and the Jungian unconscious, there is something in Jungian system that has been ignored by Eliade and other scholars. Jung never rejected the reality of the Divine and didn't say that archetypes responsible for the religious are *produced* by human unconscious. He also never neglected the mysterious side of human being.

For him an archetype of the 'self' was of a great importance. It is concerned with the process of "individuation" representing a gradual rejection of an ego, when consciousness and the unconscious come together. The realization of the self is considered by Jung to be the same realization of the *imago Dei*. Jung concludes that the

⁷⁴ Dr. C. G. Jung, "Psychological Commentary" in *The Tibetan Book of the dead or After-Death Experiences on the Bardo Plane, according to Lāma Kazi Dawa-Samdub's English Rendering*, p. xliv.

⁷⁵ Paul F. Knitter, *No Other Name*, pp. 58-59.

⁷⁶ Roberts Mūks, *Sakrālā un profānā polaritāte Mirčas Eliades darbos un kristietībā*, 122.-123. lpp.

human being is “an entity endowed with the consciousness of a relationship to Deity.” Jung writes that “as the eye to the sun, so the soul corresponds to God.”⁷⁷

Jung claimed, “I have been accused of ‘deifying the soul.’ Not I but God himself has deified it! I did not attribute a religious function to the soul, I merely produced the facts which prove that the soul is *naturaliter religiosa* [naturally religious], i.e. possesses a religious function.”⁷⁸ Hence, Jung doesn’t ignore God, nor he attributes Him to the psyche. He witnesses that the Divine imprint does exist in the unconscious, nevertheless it is not possible to prove the existence of the Imprinter by scientific methods.⁷⁹

In a personal letter to one of his critics Jung, however, presents an explicit position of his own concerning the matter,

“I was astonished to find that even you, too, did not understand the concept of the “Self.” How on earth did you get the idea that I could replace God — and with a concept of that? I can establish the existence of a psychological wholeness to which our consciousness is subordinate and which is, in itself, beyond precise description. But this “Self” can never take the place of God, although it may, perhaps, be a receptacle for divine grace. Such regrettable misunderstandings are due to the assumption that I am an irreligious man who does not believe in God, and should be shown the road to faith.”⁸⁰

Obviously, the mentioned misunderstanding of Jungian ideas is a derivative of the theistic world view possessed by Westerners. Ultimate reality is formulated by us as the Divine Other which is completely different from creatures. Two substances, the Divine and the created ones, are as if divided by an abyss. Yet, according to the teaching of Orthodox Church, the abyss is destroyed by Jesus Christ who united in

⁷⁷ Carl G. Jung, *Collected Works of Carl G. Jung*, (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1953), vol. 12, p. 10.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 14- 17.

The same position is presented by Jung in discussion of the question, if reincarnation is anything real. Jung again underscores that the fact of reincarnation can’t become an object of a scientific research. Here is the quotation from Jung dealing with the discussed topic, “Neither our scientific knowledge nor our reason can keep in step with this idea. There are too many if’s and but’s. Above all, we know desperately little about the possibilities of continued existence of the individual soul after death, so little that we cannot even conceive how anyone could prove anything at all in this respect. Moreover, we know only too well, on epistemological grounds, that such a proof would be just as impossible as the proof of God.” (Dr. C. G. Jung, “Psychological Commentary” in *The Tibetan Book of the dead or After-Death Experiences on the Bardo Plane, according to Lāma Kazi Dawa-Samdup’s English Rendering*, p. xliii.)

⁸⁰ Quoted in Gebhard Frei, “On Analytical Psychology: The Method and Teaching of C. G. Jung,” in White, *God and the Unconscious*, p. 248. (In Paul F. Knitter, *No Other Name*, pp. 59-60.)

Himself the Divine and human natures. The famous formula of the Eastern Church claims: God became man so that man can become God. In the process of *theosis* man becomes a true partaker of Divine life. Besides, it takes place in the innermost depth of human soul. A concept of God's "interiorization" is found in the mystical theology of the Church. Hence, in this context Jungian notion of the "deifying the soul" is not at all in a conflict with monotheistic world view.

In order to reconcile Jung and Mircea Eliade, we even do not need any arguments of our own because the great psychologist has himself proposed a solution. In the Commentary to the Tibetan Book of the Dead he writes, "Now whether a thing is 'given' subjectively or objectively, the fact remains that it is. [...] The world of gods and spirits is truly 'nothing but' the collective unconsciousness inside me. To turn this sentence round so that it reads: The collective unconscious is the world of gods and spirits outside me, no intellectual acrobatics are needed."⁸¹

As we shall see in our dissertation, the question of the location of ultimate reality is not so easy. The ultimate reality experienced during psychic introversion, both in Christianity and Buddhism, can be defined with difficulty. The formulations are often contradictory, going beyond doctrinal limits of the theistic and monistic models.

Going back to archetypes, it is also relevant to remember a common root of Jungian and Eliade's archetypes. Although the discussed differences can't be ignored, it must not be forgotten that both, the structures of Mircea Eliade and archetypes of Jung, are two derivatives of Plato's famous *ideas*.⁸²

The last argument in favor of the affinities between Jung's psychoanalysis and the methodology of Mircea Eliade may be formulated thanks to the *Psychoanalysis and Zen Buddhism* written by an adherent of Neofreudianism Erich Fromm. Discussing the appropriate methods of psychoanalysis, he admits that an analyst must become a patient, yet he has to save his identity; he has to forget that he is a doctor and at the same time he needs to be aware of that he is a doctor. Only when he has accepted this paradox, he can offer authoritative "interpretations", because they are rooted deeply in his own experience. Analyst analyses a patient, yet a patient also analyzes his analyst, for an analyst, while deepening into the unconscious of a patient, clarifies also his own

⁸¹ Dr. C. G. Jung, "Psychological Commentary" in *The Tibetan Book of the Dead or After-Death Experiences on the Bardo Plane, According to Lāma Kazi Dawa-Samdup's English Rendering*, p. lii.

⁸² See Mircea Eliade, *Images and Symbols: Studies in Religious Symbolism* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1961), p. 15; Dr. C. G. Jung, "Psychological Commentary" in *The Tibetan Book of the Dead or After-Death Experiences on the Bardo Plane, According to Lāma Kazi Dawa-Samdup's English Rendering*, p. xlv.

unconscious. Hence, an analyst doesn't only heal a patient, but also heals himself. He understands his patient whereas a patient understands his doctor. When this stage is attained, a solidarity and mutual understanding is achieved.⁸³

The method of Fromm, used during psychoanalysis, bears strong affinities to the participatory method of Mircea Eliade and others in religious studies. The question is, if the simultaneous participation and the presence of self-awareness, the resulting authoritative interpretation, the mutual understanding and, finely, the solidarity of the psycho-analyst are not the mentioned motifs of interreligious dialogue. The answer is yes. Hence, our conclusion may be following: the methodology of religious studies suggested by Mircea Eliade is psychological by nature and can't be distinguished from the psychological concepts of Carl Gustav Jung. Such a conclusion, however, can be made only with a reserve.

As C. Peter Bankart observes, the method of mutual understanding proposed by Fromm, is not exactly psychological and Western by its nature. The clarity of perception and knowledge of the other is borrowed by Neofreudians from Zen Buddhists to whom they actively contacted. "The dissemination of the teachings of Buddhism to psychotherapy practitioners in the west provided a deeply satisfying theoretical soapbox for a generation of mid-century existential philosopher-therapists."⁸⁴

The noted reservation, however, doesn't alter our statement about the psychological character of Mircea Eliade's method. It goes without saying that Buddhism itself is of deeply psychological nature. It means that even in the Buddhist meaning of the word the phenomenological methodology of Eliade deals to a large extent with psychology.

Although Neofreudians make an endeavor to receive Buddhist teaching without the stigma of Freudian psychopathologizing, or the imposition of an overlay of Jungian mysticism⁸⁵, the conclusions made by Jung and Fromm about human consciousness are analogous. It would be difficult even to distinguish Jungian theory from Fromm's discoveries. For this reason, Eliade has much in common not only with Jung but also with Fromm and other Neofreudians.

⁸³ Ērihs Fromms, *Psihoanalīze un dzenbudisms*, tulk. Andžela Šuvajeva (Rīga: Zvaigzne ABC, 2002), 69. lpp.

⁸⁴ C. Peter Bankart, "Five Manifestations of the Buddha in the West: A Brief History" in *Psychology and Buddhism: From Individual to Global Community*, ed. Kathleen H. Dockett. G. Rita Dudley-Grant, C. Peter Bankart ((New York, Boston, Dordrecht, London, Moscow: Kluwer Academic/Plenum Publishers, 2003), p. 55.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

We assume that the phenomenological approach proposed by Mircea Eliade and based upon the ideas of Carl Gustav Jung may be the appropriate methodology of dialogue as well as of this dissertation. Is this assertion in any conflict with our recent claim that a common space for all religions is anthropology? According to the doctrine of Orthodox Church, psychology doesn't at all contradict anthropology rather it is a part of authentic anthropology. We, however, do not want to reduce the theme of the chapter to psychology alone because, as we shall see, the soteriological transformation of man, although initiated by psyche, is not restricted by the changes in consciousness, but also in human body. Somaticism as the second section of the Orthodox anthropology is important for Christianity. Obviously, Buddhism doesn't ignore the somatic matters either. It is important to specify that at the moment we deal with the Western notion of psychology. The search for the equivalent of term 'anthropology' in Buddhism will be performed in the next chapter of the dissertation. At the moment it is sufficient to note that in the title of the dissertation we adhere to the Western terminology.

At the same time we believe that psychology is a primary discipline inside anthropology. Psyche and not body initiates the process of inner transformation. In the present research the Jungian idea of the collective unconscious is accepted as a basis for interreligious dialogue. However, the question is, if this unconscious is acceptable for the partners of the Christian-Buddhist dialogue. That the notion is acceptable for a Christian mind has been already briefly explained in the context of Orthodox doctrine. For Buddhists, in turn, the idea of ultimate and universal character of the mind, claimed by Jung, is nothing extraneous. The comparison of *ālaya-vijnāna* to the Jungian *unconscious* has become a matter of fact in the academic Buddhology. Among the scholars accepting Jungian terms in analysis of Buddhism are, for instance Detlef Ingo Lauf⁸⁶, William S. Waldron⁸⁷, Schuichi Yamamoto⁸⁸, E. A. Torchinov⁸⁹, Jung Young Lee⁹⁰, Erich Fromm⁹¹ and others.

⁸⁶ See Detlef Ingo Lauf, *Secret Doctrines of the Tibetan Book of the Dead*, trans. Graham Parkes (Boulder&London: Shambala, 1975).

⁸⁷ William S. Waldron, *The Buddhist Unconscious: The ālaya-vijnāna in the context of Indian Buddhist thought* (London, New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003).

⁸⁸ Schuichi Yamamoto, "Environmental Problems and Buddhist Ethics: From the Perspective of the Consciousness-Only Doctrine" in *Psychology and Buddhism: From Individual to Global Community*.

⁸⁹ E. A. Торчинов, *Религии мира: опыт запредельного: Трансперсональные состояния и психотехника* (Санкт-Петербург: Петербургское Востоковедение, 1997).

⁹⁰ Jung Young Lee, *Death and Beyond in the Eastern Perspective: A Study Based on the Bardo Thödol and the I Ching* (New York: An Interface Book, 1874).

⁹¹ Erich Fromm, op. cit.

Mysticism as the Universal Core of Religions

As we have already noticed, the psychological approach to religions is the most appropriate one for the purposes of anthropologically shifted dialogue. Saying this we have not yet found the basic structure which may be a universal core of religions.

As has become clear from the previous section, for Jung the decisive archetype of unconscious is the “Self”, i.e., the ineffable God-image beyond all concepts and reasoning, conflicting completely with our individual ego. Our goal is to go through the process of “individuation” in order to realize and appropriate of what we are, i.e., to realize God or our basic oneness with God. As Aniela Jaffe, one of Jung’s closest associates, claims, “The encounter with the mystery of the psyche cannot be distinguished from an experience of God.”⁹²

The soul is endowed with a religious function which should act in order to experience God. This is an interior process, and the external religiosity is just a starting point of this introversion. Jung writes that so long as religion is just an “outward form, and the religious function is not experienced in our own souls, nothing of any importance has happened.”⁹³

Jung admits that introversion and “self” realization is what mysticism is about. He adopted the orientalist convention of referring to Eastern teachings and practices as “mysticism”.⁹⁴ Jung thought that Eastern religions were endowed with a special awareness of unconscious. Nevertheless, it doesn’t mean that this awareness belongs to the adherents of Eastern religions only. Religious experience of all people is structured in the same way. Jung claims, “I must content myself with the hypothesis of an omnipresent, but differentiated, psychic structure which is inherited and which necessarily gives a certain form and direction to all experience.”⁹⁵ Jung doesn’t deny that mysticism has many forms, nevertheless “the extraordinary feeling of oneness is a common experience in all forms of “mysticism”.⁹⁶ Hence, the universal structure of

⁹² *The Myth of Meaning: Jung and the Expansion of Consciousness* (New York: Penguin, 1975), p. 54. (In Paul F. Knitter, *No Other Name*, p. 58.)

⁹³ Carl G. Jung, *Collected Works*, vol. 12., pp. 11-13.

⁹⁴ C. Peter Bankart, “Five Manifestations of the Buddha in the West: A Brief History”, p. 52.

⁹⁵ Dr. C. G. Jung, “Psychological Commentary” in *The Tibetan Book of the dead or After-Death Experiences on the Bardo Plane, according to Lāma Kazi Dawa-Samdup’s English Rendering*, p. xlv.

⁹⁶ Carl Gustav Jung, *The Development of Personality* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1954), pp. xi, xivi. (In C. Peter Bankart, “Five Manifestations of the Buddha in the West: A Brief History”, p. 52.)

religions is represented by the introversive experience, resulting in the extraordinary feeling of oneness.

The historian of religions, Mircea Eliade, distinguishing the sacred from the profane, doesn't evaluate the latter positively. This is a reason for T. J. Altizer to conclude that the phenomenological method of Eliade is rooted in mysticism, i.e., determined by the dialectic principles of *via negativa* which, in turn, needs a complete denial of the profane.⁹⁷ The position of Altizer may be accepted or contested by scholars, as it is made, for instance, by Roberts Mūks. Despite different positions concerning the matter, we can't deny that Mircea Eliade explores the field of what we call mysticism. Discussing the photic experiences in different religions, he discloses their universal character. The photic visions, however, are always perceived individually. Although enveloped in various doctrinal forms, a vision of Light can change the life of a visionary completely. He discovers the entity of Spirit, unknown by him before. As Mircea Eliade concludes, lumenophany is a testimony of God's presence in the world.⁹⁸ This observation, made by Eliade, leads us to agree with Altizer. Eliade's methodology seems to be a discovery of the universal mystical essentials in religions.

Above we have dealt with the notions of mysticism and religious experience, but haven't yet carefully defined them. We shall start with the latter and then proceed to the former. The adherent of the psychological approach, E. A. Torchinov has defined religious experience as the total spectrum of various religious feelings including those of conversion, repentance, comfort, etc. Hence, religious experience is a wide notion wherein mysticism is also included as a narrow field inside this wider religious experience. Further, the scholar makes a reservation that often in academic literature the same mysticism is meant by the words "religious experience". He, also, follows this principle. Torchinov claims that mysticism is the fundamental basis not only of the religious experience, but also of religion as such. His position is confirmed by V. S. Solovyov and W. James. This type of mysticism, designated by Torchinov as

⁹⁷ T. J. Altizer, *Mircea Eliade and the Dialectic of the Sacred* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1963), pp. 30-31. (In Roberts Mūks, *Sakrālā un profānā polaritāte Mirčas Eliades darbos un kristietībā*, 28. lpp.)

⁹⁸ Мирча Элиаде, "Мефистофель и Андрогин", пер. А. В. Нестерова // Мирча Элиаде, *Азиатская алхимия*, с. 376.

“transpersonal states” and representing the core and the source of religion, has become an object of exploration by Jung and transpersonal psychology.⁹⁹

The statement about mysticism as the universal core of religions is shared by Thomas Merton. He writes, “Without asserting that there is complete unity of all religions at the ‘top’, the transcendent or mystical level—that they all start from different dogmatic position to ‘meet’ at this summit—it is certainly true to say that even where there are irreconcilable differences in doctrine and in formulated beliefs, there may still be great similarities and analogies in the realm of religious experience. ... Cultural and doctrinal differences must remain, but they do not invalidate the very real quality of existential likeness.”¹⁰⁰

Nevertheless, before one accepts the idea of mysticism as the universal core of religions, the meaning of the term “mysticism” should be clarified. As Harvey D. Egan, S.J. observes, historically the term is associated with the hellenistic mystery religions and cults of the pre-Christian and early Christian period. The “mystics” were those who had been initiated into the secret rites. They were required to keep in secret the rituals of the Greek mystery religions. Neoplatonic philosophers may have applied the term “mystical” to some of their doctrines. The Greek verb *myo* means to close the eyes, and some of these philosophers urged a deliberate shutting of the eyes to all external reality in order to obtain a secret knowledge fostered by introverted contemplation.

The great Jewish thinker, Philo of Alexandria (20 BC-50 AD), focused upon the “mystical”, or allegorical, interpretation of scripture, and was probably the bridge between the Jewish and Greek worlds for the transposed use of the term. Similarly, for many Alexandrian Christians and the early Greek Fathers of the Church “mystical” was employed in the context of interpretation of Scripture. By the time of Constantine, the term “mystical” had biblical, liturgical, and sacramental connotations and often denoted the hidden presence of Christ in Bible, Liturgy and Sacraments.

The term has been adopted by Christians also through Pseudo-Dionysius, a sixth-century Syrian monk. He taught a mystical contemplation that permitted a person to meet God as the “Divine Darkness”. In the Latin Church the word “mysticism” was infrequently used until the late Middle Ages. Earlier Church Fathers used the word “contemplation” for what we call “mysticism”. Yet, gradually the term of “mystical theology” came to mean the knowledge of God attained by direct, immediate, and

⁹⁹ Е. А. Торчинов, *Религии мира: опыт запредельного: Трансперсональные состояния и психотехника* (Санкт-Петербург: Петербургское Востоковедение, 1997), сс. 12, 26-28.

¹⁰⁰ *The Asian Journal of Thomas Merton*, p. 312. (In Harvey D. Egan, S.J., *Christian Mysticism: The Future of a Tradition*, p. 239.)

ineffable contemplation. Egan underscores that the notion was distinguished from “dogmatic theology” and “natural theology”, nevertheless the best of Christian tradition never reduced mysticism to the psychological level nor dissociated it from its biblical, liturgical and sacramental context.¹⁰¹ Egan values the definition of Christian mysticism by Louis Bouyer as “ always the experience of an invisible objective world: the world whose coming the Scriptures reveal to us in Jesus Christ, the world into which we enter, ontologically, through the liturgy, through this same Jesus Christ ever present in the Church.”¹⁰²

As is underscored by a Lithuanian philosopher and orientalist, Audrius Beinorius, nowadays under the influence of post-Kantian epistemology and of the philosopher and psychologist William James, the Western historical and comparative study of mystics has become skewed in exclusively experiential terms. It means that some sort of ‘privatization of mysticism’ (idiom of Grace Jantzen), i.e., an endeavor to locate the mystical in the psychological entity of personal experiences, completely excludes the liturgical, biblical and sacramental contexts. As Beinorius claims, mysticism is considered to be “a personal matter of cultivating inner states of tranquility and equanimity, which, rather than seeking to transform the world, serve to accommodate the individual to the *status quo* through the alleviation of anxiety and stress”.¹⁰³

The position of Wayne Teasdale can illustrate the above mentioned tendency. On the one hand he proposes a definition of mysticism acceptable to us, as a direct experience of ultimate reality resulting in the union with this very reality. On the other hand, he completely ignores the importance of the so called external religiosity in mystical ascend. He writes that many prefer to avoid the frightening meeting with ultimate mystery by sinking into external religiosity and the safe routines of liturgy or ritual. Each one of us, however, must take the inner journey alone.¹⁰⁴ Thus, Teasdale

¹⁰¹ Harvey D. Egan, S.J., *Christian Mysticism: The Future of a Tradition*, pp. 1-3.

¹⁰² Louis Bouyer, Cong. Orat., “ ‘Mysticism’: An Essay on the History of the Word,” in *Mystery and Mysticism: A Symposium* (London: Blackfriars, 1956), p. 136. (From Harvey D. Egan, S.J., *Christian Mysticism: The Future of a Tradition*, p. 3)

¹⁰³ Audrius Beinorius, “Experience and Context: Cross-Cultural Approach to the Epistemology of Mysticism” in *Contemporary Philosophical Discourse in Lithuania*, ed. Jurate Baranova, gen. ed. George F. McLean (USA: The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, 2005), pp. 219, 227-228.

¹⁰⁴ Wayne Teasdale, *The Mystic Heart: Discovering a Universal Spirituality in the World's Religions*, p. 18.

underestimates the salvific role of the Church in the life of a Christian mystic, reducing mysticism to the psychological level alone.

Another problem with the term “mysticism” is its inadequacy in the context of Asian religions. It goes without saying that the term is of Western origin. It can't be completely distinguished from its theistic (to be more correct, from Christian) background. This fact has been noticed by many scholars in the field of Comparative religion.

Discussing the content of the term “mysticism”, E. A. Torchinov has mentioned a few modern connotations of the term. Inviting us always to be precise what we mean while speaking about mysticism, he mentions the following meanings of the term:

- 1) transpersonal experiences resulting in the oneness with the ultimate reality as well as different archetypal situations, for instance, death and rebirth;
- 2) esoteric rituals which do not always include transpersonal states of psyche;
- 3) different forms of occultism.

Concluding that these meanings have nothing in common, the Russian scholar suggests to substitute the conventional term “mysticism” by the more specific “transpersonal states”.¹⁰⁵ Although the latter term seems to be appropriate in the context of different religious systems, it leaves aside the “sociological” connotation, mentioned before.

In agreement with other scholars Torchinov asserts that the term “mysticism” can be employed only in the Christian context. He thinks that it is important to create some sort of a meta-language in order to speak about different religious matters at the interreligious level. If we speak about transpersonal states, the Sanskrit word *yoga* seems to fit better than “mysticism” because it has two main meanings, i.e., the means of transpersonal states and, simultaneously, the aim of psycho-technique. Nowadays there is much spoken about “yoga in Daoism”, “yoga in Islam” and even about “Christian yoga”, nevertheless the term has not yet acquired a conventional character and may look very “exotical” in certain contexts. Hence, at the moment the term *yoga* can be employed only in connection with Hindu and Buddhist psycho-techniques.¹⁰⁶

That the word “mysticism” is not good enough to designate transpersonal states in Asian religions is stressed also by Geoffrey Parrinder. He underscores that the core meaning of the term “mysticism” is *union* which correlates very well to the Sanskrit *yoga* and Arabian *tawhid*. Distinguishing theistic mysticism from the monistic one, he

¹⁰⁵ E. A. Торчинов, *Религии мира: опыт запредельного: Трансперсональные состояния и психотехника* (Санкт-Петербург: Петербургское Востоковедение, 1997), сс. 27-28..

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, сс. 28-29.

suggests not to confuse the mentioned *mysticism*, *yoga* and *tawhīd*. The mentioned terms should be employed strictly in their own cultural and doctrinal contexts.¹⁰⁷

Audrius Beinorius, in his turn, discovers the manifold meaning of the word “mysticism” and proposes several equivalents in Sanskrit according to a certain context. For instance, if we make an emphasis on the sense of the ‘secret doctrine’, the term *mysticism* should be translated as *rahasyavāda*, *guhyaavāda*, *gudhārtha*, *gahanavastu*, *gupta*, *upanishad*, *tantra*. If the emphasis is on the mystical experience, the appropriate translation into Sanskrit may be *sākshātkāra*, *anubhūti*, *yogipratyaksha*, *samādhi*, *samāvesa*, *anubhava*, *jīvanmukti* etc.¹⁰⁸

In a similar way, Agehananda Bharati in his *Tantric tradition* suggests to reconsider the terminology which is employed by Western Buddhologists while discussing the main categories of Buddhist philosophy. According to Bharati, the terminological problem is rooted in two factors, i.e., in a lack of communication between philosophers and cultural anthropologists and in a lack of philologically oriented Buddhologists. The Graeco-Roman-Judaeo-Christian terminology which is usually employed by Western scholars in order to interpret notions of Buddhist and Hindu philosophy, is never free from its Aristotelian and Thomistic flavor, and, thus, is not acceptable in Asian studies.¹⁰⁹

It is discernible that due to the uncertain meaning of the term “mysticism”, scholars sometimes use it in order to designate completely different things. For instance, Albert Schweitzer distinguishes Indian world view and the Western one, denoting the former as a monistic and mystical, and the latter as a dualistic and doctrinal. For him, mysticism is a complete world view. It means that only man participating in the infinite mode of being by spirit becomes aware of how the universe exists. Now he is a part of everything that exists and acquires an adequate world view.¹¹⁰ Hence, for Schweitzer, mysticism seems to be an appropriate definition of a monistic world view.

On the contrary Robert A. E. Thurman, discussing the same monistic religious model, considers its designation as “mystical” to be irrelevant. He claims in his *Essential Tibetan Buddhism* that “Buddha Shakyamuni’s enlightenment is not mystical, in the sense of “contrary to reason”. It is rational, guided by a critical inquiry into the

¹⁰⁷ Geoffrey Parrinder, *Mysticism in the World's Religions*, p. 15.

¹⁰⁸ Audrius Beinorius, “Experience and Context: Cross-Cultural Approach to the Epistemology of Mysticism”, pp. 221-222.

¹⁰⁹ Agehananda Bharati, *The Tantric Tradition* (Bombay, Calcutta, Madras, Delhi: B. I. Publications, 1976), pp. 42-43.

¹¹⁰ Альберт Швейцер, “Мировоззрение индийских мыслителей: мистика и этика” // *Восток - Запад: исследования, переводы, публикации*, с. 216.

nature of the reality of self and of the world, and experiential, proceeding from solid conclusions to the experimental verification of those conclusions.”¹¹¹ That enlightenment is rational means that according to the monistic world view enlightenment is a result of psychic introversion; it takes place in human mind (i.e., consciousness) and not beyond it. Hence, for Thurman, “mysticism” may be a designation of a monotheistic *ecstasies* (going out of the natural self) and not of a monistic *enstasies* (introversion or inner journey).

As is evident, the search for appropriate terminology is a serious topic and may become a theme for a monograph. Our task is not so pretentious. In the present research the conventional term “mysticism” will be preferred to the other ones in order not to confuse a reader with unknown formulations. At the moment, when there is not yet found a term which conventionally may be a substitute for *mysticism*, we shall make use of it, determining, however, its meaning.

So, what does the word “mysticism” mean? We shall start with a definition. The core of a mystical experience is the direct vision. In this point religions agree. As to the object of this vision, however, they may differ. (We shall limit our formulations to the Christian and Buddhist context.) In Christianity we are taught to believe in things which are obscured from our natural perception. As is claimed in 1 Cor. 13:12, “Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.” The quotation, probably, may be rather clear also for Buddhists. Christians look forward to see the Divine reality face to face, i.e., directly without any mediation. Buddhists make an endeavor to attain a direct vision of reality “as it is”.

In this connection the definition, proposed by Wayne Teasdale, seems to be rather successful. According to him, “mysticism means direct, immediate experience of ultimate reality. For Christians, it is a union and communion with God. For Buddhists, it is a realization of enlightenment.”¹¹² In order to clarify his definition, Wayne Teasdale cites the definition of Evelyn Underhill, “Mysticism, in its pure form, is the science of ultimates, the science of union with the Absolute, and nothing else, and that the mystic is the person who attains to this union, not the person who talks about it. Not to *know*

¹¹¹ Robert E. A. Thurman, *Essential Tibetan Buddhism* (New Jersey: Castle Books, 1995), p. 11.

¹¹² Wayne Teasdale, *The Mystic Heart: Discovering a Universal Spirituality in the World's Religions*, p. 20.

about, but to *Be*, is the mark of the real initiate.”¹¹³ The formulation of Underhill reminds the idea of Erich Fromm about the regression as the unmediated vision of things, free from the linguistic and social “filters” we all carry with us.

A definition, however, can’t exhaust the notion of mysticism. There are many details which must be discussed supplementarily. The first thing is how to correlate the notion of religious experience and that of mystical experience. The idea of Torchinov about mysticism as the core of religious experience expressed by him briefly and in an unclear manner, is defined more explicitly by William Johnson. He claims that “mysticism is the core of authentic religious experience”.¹¹⁴ As Harvey D. Egan comments, “by evoking E. Caird’s older definition of mysticism as “religion in its most concentrated and exclusive form,”¹¹⁵ Johnson can satisfy both those scholars who insist that, strictly speaking, only *infused* religious experience is mystical and those who contend, broadly speaking, that all genuine religious experience has a mystical aspect.”¹¹⁶

In this context Karl Rahner distinguishes between mysticism in the strict and the wide senses. Rahner doesn’t emphasize the interior mysticism alone. There is also a mysticism of daily life when God is experienced in profane activities, such as eating, sleeping etc. The mysticism of the saints is not qualitatively different from faith, hope and love of ordinary Christians.¹¹⁷ Hence, the daily mysticism, called by other scholars “religious experience” is a background and a starting point of the interior mysticism, whereas this very interior mysticism of the saints is something like quintessence of the religious experience of daily mysticism.¹¹⁸

In order to understand what mysticism is about one needs to search for its source. As is claimed by a Russian theologian, S. S. Horuzhy, man is endowed with a “fundamental questioning” about who he is and why he lives. The theologian defines it as the “religious sense” or “mystical sense”. This undifferentiated questioning is

¹¹³ Evelyn Underhill, *Mysticism: The Development of Humankind’s Spiritual Consciousness* (London: Bracken Books, 1995, rep.), p. 72. (In Wayne Teasdale, *The Mystic Heart: Discovering a Universal Spirituality in the World’s Religions*, pp. 20-21.)

¹¹⁴ William Johnson, S.J., *The Inner Eye of Love* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1978), p. 31. (In Harvey D. Egan, S.J., *Christian Mysticism: The Future of a Tradition*, p. 5.)

¹¹⁵ Quoted by William Ralph Inge, *Mysticism in Religion* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1976), p. 25. (In Harvey D. Egan, S.J., *Christian Mysticism: The Future of a Tradition*, p. 5.)

¹¹⁶ Harvey D. Egan, S.J., *Christian Mysticism: The Future of a Tradition*, p. 5.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 247-248.

¹¹⁸ The topic of the daily “experience of the Spirit” in a comprehensible and vivid manner is discussed by Rahner in the chapter called “Can God be Experienced?” of: Karl Rahner, *Do You Believe in God?* trans. Richard Strachan (New York, Paramus, Toronto: Paulist Press, 1969), pp. 111ff.

connected with the “fundamental aspiration” of a human being towards perfection. Man always is instinctively aware of his finiteness and imperfection that makes him to have a desire or aspiration. He doesn’t know what the object of his longing is, yet he tends to change his unsatisfactory mode of being. Horuzhy admits that the fundamental aspiration is the main factor which makes us human beings.¹¹⁹

It can be resumed that according to the formulation of Horuzhy, the fundamental aspiration is the starting point of any mysticism. If the fundamental aspiration is weak in us we are ready only to realize the daily mysticism of Rahner, making an endeavor to improve our earthly well-being. Although the fundamental aspiration is acquired by all human beings, its measure can alter from one individual to another. According to Buddhism the measure of aspiration represented by the ability to meditate, depends on our karma. Christian tradition has proposed a thesis of predestination which, in turn, determines our soteriological capacities. It goes without saying that there are persons among us who have a special gift of meditation/prayer.

Horuzhy was not the only Orthodox scholar discussing the question of the fundamental aspiration. John Breck, for instance, contends, that “the deepest sadness and the greatest joy in Christian life are caused by an innate *longing for* God, a passionate quest for intimate and eternal communion with the Persons of Holy Trinity. Such longing brings sadness, because in this life it goes largely unfulfilled. Yet rather than lead to frustration, it can produce an ineffable joy [...] Longing for God, the intense inner desire of the heart that seeks eternal union with Him, is the driving force and the sanctifying grace of the spiritual life. It provides the courage and strength to assume the ascetic way toward *theosis*, the vision of God and participation in His divine life.”¹²⁰

The definition of John Breck is a good summa of everything we have formulated about mysticism until now. Further, the fundamental aspiration is designated by the Orthodox Metropolitan Nicolae Corneanu as “the universal law of attraction between God and man” and defined as “the foundation of religion on the whole and, to an even higher degree, the foundation of spirituality¹²¹ itself.”¹²²

¹¹⁹ С. С. Хоружий, *Диптих безмолвия: Аскетическое учение о человеке в богословском и философском освещении* (Москва: Центр психологии и психотерапии, 1991), сс. 57-58, 68.

¹²⁰ John Breck, “Prayer of the Heart: Sacrament of the Presence of God” in *St. Vladimir’s Theological Quarterly* 39.1 (1995), pp. 25, 44.

¹²¹ Spirituality here is a complex consisting of asceticism and mysticism, i.e., the natural and supernatural stages of the path.

¹²² Metropolitan Nicolae Corneanu, “The Jesus Prayer and Deification” in *St. Vladimir’s Theological Quarterly* 39.1 (1995), p. 3.

The fundamental aspiration has been denoted by Thomas Aquinas as *desiderium naturale Dei*, i.e., the heart's natural desire for God. This very desire is designated by Jung as the "undifferentiated energy" within us¹²³, and by the psychological school of Abraham Maslow as the "meta-motivation".¹²⁴

The fundamental aspiration towards the other mode of being is noticed also by scholars researching the field of Comparative Religion, even by those who are very far from the psychological and structural approaches to the religious studies. For instance, the fundamental aspiration or meta-motivation has been called by Troeltsch *the religious a priori* that is our constant searching for more, the innate orientation toward and the experience of the divine built into human nature.¹²⁵ And Rahner spoke about the "fundamental option" by which man lives his life for others.¹²⁶

The same "sociological" aspect of the fundamental aspiration has been noticed also by Arnold Toynbee. According to him human struggle with selfishness is the main catalyst and incentive stirring us to faith in "something more".¹²⁷ Ben-Ami Scharfstein, in turn, notes that "the very broadly, mysticism is a name for our infinite appetites. Less broadly, it is the assurance that these appetites can be satisfied." It makes the scholar conclude that man is by nature a mystical being.¹²⁸ The list can be continued. To sum up, mysticism and religion as such starts with the incorporated into the human psyche *fundamental calling or aspiration* to change the finite mode of being.

Mysticism doesn't only has a point of departure but also the last stop or the fulfillment expressed by soteriology. Mysticism is useless without the notion of salvation (liberation). John Hick, for instance, believes that all religions share a common soteriological structure which arises from the fact that all of them are animated by and in search of the same ultimate reality. All the major religions tend to transform the human situation and to carry salvation/liberation.¹²⁹ The formulation of Hick bears a close

¹²³ Paul F. Knitter, *No Other Name*, p. 59.

¹²⁴ E. A. Торчинов, *Религии мира: опыт запредельного: Трансперсональные состояния и психотехника*, с. 31.

¹²⁵ "Die Selbständigkeit der Religion" in *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche*, 5 (1895) 367-436. (In Paul F. Knitter, *No Other Name*, p. 25.)

¹²⁶ Karl Rahner, "Observations on the Concept of Revelation", pp. 9ff.

¹²⁷ "What Should Be the Christian Approach to the Contemporary Non-Christian Faiths?", in *Attitudes toward Other Religions*, Owen C. Thomas, ed. (London: SCM, 1969), p. 154. (In Paul F. Knitter, *No Other Name*, p. 40.)

¹²⁸ Be-Ami Scharfstein, *Mystical Experience* (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1973), p. 1. (In Harvey D. Egan, S.J., *Christian Mysticism: The Future of a Tradition*, pp. 5-6.)

¹²⁹ "On Grading Religions," in *Religious Studies*, 17 (1981), pp. 464-465, 453, 463, 467. (In Paul F. Knitter, *No Other Name*, p. 148.)

resemblance to what we have discovered about the fundamental aspiration. The link is not accidental for in salvation our religious potentiality is actualized. The meta-motivation is verbalized or formulated distinctively by the major religions as a salvific ideal. If not determining the salvific aim, mysticism entails the mentioned by Audrius Beinorius “secularization” and “privatization of mysticism”.¹³⁰ It loses its orientation from ego to the ultimate reality completely and can’t be called “mysticism” in its genuine sense of the word.

If one is interested in the question of a genuineness of a certain form of mysticism, he or she should ask about the result of a mystical experience. The genuineness of mysticism as well as of a religion on the whole is determined by its soteriological effectiveness. This can be concluded from the assertion of John Hick. He claims that in trying to evaluate a religious tradition, one should ask: “Is this complex of religious experience, belief, and behavior soteriologically effective? Does it make possible the transformation of human experience from self-centeredness to Reality-centeredness?”¹³¹

The correct accent on soteriology in the context of mysticism is made powerfully by Orthodox theologians (Horuzhy, Lossky etc.). Mysticism is never distinguished by them from the salvific background, being a means of *theosis*. The soteriological perspective of mysticism has been also underscored by E. A. Torchinov. The scholar has defined soteriology as the central aspect of a religious doctrine which gives a *directive to reproduce the basic experience*.¹³² The formulation of Torchinov seems to be rather successful.

The importance of soteriology for religion has been underscored also by Aloysius Pieris. The accent is made by him upon soteriology not only as an idea but on the salvific experience. He writes,

“The “core” of any religion is the *liberative experience* that gave birth to it and continues to be available to successive generations of humankind by developing its own peculiar medium of communication [...]. It is this primordial experience that functions as the *core* of a religion at any time in any given place, in the sense that it continuously re-creates the *psycho-spiritual mood* proper to that particular religion, imparting at the

¹³⁰ Audrius Beinorius, “Experience and Context: Cross-Cultural Approach to the Epistemology of Mysticism”, pp. 225-228.

¹³¹ “On Grading Religions,” in *Religious Studies*, 17 (1981), p. 463. (In Paul F. Knitter, *No Other Name*, p. 148.)

¹³² E. A. Торчинов, *Религии мира: опыт запредельного: Трансперсональные состояния и психотехника*, сс. 31, 47..

same time its own peculiar character to the *socio-cultural manifestations* of that religion.”¹³³

Harvey D. Egan, in his turn, points out that genuine mysticism can't be transient. “Mystical experiences not only become mystical states, but are frequently only the surface manifestation of a deeper, permanent way of life that slowly transforms the mystic's entire being and consciousness.”¹³⁴

Finally, the importance of the religious practice based upon a certain religious doctrine should be mentioned. We have started the discussion of the notion of “mysticism” with the brief history of the term and have noticed that for the ancient Christian Church a religious experience could never be distinguished from the biblical and liturgically sacramental contexts. This statement has not lost its vitality today. In the case of interreligious dialogue it can be widened a little bit. In Christianity the role of Scripture and Liturgy is tremendous; the situation changes in Buddhism in favor of Buddha, Dharma and Sangha. Tantric Buddhism has added lama to this triad. The figure of lama (guru) in Tibetan Buddhism incarnates the mentioned three members of the triad. It goes without saying that lama is a person who becomes a fellow and a teacher of the path. It means that in religion we always deal with the so called externals of religion, connected, in turn, with the sociological and historical contexts. As Karl Rahner contends, “even in his most personal history man is still a social being whose innermost decisions are mediated by the concreteness of his social and historical life, and are not acted out in a special realm which is separate.”¹³⁵ Hence, neither religion is mysticism alone, nor mysticism is free of a certain doctrinal background.

The question is what, if the accepted phenomenologically psychological approach contradicts this statement. In order to find an answer, it is necessary to go to Jung and Mircea Eliade. As Paul F. Knitter observes, for Jung the process of individuation is not at all possible without doctrine, “Religions [...] play a valuable, a necessary, role in mediating between the “divine content” of the unconscious and a person's conscious awareness; without them, the process of individuation is hamstrung. So Jung could call the world religions the great psychotherapeutic symbol systems of the world; they provide the symbols by which the archetypes can be touched and called forth. They tune us to the mystery within so that we can feel its call and not be frightened by its unknown demands.”¹³⁶

¹³³ Aloysius Pieris, S.J., *Love Meets Wisdom: A Christian Experience of Buddhism*, pp. 110-111.

¹³⁴ Harvey D. Egan, S.J., *Christian Mysticism: The Future of a Tradition*, p. 7.

¹³⁵ Karl Rahner, *Foundations of Christian Faith: An Introduction to the Idea of Christianity*, p. 314.

¹³⁶ Paul F. Knitter, *No Other Name*, p. 60.

For Jung a dogmatic symbol “formulates a tremendous and dangerously decisive psychic experience, fittingly called an “experience of the Divine,” in a way that is tolerable to our human understanding, without either limiting the scope of the experience or doing damage to its overwhelming significance.”¹³⁷ According to Jung, different doctrines represent an endeavor to give a symbolic expression to the incomprehensible experience of the unconscious. Doctrines differ, and yet they are derivatives of the same archetypes.¹³⁸ Hence, a religious doctrine is an important link between the fundamental aspiration and the realization of the soteriological ideal. It is never sufficient to have an interior intuition or aspiration. If we lack a path (that is designated by Jung as symbols) the soteriological aim can’t be achieved. For Jung religious doctrine is a means of individuation.

The link between mystical experience and doctrine has been noticed also by the representative of Jungian school E. A. Torchinov. He asserts that the essential core of religion is the transpersonal experience (the same mysticism) whereas doctrine, though a derivative of the experience, is also essential. To be precise, the most important part of doctrine is none other than soteriology. As is mentioned above, soteriology gives a directive to reproduce the basic experience.¹³⁹

We have defined soteriology as the last point of a religion; now we claim that soteriology as a part of doctrine belongs to the means of salvific experience. Is here any contradiction? Not at all. Soteriology, pervading the whole body of religion, represents the “road-signs” as well as the last point of the journey. For instance, if we are looking for a hospital but do not have exact information where it is situated, a certain road-sign can help us. The situation is similar with soteriology which represents the directives as well as the attainment of the salvific aim.

Unlike Torchinov, who has designated doctrine as the primordial or essential feature of religion, Arnold Toynbee admits that externals (holy places, rituals, *tabus*, social conventions, myths, dogmas, schools of theology) are nonessential for the whole body of religion. He distinguishes between 1) the essential part of all religions, i.e. the universal experience and insight, called by him “spiritual presence” within all reality, and 2) nonessential externals of religion. Still, it doesn’t mean that externals are not

¹³⁷ Carl G. Jung, *Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious* in *The Collected Works of C. G. Jung*, ed. †Sir Herbert Read, Michael Fordham, Gerhard Adler, William McGuire. Trans. R.F.C.Hull (Princeton University Press, 1968), vol. 9, part 1, p. 11.

¹³⁸ See Carl G. Jung, *Collected Works*, vol. 12, p. 17.

¹³⁹ E. A. Торчинов, *Религии мира: опыт запредельного: Трансперсональные состояния и психотехника*, с. 47.

important for Toynbee. Without them a religion can't communicate its message and its experience of the absolute to persons in a particular society in a particular stage of history.¹⁴⁰ The position has been shared by Frithjof Schuon, another representative of a perennial philosophy. He speaks about the universal experience of non-duality present in all religions, which, however, needs to be mediated or started from a particular form, some finite symbol, practice and doctrine. Schuon states that "there is no possible a spiritual way outside of the great orthodox traditional ways. A meditation or concentration practiced at random and outside of tradition will be inoperative, and even dangerous."¹⁴¹

Going back to the phenomenological school of Mircea Eliade, it would be important to clarify his position in the question of externals of religion. So, what do they mean for Mircea Eliade? As Robert Mūks observes, Eliade never ignored history and external forms of religion which present themselves in this very history. What we call "externals of religion", is designated by Eliade as "symbols". Thanks to symbols man perceives a vision of the universe as a union or a system wherein there is a place for himself. Symbols are some sort of signs representing the sacred in this profane entity. That is why symbols for a human being are the link between the sacred and the profane. Man doesn't lose his relationship with the former or the latter because of the symbols. They allow man to grasp the universal order of things.¹⁴²

Mircea Eliade has also discussed these very symbols in the mystical context. Symbols are indispensable in the process of spiritual perfection. The scholar has admitted that thanks to a symbol a personal experience comes into being and transforms into a spiritual act. To live through a symbol and to interpret it adequately means the openness to the Spirit and an access to the universal.¹⁴³

The position of V. S. Semencov concerning the role of the externals of religion is rather curious. According to him the task of a religious tradition is to translate through ages a primordial essential of what is really human. In India this is attained through an "imitation of a teacher" which should never be only external. A teacher is God; a disciple, in turn, must imitate divine, and not human, qualities of his teacher. Hence, the imitation acquires an esoteric (we should say, a mystical) character rather than an

¹⁴⁰ *An Historian's Approach to Religion* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1956), p. 264. (In Paul F. Knitter, *No Other Name*, pp. 38-39.)

¹⁴¹ "Des stations de la Sagesse," *France-Asie* (Saigon, 1953, no. 85-86), pp. 507-13. (In Paul F. Knitter, *No Other Name*, p. 48.)

¹⁴² Roberts Mūks, *Sakrālā un profānā polaritāte Mirčas Eliades darbos un kristietībā*, 21.-22. lpp.

¹⁴³ Мирча Элиаде, *Мефистофель и Андрогин*, пер. А. В. Нестеров // Мирча Элиаде, *Азиатская алхимия* (Москва: Янус-К, 1998), с. 475.

external one. Of course, the imitation of a teacher takes place exclusively inside the tradition. It means that only through the given symbolic structure of a religious tradition a contact with the unknown “other” becomes possible which, accordingly, entails a completely new intimate communication between a person and universe.¹⁴⁴ (The same idea is expressed in the notion of a “complete world view” by Schweitzer). Hence, tradition becomes a link which ties together man and ultimate reality and the universe. The idea of an imitation of a teacher in Hinduism obviously corresponds to Christian idea of *imitatio Christi*. The latter ideal represents the most important factor in development of such a phenomenon as Christian sanctity.

Finally, we must agree with the position of Geoffrey Parrinder, who is questioning if any mystical experience is “genuine” and claims that, “many people today who are seeking new forms of spiritual illumination, by drugs, music or new religious movements, would hold that the experience is its own justification and that one cannot share in another’s experience. Yet it is also true that environment, group, tradition, materials used, and so on, should all be examined in relationship to the claimed experience, and the value of a community is that it serves as a check upon extravagant claims.”¹⁴⁵ The position of the scholar is quite in conformity with the previous ones.

Now, when the position of the scholars is clear, it is useful to go to the representatives of the two explored religious traditions, to the Orthodox theologians and the Buddhist philosophers. We shall start with the former one. The firm position in the question of the external forms of religion expressed by the scholars of comparative religions is confirmed by the Orthodox theologian, V. N. Lossky. In agreement with the Orthodox tradition on the whole he has never distinguished an individual experience from the integral corpus of theology. Mystical experience is linked to theology; they are inseparable. The former is an individual manifestation of the common faith; the latter is a common expression of what can be experienced by anybody. There is no Christian mysticism without theology and what is even more important there is no theology without mysticism.

Although Lossky doesn’t ask a question, which one is primary, the decisive role of the experiential factor is obvious. It means that in the context of theism Revelation as such is of a mystical character. As Lossky claims, any theology is mystical because it expresses the Divine mystery perceived by us through Revelation. That Revelation is unique, doesn’t mean that it is enough for our salvation just to accept this fact.

¹⁴⁴ В. В. Малявин, “В поисках традиции” // *Восток - Запад: исследования, переводы, публикации*, с. 34.

¹⁴⁵ Geoffrey Parrinder, *Mysticism in the World's Religions*, p. 19.

Revelation should live further in us, it must be experienced in the depths of our souls individually. Hence, theology is never speculative. Its task is always practical, i.e., to mediate salvation (i.e., *theosis*) to all the adherents of the tradition. Mysticism, in turn, is the perfection and a summit of theology. Therefore, an experience of a certain believer is never individual in the direct meaning of the word.¹⁴⁶

A Monk of the Eastern Church, preferring the term *spirituality* to that of *mysticism*, also rejects any individualism in the spiritual growth. He writes that the basis of spiritual life is not psychological, but ontological. Therefore a genuine spirituality is the “objective application of definite theological principles to the individual soul.”¹⁴⁷

Metropolitan Nicolae Corneanu, in his turn, dealing with the same notion of *spirituality* (for Corneanu *spirituality* is a wider notion, including *asceticism* and *mysticism*), claims that it “represents the depth and summit of religious life”. Hence, mysticism and doctrine (which always is in the complex with a religious practice) are inseparable.

In a work dedicated to Orthodox anthropology, V. Lossky proposes several arguments against individualism in Christian mysticism. His ideas are curious in the context of comparative analysis of Christian and Buddhist doctrines. Lossky proposes an idea of the universal human consciousness which can be compared to *ālaya-vijñāna* of Vijnānavāda. This common consciousness is the same common human nature renewed in Christ. We all are endowed with one nature still there are many hypostases of this very nature. When a person has attained *theosis*, he loses his individual will, sharing the common *theandric* will. If the will is not any longer individual, experience doesn't belong to him or her either. A man participates in the common awareness of the truth which, however, actualizes in the consciousness of every distinct person. Hence, there are many consciousnesses with the same content.¹⁴⁸ In the situation of common content of consciousnesses and common will, it is not any longer possible to speak about any individualism in Orthodox mysticism.

As Audrius Beinaris observes, Buddhist scholasticism also accepts the conditioning role of cultural, mental and behavioral factors in the eventual attainment of

¹⁴⁶ В. Н. Лосский, *Очерк мистического богословия Восточной Церкви* // В. Н. Лосский, *Очерк мистического богословия Восточной Церкви. Догматическое богословие* (Москва: СЭИ, 1991), сс. 8-11.

¹⁴⁷ A Monk of the Eastern Church, *Orthodox Spirituality: An Outline of the Orthodox Ascetical and Mystical Tradition*, 3rd ed. (Crestwood, New York: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1987), p. 23.

¹⁴⁸ В. Лосский, *Кафолическое сознание: Антропологическое приложение догмата Церкви*, пер. В. Рещикова // В. Лосский, *Богословие и боговидение*, общ. ред. А. Писляков (Москва: Издательство Свято-Аладимирского Братства, 2000), сс. 569-581.

enlightenment. At the same time the liberative experience results in a transcendence of cultural particularity.¹⁴⁹

To sum up, mysticism is a direct vision of [ultimate] reality, which requires to have a starting-point in the fundamental meta-motivation, continued by a religious practice, determined by a doctrine. The core of a doctrine is soteriology which, giving a directive to reproduce a basic experience, entails the ‘embodiment’ of this very soteriological model into an individual experience.

The formulation can be perfectly illustrated by a diagram, proposed by Swami Viśvānanda Bhāratī. Although his diagram expresses the interrelation of doctrine and soteriological target in tantric tradition, we wish to employ the model in the common context of soteriologically oriented mysticism as the common core of the major religions. The late Hindu master suggested that the problem of variant doctrine and common target can be likened to a “children’s humming-top”. We shall adopt the diagram in order to illustrate our ideas. That is why the interpretation of the Hindu master will be a little bit changed.

In the diagram the common target of religious life is depicted as the point 1A. This is the soteriological ideal which is considered to be essentially the same. The point 2A of the figure **A** depicts the actual achievement of the individual adept. 3A represents the individual adept’s progress towards. It is very important for the children’s top to be in motion. Only when it moves, the soteriological ideal can coincide with the individual salvific progress. In the system of Bhāratī 4A is a starting point of actual *sādhana* and the starting point (doctrinal) of all Indian indigenous systematized traditions. In our situation 4A is the fundamental meta-motivation which is common to all people of the planet; it is also a starting point of any doctrine, because, as Horuzhy claims, the fundamental aspiration always grows into an articulated world view and religious doctrine. The various doctrines are denoted as IA, IIA, IIIA etc. The figure **B** depicts a situation when a religious doctrine is distinguished from a religious practice (*sādhana*), i.e., from personal experience. In this situation the soteriological target can’t be achieved.¹⁵⁰

The diagram illustrates the statement of Horuzhy concerning the necessity of the experience. According to him the fundamental questioning of man (connected to its derivative, the fundamental aspiration) without a fundament of a spiritual practice, i.e.,

¹⁴⁹ Audrius Beinorius, “Experience and Context: Cross-Cultural Approach to the Epistemology of Mysticism”, pp. 243.

¹⁵⁰ Agehananda Bharati, *The Tantric Tradition*, pp. 31-33.

the interior experience or the experience of the self is not endowed with any meaning.¹⁵¹ To continue the idea, the fundamental questioning without spiritual practice can never lead to the salvific target.

Searching for a Clue to Differences

The erroneous separation of mystical experience from the externals of religion causes inadequate classifications of religions and an endeavor to claim a superiority of one religious system and an imperfection of another.

An example is the typology of a perennial philosopher, Schuon. He admits that the common essence of all religions is the esoteric experience of the non-duality of God and the world. Although the externals of religions are very important mediators of the interior experience, they are as if situated at the periphery and, hence, are relative. The real divisions in the religious world are not the many religions but two different types of religious persons, i.e., esoteric believers and exoteric believers. Hindus and Buddhists represent the former type of persons, whereas Christians together with Jews and Muslims are of the latter type. The conclusion is obvious: adherents of the esoteric spirituality are open to the genuine vision of reality to a larger extent than the exoterics. Whereas esoterics experience the non-dual character of God's and world's relationship, exoterics absolutize the relative, i.e., the truth given in revelation.¹⁵²

We agree with Schuon in the question concerning the commonality of religions. The experience of non-duality is what religions may share. Still the statement about relativity of revelation as well as of other externals of religion can be questioned. The main problem here is in fact that Schuon doesn't estimate the mystical character of these very externals in theistic religious systems. For Christians revelation expressed in Scriptures and Liturgy together with Sacraments are of the equal mystical or "esoteric" character as a mystical introversion. It means that a participation in Liturgy by a Christian believer is not a periphery of religious life; rather it is a perfect path leading to the same experience of non-duality.

A similar endeavor to proclaim the introversive religious systems as superior to the extroversive one is found in the works of a Neo-Freudian, Erich Fromm and perennialists, Wayne Teasdale and Marco Pallis.

¹⁵¹ С.С. Хоружий, *Диптих безмолвия*, с. 59.

¹⁵² Observed by Paul F. Knitter, *No Other Name*, pp. 48-49.

Our position is close to that suggested by Aloysius Pieris in his *Love Meets Wisdom*. He asserts that “East” and “West” can retain their conventional meaning when referring to the Asian and Euro-American areas on the map. Yet the designations are irrelevant if we speak about religious and spiritual phenomena. “East” and “West” connote, respectively, the *gnostic* and *agapeic* instincts of the human person. *Gnosis* is salvific knowledge, whereas *agape* is redemptive love. These two are not soteriological alternatives or optional paths to human liberation. As Aloysius Pieris claims, “They are two mystical moods that can alternate according to the spiritual fluctuations of individuals, groups, and even of entire cultures, without either of them allowing itself to be totally submerged by the other. Nor can they mix to form a hybrid or a “synthesis,” for the “twain shall never meet,” as Kipling would insist. They are, in other words, two irreducibly distinct languages of the spirit, each incapable, unless aided and complemented by the other, of mediating and adequately expressing the human encounter with the ultimate. Any valid spirituality, Christian or otherwise, *must* and, as history shows, does retain both poles of religious experience. In the dialectical interplay of wisdom and love that ensures a progressive movement in the realm of the human spirit.” Pieris claims that “we are actually dealing with the *poles of a tension not so much geographical as psychological*. They are *two instincts* emerging dialectically from within the deepest zone of all individuals”.¹⁵³

The core experience of Buddhism is *gnosis* or liberative knowledge whereas in Christianity the most important experience is *agape* or redemptive love. According to Pieris, “each is *salvific* in that each is a *self-transcending* event that radically transforms the human person effected by that experience.”¹⁵⁴ The position of Pieris seems to be very successful. The idea of an effectiveness of various religious systems together with an endeavor to proclaim them all to be equally absolute rather than relative correspond to the equal measure of salvific potentiality of the *gnostic* and *agapeic* religious systems.

In the context of Christian-Buddhist comparative analysis, *gnostic* versus *agapeic* model is identified with *monistic* versus *theistic* scheme. Buddhism belongs to the monistic world view which presupposes the oneness of all things. Ultimate reality emanates producing phenomena. Man is not an exception. He also is the same ultimate reality in his innermost being. If so, man is able to communicate the ultimate only in the process of introspection or meditation (Skt. *dhyāna*) which results in a complete

¹⁵³ Aloysius Pieris, S.J., *Love Meets Wisdom: A Christian Experience of Buddhism*, pp. 9-10, 27.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 111.

destruction of ego and union with the ultimate. This sort of experience is qualified as knowledge because man acquires some sort of gnosis of himself and reality.

A famous Buddhologist Giuseppe Tucci discussing religious characteristics of Tantrism, whether Hindu or Buddhist, relates it to the gnostic religious model. He underscores that in order to attain Wisdom man must practice psychic introversion (*samādhi*). This process of transformation, including different rituals which are intended to destroy affects, is fully a result of human effort. Any kind of divine support is completely excluded in Tantrism.¹⁵⁵

The same conclusion has been made by Robert A. E. Thurman in the context of Tantric understanding of Buddhist compassion. The scholar contends that Buddha's "compassion for beings forced Him not to offer them a religious solution to their predicament, a redemptive belief in Him or any dogma, deity, salvific rite, or membership in a group of elect. Since he knew that the only means for beings to gain freedom was their individual understanding of their unique situation, He was forced to try to help them come to such an understanding."

Theistic world view, on the contrary, deals with the Ultimate Other which is situated beyond and not in us. The ultimate Other is a Divine Person who has created the world by an act of will. And if so, His revelation to man depends only on His will. Being situated outside human being, God can't be discovered in the process of psychic introspection. In order to be revealed He requires a unique Mediator. In Christianity this role is played by Jesus Christ who is the only path to the Father. In this context the idea of the Divine Grace comes into being. If revelation and salvation depend on God's will, man can never participate in the Divine without mediation of the Divine Grace. And, if Grace does its work, it is enough for man to seek for God's Grace. This is a source of devotion, which erroneously has been related by Wayne Teasdale to non-essential externals of religion. Teasdale contradicts the devotional path to the mystical introversion. The former is neglected by him whereas the latter is proclaimed to be a superior path.¹⁵⁶ The path of Grace, when man and God cooperate (*theandry*, called also *sinergy*), is of the same value as the introversive path of the Gnostics. These two paths are just two alternative ways to the Ultimate.

The schemes, however, are never so strict when incarnated in the vivid body of religious experience. For instance, according to the theistic model, a mystical experience as a result of introversion must be excluded completely. Nevertheless, a presence of

¹⁵⁵ Джузеппе Туччи, *Религии Тибета*, пер. О. В. Альбедиль (Санкт-Петербург: Евразия, 2005), с. 78.

¹⁵⁶ Wayne Teasdale, *The Mystic Heart: Discovering a Universal Spirituality in the world's Religions*, p. 11.

mystical experience in theistic religions can't be ignored. The purpose of this dissertation is to show how the two schemes merge at the level of mystical experience. Then it is not possible any longer to distinguish the path of Buddhist introspection (meditation) and that of Christian prayer. Prayer, representing the devotional way, at its higher levels transforms into introversion resulting in the experience of God in the innermost depth of human heart.

Now it is relevant to go on with classifications of mystical experiences. A typology of mysticisms, obviously, should correspond to a certain typology of religions. If we accept the division of religions in theistic (agapeic) and monistic (gnostic) ones, it would be quite natural to formulate a similar classification of mysticism as a derivative of the mentioned classification. Geoffrey Parrinder, for instance, opposing the idea of T. Stace about a universal, i.e., monistic, core of mystical experience, distinguishes between a theistic form of mysticism and the monistic one. He admits that there is a difference between unity and identity, or between theism and monism. "Theistic mysticism seeks union with God but not identity. Monistic mysticism seeks identity with a universal principle, which may be called divine though that would imply a difference from the human."¹⁵⁷

A classification of mysticisms can be more detailed. Wayne Teasdale suggests to divide mysticism into *natural one*, *theistic one* (that sometimes coincides with the *mysticism of love* and with *bridal mysticism*), *mysticism of knowledge* (in Buddhism), and that *of the soul* (Hindu and sometimes Christian).¹⁵⁸

The question is if there can be any way to reconcile the idea of Stace about the universal character of mystical experience and the notion of different mysticisms. A brilliant answer is proposed by E. A. Torchinov. He suggests to distinguish between two levels of mystical experience. One of them is a universal experience. The other one is the level of expression in which an experience is described. A mystical experience is always expressed by an adept in the language of his native religious tradition which, in turn, becomes a determinative of a doctrinal expression of an experience.¹⁵⁹

We shall accept the idea of Torchinov and make an endeavor to demonstrate how this model works in practice. At the same time we shall show that a way of expression is not just a verbal formulation of an experience. Although the core experience of ultimate reality is universal, a saved/enlightened human being can't completely avoid

¹⁵⁷ Geoffrey Parrinder, *Mysticism in the World's Religions*, pp. 14-15.

¹⁵⁸ Wayne Teasdale, *The Mystic Heart*, pp. 21-22.

¹⁵⁹ E. A. Торчинов, *Религии мира: опыт запредельного: Трансперсональные состояния и психотехника*, сс. 75-76.

doctrinal directives of a native religious tradition and continues to incarnate them in his/her life even after the ultimate union is achieved. Although the culminative mystical experiences are common for a Buddhist and a Christian, they still have different somatic consequences and salvific perspectives in after-death state.

The Notion of Mystical Anthropology

As is already pointed out, anthropology is the most successful ground of interreligious dialogue. Only in anthropology can be shared common frontiers of different religions. The tremendous value of anthropology as our common basis and own “charisma” has been underscored by Marco Pallis in his *Buddhist Spectrum*,

“History of the religions is full of passionate debates which amount to little more than two soloists trying to shout one another down; the longterm results of this sparring in the void can only be properly interpreted by facing up squarely to the various factors actually at play—intellectual, psychological and even ethnic in some cases. Saying this does not mean that one is out to explain religious differences in purely anthropological terms, that is to say by bypassing their significance as pointers to particular aspects of truth—unless indeed by ‘anthropology’ is meant not the profane medley now going under that name but a science founded upon the prior recognition of what it really means to be a man, *anthropos*, or, in other words, recognition of one’s own dharma *qua* human being and what it entails for all who have been qualified by birth into the human state.”¹⁶⁰

That anthropology doesn’t mean to ignore ultimate truth is pointed out also by a Catholic theologian Michael Kunzler in the context of contemporary Catholic theology. As he observes, thanks to Rahner and others a shift from theology to anthropology has taken place in the contemporary Catholic theology. A perspective of anthropology wherein anthropocentrism presupposes an essential dependence of man on the Divine reality has been denoted by Michael Kunzler as the *theandric*¹⁶¹ one. Thanks to the *theandric* context anthropology doesn’t run a risk to ignore and to force out God.¹⁶²

¹⁶⁰ Marco Pallis, *A Buddhist Spectrum*, p. 135.

¹⁶¹ The term *theandric* is a derivative from the Greek θεός (God) and ἀνθρωπ - ἄνδρως (man).

¹⁶² W. Pannenberg, for instance, has warned against the trend to envelope theology by anthropology. In this occasion man will be busy only with himself and not with God, substituting, in this way, the content of theology. (W. Pannenberg, *Anthropologie in theologischer Perspektive* (Göttingen, 1983), 15.) Häußling thinks that the anthropological shift, proposed by Karl Rahner, is a mere protection of

The theological speculation about man is possible only from the soteriological point of view. Man is created by God as a *theandric* being and, thus, is able to become god.¹⁶³ This very *theandria* is better known to Orthodox Christians under a name of ἡ συνεργεία (Gr. cooperation).

Finally, S. S. Horuzhy speaks about “anthropologization” of theology in the context of Orthodox tradition. Here the same shift from theology to anthropology is meant. The scholar underscores that for the Orthodox spirituality the shift doesn’t mean demythologization of the dogmatically patristic essence of Orthodox tradition because the axe of this very Orthodox anthropology remains Christology. In the same way as Kunzler points out a *theandric* orientation of Christian anthropology, so also Horuzhy does. He underscores that we deal with a “new” kind of anthropology, which doesn’t any longer represent a narrow subject inside theology, rather it transforms into a new all-embracing theological approach. It means that now anthropology envelops the integrate body of theology becoming completely holistic. In this situation man is a starting point of any philosophical and theological discourse. But we must not forget that such an anthropology is interrelated with ontology. Hence, the new anthropology is soteriologically oriented.¹⁶⁴

A Russian orientalist, M. F. Albedil, has pointed out a burning necessity to go to anthropology because the latter is the only way to avoid an existential crisis of European culture. Nowadays the genuine anthropological values, i.e., an understanding of what we are and what we shall do with the world, are completely lost. An egocentrism has entailed an absence of any interior experience accumulated by culture. A loss of our essentials causes a destruction of culture and environment. Also such a phenomenon as terrorism is a result of our inner non-effectiveness.¹⁶⁵

As is evident, Albedil’s idea about the destruction of culture is quite in unison with what is expressed by Semencov about a destruction of a religious tradition. At the

the impossibility to believe in God. (A.A. Häußling, *Odo Casel – Noch von Aktualität? Eine Rückschau in eigener Sache aus Anlaß des hundertsten Geburtstages des ersten Herausgebers*. In *Alw* 28 (1986) 357-387. 362. L. Scheffczyk, in his turn, has warned against the affinities between the anthropological change and the philosophy of existentialism. (L. Scheffczyk, *Die Frage nach der Gottebenbildlichkeit in der modernen Theologie* in ders. (Hg.) *Der Mensch als Bild Gottes*. Darmstadt, 1969 (Wege der Forschung CXXIV), IX-LIV. IX-XI.) (from Михаэль Кунцлер, *Литургия церкви* (Москва: Христианская Россия, 1995), т. 1, с. 16.)

¹⁶³ Михаэль Кунцлер, цит. соч., т. 1, с. 20-21.

¹⁶⁴ С. С. Хоружий, “Аналитический словарь исихастской антропологии” // *Синергия: проблемы аскетике и мистики Православия*, общ. ред. С. С. Хоружий (Москва: Ди-Дик, 1995), сс. 43-44.

¹⁶⁵ М. Ф. Альбедиль, *Зеркало традиций*, сс. 17-33.

same time a necessity to return to genuine human values is close to the notion of fundamental aspiration. If we as representatives of European civilization have even lost a meta-motivation, the most intrinsic instinct of a human being, the situation is really disastrous. We need to start a revival with ourselves. Here anthropology can help.

As Albedil points out, many modern sciences experience a real anthropological renaissance. In this context man has been denoted as *Homo sapiens* (an intelligent man), *Homo faber* (a man-creator), *Homo sociologicus* (a social man), *Homo ludens* (a playing man), etc. Hence, modes of anthropology are innumerable.¹⁶⁶

In the previous part of the research different approaches to religions have been mentioned. From every approach a certain characteristics of man may derive. For instance, in the context of the historical approach of Troeltsch man is not only a social or a rational being but also a *historical* being. For a representative of phenomenology man becomes a *religious* being (*homo religiosus*). According to Mircea Eliade *homo religiosus* means to have an experience of the sacred.¹⁶⁷ For an adherent of the idea of anonymous Christianity, Karl Rahner, man is essentially a mystical being that is one experientially drawn toward God of mystery, revelation and love. As Harvey D. Egan observes, the whole life of man is directed to the God of mystery, whether he explicitly and directly adverts to it or not.¹⁶⁸

Being aware of explicitly Christian context of Rahner's consideration, we, however, shall employ his formulation of man. The topic of how should a notion of mysticism be understood in the context of this research, has already been discussed above. It means that, accepting Rahner's terminology, one doesn't need to accept exactly Rahner's interpretation of the term. We have as well pointed out the tremendous importance of mysticism as a common basis of interreligious dialogue. The term of *Mystical Anthropology* which is not conventional among scholars, is a derivative of the mentioned designation of man as a mystical being.

We believe that Eliade's religious man and Rahner's mystical man have much in common. The definitions suggested by the two scholars have strong affinities and both are appropriate for research. Nevertheless, the designation proposed by Rahner is narrower than that of Eliade, helping us to determine limits of the discussed matter.

In search for interpretation of the term "mystical anthropology," it is helpful to make use of what is admitted by S. S. Horuzhy. His consideration is rather important for the phenomenological and experiential context of our research. Horuzhy claims that

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., c. 17.

¹⁶⁷ Roberts Mūks, *Sakrālā un profānā polaritāte Mirčas Eliades darbos un kristietībā*, 34.-35. lpp.

¹⁶⁸ Harvey D. Egan, *Christian Mysticism: the Future of a Tradition*, p. 246.

in Orthodox tradition the theoretical or academic theology and the experiential one, although interrelated, should be distinguished. The necessary basis of the latter is asceticism whereas its main category is salvation. This kind of theology can be defined as a teaching about salvation (*theosis*) growing out from the experience of zealots. Its main task is to explore this very experiential ground. Such an approach in theology is necessarily anthropological and phenomenological. Doctrine, in turn, manifests as a code of anthropology.¹⁶⁹

As is formulated by the Orthodox theologian, religious experience (asceticism together with mysticism) is explored by anthropology which, in turn, is connected to phenomenology. What is claimed by Horuzhy can easily be adopted to the exploration of a religious experience in any religion.

Survey of Sources in the Context of the History of Hesychasm and Tibetan Buddhism

In the beginning a brief history of Hesychasm and a survey of Hesychast sources will be discussed. Afterwards we shall proceed to a short history of the main landmarks of Tibetan Buddhism and a survey of Buddhist sources.

The Orthodox Christian movement denoted as Hesychasm is not so young as the Hesychast controversy of the 14th century Byzantium. The term *hesychia* (ἡ ἡσυχία, lit. tranquility) was conventional among Christian contemplators in the 4th century, denoting a state of calmness or inner tranquility as a result of asceticism. Hesychia is necessary to go further to contemplation. Hesychasts were anchorites who spent their lives in solitude far away from large monasteries. A spiritual method of Jesus Prayer has been established in their midst.¹⁷⁰

Hence, Hesychasm has been always concerned with Jesus prayer. As Metropolitan Nicolae Corneanu observes, the Jesus prayer flourished by the fifth century, as it is witnessed by a *Treatise* of Diadochus of Photice. As to its earlier development, it may be traced back to Evagrius of Pontus in the fourth century.¹⁷¹ As

¹⁶⁹ С. С. Хоружий, "Аналитический словарь исихастской антропологии" // *Синергия: проблемы аскетике и мистики Православия*, с. 44.

¹⁷⁰ Протопресвитер Иоанн Мейендорф, *Жизнь и труды Святого Григория Паламы: Введение в изучение*, пер. Г. Н. Начинкин, ред. И. П. Медведев, В. М. Лурье (Санкт-Петербург: Византинороссика, 1997), сс. 187-188.

¹⁷¹ Metropolitan Nicolae Corneanu, "The Jesus Prayer and Deification", pp. 7-8.

John Meyendorf asserts, Evagrius was one of the two fathers of Hesychasm. He taught prayer and Divine contemplation to Egyptian monks according to the main principles of Origenist mysticism. The features of the exclusively intellectual mysticism of Evagrius, which had much in common with platonist idealism¹⁷², will be discussed in the main part of the dissertation.

The second father of Hesychast movement is the unknown author of *Corpus macarianum*, representing completely another anthropology. Being far from the intellectualism of Evagrius, his teaching is close to Stoicism, suggesting the holistic interpretation of man which, in its turn, is much more relevant in the context of Orthodox spirituality than the intellectualism of Evagrius. According to the holism of human being claimed by *Corpus macarianum* all constituents of man are inseparable; all of them, including body, are intended to be saved. In Platonism and, consequently, in the anthropology of Evagrius, body does not participate in salvation. That is why the teaching of Evagrius has been condemned by the V Council of the Church whereas Macarian anthropological doctrine, although associated in a certain period of Church history with the heresy of Messalians, has been finally accepted.

Although the both anthropological streams, i.e., the Evagrian one and that of Macarius, are latently represented in the history of Hesychasm, the latter and not the former reconciles two completely different anthropological schemes, i.e., the intellectual platonism of Evagrius and the holistic anthropology of the Bible. Macarius and the adherents of his school have united the mind (νοῦς) of Origen, Gregory of Nyssa and Evagrius with the Biblical notion of heart as the center of psycho-physical constitution of man.¹⁷³ As is known, this union of mind and heart in future becomes one of the central themes of Hesychasm¹⁷⁴; it can be defined as the main target of Hesychast asceticism. This very psycho-technical motif is essentially important for Tibetan yoga as well. A cursory acquaintance with the mentioned commonality has induced us to explore it more thoroughly in the present research.

The theoretical layer of Hesychasm should be distinguished from the practical or experiential one. The latter doesn't presuppose any theoretical speculation rather it is a

¹⁷² Протопресвитер Иоанн Мейендорф, *Жизнь и труды Святителя Григория Паламы: Введение в изучение*, сс. 188-189.

¹⁷³ Ibid., с. 192.

¹⁷⁴ Vladimir Lossky, for instance, admits that union of mind and heart is the most important principle of Hesychasm. See Владимир Лосский, *Боговидение*, пер. В. Рещиковой // Владимир Лосский, *Богословие и боговидение: Сборник статей*, общ. ред. В. Писляков (Москва: Издательство Свято-Владимирского братства, 2000), с. 243.

detailed description of the spiritual path of a zealot beginning with the first steps of asceticism. The final stage of such a way is a vision of the Uncreated Divine Light. The aim of practical Hesychasm is a spiritual guidance. For this reason a vast literature, accessible nowadays, has been written by zealots according for their disciples. There can never be found a controversy concerning the necessity of the mentioned psycho-technique or the nature of the Divine Light or the name of Jesus in the context of practical Hesychasm. The experiential Hesychasm is positive and self-sufficient. For this reason it doesn't need any polemics. As Valery Lepahin asserts polemics has been forced upon Hesychasm by the outward circumstances. Only then as a result of Hesychast controversy the theoretical theology of Hesychasm came into being. This very theology is not at all a natural continuation of practical Hesychasm, rather it acquires an apologetic character as a means of defense of Hesychast ortho-praxis.¹⁷⁵

Thanks to the mentioned division of two layers in Hesychasm, the borders of the present research can be determined. As is claimed before, anthropology as well as phenomenology deals with exclusively experiential part of religion. That is why we shall not compare such topics as Tantric and Hesychast theological or philosophical speculations about the nature of the Divine / Clear Light. The questions, which can't clarify the experiential content of Hesychast prayer or Buddhist meditation, are left outside the present research.

The same principles concern the sources and secondary literature which are chosen as the appropriate ones for the exploration of practical mysticism. Although literature proposed by Hesychasm is rather vast, its content can be qualified mainly as spiritual instructions and not as a description of the mystical experience as such. Hesychasts are not used to discuss their contemplative experience. The vision of the Uncreated Light representing the culmination of contemplation and being associated with *theosis* is too close to the incomprehensible summit of the spiritual journey. That is why descriptions of such an experience are rather rare.¹⁷⁶ The vast corpus of Russian *Philocalia* which is the main and the most complete source of Hesychasm has been employed by us only fragmentarily for this very reason.

We shall return to the list of main sources later. At the moment we want to go back to the *Corpus macarianum* which is rather important for the research. As is

¹⁷⁵ Валерий Лепехин, "Умное делание: О содержании и границах понятия «исихазм» // Вестник русского христианского движения 164.1 (1992), с. 20.

¹⁷⁶ Сергей Хоружий, *К феноменологии аскезы* (Москва: Издательство гуманитарной литературы, 1998), с. 160.

qualified by Metropolitan Nicolae Corneanu¹⁷⁷, P. Minin¹⁷⁸ and V. Lossky¹⁷⁹, the source is rather experiential by its character. A Russian theologian, I. V. Popov also contends that the basis of Macarian theory is a psychologically religious experience. Mysticism of Macarius is soteriologically and anthropologically oriented because the main theme in *Corpus macarianum* is a human soul in its supernatural hypostasis.¹⁸⁰ Deepening the *Corpus* one may realize that all topics and even whole subjects of theology, such as ecclesiology or even theology or Christology, are object to anthropology. Obviously, for Macarius any endeavor to discuss theological questions outside anthropology is just senseless. This fact makes one to make a conclusion that an attempt to anthropologize theology is not only an actuality of the modern age, rather it is essential for the experiential context of religion in all times. The deeply anthropological character of any experientially and soteriologically oriented religious discourse is dealt with in the next chapter of the present dissertation.

One more important topic discussed in the *Corpus* is human heart as a center of psycho-physiological organism. It is included in the theme about constitution of man. Macarius, making use of the Stoic fivefold anthropological model, imparted it to Hesychasm. We have employed a new edition of the *Corpus*, translated, commented and edited by A. G. Dunayev. It is the most complete and academic one of the previously known Russian editions.¹⁸¹

Going back to the historical sources of Hesychasm, it is interesting to mention a legendary monastic tradition which admits that Jesus Prayer has been instituted by the Savior Himself. Nicolae Corneanu observes, “The fact that it was not recorded in writing or that we lack any specific account of it from the first three or four centuries could be attributed to the so-called “discipline of arcane.” This is the discipline of secrecy, whose object was to veil or hide those Christian truths that the unfaithful or the uninitiated could not understand.”¹⁸² On the one hand the alleged tradition of secrecy in

¹⁷⁷ Metropolitan Nicolae Corneanu, “The Jesus Prayer and Deification”, p. 19.

¹⁷⁸ П. Минин, *Главные направления древне-церковной мистики // Мистическое богословие* (Киев: Путь к истине, 1991), с. 374.

¹⁷⁹ Владимир Лосский, *Богосвидение*, пер. В. Решиковой // Владимир Лосский, *Богословие и богосвидение*, с. 243.

¹⁸⁰ И. В. Попов, *Труды по патрологии*, т. 1, *Святые отцы II-IV вв.* (Сергиев Посад: Свято-Троицкая Лавра, 2004), сс. 139, 160.

¹⁸¹ A. G. Dunayev has discussed several burning questions, such as the authorship of the *Corpus* and the history of Jesus Prayer. See Преподобный Макарий Египетский, *Духовные слова и послания: собрание типа I (Vatic. Graec. 694)*, пер., ком. А. Г. Дунаев (Москва: Индрик, 2002).

¹⁸² Metropolitan Nicolae Corneanu, “The Jesus Prayer and Deification”, p. 8.

early Christianity may be compared to a similar principle of esoteric teachings, rituals and psycho-techniques in Asian religions (Hinduism, Buddhism or Taoism). On the other hand an idea of translation of the esoteric essence of Orthodox spirituality from the Savior Himself up to the modern age through Jesus prayer takes us back to the consideration of V. Semencov mentioned above. We believe that Jesus Prayer (or similar formulas) is this very essential and experiential core of Orthodox spirituality which makes Orthodoxy vital through ages. According to Semencov, only such a tradition which keeps firmly with this unchangeable essence, can survive. It seems that Jesus Prayer is a reason for a mysteriously conservative and still very vital character of Orthodox Christian tradition.

As is observed by Corneanu, there exists another monastic tradition according to which Jesus Prayer has come into existence among the anchorites who lived in the deserts of Egypt around the second half of the third century, later becoming a secret tradition inside the contemplative monasticism. It must have been here, that Evagrius of Pontus, who had retired to the Nitrian desert from Byzantium, learned it and imparted it to his followers.¹⁸³

From Egypt, anchoritism spread to Palestine, especially to Mount Sinai, and then to the mountains of Syria and Pontus where St. Basil and St. Gregory of Nazianzus lived. Mount Sinai became the cradle of the spiritual life in the Christian East. Here Jesus Prayer has been practiced and the great Hesychast movement has come into being. The ideas of St. Gregory are important for us because he was the first who discussed *theosis* systematically. The topic is connected with the apparition of the Divine Light to Hesychasts. In the dissertation we shall employ the *Select Orations* of Saint Gregory Nazianzen, translated by Charles Gordon¹⁸⁴, and the work of Hegumenos Hillarion Alfeyev about life and theology of Gregory Nazianzus.¹⁸⁵ Here it is important to note that the concept of deification suggested by Nazianzus has been interdependent with the personal mystical experience of the Cappadocian.

Monasticism together with Jesus Prayer expanded to different areas of the Orthodox East, for instance to Mount Athos in Greece, Niamets Monastery in Romania and Optino Monastery in Russia. Handed down from the spiritual fathers to their

¹⁸³ Ibid.

¹⁸⁴ Gregory Nazianzen, *Select Orations of Saint Gregory Nazianzen, Sometime Archbishop of Constantinople* (XXII, 19), trans. Charles Gordon Browne in *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of Christian Church* (Michigan: Wm.B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, n.d.).

¹⁸⁵ Григорий Богослов, Сл. 40 (In Игумен Иларион Алфеев, *Жизнь и учение св. Григория Богослова* (Санкт-Петербург: Алетейя, 2001)

disciples and secretly preserved by oral tradition, the Jesus Prayer benefited by a few treatises dedicated to methods of practicing it. Later more and more treatises were written. The most representative ones were collected in the *Philocalia* by Nicodemus the Hagiorite in the 18th century. The edition appeared in Venice in 1782. The collection extends over a period of eleven centuries (beginning with the 4th and ending with the 14th).¹⁸⁶ In the research we shall fragmentarily employ the Russian translation of the collection known as *Добротолюбие*¹⁸⁷ enriched by many other treatises on Orthodox mysticism.¹⁸⁸ A good compilation of *Philocalia* is found in the dissertation of Hegumenos Barsonophy Verevkin.¹⁸⁹

As is mentioned above, Hesychast treatises, describing the experimental aspect of the tradition, are just few. Among them are works written by St. Symeon the New Theologian (949-1022), the abbot of the monastery of St. Mamas in Constantinople. S. S. Horuzhy admits that the most expressive and vast testimony about a perception of the Divine Light belongs to Symeon the New Theologian. The scholar adds that his works are of tremendous value for the phenomenological anthropology.¹⁹⁰ George Maloney points out that “Symeons’ writings constitute a new genre of spiritual writing, at least among the Eastern Christian writers. No Christian writer before Symeon, not even Saint Augustine, opened his own interior experience of Jesus Christ and the indwelling Trinity to a reading audience as does Symeon.”¹⁹¹ Besides, as V. Lossky notes, in the treatises of Symeon the first systematic description of the Hesychast technique of interior prayer is represented.¹⁹²

The most important for us treatise of Symeon is his *Hymns of Divine Love*, translated from Greek into English by George A. Maloney, S.J. As the translator writes, he tried to be as close as possible to the original text, keeping a similar long or short line arrangement to render better Symeon’s style and thought. As the translator admits, “Symeon in his *Hymns* reaches a unique originality, not only in articulating the

¹⁸⁶ Metropolitan Nicolae Corneanu, “The Jesus Prayer and Deification”, pp. 9-11.

¹⁸⁷ *Добротолюбие* (Свято-Троицкая Сергиева Лавра, 1992).

¹⁸⁸ Metropolitan Nicolae Corneanu, “The Jesus Prayer and Deification”, p. 13.

¹⁸⁹ Игумен Варсонофий (В. С. Вереvкин), *Учение о молитве по добротолубию* (Ярославль-Рыбинск: Рыбинский дом печати, 2002).

¹⁹⁰ С. С. Хоружий, “Аналитический словарь исихастской антропологии” // *Синергия: проблемы аскетики и мистики Православия*, с. 135.

¹⁹¹ George Maloney S.J., “Introduction” in Symeon the New Theologian, *The Discourses*, trans. C.J. deCatanaro (New Jersey: Paulist Press, 1980), p. 13.

¹⁹² Владимир Лосский, *Богословие*, пер. В. Решиковой // Владимир Лосский, *Богословие и богословие*, с. 245.

higher stages of the mystical union with Christ, but also in describing these levels in a dynamic, experiential language that the reader wishes ardently to share in what Symeon clearly lived habitually”.¹⁹³

The Hymns are translated also from original Greek into Russian by Bishop Theophan. The Greek original text he has also employed for the Latin translation of the *Hymns*.¹⁹⁴ The second important work of Symeon are his *Discourses (Catecheses)* translated into English by C. J. deCatanzaro. As Maloney claims, “without a doubt his [Symeon’s] *Discourses* form the central work of his life, for it is in these thirty-four discourses, given mainly to his monks at Saint Mamas [...] that we find the main ideas he developed in his hymns and other writings.”¹⁹⁵ Archbishop Basil (Krivoshein), an author of monography about Symeon’s works¹⁹⁶, advises to search a detailed bibliography of Symeon’s treatises in Walter Volker, *Praxis und Theoria bei Symeon dem Neuen Theologen. Ein Beitrag zur Byzantinischen Mystik*, edited in Wiesbaden in 1974.

The late Byzantine Hesychasm is usually associated with the name of Gregory Palamas and the Hesychast controversy between Palamas and Barlaam of Calabria in the 14th century. The controversy dealt with the nature of the Divine Light experienced by Hesychasts. According to Barlaam the Light was of material nature for the nature of God is completely apophatic and, thus, inaccessible for human perception. In order to defend Hesychasm, Palamas has suggested the need to distinguish the idea of Divine substance and His uncreated luminous energies. Man, participating in these very energies and not in the incomprehensible Divine substance, changes his mode of being remaining a creature by substance.

The works of Palamas are rather important for the research because of a particular interest of Palama in photic phenomena during prayer. Even though his ideas are qualified by theologians as rather speculative, it can’t be denied that a theory of Divine energies is a result of a forced necessity to defend Hesychasm. Palamas himself was a

¹⁹³ George A. Maloney, S. J., “Introduction” in St. Symeon the New Theologian, *Hymns of Divine Love by St. Symeon the New Theologian*, trans. George A. Maloney, S.J. (Denville, New Jersey: Dimension Books, n.d.), p. 8.

¹⁹⁴ About versions and translations of the text see Иеромонах Пантелеймон, “О гимнах преп. Симеона Нового Богослова” // Симеон Новый Богослов, *Божественные гимны*, пер. Епископ Феофан (Свято-Троицкая Сергиева Лавра, 1993), сс. XXIV-XXXII.

¹⁹⁵ George A. Maloney, S. J., “Introduction” in St. Symeon the New Theologian, *Hymns of Divine Love by St. Symeon the New Theologian*, trans. George A. Maloney, S.J., p. 15.

¹⁹⁶ Архиепископ Василий (Кривошеин), *Преподобный Симеон Новый Богослов (949-1022)* (Нижний Новгород: Издательство братства во имя святого князя Александра Невского, 1996).

true contemplator. In 1339 he had to leave Athos in order to take part in the controversy. In 1347 he became an archbishop in Thessaloniki. He died in 1359 and very soon was canonized by the Church. We believe that his works can be qualified as experiential to a large extent. The vision of Light and the doctrine of the Divine energies are inseparable. In the present dissertation we have employed the *Triads in Defense of the Holy Hesychasts* as the most famous treatise of Palamas. The work is partially translated into English by Nicholas Gendle¹⁹⁷ and in Russian by V. Veniaminov¹⁹⁸.

The works of Palamas are rather important for the present dissertation, because thanks to Palamas the Hesychast idea of how a perception of Divine Light is possible has been shaped. Although the topic is rather speculative, it simultaneously can be attributed to the sphere of experimental anthropology. The model suggested by Palamas is curious because it represents an explicitly *agapeic* solution of the problem of the supernatural perception.

Triads discuss the question of a true and unmediated relationship with God. In Triads as well as in other Hesychast treatises dealing with contemplation one can notice an attempt to destroy the strictness of the theistic model. In order to understand what we mean by that, the notion of Revelation should be clarified. According to Geidar Jemal, religions of Revelation (which are included in the class of theistic religions) do not presuppose any contemplation. For Jemal, contemplation means psychic introversion which may become an exploration of human consciousness, but it is fruitless if a contact with God is searched. Religions of revelation deal with an invasion of a Divine impulse from outside. This very impulse comes to us exclusively through Revelation. Hence, contemplation, which is natural by its nature, can't substitute the supernatural Revelation.¹⁹⁹ The classification of religions suggested by Jemal obviously correlates to that proposed by H. Kraemer who, in turn, attributes Hinduism and Buddhism to the naturalist religions of self-realization, and Christianity to the prophetic religions of revelation.²⁰⁰

Keeping in mind the model suggested by Jemal, one may see Hesychasm in a completely new light. Palamist assertion of a possibility of the unmediated contact with the Divine through introversion is the same endeavor to “destroy” a wall of Revelation

¹⁹⁷ Gregory Palamas, *The Triads*, trans. Nicholas Gendle (New Jersey: Paulist Press, 1983).

¹⁹⁸ Св. Григорий Палама, *Триады в защиту священно-безмолствующих*, пер. В. Вениаминов (Москва: Канон, 1995).

¹⁹⁹ Гейдар Джемаль, *Арабо-Израильский конфликт - осевая эсхатологическая тема* // palestine-info.ru

²⁰⁰ H. Kraemer, *The Christian Message in a Non-Christian World* (London: Edinburg House Press, 1938), p. 142 ff.

and to proclaim experience as the basis of Revelation. Prayer represents the essential of the religious tradition, translated through ages by Hesychasm. Thus, experience of the Divine becomes a guarantee of vitality of Hesychast tradition.

Going back to the controversy of the 14th century, two brief but fundamental articles, discussing the topic, can be noted. The first is called *Palamas and Barlaam Revisted: A Reassessment of East and West in the Hesychast Controversy of 14th Century Byzantium*, written by Reinhard Flogaus²⁰¹. A successful historical interpretation of the controversy is suggested also by V.V. Bibihin²⁰².

A correspondance of the works written by Symeon the New Theologian and of those created by Palamas, is adequately qualified by S. S. Horuzhy. He contends that Symeon has described the “what”, i.e., the object of vision, whereas Palamas has formulated the “how” of Hesychasm. In other words he discussed the question of perception of Light or the nature of the vision.²⁰³

An important stage in the history of Hesychasm is its introduction to Russia. In the beginning the great spiritual movement was initiated by staretz Paissy Velichkovsky (1722-1794) from the Moldavian Monastery of Niamets. Thanks to Velichkovsky, Jesus Prayer was translated to Russian monasteries. In 19th century all Russian monasteries bore the mark of Paissianism. The spirit of the tradition was preserved at the Optino Hermitage for about a hundred years. Nicolae Corneanu witnesses that the contemplative spirit of Hesychasm “elevated Russian monasticism to spiritual heights never before reached in any other Christian nation.”²⁰⁴

Two famous representatives of post-Byzantine Hesychasm are Seraphim of Sarov and Staretz Silouan together with his disciple Archimandrite Sophrony. The most important evidence about the personality and teaching of St. Seraphim is left by N. A. Motovilov in his manuscript accidentally found among other papers of the late Motovilov. His testimony is employed in the last part of our research.²⁰⁵

²⁰¹ Reinhard Flogaus, “Palamas and Barlaam Revisted: A Reassessment of East and West in the Hesychast Controversy of 14th Century Byzantium” in *St Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 42.1 (1998), pp. 1-32.

²⁰² В. В. Бибихин, “Материалы к исихастским спорам” // *Синергия: проблемы аскетике и мистики Православия*, сс. 177-206.

²⁰³ С. С. Хоружий, “Аналитический словарь исихастской антропологии” // *Синергия: проблемы аскетике и мистики Православия*, с. 137.

²⁰⁴ Metropolitan Nicolae Corneanu, “The Jesus Prayer and Deification”, pp. 12-13.

²⁰⁵ Н. А. Мотовилов, “Дух Божий явно почивший на о. Серафиме Саровском в беседе его о цели христианской жизни с Симбирским помещиком и совестным судьей Николаем Александровичем Мотовиловым” // Анатолий Тимофиевич, *Преподобный Серафим Саровский: к пятидесятилетию прославления 1903-1953* (New York: Новое Дивеево, 1953), сс. 82-109.

The second representative of Russian Hesychasm is Staretz Silouan (1866-1938). His disciple Archimandrite Sophrony has written a famous biography about Staretz.²⁰⁶ The source suggests a detailed description of the mystical experience of the father and also of his teaching. The book is edited in Russian 13 times and is translated into several languages including English. A fragmentary (but rather precise) translation from Russian into English is made by Rosemary Edmonds²⁰⁷. Archimandrite Sophrony has described his own experience in two books²⁰⁸.

Choosing the primary sources, we have followed a brief survey of sources suggested by Horuzhy. The scholar contends that the literature of experiential character is rather rare in Hesychasm. These few works with experiential content, listed by the theologian, are following: *Corpus macarianum*, the treatises of Symeon the New Theologian, those of Gregory Palamas, the materials left about Seraphim of Sarov and the books of archimandrite Sophrony about Staretz Silouan and his own experience. We have strictly followed the proposed bibliography of the famous Russian theologian. As Horuzhy points out, there are also several good “summas” about experiential Hesychasm, written by contemporary Orthodox scholars. We have added some other books to the list of Horuzhy. The most important contemporary authors writing about Hesychasm are V. Lossky²⁰⁹, John Meyendorff²¹⁰, Archimandrite Ciprian (Kern)²¹¹, S. M. Zarin²¹², P. Minin²¹³ and S. S. Horuzhy himself²¹⁴. Two fundamental works in the

²⁰⁶ *Старец Силуан: Жизнь и поучения* (Москва, Ново-Казачье, Минск: 1991).

²⁰⁷ Archimandrite Sophrony, *The Monk of Mount Athos Staretz Silouan 1866-1938* (Crestwood, New York: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2001).

²⁰⁸ Архимандрит Софроний, *Рождение в Царство непоколебимое* (Москва: Паломник, 2000).

Архимандрит Софроний (Сахаров), *Видеть Бога как Он есть* (Essex: Stavropegic Monastery of St. John the Baptist, 1985).

²⁰⁹ В. Н. Лосский, *Очерк мистического богословия Восточной Церкви* // В. Н. Лосский, *Очерк мистического богословия Восточной Церкви. Догматическое богословие* (Москва: СЭИ, 1991). В. Лосский, *Богословие и боговидение*, общ. ред. А. Писляков (Москва: Издательство Свято-Владимирского Братства, 2000).

²¹⁰ Протопресвитер Иоанн Мейендорф, *Жизнь и труды Святителя Григория Паламы: Введение в изучение*, пер. Г. Н. Начинкин, ред. И. П. Медведев, В. М. Лурье (Санкт-Петербург: Византинороссика, 1997).

²¹¹ Архимандрит Киприан (Керн), *Антропология Св. Григория Паламы* (Москва: Паломник, 1996).

²¹² С. М. Зарин, *Аскетизм по Православно-христианскому учению* (Москва: Паломник, 1996)..

²¹³ П. Минин, *Главные направления древне-церковной мистике* // *Мистическое богословие* (Киев: Путь к истине, 1991).

²¹⁴ С. С. Хоружий, *Диптих безмолвия: Аскетическое учение о человеке в богословском и философском освещении* (Москва: Центр психологии и психотерапии, 1991). С. С. Хоружий, "Аналитический словарь исихастской антропологии" // *Синергия: проблемы аскетики и мистики Православия*, общ. ред. С. С. Хоружий (Москва: Ди-Дик, 1995).

Orthodox anthropology are those written by Archpriest Stephan Kashmensky²¹⁵ and by Priest Vadim Korzhevsky²¹⁶.

In the last chapter concerning Somatic question, different hagiographic materials are used. We haven't limited ourselves by strictly Hesychast hagiography rather we have also employed narratives from Armenian original works as well as from Armenian hagiographic materials translated into Russian. We have also utilized hagiographic narratives of the tradition of Christian West.

The main Buddhist literature chosen for the comparison, are Tibetan texts concerning death and liberation during death. The reason is simple. All Tibetan yogas are based on simulating death. Processes occurring in human subtle body during death and those during meditation and sleeping are analogous. That is why it is important for the *yogi* to know how human beings die — the stages of death and physiological reasons behind them. The tantric description of the process is based on the complicated theory of winds or currents of energy that serve as foundations for different levels of consciousness. The study of death for a *yogi* is a study of these winds and the consciousnesses.²¹⁷

There exists also another reason why Tibetan Buddhists discuss meditation and consequently liberation in the context of death. According to Tibetan Buddhism a perfect vision of the ultimate reality and liberation as such take place after death. Only in the intermediate state between two lives a living being is able to release from *samsāric* chains. It doesn't mean that after death man just collects fruits of his previous life. The three *bardos* described in the Tibetan Book of the Dead is a period when a culminative fight for liberation takes place. Human effort which has been cultivated by *yogi* during long meditation practices in *bardo* of life is of tremendous value. Hence, in Tibetan Buddhism one deals with self-liberation after death.

In Christian tradition one will never find a similar idea to that of the Buddhist self-liberation after death. Of course, Christian zealots are aware of a tremendous meaning of man's attachments at the moment of death. It is important for a zealot to concentrate his mind on God alone

²¹⁵ Протоиерей Стефан Кашменский, *Систематический свод св. Отцов о душе человеческой* (Пермь: Панагия, 2002).

²¹⁶ Иерей Вадим Коржевский, *Пропедевтика аскетике: компендиум по православной святоотеческой психологии* (Москва: Центр Информационных Технологий Информатики и Информации, 2004).

²¹⁷ Jeffrey Hopkins, "Preface" in Lati Rinbochay and Jeffrey Hopkins, *Death, Intermediate State and Rebirth in Tibetan Buddhism* (London: Rider and Company, 1979), p. 13.

during death. Nevertheless, he is not able any longer to influence his existential situation in the afterlife. Christianity doesn't transfer the decisive spiritual warfare into the period of death and after death as tantric Buddhism does. This very warfare takes place in this life whereas in the afterlife man, being judged, just collects the fruits of this warfare. After death the role of man in salvation is not any longer active but passive.

The mentioned differences are rooted deeply in the gnostic and agapeic mentalities. In Tibetan Buddhism only after death man attains such a condition of his psycho-physical constitution which is the most suitable for liberation. In Christianity mystical physiology is substituted by the notion of the Divine Grace. Man is saved by the Supernatural Other. Death as such is a mystery. It is as if disguised by a mysterious cloth of the Divine judgment.

Orthodox Christians are not used to discuss afterdeath experiences. The only example found in the vast corpus of Orthodox hagiography that can be somehow compared with the experiences of *Bar do thos grol* is, perhaps, a famous narrative about the so called "sufferings of souls after death because of sins" (Rus. *мытарства*) experienced by Blessed Theodora. According to the description souls after death, going through innumerable stations, are exposed in detail by demons and consequently judged. In this procedure souls are completely passive. Theodora herself has allegedly been redeemed every time by intercession (literally, by good deeds which are paid by Theodora's angels to the demons) of St. Basil.²¹⁸

The agapeic idea of Grace is expressed in the narrative clearly. It is also discernible that the context of Theodora's experience is exclusively ethical (and sometimes devotional) in spite of the psycho-technical background of *Bar do thos grol*. It means that Theodora is judged only for her good or bad deeds whereas in the Tibetan Book of the Dead the main "virtue" endowed with the liberative capacity is the habit of meditation. Besides, the narrative about Blessed Theodora doesn't at all mention the vision of Light which is obviously the culminative one in the after-death state of *Bar do thos grol*.

Before we deal with the list of primary Buddhist sources concerning death and dying, it is important to remember briefly the history of Tibetan Buddhism and its sects because the chosen texts belong to these various sects. Before Buddhism was

²¹⁸ *Жития святых, изложенные по руководству Четьих-Миней св. Димитрия Ростовского*, кн. 7 (Москва, 1906), сс. 530-550.

introduced to Tibet, an only religion known to Tibetans was the indigenous tradition called nowadays *Bon*. It was and remains shamanistic and animistic by its character. In spite of the importance of the indigenous religion for Tibetans, it was not well organized. As John Powers contends, Bon only developed as a self-conscious religious system under the influence of Buddhism. Even the term Bon as a designation of the indigenous religious complex came into use later. In order to designate the mentioned complex of religious beliefs the early dynastic records employed the word *Chos* instead of *Bon*. By the same *Chos*, afterwards Sanskrit *Dharma* has been translated. In early records, *Bon* was a designation of a particular type of priests who performed rituals to propitiate local spirits and to improve the well-being of the dead in the afterlife.²¹⁹

John Powers notes that the folk religion of Tibet, relying heavily on magic and ritual, gave people a measure of control over their unpredictable and sometimes hazardous surroundings in the often harsh environment of Tibet.²²⁰ Although the abstract idea of such an environmental influence on a religious doctrine and practices, obviously, can be contested by many scholars of religion, the case of Tibet seems to be special. The idea of the influence of environment upon religious beliefs and practices is shared also by an Indian scholar in the field of Tantric Buddhism, Ramachandra Rao.²²¹

Nowadays, the folk religion is infused with Buddhist elements, but it still remains distinct in the minds of the people. A peaceful co-existence of Bon monks with adherents of Dharma is a known fact. Obviously, Bon is never considered to be a foreign element in Tibetan Buddhism. As David Snellgrove admits, Bon can even be conceived as a special school of Tibetan Buddhism.²²²

When Buddhism entered Tibet, it didn't suppress the indigenous tradition. Rather, it incorporated it into its worldview, making the local deities protectors of the Dharma who were converted by tantric adepts like Padmasambhava. The most powerful deities are considered to be manifestations of *buddhas*, *bodhisattvas*, *dākinīs*, but the mundane forces are thought to be worldly powers, who have demonic nature that have been suppressed by Buddhism and must be kept in check by shamanistic rituals and the efforts of Buddhist adepts.²²³

²¹⁹ John Powers, *Introduction to Tibetan Buddhism* (Ithaca, New York: Snow Publications, 1995), pp. 431-432.

²²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 432-433.

²²¹ Рамачандра Рао, Тантрические традиции Тибета // Рамачандра Рао, Тантра, мантра, янтра. Тантрические традиции Тибета (Москва: Беловодье, 2002), сс. 124-126.

²²² David Snellgrove, *Himalayan Pilgrimage* (Oxford, 1961), p. 43. (In Рамачандра Рао, Тантрические традиции Тибета, с. 139).

²²³ John Powers, *Introduction to Tibetan Buddhism*, p. 433.

Buddhism encountered difficulties in the beginning of its expansion.²²⁴ It couldn't take deep roots in the hearts of Tibetans because it had to fight against the strong opposition of the indigenous religion. This fight continued for three centuries. During the reign of Khri-sron-Idebtsan (755-97) the famous Indian scholar, Śāntaraksita was invited to Tibet who, however, was not successful in drawing the people towards Buddhism. Being an intellectual, he preached the new religion in doctrinal terms, which people couldn't understand. Another teacher was Padmasambhava, also invited from India. He was a great Tantric and, spending in Tibet only about 18 months, successfully implanted the Tantric form of Buddhism in the Tibetan soil. This version of Buddhism mixed with magic and ritual mysticism appealed to all the segments of society. Padmasambhava is, thus, considered by the Tibetans as the real initiator of Dharma in Tibet. One more famous personality in the early history of Buddhism in Tibet is Kamalaśīla, a disciple of Śāntaraksita. The great scholars initiated studies of Buddhist literature and its translation into Tibetan.

During the reign of Glan-dar-ma (838-42) a persecution of Buddhism took place in Tibet. The king caused great destruction to Buddhist monasteries and death of innumerable Buddhist monks. This was a period when many Buddhist texts and relics were hidden by the adherents of Dharma and afterwards found by *gter ston*'s. After the king was murdered in 842, monks were able to regain their lost power.

In 1042 Tibet was visited by the great Indian scholar, Ācārya Atīṣa. He infused a new vitality and strength to the Dharma. From this period onward Buddhism would totally be identified with Tibet. Atīṣa initiated a movement for reform of Tibetan Buddhism called *bKah gdams pa* (the School Bound by the Command). The reform movement of Atīṣa was based upon the doctrinal teachings of classical Buddhism. The earliest and the unreformed Tibetan Buddhism found its expression through the sect called *rNying ma pa* (the School of the Old Tantras) and laying a great emphasis on magic, ritual mysticism and Bon shamanism. This sect traces its lineage to Padmasambhava. Atīṣa, however, was not very successful.

He was followed by Tsong Kha Pa (1357-1410) who carried out further the reform movement of Atīṣa by establishing a new school of the *d Ge lugs pa*. He tried to purify Tibetan Buddhism from Tantrism and Bon magic, laying much emphasis on monastic discipline of early Buddhism and the study of Mādhyamaka philosophy. These monasteries became great centers of logic, debate and scholarship. In the

²²⁴ Further the brief history of Tibetan Buddhism is presented according to Moti Lal Pandit, *Śūnyatā: The Essence of Mahāyāna Spirituality* (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers, 1998), p. 370-377.

sixteenth century *dGe lugs pa* introduced Buddhism to the Mongols whereas the head of the sect was bestowed by the title of Dalailama by the Mongol ruler, Altan Khan.

In addition to the above two sects, i.e., *rNying ma pa* and *dGe lugs pa*, there are two more schools which existed during the eleventh century, and are still extant. The first is the *bKah brgyud pa* (the Whispered Transmission School). The founder of the school is said to be the great Tantric master Mar pa (1012-96). The special feature of this school or sect is its emphasis on meditation rather than on scholastic studies. The school teaches a complex system of yoga practices kept in secret and whispered from master to disciple. One leading disciple of Marpa was Mi la ras pa.

Finally there is the *Sa skya pa* sect which is said to be founded in 1073 at the Sa skya monastery, and so the name of the sect. The school follows Mādhamaka's system of thought. The monks of the sect played a great role in the propagation of Buddhism in Mongolia. The great *Sa skya* hierarch, Hphaga Pa, became the spiritual preceptor of the great Mongol, Kublai Khan, in the thirteenth century. Kublai Khan bestowed the power of sovereignty over Central Tibet upon the High Priest of *Sa sKya*. The most important scholar of the sect is Bu tson (1290-1364) who classified all the translated into Tibetan texts into *bkah hgyr* (the Word of the Buddha) and *bstan-hgyur* (the Treatises).

For the present dissertation the texts of the so called *rDzogs chen* tradition have been essential. *rDzogs chen* is found in *rNying ma pa* as well as in *Bon* tradition. On the one hand *rDzogs chen* (or the Great Perfection) known also as *Atiyoga*, is the ninth, i.e., the last vehicle in *rNying ma pa* system, concluding the process of Tantric transformation. On the other hand it is classified as a vehicle on its own account. It has its own methodology which is claimed by the adherents of the school to differ from other vehicles. *rDzogs chen* is not even attributed by its adepts to Tantrism because the practitioner of the Great Perfection does not try to avoid, or to transform the poison of human imperfections as it is practiced in Tantrism. In *rDzogs chen* there is no transforming of impure phenomena into pure phenomena, because whatever phenomena manifest to the senses are perfect just as they are. They are spontaneously perfected (*lhun rdzogs*) because they are manifestations of the nature of mind. The school proposes a special method called self-liberation (Tib. *rang grol*). The path starts with the state of contemplation and ends with contemplation. Within the individual's meditation practice, thoughts are allowed to self-liberate as soon as they arise.²²⁵

²²⁵ John Myrdhin Reynolds, "Introduction" in *The Golden Letters: The Three Statements of Garab Dorje, the First Teacher of Dzogchen, Together with a Commentary by Dza Patrul Rinpoche entitled "The Special Teaching of the Wise and Glorious King"*, trans., com. John Myrdhin Reynolds (Ithaca, New York: Snow Lion Publications, 1996), pp. 30-31, 34.

According to *rNying ma pa* tradition, Garab Dorje was the first human teacher of *rDzogs chen*. Traditionally, the Great Perfection is said to have been taught previously to certain nonhuman beings in other dimensions of existence. Garab Dorje is allegedly born in the country of Uddiyana that was situated in modern-day Pakistan or Afganistan. It is believed that Garab Dorje received the transmission of the teaching directly from Vajrasattva, the Sambhogakaya aspect of Buddha and an archetype of eternity. Garab is considered to be an emanation (*spruls ku*) of Vajrasattva. In the view of Tibetans, *rDzogs chen* represents the genuine teaching of the Buddha. This word of Buddha, however, derives not so much from the historical Buddha Shakyamuni as from his trans-historical archetype Vajrasattva. Garab Dorje transmitted the *rDzogs chen* teaching to various disciples.²²⁶ Padmasambhava was the first transmitter of *rDzogs chen* teachings to Tibet in the eighth century. This, however, has been recently contested by Eva Dargyay. She claims that the teachings were introduced by Vairochana and Vilamamitra and attributed only in a later time (post-tenth century) to Padmasambhava.²²⁷

Throughout the history of Tibet, the adherents of *rDzogs chen* have not been strictly limited to the *rNying ma pa sect*. A *rDzogs chen* teaching of independent lineage is found preserved also in *Bonpo* tradition of Tibet, namely, the oral tradition from *Zhang-zhung* (the Western and Northern part of contemporary Tibet). As Samten Gyaltzen Karmay claims, both the *rNying ma pa* and *Bonpo* traditions share the doctrine without having contradictions at least at the philosophical level as well as a common source as far as the *rDzogs chen* tradition is concerned.²²⁸

The mention of *rDzogs chen* school is important for the present research because it deals with the concept of the so called ‘rainbow body’ (Tib. *‘ja’ lus*). The notion will be discussed in the last chapter. At the moment it is sufficient to note that the concept has been specially cultivated beginning with the eleventh century by *rNying ma pa* and *Bonpo*. A similar notion of rainbow body is found also in the texts of *Sa skya pa* sect of Tibetan Buddhism. A critic emphatically states that none of the Buddhist philosophical schools holds such a doctrine. The origins of the concepts are obviously of Bon nature. It is curious that according to Tibetan tradition, at times when the Bon was at its apogee, the Tibetan kings didn’t leave their bodies behind since they went to heaven by means

²²⁶ Ibid., pp. 22-24.

²²⁷ See more in Eva Dargyay, *The Rise of Esoteric Buddhism in Tibet* (Delhi: Motilal, 1977). (from John Myrdhin Reynolds, “Historical Origins of Dzogchen” in *The Golden Letters*, pp. 217-218.)

²²⁸ Samten Gyaltzen Karmay, *The Great Perfection (rDzogs chen): A philosophical and meditative Teaching in Tibetan Buddhism* (Leiden, New York, Kobenhavn, Köln: E.J. Brill, 1988), p. 219.

of the divine cord (*dMu*) in the form of white light.²²⁹ Hence, the concept of rainbow body is exclusively Tibetan, becoming an excellent ground for comparative analysis of the somatic aspect of soteriology.

Although the concept of rainbow body is cultivated by certain schools of Tibetan Buddhism, the ideal of the dissolution of the physical body in rainbow light is rather popular throughout Tibet. For instance, according to the tradition, a great jogi Milarepa, being a representative of *bKah brgyud pa* sect, achieved the same state of rainbow body.

Later the Tibetan idea of rainbow body transforms into a distinct aspect of the theory of the Clear Light. If the latter theory is of Tibetan or Indian origin, is a complicated question worthy of becoming a theme of a whole monograph. The theory of Clear Light is common to all sects of Tibetan Buddhism. As the Dalai Lama states, the idea of the innate fundamental mind of Clear Light is emphasized equally by the New Translation Schools (*bKah brgyud pa*, *Sa skya pa* and *dGe lugs pa*) and by the *Nying ma pa* and is the proper place of comparison of the old and new schools.²³⁰

Being based on the statement of Dalai Lama, we have employed the texts and secondary sources attributed to different Tibetan schools. The texts are with courage cited and discussed together. Besides, it is important to note that even if the similarity among teachings of different Tibetan sects was not so obvious, the purpose of the present research would remain the same, i.e., to make a search for these very commonalities not only among the Tibetan sects but also among religious traditions of completely different cultural origin.

The survey of Tibetan primary sources may be started with the most famous work among Tibetan Books of the Dead, i.e., *Bar do thos grol*. According to Tibetan tradition the text, which can be translated as “The Great Book of Natural Liberation through Understanding in the Between”, has been written in the eighth century by Padmasambhava and consequently hidden away. *Bar do thos grol* was brought to light by a discoverer of treasures of the fourteenth century, Karma Ling pa. He is claimed by some to have been an incarnation of Padma Sambhava himself. He discovered the mentioned booking a cave on the Gampo Dar Mountain in Central Tibet.²³¹

²²⁹ Ibid., pp. 195-196.

²³⁰ *Kindness, Clarity and Insight*, p. 208. (In John Powers, *Introduction to Tibetan Buddhism*, p. 316.)

²³¹ Кшиуке Ф.А. Ергкьфт ъекфты. Ёб *Еру Ешиуефт Ишцил ша еру Вуфв фы эцзгдфкдн лтицил шт еру Цуые Лтицил шт Ешиуе фы еру Пкуфе Ишцил ша Тфегкфд Дшиукфешит еркципр Гтвукыефтвшти шт еру Иуецуут Сшьзшыув ин Зфвьф Ыфьирфмф Вшысшмукув ин Лфкьф Дштпзф ъТуц Ншкклб Ешкштещб Дштвщтб Ынвтунб ФгсдфвЖ Ифтефь Ишцилыб 1994 Ёб з. 84.*

The treatise is attributed to so the called *gter ma* (treasure) literature of *rNying ma pa*, discovered by *gter ston* (discoverers of treasures). This sort of *rNying ma pa* texts are said to be originated in the early Buddhist period in Tibet, and be concealed and then rediscovered in later centuries. According to the tradition, the reason why the texts were hidden, is that people were not yet ready to read them. The texts were supposed to be discovered by *gter ton* who were specially prophesied by the masters hiding the *gter ma*. Western scholars as well as Tibetan scholars belonging to the three new sects of Tibetan Buddhism, usually consider the texts to be written by these very individuals who discovered them.²³² According to another version the texts were concealed during the persecution of Buddhism in the ninth century.

Bar do thos grol allegedly is one of these *gter ma*. In the present research the translation of Robert A.F. Thurman is used. The edition includes a part which is previously untranslated.²³³

The second work concerning death and liberation during death and attributed to *rNying ma pa*, is *Nyi ma dang zla ba kha sbyor ba gsang ba'I rgyud: The Tantra of the Great Secret Union of the Sun and the Moon*. The ancient text belongs to the *rDzogs chen* system of *Nying ma pa*. The text is translated into English and commented by Giacomella Orofino. The Tibetan original text is also present in the mentioned edition.

The Tantra of the great Secret Union is not the only translated text by Orofino. In the same edition we deal also with the extract from the *sGron ma drug gi gdams pa: The Doctrine of the Six Lights* from the literary cycle of the *rDzogs pa chen po zhang zhung snyan rgyud*. As Orofino observes, this is a collection of all the texts that have been transmitted by the oral *rDzogs chen* tradition that has its origin in *Zhang zhung*, a center of Bonpo culture and religion. The translation is complemented by the Tibetan original text.²³⁴

An important contribution to our research has been made by the *rDzogs chen* texts of *rNying ma pa* translated into English and complemented by interlinear

²³² John Myrdhin Reynolds, "Historical Origins of Dzogchen" in *The Golden Letters*, p. 215.

²³³ Robert A.F. Thurman notes that the best organized collection consists of 275 folios from which 150 are translated by him. The 108 folios of the main text have been translated by the Kazi Dawa-Samdup and W.H.Y. Evans-Wentz team, and later by Trungpa Rinpoche and Francesca Fremantle team. (See Кшиуке Ф.А. Ергкьфт ъекфты. Ёб Еру Ешиуефт Ишишл ша еру Вуфвб зз. 88-89.

²³⁴ Giacomella Orofino, "Introduction" in *Sacred Tibetan Teachings on Death and Liberation: Texts from the Most Ancient Traditions of Tibet*, trans. and com. Giacomella Orofino (Great Britain: Prism Press, 1990), pp. 9-10.

commentary of John Myrdhin Reynolds. The edition contains the last (posthumous²³⁵) teachings ('*das rjes*) of Garab Dorje known as *The Three Statements That Strike the Essential Points: Tshig gsum gnad du brdeg pa*. The text doesn't deal directly with death. Rather it is essential not only because it expresses the quintessential meaning of the entire corpus of *rDzogs chen* teaching, but also because Clear Light during meditation, the rainbow body etc. are discussed in detail by the commentators.

The first commentary on the Statements of Garab Dorje is written by the nineteenth century *rDzogs chen* master Dza Patrul Rinpoche (1808-1887) and is entitled the *mKhas pa shri rgyal po'i khyad chos: The Special Teaching of the Wise and Glorious King*. The commentary is the most popular one among Tibetan *rDzogs chen* practitioners nowadays. The commentary is followed by the commentary of the translator wherein the *Special Teaching of the Wise and Glorious King* is interpreted.²³⁶

As is already mentioned, *rDzogs chen* school is found also inside *Bon* tradition. The collection of *Zhang zhung snyan brgyud* texts representing *rDzogs chen* of *Bonpo* are helpful for those who explore the notion of Light in Tibetan tradition. In the present research a short section called '*Khor lo bzhi sbrags* of the mentioned collection of the texts is made use of. The section is of particular interest with regard to the conception of Light as the source of the phenomenological world.²³⁷

We have dealt also with two texts concerning death and dying of *dGe lugs pa*. They both are commentaries on Tsong kha pa treatise called *The Lamp Thoroughly Illuminating (Nararjuna's) "The Five Stages": Quintessential Instructions of the King of Tantras, the Glorious Guhyasamaja (rGyud kyi rgyal po dpal gsang ba'dus pa'i man ngag rim pa lnga rab tu gsal ba'i sgron me)*.

The first text interpreting Tsong ka pa treatise, is the *Lamp Thoroughly Illuminating the Presentation of the Three Basic Bodies – Death, Intermediate State and Rebirth (gZhi's sku gsum gyi rnam gzhas rab gsal sgron me)*²³⁸ written by dbYangs can dga' ba'I blo gros in 18th century, translated into English and commented

²³⁵ As Reynolds explains, great masters, such as Garab Dorje, after dissolving their physical body into pure radiant energy, then subsequently reappeared in the dimension of the sky bodies of light in order to bestow their last testaments upon their disciples. (John Myrdhin Reynolds, "Introduction" in *The Golden Letters*, pp. 34-35.)

²³⁶ Ibid.

²³⁷ See the translation of the section from *Zhang zhung snyan brgyud kyi bla ma brgyud pa'i rnam thar* by sPa bsTan-rgyal bzang-po (composed in 1419) in Samten Gyaltzen Karmay, *The Great Perfection (rDzogs chen): A philosophical and Meditative Teaching in Tibetan Buddhism*, pp. 203-205.

²³⁸ The original text is found in three editions: 1) ed. in Delhi: Dalama, Iron Dog year); 2) ed. by Nang bstan shes rog 'dzin skyong slob gnyer khang, no other data; 3) in *The Collected Works of A-kye Yongs-'dzin*, Vol. I (New Delhi: Lama Guru Deva, 1971).

by Lati Rinbochay and Jeffrey Hopkins²³⁹. As Jeffrey Hopkins notes, “the text presents in remarkable clarity the psychological basis of Buddhist practice, revealing the ultimate aim of the vast series of graded paths that Buddha set forth – the transformation of death into an immortal states of benefit to others”²⁴⁰.

The second interpretation of the mentioned treatise of Tsong ka pa is a contemporary work written by Geshe Kelsang Gyatso. In his *Clear Light of Bliss: Mahamudra in Vajrayana Buddhism* the author explains in detail the foundations of the so called mystical physiology and the processes which take place in the subtle body during meditation and death. The work presenting a perfect systematization of the mentioned topics is indispensable for the present research and, as an exception, is mentioned among primary sources.

bKah brgyud pa texts used in the present research are *The Path of Knowledge: The Yoga of the Six Doctrines: Chos drug bsdus pahi zin bris bshugs so* translated into English by late Lama Kazi Dawa-Samdub. One section of the text is dedicated to the practice of Clear Light and is continued by a section representing a shortened version of *Bar do thos grol*.²⁴¹

A special kind of literature is the hagiographic one. The most important texts of the mentioned genre are two. The first one is the *Biographical History of Jetsun-Milarepa (Jetsun Kahbum)*, which is written down by his disciple Rechung from the words of the master approximately eight hundred years ago. Rechung has added to the text his own introduction and the last chapter. As W. Y. Evans-Wentz observes, “on the whole, the biographical narrative, as it has come down to us, may be accepted as a faithful account of the sayings and doings of Jetsun, with due allowance for a certain amount of folk-lore and popular mythology which has been incorporated in it. As a Gospel of the Kargyutpa Sect, it is one of the many Sacred Books of the East; and, as such, perhaps as historically accurate as parts of the *New Testament*, if not more so.”²⁴²

²³⁹ Lati Rinbochay and Jeffrey Hopkins, *Death, Intermediate State and Rebirth in Tibetan Buddhism* (London: Rider and Company, 1979).

²⁴⁰ Jeffrey Hopkins, “Preface” in Lati Rinbochay and Jeffrey Hopkins, *Death, Intermediate State and Rebirth in Tibetan Buddhism*, pp. 20-21.

²⁴¹ *The Path of Knowledge: the Yoga of the Six Doctrines* (V, 21-24) in W.Y. Evans-Wentz (ed.), *Tibetan Yoga and Secret Doctrines or Seven Books of Wisdom of the Great Path, According to the Late Lāma Kazi Dawa-Samdub's English Rendering* (London, Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1982).

²⁴² W. Y. Evans-Wentz, “Introduction” in *Tibet's Great Yogī Milarepa: A Biography from the Tibetan being Jetsun-Kahdum or Biographical History of Jetsun-Milarepa, According to the Late Lāma Kazi Dawa-Samdub's English Rendering*, ed. W. Y. Evans-Wentz, 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), p. 2.

As the editor points out, the last chapter of the biography is almost the most important of all for Kargyutpas. Not only the hagiographical material concerning the passing away of the master and represented in the last chapter, is valuable. Here also “a summary of the most essential teachings of the Northern Buddhism” is found²⁴³.

The second text provided with commentaries of hagiographical character and used in the present research, is written by the representative of *rDzogs chen* school of *Bonpo*, Shardza Tashi Gyaltzen and commented by Lopon Tenzin Namdak. The text called *Heart Drops of Dharmakaya* is composed by the author in the beginning of the twentieth century. The information of the hagiographical character found in the commentaries and supplements concern the attainment of rainbow body by Tibetan masters. The proposed information is rather curious becoming a good background for the present comparative analysis.²⁴⁴ The text as such, discussing in detail the practices of *khregs chod* and *thod rgal*, has also been helpful for the last chapter of the dissertation. The edition is supplemented by a short but important bibliographical survey of primary and secondary literature about *rDzogs chen*.

The second block of literature is represented by the works of Tibetan masters and also of Western adepts of Buddhism, which may be attributed to the class of primary sources rather than to the group of academic literature. For the reason of phenomenological methodology of the research such kind of texts bearing a testimony to the vital religious experience are just indispensable. Here the books written by A. David-Neel²⁴⁵, Jurga Ivanauskaite²⁴⁶, Dalai Lama the XIV²⁴⁷, Lama Lodo²⁴⁸, Sogyal Rinpoche²⁴⁹, Francesca Fremantle²⁵⁰, Jampa Tinley²⁵¹, etc., can be mentioned.

²⁴³ Ibid., p. 3.

²⁴⁴ Shardza Tashi Gyaltzen, *Heart Drops of Dharmakaya: Dzogchen Practice of the Bön Tradition*, trans. and com. Lopon Tenzin Namdak, ed. Richard Dixey, 2nd edn. (Ithaca, New York: Snow Lion Publications, 2002). The full name of the text is ‘The Teaching of the Progressive Great Perfection Called the Heart Drops of Dharmakaya’ (*‘od gsal rdzogs pa chen po’i lam gyi rim pa khrid yig kun tu bzang po’i snying tig shes bya ba bzhugs* (A Teaching about the Development of Great Perfection called *The Heart Drops of Dharmakaya*). The edition is provided by the original Tibetan text.

²⁴⁵ А. Давид-Неэль, *Мистики и маги Тибета* (Москва: Дягилев Центр, 1991); Alexandra David-Neel, *Initiations and Initiates in Tibet*, trans. Fred Rothwell (New York: Dover Publications, 1993).

²⁴⁶ Jurga Ivanauskaite, *Zaudētā Apsolitā Zeme*, tulk. Talrids Rullis (Rīga: Jumava, 2000).

²⁴⁷ His Holiness the Dalai Lama, *The Good Heart: A Buddhist Perspective on Teachings of Jesus* (Somerville: Wisdom Publications, 1996).

²⁴⁸ Venerable Lama Lodö, *Bardo teachings: The Way of Death and Rebirth* (Ithaca, New York: Snow Lion Publications, 1987).

²⁴⁹ Sogyal Rinpoche, *The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying*, ed. Patrick Gaffney and Andrew Harvey (New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 1994).

The third group of sources includes those which can be designated as the academic ones. It must be mentioned here that very often these works are written by Tibetan scholars as well as by Western adherents of the Tibetan spiritual tradition. Among them are the works of Giuseppe Tucci²⁵², Detlef Ingo Lauf²⁵³, Agehananda Bharati²⁵⁴, Samten Gyaltzen Karmay²⁵⁵, Lama Anagarika Govinda²⁵⁶, Jung Young Lee²⁵⁷, Glenn H. Mullin²⁵⁸, John Myrdhin Reynolds²⁵⁹, Marco Pallis²⁶⁰, Russian Buddhologists Androsov²⁶¹ and Rozenberg²⁶², etc.

Although literature in Buddhist-Christian comparative studies is rather vast, sources in comparative analysis of Tibetan Buddhism and Hesychasm are rare. Tibetan Buddhism in its different manifestations is popular in Europe and America nowadays. Hesychasm, however, is not at all known to Europeans and Americans in spite of the fact that its cultural background is much closer to European mentality. The absence of information and interest about this contemplative movement inside Christianity, obviously, entails an absence of researches in the mentioned field.

Orthodox Christians, in turn, are too much isolated in their endeavor to save the “genuine Orthodox spirituality” untouched to perform any exploration in the field of comparative religion. The negative attitude to any sort of comparative studies has been

²⁵⁰ Francesca Fremantle, *Luminous Emptiness: Understanding the tibetan Book of the Dead* (Boston&London: Shambala, 2001).

²⁵¹ Геше Джампа Тинлей, *Ум и пустота* (Москва: Московский буддийский центр Ламы Цонкапы, 1999)..

²⁵² Джузеппе Туччи, *Религии Тибета*, пер. О. В. Альбедиль (Санкт-Петербург: Евразия, 2005).

²⁵³ Detlef Ingo Lauf, *Secret Doctrines of the Tibetan Books of the Dead*, trans. Graham Parkes (Boulder, London: Shambala, 1977). See also his *Some Comparisons with Ideas about Death and the After-Life in Other Cultures* in the end of the book.

²⁵⁴ Agehananda Bharati, *The Tantric Tradition* (Bombay, Calcutta, Madras, Delhi: B. I. Publications, 1976).

²⁵⁵ Samten Gyaltzen Karmay, *The Great Perfection (rDzogs chen): A Philosophical and Meditative Teaching in Tibetan Buddhism* (Leiden, New York, Kobenhavn, Köln: E.J. Brill, 1988).

²⁵⁶ Lama Anagarika Govinda, *Foundations of Tibetan Mysticism* (New York: Samuel Weiser, 1975).

²⁵⁷ Jung Young Lee, *Death and Beyond in Eastern Perspective: A Study Based on the Bardo Thödol and the I Ching* (New York: Interface Book, 1974).

²⁵⁸ Glenn H. Mullin, *Death and Dying: The Tibetan Tradition* (London, New York: Arkana, 1986).

²⁵⁹ *The Golden Letters: The Three Statements of garab Dorje* (op. cit.).

²⁶⁰ Marco Pallis, *A Buddhist Spectrum: Contributions to Buddhist-Christian Dialogue* (Bloomington: World Wisdom, 2003).

²⁶¹ В. П. Андросов, *Будда Шакьямуни и индийский буддизм: современное истолкование древних текстов* (Москва: Восточная литература РАН, 2001).

²⁶² О. О. Розенберг, *Труды по буддизму* (Москва: Наука, 1991).

expressed by Russian theologian S. S. Horuzhy. He has admitted that nowadays the role of comparative studies has been too exaggerated. In his view, the post-modern attempts to compare and combine anything often lack a deep understanding of what is compared. This results un-adequate, superficial and meaningless interpretations.

In the beginning it is important to go deeply into a tradition and to explore it in detail from within. Only from the perspective of a perfect knowledge of this very tradition it is possible to grasp its true correlation with other religious traditions. Only by this approach one will be able to see true commonalities and differences and to distinguish them from minor and superficial ones. As Horuzhy underscores, a scholar doesn't have any right to derogate the essentials of a certain religious tradition. For instance, if Hesychasm is compared to other religious traditions, the holistic and personal orientation of Hesychasm towards transcendence should not be ignored. Hesychasm is a path for overcoming our mortal nature in the energetic union with Christ.²⁶³ We believe that the stated reservations are not an obstacle for comparative studies as such. The warning of Horuzhy should be taken seriously in order to avoid the most wide-spread mistakes and imperfections of comparative studies.

An obvious example of such an erroneous interpretation of Hesychasm in the context of comparative studies is *Yoga and Christianity* written by Justin O'Brien. For the benefit of a successful comparative analysis the scholar has ignored the most important truths of Christian spirituality, for instance the notion of Grace. The scholar discusses the psycho-physical method of Hesychast prayer as the crucial path to God. At the same time the primary role of the Divine Grace in the process of *theosis* has been overlooked by Justin O'Brien. Hence, the identification of Jesus Prayer and *japa joga*²⁶⁴ made by the scholar seems to be irrelevant. That these two are not one and the same is stressed by John Meyendorff. The auxiliary role of the psycho-physical method of Jesus Prayer has been discussed in his book, dedicated to the life and works of Gregory Palamas.²⁶⁵

According to the interpretation of Justin O'Brien the effect of Jesus Prayer is introversion (*enstasis*), interiorization of mind, expansion of consciousness and higher

²⁶³ С. С. Хоружий, "Аналитический словарь исихастской антропологии" // *Синергия: проблемы аскетики и мистики Православия*, сс. 46-47.

²⁶⁴ Justin O'Brien, *Yoga and Christianity* (Honesdale, Pennsylvania: Himalayan International Institute, 1978), pp. 25-26.

²⁶⁵ Протопресвитер Иоанн Мейендорф, *Жизнь и труды Святого Григория Паламы: Введение в изучение*, сс. 194-198.

intuitive approach to reality.²⁶⁶ As is obvious none of the mentioned notions are originally Christian. The author tries to translate Hesychasm into the language of Yoga of Patanjali by making superficial conclusions. In the context of Christianity one never deals with *enstasis* alone because, according to the theistic model, the Divine vision should result in *ecstasis*. The culmination of prayer can be also formulated as God abiding in the soul of man. O'Brien, in his turn, speaks only about the interiorization of the mind that is valid for Yoga of Patanjali rather than for Hesychasm. Such formulations as "the expansion of consciousness" and "higher intuitive approach to reality" are also completely extraneous for the Christian doctrine.

An endeavor to combine the foundations of the so called mystical physiology (i.e., physiology of the subtle body) of Tantrism and principles of Hesychast prayer entail inadequate interpretations of the latter. The scholar writes that "man becomes and continues to be enlivened with God's life through the action of breathing."²⁶⁷ The consideration based upon the Tantric idea of *prāna* as the vitalizing force, seems to be irrelevant in the context of Christianity. John Meyendorff underscores that breathing is one of auxiliary methods of concentration²⁶⁸. It can't be claimed as a primary means of sharing God's life.

The reason of the misunderstandings is twofold. On the one hand the importance of the so called externals of religion has been completely ignored by the author. This causes a situation when spirituality is reduced to the privatization of mysticism which has already been discussed above. The second reason of the error is the absence of the border between phenomenology and doctrine. This very border could help to proclaim a commonality at the level of experience and differences at the doctrinal level. Finally, it would entail an adequate usage of the terms. Saying that "*theosis* and *samadhi* unite" the scholar has not made an important reservation. The consideration may be true if viewed from the phenomenological point of view; rather it would be completely erroneous from the doctrinal perspective.

A successful comparison of Hesychast photic experiences and those of Tibetan yogis has been made by Mircea Eliade.²⁶⁹ It is provided by brief but essential conclusions. The comparison, however, is very short, being just a section of the work

²⁶⁶ Justin O'Brien, *Yoga and Christianity*, pp. 29, 32-33.

²⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 34.

²⁶⁸ Протопресвитер Иоанн Мейендорф, *Жизнь и труды Святого Григория Паламы: Введение в изучение*, с. 197.

²⁶⁹ Мирча Элиаде, "Мефистофель и Андрогин", пер. А. В. Нестерова // Мирча Элиаде, *Азиатская алхимия*, сс. 344-349; 363-367.

dedicated to the phenomenon of lumenophany in different religious traditions. The research of Mircea Eliade allows us to inscribe our own comparison in a wider cultural context and to attribute the cross-cultural meaning to the phenomenon of photism as such. We believe that the present dissertation will become a contribution to the young but crucial domain of comparative religious studies.

Doctrine of Man in Christianity and Buddhism

To introduce the topic it is important to clarify the meaning of the term *anthropology*. If one tends to find this usual for the Christian thought term in Buddhism he or she will be confronted by with its absence. Therefore the first thing we should do is to search for the appropriate term in order to designate the Buddhist doctrine of man. Our task is also to realise the reason why the notion of anthropology is extraneous for Buddhists and is essential for Christians.

Christian Theology and Buddhist Philosophy

In the beginning it is helpful to remember that not only the domain of anthropology but also the notion of theology is absent in the classic Buddhism. Siddhartha Buddha denied the doctrine of Brahman as the cause of the world substituting it by the principle of Dependent Origination (*pratītya-samutpāda*), i.e. the Twelfefold Chain of Causes. It is the reason why the adherents of the classic Indian Buddhism do not make use of the term *theology* giving priority to *philosophy*. V.P. Androsov thinks it is better to make use of the term of *the religious philosophy*, stressing that all the Buddhist treatises, including the polemic and epistemological ones, were created with a religious purpose. Thus it would be irrelevant to distinguish between the religious and philosophical Buddhist sources.²⁷⁰ It means that the border between the religion (represented in the West by Christian theology) and philosophy is never valid for the Asian type of thinking.

V. K. Shohin, comparing Indian and Greek systems of philosophy, stresses that the former offers different “programs” of the releasing oneself and achievement the soteriological goal, whilst the latter represents various abstract ideas of cosmology, solving the question of being in quite an intellectual manner. Indian philosophy’s core is a psycho-technique; the focus of Greek philosophy is of speculative origin.²⁷¹

²⁷⁰ В.П. Андросов, *Будда Шакьямуни и индийский буддизм. Современное истолкование древних текстов* (Москва: Восточная литература РАН, 2001), с. 239.

²⁷¹ В.К. Шохин, *Первые философы Индии* (Москва: Ладомир, 1997), сс. 204-205.

The idea of mutual interplay between philosophy and religion in the East has been explained by Aloysius Pieris like this, “In the Oriental, especially the Indian, systems the concepts of philosophy (*darśana*) and religion (*pratipadā*) are not compartmentalised, as has been done in the West, not subordinated one to the other. “No Indian philosophical system is merely speculative,” explains Murti. “Each is a *darśana*, an insight into the real which is at once a path of salvation and cessation of pain.”²⁷² In the Buddha’s message, the fourfold truth and the eightfold path — the theory and the praxis — include each other in a mutuality that makes the oft repeated question, “Is Buddhism a philosophy or a religion?,” null and void.”²⁷³

According to Aloysius Pieris the relationship between philosophy and religion in the West is insightfully presented by Panikkar in the context of philosophy of religion. “Panikkar’s criticism of Western philosophy of religion results in suggesting that the relationship between philosophy and religion be neither *heteronomy* (domination of a religion over philosophy as in Western tradition) nor *autonomy* (independence of the two — being a recent reaction to the earlier heteronomy), but *ontonomy*.²⁷⁴ It is an orientation of that guarantees a philosophical understanding of religion from within every religion.”²⁷⁵

Searching for the reason compartmentalisation of religion and philosophy in the West, Aloysius Pieris discovers its ancient roots in Church History, “The fathers were interested in non-Christian philosophy insofar as it was apt *intellectual equipment* to grasp revelation conceptually and formulate it in a manner intelligible to the “pagan” culture in which they lived. Thus begins the tradition in which Christian “religion” learned to instrumentalize philosophy. In fact, as Pannenberg points out, the later medieval image of philosophy as *ancilla theologiae* was already used by Clement of Alexandria and expressed in its classical form in Peter Damian’s allegorical interpretations of Deuteronomy 21:10ff.²⁷⁶ The “heteronomous” relationship between

²⁷² T. V. Murti, *Central Philosophy of Buddhism* (London: Allen&Unwin, 1955), p. 30. (from Aloysius Pieris, S.J., *Love Meets Wisdom. A Christian Experience of Buddhism* (Maryknoll, New York 10545: Orbis Books, 1988), p. 19.)

²⁷³ Aloysius Pieris, S.J., *Love Meets Wisdom. A Christian Experience of Buddhism* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1990), p. 19.

²⁷⁴ R. Panikkar, “Philosophy of Religion in the Contemporary Encounter of Cultures” in R. Klibansky (ed.), *Contemporary Philosophy. A Survey* (Florence: La nuova Italia, 1971), p. 234. (from Aloysius Pieris, S.J., *Love Meets Wisdom. A Christian Experience of Buddhism*, p. 20.)

²⁷⁵ Aloysius Pieris, S.J., op. cit., p. 20.

²⁷⁶ W. Pannenberg, *Theology and the Philosophy of Science* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1976), p. 10. (from Aloysius Pieris, S.J., op. cit., p. 21.)

religion and philosophy, which I have criticised, following Pannikar, had its remote origins here.”²⁷⁷

Hence, early Christianity, being Semitic in its origin, was deprived of philosophy of its own and had to accept and subordinate the Greek system of philosophical reflection. Obviously, it was not possible for Christian theology to accept the “pagan” philosophy as something equal in order not to be consumed by its own weapon. In Hinduism and Buddhism the situation changes completely because of the common Indian root, philosophy and religion have grown out. Even more than that, one should do an effort to differentiate between philosophy and religion in Indian context.

This observation, however, doesn't mean that the notion of *theology* is completely absent in Buddhism. Visually close to the Christian term *theology* is the term of *Buddhalogy* adopted by Buddhist scholars. Shashi Bhushan Dasgupta in his *Introduction to Tantric Buddhism* makes use of the term, while discussing the origins of the idea of *Trikāya* of Mahāyānists. He writes that before the theory developed its cosmological and ontological significance, it could be designated as *mere Buddhalogy* and should be explained in the following manner: The quintessence of Buddha is Buddha in *nirvāna* and is called *Dharmakāya*; before he merges into *nirvāna* he possesses and enjoys the fruit of his charitable behaviour as *Bodhisattva*, and this is *Sambhogakāya*; again, human beings, known as the Buddhas, who are created by the magical contrivances represent *Nirmānakāya*. Later the *Trikāya* theory acquires a cosmological and ontological meaning, and “we find the three *Kāyas* mentioned more often in their composite sense than either as pure *Buddhalogy*”.²⁷⁸

Although the term of *Buddhalogy* seems to have some sort of resemblance to the Christian *theology*, it is used by Western scholars and is not conventional among Buddhists. For the Buddhist religious reflection it is not typical to distinguish any speculative domain from the integral corpus of philosophy. According to Mādhyamaka each phenomenon or notion is empty, i.e. is originated dependently. This conditioned arising of things determines the mutual interdependence of entities and reflects their non-nature. It means that discrete entities do not exist and an entity is what it is only in relation to other entities.²⁷⁹ Therefore it is meaningless to discuss any object or notion apart other ones and Buddha is not an exception. If we distinguish Buddha and

²⁷⁷ Aloysius Pieris, S.J., op. cit, p. 21.

²⁷⁸ Shashi Bhushan Dasgupta, *An Introduction to Tantric Buddhism* (Berkeley&London: Shambala, 1974), pp. 12-13.

²⁷⁹ More about Mādhyamika see Moti Lal Pandit, *Śūnyatā. The Essence of Mahāyāna Spirituality* (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 1998), pp. 246-266.

Buddhalogy as something independent and standing apart, we attribute the self-nature to Buddha that is against the Buddhist principle of *anātman*. Obviously, this very composite aspect of Buddhist philosophy was underscored by Dasgupta discussing the absence of the pure *Buddhalogy* in Mahāyāna.

Hitherto the theoretical part of Buddhism has been discussed. Aloysius Pieris, however, has noticed that except this doctrinal department of the religion (with *nirvanacentricity* of Theravāda tradition) there exists the other level of belief that is the religious practice, marked by *Buddhocentricity* where all worship culminates in the worship of the Buddha. Dr. Snellgrove suggests to consider the ultimacy of *nirvāna* as expressive of a *philosophy*, whereas the Buddha cult (together with the legends about his birth, conquest of Māra, enlightenment, etc.) as a *theology*. The shift of accent from the ideal of *nirvāna* to the ideal of Buddhahood would then be the development of a philosophy into a theology.²⁸⁰

According to the interpretation of Aloysius Pieris the ultimacy of *nirvāna* and its attainment (*paññā*) together with him who had supremely attained it (*Buddha*) are placed on a par as twin values in this *samsāric* existence. *Nirvāna* is the religious goal, whilst Buddha is the path. Hence any essential distinction between the “authentic Buddhism” and the “popular one” can never be valid. The transcendent Buddha as an object of the cult “is the symbol most expressive of the supracosmic goal of nirvana and, pedagogically, the most effective. In him the ideal of nirvana reveals itself as a realised goal rather than as a receding horizon.”²⁸¹

The practical sense of *theology* beside the doctrinal character of *philosophy* in the context of Tantric Buddhism is discovered by Shashi Bhushan. The abstract metaphysical speculations “deal with the nature of the reality and philosophic method for its realisation” and have nothing in common with the esoteric methods of Tantras. “The Tantra, whether Hindu or Buddhistic, has to be regarded as an independent religious literature, which utilised relevant philosophical doctrines, but the origin of which may not

²⁸⁰ “Traditional and Doctrinal Interpretations of Buddhahood. An Outline for a ‘Theology of Buddhahood’ (London: SOAS, Seminar on Aspects of Religion in South East Asia) (cyclostyled, 1971). Reprinted later in *Bulletin of the Secretariat for Non-Christians*, 5 (1970) 3-24. (from Aloysius Pieris, S.J., op. cit., p. 55.)

²⁸¹ Aloysius Pieris, S.J., op. cit., pp. 55-56.

We can assume that the notion of theology might be acceptable for Mahāyāna on the whole by the force of presence of innumerable personified buddhas and bodhisattvas, who, of course, are not gods in the direct sense of the word. However, it would be difficult to abandon the *tremendous compassionate role* of bodhisattvas in liberation of the devoted adherents. The same salvific power belongs to God in Christianity; in Hinduism god Viṣṇu is endowed with the compassionate ability to liberate his devotees.

be traced to any system or systems of philosophy; it consists essentially of religious methods and practices”. These practices, however, have their own fundamental postulates upon. These are the notion of the human body as the best medium of truth on the one hand, and “the *theological* principle of duality in nonduality” on the other hand.²⁸² The two theories are inseparable for the two poles of nonduality (i.e. *Śiva* and *Śakti* in Hinduism, and *śūnyatā* and *karunā* or *prajñā* and *upāya* in Buddhism, as male and female principles) are situated in this very human body. Although not Buddhocentricity but the principle of relative duality marks Tantric Buddhism, this sort of theology is conceived as explicitly practical by its nature.

According to Dasgupta, it is relevant to call the principle of duality *the esoteric theology*. Besides, in tantrism “it may not be a fact that the practices are there solely because of this theology; on the contrary, we are inclined to postulate great influence of these practices in evolving the doctrinal theology through the gradual transformation of the Mahāyānic ideas”.²⁸³

In a similar manner as it is in the case of *Buddhalogy*, the term of *esoteric theology* is not elaborated by Buddhists. In order to find out what kind of terminology is acceptable for representatives of Tantra, one should just become acquainted with the teaching program of a Buddhist monastery in Tibet or Mongolia. As Badzar Baradiyn (1878-1937) notices, Tibetans are used to divide the Buddhist reflection into *Realics* and *Symbolics*, those are known among the adepts as *Sūtra* and *Tantra*. Usually there are two different faculties at Buddhist monasteries, those are the faculty of ‘Realics’ and that of ‘Symbolics’. Realics is the first part of the teaching program proposing studies of the exoteric Buddhist doctrine, i.e., general teachings of Mahāyāna. Studies at the Faculty are accessible for each volunteer. Students of Symbolics go further and are familiarised with the theoretical part and practices of Tantrism, those are esoteric being accessible only to initiated and able ones.²⁸⁴ The border between Realics and Symbolics is approximately the same as between philosophy and esoteric theology mentioned by Dasgupta. To be precise, the way of Symbolics, i.e. the Tantric path, is considered by its devotees to be much more effective because of special esoteric methods that *Sūtra* doesn’t possess. Realics, in turn, consists of 1) *Pramāna* (Skt.) or gnoseology, 2) *Paramitā* (Skt.) or the theory of Enlightenment, 3) *Madhyamāna* (Skt.) or the theory of the Middle Way, 4)

²⁸² Shashi Bhushan Dasgupta, *An Introduction to Tantric Buddhism*, pp. 3-5.

²⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 77.

²⁸⁴ Б. Б. Барадийн, *Буддийские монастыри: краткий очерк // Orient: Альманах*, выпуск 1. *Буддизм и Россия* (С.-Петербург, 1992), сс. 95, 106.

Abhidharma (Skt.) or the synthetic philosophy of Buddhism, 5) *Vinaya* (Skt.) or the monastic ethics.²⁸⁵

The first two subjects concern doctrine of man and will be dealt with later. The next two ones represent the Buddhist philosophy; the last subject refers to the practical side of monastic life. Special attention is to be paid to the fact that *Abhidharma*, representing philosophic analysis of the four noble truths, is conceived as the most important subject of the Faculty.²⁸⁶ *Abhidharma* analyses basic Buddhist ideas, including the idea of *anātman* and the notion of dependent co-arising. *Madhyamāna*, in its turn, as a further philosophic interpretation of the theories of *anātman* and *pratītya samutpāda*, is related to *Abhidharma* as its sequel. As is evident, Buddhists do not divide the subject matter into parts, and philosophy into independent subjects, making an attempt to avoid dichotomous conceptualisation and to cultivate an idea of unity of all phenomena. It means that *holism* is one of the most important features of Buddhist philosophy.

Christian Anthropology and Buddhist Psychology

To clarify the role of anthropology in Christianity, it is helpful to remember that it is connected with *anthropocentrism* as one of the typical aspects of Christian doctrine. Man is the only creature in God's image and likeness, whilst other creatures are images of man. Man is supposed to rule "over every living creature" (Gen. 1, 28), which, in turn, is not able to achieve salvation by its own. Man is the main agent of the process of creature's salvation. As L.I. Vasilenko observes, man is the centre of the universe. However, this anthropocentrism doesn't concern ordinary man, as only the redeemed human being can become the focus of the world. Anthropocentrism is interrelated with Christocentrism.²⁸⁷ As is stated by Hegumen Hillarion (Alfeyev), man is a creature, but, being an image of Ultimate God, in the act of completion he becomes a marvellous centre of the world through the Son.²⁸⁸ To generalize, man differs from other creatures essentially, that is a purpose to create a certain domain of Christian doctrine called *anthropology*.

²⁸⁵ Ibid., с. 96.

²⁸⁶ Ibid., с. 98.

²⁸⁷ Л. И. Василенко, *Краткий религиозно-философский словарь* (Москва: Истина и жизнь, 2000), с. 14.

²⁸⁸ Игумен Иларион (Алфеев), "Архимандрит Софроний" / *Преподобный Силуан и его ученик Софроний. По материалам «Силуановских чтений»* (Клин: Христианская жизнь, 2001), с. 153.

Hesychasm has been skilful enough to exalt man among other creatures, utilising several arguments. The first one was turned against the neoplatonic ontology of Pseudo-Dionysius with its hierarchic arrangement of the universe. Barlaam, being an adherent of Pseudo-Dionysius' theology and an opponent of Gregory Palamas, asserts that man can communicate with God only through mediation of all stages of the celestial hierarchy, i.e. through angels as they are situated on the top of the created world and are the closest beings to God. Gregory Palamas attempts to refute the validity of the hierarchy²⁸⁹ claiming that God has become incarnate as a man and not as an angel. In this way God has abolished the ancient order of man's relationship with God, creating the new one, which is deprived of any mediation.²⁹⁰ According to Gregory Palamas, this is the quintessence of the Good News.²⁹¹

The second argument, exalting man, is connected with the first one. If God has become incarnate as a man, He has accepted human nature and has united it with God's nature. In other words man is able to become God by participation and therefore is the main agent and mediator of salvation of creatures. Not men through the mediation of angels, but vice versa, angels thanks to the human beings can be deified.

Man is special also because of the matter of which he partially consists. The human being is the only microcosm, including the uncreated and created poles of existence. As God has part in us through the Incarnation, man similarly participates in

²⁸⁹ S. S. Horuzhy's idea of controversy between Gregory Palamas and Pseudo-Dionysius has been obviously shared by John Meyendorff and professor A. M. Ritter. In unison with Fr John Romanides, Alexander Golitzin, however, contests the consideration, underscoring that "neither Palamas nor Dionysius believed that the great theophanies of either the past (to the saints of Israel), or of the present (to the saints of the New Covenant) took or take place through angelic mediation, but rather that the angels served both then and now to explain and interpret the *visio dei luminis*. [...] In Triads 2.3.30, Gregory spells out the distinction between mediated *knowledge* and direct *vision*. [...] His illustration of this principle is Moses on Sinai. The latter was indeed given the Law "through angels, but not the vision itself [...]" This is, again, exactly the distinction that Dionysius assumes. In *Celestial Hierarchy* 4.2, he makes the same point of angelic meditation of the Law, as well as of the angels teaching the patriarchs before Moses, but it is the latter who is the express recipient and exemplar of immediate contact with God in the justly famous lines from *Mystical Theology* 1.3, which feature the Godseer's ascent into mysterious darkness of "unknowing". (Alexander Golitzin, "Dionysius the Areopagite in the Works of Gregory Palamas: On the Question of a "Christological Corrective and Related Matters" in *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 46.2-3 (2002), pp. 170-171.)

²⁹⁰ See Св. Григорий Палама, *Триады в защиту священнобезмолвствующих* (2, 3, 29) (Москва: Канон, 1995), сс. 216-217.

²⁹¹ С. С. Хоружий, *Диптих безмолвия: Аскетическое учение о человеке в богословском и философском освещении* (Москва: Центр психологии и психотерапии, 1991), сс. 51-52.

creature through matter. Due to this common part, i.e. matter, salvation is mediated to creatures.²⁹²

The latter consideration is expressed, for instance, by Symeon the New Theologian like this. Only man is created by God as a dichotomous being. He possesses body, consisting of the four elements as well as of senses and breath. But he also has the intelligent, intangible and immaterial soul which is incomprehensibly united with the body. Thus, man is simultaneously mortal and immortal, seen and unseen, sensuous and intelligent, able to perceive what is created and to grasp what is mental.²⁹³ Hence, man is the only created being capable of embracing the whole world by participation.

That man is a microcosm and a mediator between God and other creatures, is most emphatically insisted upon by Gregory Nazianzen in his *Second Oration on Easter*, “Now the Creator-Word, determining to exhibit this, and to produce a single living being out of both (the invisible and the visible creation, I mean) fashions Man; and taking a body from already existing matter, and placing in it a Breath taken from Himself (which the Word knew to be an intelligent soul, and the image of God), as a sort of second world, great in littleness, He placed him on the earth, a new Angel, a mingled worshipper, fully initiated into the visible creation, but only partially into the intellectual; king of all upon earth, but subject to the King above; earthly and heavenly; temporal and yet immortal; visible and yet intellectual; half-way between greatness and lowliness; in one person combining spirit and flesh; spirit because of the favour bestowed on him, flesh on account of the height to which he had been raised; the one that he might continue to live and glorify his benefactor, the other that he might suffer, and by suffering be put in remembrance, and be corrected if he became proud in his greatness; a living creature, trained here and then moved elsewhere; and to complete the mystery, deified by its inclination to God”.²⁹⁴

This kind of exalted Hesychast anthropology together with the positive attitude to creature is called by Russian theologian Archimandrite Kiprian Kern *the joyful cosmism*. He notices that this shift was really hard from the typically Eastern elevation of the spiritual realm to the exaltation of man and matter.²⁹⁵

²⁹² Ibid., cc. 52-53.

²⁹³ Преподобный Симеон Новый Богослов, *Деятельные и богословские главы (152) // Творения. Том 2. Слова 53-92* (Свято-Троицкая Сергиева Лавра, 1993), с. 558.

²⁹⁴ Gregory Nazianzen, *Select Orations* (XLV, VII) in *A Selected Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church: Second Series*, ed. by Philip Schaff, D.D., LL.D., Henry Wace, D.D., vol. VII: *S. Cyril of Jerusalem, S. Gregory Nazianzen* (Michigan: WM. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, n.d.), p. 425.

²⁹⁵ According to Kiprian (Kern) one of the fruits of the Eastern elevation of the spiritual

The third argument also concerns the relationship between man and other creatures. Making use of the comparison of human beings with angels, Gregory Palamas asserts that angels were created to be under the rule of God and to serve the Highest Mind and men, whilst men are supposed to be servants of God and rulers of the lower world simultaneously.²⁹⁶ St. Symeon the New Theologian, in his turn, proposes to interpret the universe as the content of the human soul,

“[...] this visible world is the man whom God created according to His own image and according to His own likeness, this we call the world, since he is adorned with virtues, he rules over the terrestrial beings, in the same way as God has power over the universe, and since man reigns over his passions

to the degree that he lives according to the image and he subdues the demons, the perpetrators of evils, he tramples upon the ancient, immense serpent, as though he were a simple little sparrow.”²⁹⁷

Here again is expressed the theme of microcosm, skilfully combined with the idea of image and likeness and that of man’s supremacy in macrocosm.

The other three arguments are also supposed to destroy the hierarchy of Pseudo-Dionysius. Again, in comparison with angels, men are higher because they are endowed with *the image of God* which, in turn, is expressed in their creative ability. Although human beings do not create things of nothing (*ex nihilo*), they are the only living beings, imitating God in His creative work. Here the conclusion is made by Gregory Palamas, that human beings are created in God’s image to a larger extent than angels are.²⁹⁸

The next point, exalting man, follows. The capacity to create is not the only thing which witnesses man to have been made in God’s image. Human being is also a perfect image of Trinity, due to the fact that his soul consists of three parts, those are the mind (the image of the Father), the word (the image of the Son) and the life-giving spirit (the

realm are the theological position of Monophysites and the famous heresy of Manichaeism. (Архимандрит Киприан (Керн), *Антропология Св. Григория Паламы* (Москва: Паломник, 1996), сс. 359-360.)

²⁹⁶ See, for instance, Cap. 44, — col. 1152 C. (from Архимандрит Киприан (Керн), *Антропология Св. Григория Паламы*, с. 363)

²⁹⁷ St. Symeon the New Theologian, *Hymns of Divine Love* (33), trans. by George A. Maloney, S.J. (Denville, New Jersey, n.d.), p. 183.

²⁹⁸ Cap. 63, — col. 1165 C. (from Архимандрит Киприан (Керн), *Антропология Св. Григория Паламы*, с. 364.)

image of the Holy Spirit). Besides, men are endowed with God's image for ever and independently of their deeds. Even when a certain man or a woman is not aware of carrying God's image, this very image is constantly present in him or her. Angels are not that perfect and, therefore, possess God's image to a lesser extent than men.²⁹⁹

The next argument is the most speculative one. Gregory Palamas makes use of Aristotelian notions of "substance", i.e., "potentiality" (ἡ δύναμις), and "operation" (ἡ ἐνέργεια). The reception of the Aristotelian ideas was typical also for Thomas Aquinas who transformed them into *essentia* and *existentia* or *esse reale*. This is an obvious reason why an attempt to compare mystical Theology of Gregory Palamas and Scholasticism of Thomas, has been repeatedly made by theologians.³⁰⁰

The two categories, those of "substance" and "energies", are valid in the context of theology as well as of anthropology. Again Palamas, comparing human beings with angels, claims that each spiritual being, a man or an angel, possesses *life by substance* and, thus, is endowed with eternity. However, the soul of man has also *life by action* (κατὰ τὴν ἐνέργειαν) that is able to vivify the body. Soul's life by action means life is in relation to something else, for instance, to the body, and not life in itself, as it is in the case of soul's substance.

It is curious that according to palamism souls of animals are endowed only with life by action because they contemplate solely the life of the body. The soul of an animal isn't able to contemplate anything else and therefore is deprived of life by substance. When the body of an animal dies, its soul is also destined to die.³⁰¹ Here we should once more remember the notion of man as a microcosm, which includes the extreme of spiritual realm and that of animated matter. That is why man is the unique essential link or glue that keeps all creatures, angels and animals, and all elements of the macrocosm together.

²⁹⁹ At the same time angels excel men in God's likeness. God's likeness means the spiritual (i.e., illumined) mode of being, which is lost by men because of the original sin. (Cap. 39, — col. 1148 B. (from Архимандрит Киприан (Керн), *Антропология Св. Григория Паламы*, с. 362). John Meyendorff comments this statement of Gregory Palamas like this: the image of God in man differs from the likeness because the former is given to each of us for ever, whilst the latter is developed in man due to God's grace and man's response, i.e. his co-operation. (Протопресвитер Иоанн Мейендорф, *Жизнь и труды святителя Григория Паламы*, с. 170.)

³⁰⁰ С. С. Хоружий, *Диптих безмолвия: Аскетическое учение о человеке в богословском и философском освещении*, сс. 43-44.

³⁰¹ Cap. 30, — col. 1140; Cap. 31, — col. 1141 A. (from Архимандрит Киприан (Керн), *Антропология Св. Григория Паламы*, сс. 361-362)

The position of man in Buddhism differs due to the absence of anthropocentrism. Man is just one of six (according to the other system of cosmology - five) ontologically equal categories of living beings. Those are called *the six forms of existence* derived from the six hindrances. The sixfold cosmology includes the entities of gods (*deva*), titans (*asura*), human beings (*manusya*), animals (*tiryagyoni*), hungry ghosts (*preta*) and denizens of hell (*naraka*).³⁰² All inhabitants of the six realms are identical in their essence. In Buddhism one deals with the same consciousness principle which experiences different forms of incarnation. Every living being is composed of the five aggregates and of the same *dharmas*. O.O. Rozenberg stresses that difference of the six realms is determined by the power of *karma*, which is defined as the composition manner of the same *dharmas*. Karma might combine *dharmas* in a special way, thus constituting a certain personality together with the realm it experiences.³⁰³ Hence, *karma* puts *dharmas* together in various “ornaments”, yet preserving the *dharmas* as such.³⁰⁴

A Buddhist adept believes he can reincarnate as an inhabitant of any *samsāric* entity that distinguishes him from a Christian, accepting his human status as something absolutely constant. The difference between eternal souls of men or angels, and mortal ones of animals, can never be accepted in Buddhism. Besides, the Christian notion of the once given unique human body, destined to live for ever in the future age, co-operates with the absence of the ideas of impermanence and reincarnation in Christianity.

Some sort of hierarchy of living beings has been elaborated by Buddhaghosa, the great fifth-century synthesiser of the exegetical lore of the orthodox school of Buddhism. He has placed the famous seven “gems” or the most valued possessions of a universal king of righteousness (*Cakravartin*) in an ascending order. Buddhaghosa maintains that

³⁰² For the detailed Cosmology see: Randy Kloetzli, *Buddhist Cosmology: From Single World System to Pure Land: Science and Theology in the Images of Motion and Light* (Delhi: Varanasi: Patna: Motilal Banarsidass, 1983).

³⁰³ О. О. Розенберг, *Труды по буддизму* (Москва: Наука, 1991), с. 101.

³⁰⁴ Russian scholars, Yermakova and Ostrovskaya, however, underscore that denizens of hell differ from the other living beings because of the lost good factor or roots. They have to stay in hell until bad karma is exhausted and the three good roots are again created. According to Classic Buddhism three roots of the Good are *dharmas* called *non-hatred*, *non-selfishness* and *non-ignorance*. These are necessary in order to take birth in the body of man, god, demi-god (i.e. titan), animal or hungry spirit. If a mortal sin is committed by a man or a woman, the three roots of the Good are destroyed and he or she has to take birth in hell. (More about the topic see Т.В. Ермакова, Е.П. Островская, *Классический буддизм*. (СПб.: Петербургское Востоковедение, 1999.) Nevertheless, the situation of a denizen of hell is just temporary; the three roots of the Good are lost for a certain period of time; they are present in any sentient being potentially. It means that no form of existence can change the ontological situation of living being.

inanimate gems exist for the use (*paribhoga*) of living beings, who are superior. In the domain of the living, the human being prevails over beasts, for they are at human service. Similarly in the human sphere, a woman is called to be of service to the male and cannot outrank him. The superiority of one class of beings over another is associated with “use” and “service”. And, although Aloysius Pieris indicates that the superiority seems to be assessed in soteriological terms³⁰⁵, it can’t be treated as possessing an ontological meaning. Even if a man has a greater salvific capacity than an animal does, their present situation can change in the future incarnation vice versa. The man can reincarnate as an animal, whereas the animal can get the next birth in the form of a human being.

Undoubtedly, Buddhist doctrine points out the tremendous value of rebirth in the human realm. The reason is its “neutral” form of existence. It means that men experience both pleasure and sufferings. This sort of emotional balance allows them to analyse the unenviable situation of living beings, who are destined to reincarnate in *samsāra*. It makes intelligent human beings go the eightfold path. Inhabitants of hells and hungry ghosts experience only sufferings and physical pain, those make the search for the soteriological goal impossible; the instincts prevail in animals and paralyse their intellect, whereas gods are very happy and do not have any stimulus to search release from *samsāra*. Therefore, the favourable temporal circumstances attach value to the existence in human body, yet depriving man of any special ontological status.

To draw a conclusion about the attitude to man in Christianity and in Buddhism, it is useful to employ the suggestion of Aloysius Pieris to classify Christianity as the *agapeic* religion and Buddhism as the *gnostic* one.³⁰⁶ Christian anthropocentrism seems to be an obvious fruit of the agapeic religious model. Only a *Personal Thou* (contradicted to a *nonpersonal It* of the *gnostic* idiom)³⁰⁷ can deliberately and without any logical reason attach a peculiar status to a certain group of living beings. God’s love, similarly to any kind of love, can’t be explained; it is just a matter of fact. That is why Gregory Palamas can’t propose any self-sufficient reason for man’s elevation among creatures. He just certifies this peculiar status of human being, formulating it in the form of the above arguments which, in their turn, tell us about two great acts of God’s love, those are 1) creation of the world and simultaneous exaltation of man among creatures, and 2) salvation of man. For instance, the second, the third, the fourth, the fifth and the sixth arguments of Palamas are formulated in order to point out God’s love in the act of creation, whereas the first and partially the second ones introduce the topic of God’s

³⁰⁵ Aloysius Pieris, S.J., op. cit., p. 19.

³⁰⁶ Ibid., pp. 110-111.

³⁰⁷ Terms of Aloysius Pieris. Ibid., p. 14.

redemptive love. God has initially attached the particular status to man, creating him as a many-sided and perfect being and incarnating as a true man.

For the reason of emphasized anthropocentrism it is just necessary to create a certain speculative domain which would formulate the ontological status of man. Besides, there is one more philosophical argument in anthropology's favour, which is not too much realised by Christians, but appears rather important if compared to Buddhist religious doctrine. As is claimed by Gregory Palamas in his sixth argument, the soul of man doesn't only possess life by energy, but also by *substance* because it lives of its own accord. To paraphrase, the soul has life in itself.³⁰⁸ In the context of Buddhist notional language the assertion would mean that the soul is *ātman*; it is *real* and independent, that is a reason to create an independent domain called anthropology.

According to Buddhist teaching no-thing possesses substance. No-thing exists of its own accord. Each phenomenon is impermanent, being involved into the principle of dependent origination or *pratītya-samutpāda*. In other words such an independent and permanent soul outside the chain of causality doesn't at all exist and is not worthy of a distinct philosophical analysis.³⁰⁹ Therefore, it is meaningless to elaborate anthropology inside Buddhism.

The situation, when man is proclaimed to be ontologically equal to other living beings, co-operates with the *gnostic* religious model. Unlike Christian idea of the *Personal Thou*, Buddhism operates the notion of *nonpersonal It*. The latter is expressed in the principle of Dependent Origination (*pratītya-samutpāda*). *Karma* as one of twelve stages of the chain impartially determines the form of existence of each living being. The nonpersonal karmic law deprives a distinct human being of the constant belonging to mankind, making him eternally take birth in the other six realms. Therefore, man is supposed to be analysed together with the other living beings for he is just a part of the integral animated entity.

As is clarified above, the essential possession which inhabitants of all the six realms have in common is "awareness" or "consciousness" principle³¹⁰. If to make use

³⁰⁸ Cap. 32, — col. 1141 B. from Архимандрит Киприан (Керн), *Антропология Св. Григория Паламы*, сс. 359-360)

³⁰⁹ This statement can be confirmed by the implication of B. D. Dandaron. He asserts that it is nonsense to analyse what is empty. The scholar quotes Cāndrakīrti, who admitted that the objects of matter were just empty names not worthy of a philosophical reflection. (Б. Д. Дандарон, "Теория Шуньи у мадхьямиков: (по тибетским источникам)" // *Тибетский буддизм: теория и практика* (Новосибирск: Наука, 1995), с. 35.

³¹⁰ At the moment it is not important to distinguish between *awareness* and *consciousness*. In the context of Tantric Buddhism, however, *awareness* and *consciousness*

of Western terminology, “consciousness” is the same “psyche”, and the domain, exploring sentient being in Buddhism, should be called “psychology”. The term has already become conventional among Western scholars of Buddhism. As a result the doctrine of man is incorporated into the doctrine analysing sentient beings. Because of the common object of exploration, *psychology* automatically coincides with the integral corpus of *philosophy*. *Psychology* and *philosophy* are just two different perspectives of the same subject. In other words psychology is another name of this very philosophy. To attest the statement a few arguments will be mentioned.

The tenets of *psychology* are already found in the canonical texts of *Suttapitaka*. As Lama Anagarika Govinda notices, the first verse of the *Dhammapada* begins with the words: ‘All things are preceded by the mind, led by the mind, created by the mind’. In the teachings of the less popular but profound *Abhidharma* the world is analysed exclusively from the point of view of a phenomenology of consciousness.³¹¹

As O. O. Rozenberg contends, classic *Abhidharma* explores sentient being defined as a *continuity* that is a chain of deliberately experienced moments. Continuity is ‘subject’ together with the “object” or *consciousness together with its content*. Here external phenomena are interpreted as a natural part of personality. It means that a starting point of the theory of *dharmas* is none other than the psychological analysis of a human being. Its task is to decompose *continuity* in elements and to study these very components of living being. The most important part of the theory of *dharmas* is *psychology of cognition* or *gnoseology*.³¹²

are two different terms. John Myrdhin Reynolds commented them like this, "The interior Awareness (*nang rig-pa*) exists prior to consciousness (*rnam-shes*) because the operation of consciousness, as defined in the Buddhist psychology, is always dualistic, the dichotomy between internal subject and external object having come into play. This consciousness represents a discursive (*rnam-par*) awareness (*shes-pa*). But Rigpa is inherently liberated". (*The Golden Letters. The three Statements of Garab Dorje, the first teacher of Dzogchen, together with a commentary by Dza Patrul Rinpoche entitled "The Special Teaching of the Wise and Glorious King"*, trans. and com. by John Myrdhin Reynolds (Ithaca, New York USA: Snow Lion Publications, 1996), p. 148.) Thus, the dichotomic mind, being enslaved by the illusion, is called *consciousness*, whereas the mind, releasing from the samsāric chains, is denoted as *awareness*. The quotation obviously shows the difficulty to find the appropriate translation of the Tibetan psychological terms into English.

³¹¹ Lama Anagarika Govinda, *Foundations of Tibetan Mysticism According to the Esoteric Teachings of the Great Mantra OM MANI PADME HŪM* (New York: Samuel Weiser, 1960), p. 66.

³¹² O. O. Розенберг, *Труды по буддизму.*, сс. 106-108.

In the other place O. O. Rozenberg precises the topic like this. The central problem of Buddhism is living being, its components, its growth and liberation. And if it is so, the question is how to interpret the external inanimate objects, for instance, a mountain, the sun etc. The answer should be looked for in the connection with the theory of the phenomenal world as something created by *karma* which, in its turn, is just an activity of consciousness. Hence, for Buddhists external inanimate objects do not exist independently, but there only exist the transient combinations of different *dharmas*, which produce an empirically illusory phenomenon, called “a man who sees the sun”.³¹³ This is what we have called ‘holism’ of being. No phenomenon is real for it consists of a huge number of *dharmas*, which, in their turn, do not really exist if not connected with the *dharmas* of the other phenomena. From the psychological point of view all *dharmas* belong to the only reality, called consciousness.

In unison with O. O. Rozenberg, V. P. Androsoff asserts that the doctrine of *dharmas* in early Buddhism concerned solely the experience of consciousness. Analysis of *dharmas* was adequate only in the context of *psychology* and was not supposed to investigate the entity of inanimate subjects. V. P. Androsoff underscores that Buddhism is exclusively practical by orientation. To be precise, the inanimate reality out of touch with consciousness can’t be treated as the reason for sufferings, and, hence, is not at all important for Buddhists. Adherents of the tradition are interested only in *perception* of inanimate things by consciousness and its result that is new combinations of *dharmas* at the level of living continuity.³¹⁴

A similar observation concerning the psychological character of Buddhist analysis of being was made by Aloysius Pieris, “The world in the ultimate analysis is the human person. All “reality” is conceived exclusively in terms of human beings and their experience. Even *nirvāna*, the ultimate experience, is “had” within this psycho-physical sphere called “human person” as the Buddha himself declared. As a matter of fact, orthodox scholastic tradition admits a contracted list of the aggregates with *nirvāna* included therein. They are referred to as the four ultimate realities, *param’atthā*.”³¹⁵

³¹³ Ibid., cc. 168-169.

³¹⁴ В.П. Андросов, *Будда Шакьямуни и индийский буддизм*, с. 182.

³¹⁵ Ultimate realities and corresponding aggregates can be depicted as the following figure.

The Four Ultimate Realities	=	The Five Aggregates
<i>I citta</i> , basic consciousness	=	<i>vinñāna</i>
		4

All realised above doesn't mean any domination of psychology (which investigates consciousness) over philosophy (exploring ultimate reality) in Buddhism. *Dharmas*, analysed by *Abhidharma*, construct consciousness and at the same time represent this ultimate reality. Hence, psychology and philosophy are interested in the same object and, therefore, coincide.

Yogācāra is a philosophical school which elaborates the idea of the mind-only reality. In its context the notion of psychology is of great importance. Accepting the assertion of Shashi Bhushan Dasgupta, that “the Buddhist Tantras are based more on the Yogācāra school than on the Śūnyavāda”³¹⁶, we can assume that the psychological interpretation of reality is also basic for Tantric Buddhism. According to Vijnānavāda, the external world has no reality without consciousness because all phenomena are just its mere projection. Therefore consciousness (Skt. *ālaya-vijnāna*) is the only really existing entity worthy of philosophical reflection. In Yogācāra *ālaya-vijnāna* may be denoted as ultimate reality. For this reason Buddhist psychology of Yogācāra is an analogue of Christian *theology*. On the other hand, due to the fact that the store-house consciousness is a possession of man, this very psychology exhibits a similarity to Christian *anthropology*. Here, in the point of encounter of what Christian theologians call *theology* and *anthropology*, the Buddhist idea of the total unity of being is represented clearly.

As has been clarified, the most important aspect of the Abhidharmic theory of *dharmas* is the psychology of cognition. However, to restrict Buddhist psychology by gnoseology would mean to leave aside its religious aspect. The integral character of psychology is achieved only when the theory of enlightenment joins gnoseology. Now it is relevant to come back to the educational system of Buddhist monasteries in Tibet and Mongolia. As has been already discussed above, the teaching program of the Faculty of Realics includes *Pramāna* (Skt.) or gnoseology, and *Paramitā* (Skt.) or the theory of enlightenment, those are two interrelated parts of Buddhist psychology. *Pramāna* is a field of studies according to the system of two Indian philosophers, those are Dignāga (the 6th cent.) and Dharmakīrti (the 7th cent.). The task of *Pramāna* is to criticise *naive*

II <i>cetasika</i> , functions of <i>citta</i>	=	<i>vedanā</i>	1
		<i>sannā</i>	2
		<i>samkhārā</i>	3
III <i>rūpa</i> , material form	=	<i>rūpa</i>	5
IV <i>nirvāna</i> , the transpersonal			

(See Aloysius Pieris, S.J., op. cit., pp. 46-47.)

³¹⁶ Shashi Bhushan Dasgupta, *An Introduction to Tantric Buddhism*, p. 14.

*realism*³¹⁷ and to proclaim *pure psychism* of phenomena. *Pāramitā*, continuing *Pramāna*, investigates psychic condition of man at different stages of enlightenment and explores the “transfigured” cognition of reality.³¹⁸ One cannot help but notice that in this sense *Paramitā* may be compared to Christian *soteriology*. Thus, Buddhist psychology is the subject, including both Christian anthropology and soteriology. This is a reason why it’s not possible to put the sign of equality between Buddhist psychology and Christian anthropology. The former is wider than the latter.

Discussing psychology in Buddhism, one should make an important reservation. Buddhist psychology and the Western one are two different things. O. O. Rozenberg stresses that the former makes use of the religious experience to a larger extent than the latter one, besides, psychology in Buddhism is just a small domain, that is, however, termed as the speculative fundament of metaphysics.³¹⁹

In agreement with O. O. Rozenberg, C. G. Jung in his *Psychological Commentary* to the Tibetan Book of the Dead (*Bar do thos grol*) explains the meaning of the Buddhist term *psychology* like this, “Metaphysical assertions are statements of the psyche, and are therefore, psychological.” C. G. Jung distinguishes between the Western and the Asian understanding of *psyche*, “To the Western mind, which compensates its well-known feelings of resentment by a slavish regard for ‘rational’ explanations, this obvious truth seems all too obvious, or else it is seen as an inadmissible negation of metaphysical “truth”. Whenever the Westerner hears the word “psychological”, it always sounds to him like “*only* psychological”. For him the “soul” is something pitifully small, unworthy, personal, subjective, and a lot more besides. He therefore prefers to use the word “mind” instead, though he likes to pretend at the same time that a statement which may in fact be very subjective indeed is made by the “mind”, naturally by the “Universal Mind”, or even—at the pinch—by the “Absolute” itself. This rather ridiculous presumption is probably a compensation for the regrettable smallness of the soul.”³²⁰

³¹⁷ ‘Naive realism’ is a notion of really existing subject and independent objects. The former perceives the latter in the direct way. Christianity with its idea of man, the other creatures and God as independently existing beings, obviously, may be qualified as ‘naive realism’.

³¹⁸ Б. Б. Барадийн, *Буддийские монастыри: краткий очерк*, сс. 96-97.

³¹⁹ О. О. Розенберг, цит. соч., с. 119.

³²⁰ Dr. C. G. Jung, "Psychological Commentary" in *The Tibetan Book of the Dead or The After-Death Experiences on the Bardo Plane*, Lama Kazi Dawa-Samdup's English Rendering, compiled and ed. by W. Y. Evans-Wentz (London: Oxford: New York: Oxford University Press, 1960), pp. XXXVII-XXXVIII.

Accepting the world view of *Bar do thos grol*, C. G. Jung continues, “It is the soul which, by the divine creative power inherent in it, makes the metaphysical assertion; it posits the distinctions between metaphysical entities. Not only is it the condition of all metaphysical reality, it is that reality.”³²¹

Quite in conformity with C. G. Jung’s assertion, Detlef Ingo Lauf admits that “the philosophical path³²² towards knowledge rests upon the reality of the psyche and is one of its primary images”.³²³ He also introduces the comparative analysis of Buddhist psychology and the Western one like that, “The more ignorance may be transformed into knowledge, the more wisdom and awareness can be actualised. This is the primary goal in Buddhism, prior to the asking of any transcendental question. The more unconscious contents can be raised from the unconscious, and the more consciousness can be increased, the more independence from the dangers of the unconscious processes then develops, reducing dependence on drives and libidinous fixations. This is the task of Western psychology”.³²⁴ And although “the analytical path and the destruction of the psychically conditioned phenomena of a secondary character” are common to the teachings of Buddhism and to Western psychology³²⁵, the metaphysical orientation of the former and the secular interests of the latter are discernible. Making use of the terminology of Vijnānavāda, for Buddhism the psychological work with the seeds of contamination is just a starting point of the discovering of ultimate metaphysical reality called *ālaya-vijnāna*, whereas for Freudian psychoanalysis these very “philogenetically inherited” seeds of passions are “the ultimate reality” and the last point of the “arrival”.

According to the notional system of *Bar do thos grol* and C. G. Jung’s ideas, the Freudian psychoanalysis can be inscribed at the lower part of the religious experience and is situated at the level of *Sidpa Bardo*³²⁶. Here is what C. G. Jung wrote in this respect, “Freudian psychoanalysis, in all essential aspects, never went beyond the experiences of the Sidpa Bardo; that is, it was unable to extricate itself from sexual fantasies and similar “incompatible” tendencies which cause anxiety and other affective states. Nevertheless, Freud’s theory is the first attempt made by the West to investigate, as if from below, from the animal sphere of instinct, the psychic territory that corresponds in Tantric Lāmaism to the Sidpa Bardo. [...] The *Sidpa* state, if we are to

³²¹ Ibid.

³²² The Buddhist spiritual journey from ignorance to wisdom is called by Detlef Ingo Lauf ‘the philosophical path’.

³²³ Detlef Ingo Lauf, *Secret Doctrines of the Tibetan Books of the Dead*, p. 217.

³²⁴ Ibid.

³²⁵ Ibid., p. 220.

³²⁶ Tibetan transliteration: *srid pa’i bar do*.

accept the psychology of the *Sidpa Bardo*, is characterised by the fierce wind of *karma*, which whirls the dead man along until he comes to the ‘womb-door’. To put it differently, the *Sidpa* state permits of no going back, because it is sealed off against the *Chonyid* state by an intense striving downwards, towards the animal sphere of instinct and physical rebirth. That is to say, anyone who penetrates into the unconscious with purely biological assumptions will become stuck in the instinctual sphere and be unable to advance beyond it, for he will be pulled back again and again into physical existence. It is therefore not possible for Freudian theory to reach anything except an essentially negative valuation of the unconscious. It is a “nothing but”. At the same time, it must be admitted that this view of the psyche is typically Western.”³²⁷

In defining Buddhist psychology, the qualification of V. G. Lisenko is relevant. According to the scholar, Buddhists are not interested in the analysis of psyche as such; they never investigate consciousness on the plane of natural sciences as Westerners do. Psyche is essential for them solely because of its ability to achieve liberation from *samsāra*.³²⁸ The same salvific perspective is given by Michael Kunzler to Christian anthropology and to theology on the whole. The main task of theology is to discuss the soteriological questions, i.e., the topics concerning salvation of man.³²⁹

The term *psychology* is also accepted by Christian theologians in order to denote the domain investigating the soul of man. S. S. Horuzhy admits that *psychology* is the appropriate designation of Orthodox *asceticism*. His definition of Christian *psychology* is similar to V. G. Lisenko’s definition of Buddhist *psychology*. S. S. Horuzhy claims that Christian *asceticism* as the domain, investigating passions, is interrelated with *psychology* and *psychiatry* because all the three subjects study psychic processes. Nevertheless, an essential difference is obvious. *Psychology* and *psychiatry* investigate psychic processes as such in a scientific and quite an empirical manner, while *asceticism* is interested in the relation of the above-mentioned processes to the *supernatural* goal of man, i.e. God. Life in God is not just a psychic, but also a psycho-ontological process. Therefore, Christian *asceticism* can be termed as *ontological psychology*.³³⁰ The idea of S. S. Horuzhy about the *supernatural* purpose of man can be likened to the Buddhistic

³²⁷ Dr. C. G. Jung, "Psychological Commentary" in *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*, pp. XLII-XLIII.

³²⁸ В. Г. Лысенко, *Ранняя буддийская философия* // В. Г. Лысенко, А. А. Терентьев, В. К. Шохин, *Ранняя буддийская философия. Философия джайнизма* (Москва: Восточная литература РАН, 1994), с. 222.

³²⁹ Михаэль Кунцлер, цит. соч., т. 1, с. 15.

³³⁰ С. С. Хоружий, *Диптих безмолвия: Аскетическое учение о человеке в богословском и философском освещении*, сс. 26-27.

releasing of one's consciousness and the realisation of the Buddha nature. Thus, the metaphysical orientation of *religious* (Christian or Buddhist) *psychology* contrasts with the empirical content of the secular psychology.

To clarify the meaning of the term *psychology* in the context of Christianity, it is helpful to consider the idea of Russian theologian Vadim Korzhevsky. He notes that Christian *psychology* and *asceticism*, although interrelated, are two different subjects. *Psychology* is a science of the human soul as a constituent of man (the other part of man is his body). It investigates the structure of the soul and is rather speculative in its nature if not connected to *asceticism*. *Asceticism*, in turn, deals with psycho-techniques of the zealots and employs *psychology* as its theoretical background. Here the relationship between *psychology* and *asceticism* can be compared to that between *anatomy* and *physiology*. *Anatomy* explores the structure of human body and of every organ separately whereas *physiology* deals with the functions of the organs and of the body on the whole.³³¹ The meaning of Christian *psychology* for *asceticism* bears a resemblance to that of *Sāṅkhya* for Yoga of Patanjali. *Sāṅkhya* is the theoretical background of Yoga.

Finally, it is relevant to compare Christian *psychology* to the Buddhist psychology. Although the former is rather important and necessary for the achievement of the soteriological goal, it is just one domain within *anthropology*. *Psychology* explores one of the two constituents of man. Although *psychology* is connected with *theology*, it doesn't coincide with it. God and man are two different entities with their own substances. Therefore, *theology* and *anthropology* (as well as *psychology* which is the part of *anthropology*) are two various domains exploring different subjects. Man is created by God and, thus, is subject to God. In a similar manner *anthropology* (and *psychology*) is subordinated to *theology*. In other words *psychology* is a narrow domain of *theology*. The situation changes in Buddhism. As became obvious, *psychology* in Buddhism is a wide subject which encompasses all other subjects. Consciousness is the source of all phenomena and is a container of ultimate reality. There is no ultimate reality beyond psyche and no world outside consciousness. That is why psychology envelopes all other subjects.

To summarise, we have shown, why the notion of *anthropology* is irrelevant in the Buddhist tradition. It has been also demonstrated that *psychology* is the domain which includes the Buddhist doctrine of man and simultaneously coincides with the Buddhist *philosophy*. Christianity is characterised by *anthropocentrism*, while Buddhism is

³³¹ Иерей Вадим Коржевский, *Пропедевтика аскетике: Компендиум по православной святоотеческой психологии* (Москва: Российская Академия Образования, 2004), с. 261.

psychocentric. According to Christian anthropology the human being possesses an ontological status and acquires his completeness in both the psyche and the body, whereas Buddhist psychology attributes the true nature of man solely to his psyche. In Buddhism, however, psyche is not something that belongs to man alone. The principle of consciousness is common to all sentient beings. In spite the noted differences between the Christian and the Buddhist understanding of man, the tendency to analyze phenomena and transphenomenal reality from the perspective of an intelligent living being, i.e., man, is common to the both traditions.

Two Types of Holism: Christian and Buddhist

According to Gregory Palamas, Christian anthropology is *ontologically holistic*. To term anthropology as *ontological* means to attribute to man the longing for God and the capacity to transform his created image or mode of being into uncreated one. *Holism* means that all components of man, whether his spiritual constituent or his body, represent true man and construct him as an indestructible whole. But holism can be realized perfectly only from the ontological perspective. Gregory Palamas asserts that all the constituents of man are equal in their relation to God, i.e. are destined for the ontological transformation.

The assertion becomes explicit when compared with dualistic anthropology of platonism and neoplatonism. According to the teaching of the mentioned philosophical schools, man consists of two ontologically different parts. His soul is a divine grain accidentally united with mere illusion, i.e. the body, which doesn't have any part in the Divine. Hence, the body can be termed as something ontologically empty or deprived of ontological status. The opponent of Gregory Palamas, Barlaam, accepted the dualistic concept of man and admitted that the mind (νοῦς) was the only constituent of man carrying God's image. This elevation of the mind has been the basis for the Western humanistic culture even to the present.³³²

For Barlaam a natural capacity of the mind to investigate creatures was the only manner to grasp the Divine. Fruits of the mind, those are empirical knowledge and logic, as well as their derivative, science, are spiritually equal to revelation.³³³ It may become

³³² Ibid., cc. 22, 30-31.

³³³ Barlaam attempted to reanimate antique philosophy and to elaborate some sort of Humanism which was supposed to become a new criteria in theology. These criteria, influenced by speculations of Thomas Aquinas, can be summed up like this,

clear from the words of Gregory Palamas, retelling the ideas of Barlaam, “One cannot acquire perfection and sanctity without seeking knowledge from all quarters, above all from Greek culture, which also is a gift of God — just as were those insights granted to the prophets and apostles through revelation. This education confers on the soul the knowledge of [created] beings, and enriches the faculty of knowledge, which is the greatest of all the powers of the soul. For education not only dispels all other evils from the soul — since every passion has its root and foundation in ignorance — but it also leads men to the knowledge of God, for God is knowable only through the mediation of his creatures.”³³⁴

For Barlaam the body has nothing in common with spiritual life and is none other than an obstacle or a burden. Hence, man is a dichotomous being; his task is to abolish the link between the soul (that is the divine spark) and the body (which has been designated as mere illusion, deprived of the ontological status). Only then the divine spark would be able to blend with the Divine whole. The abolishment of the link means mortification of the body and liberation of the soul. Thus, for Barlaam and for platonic and neoplatonic philosophy as a whole, the achievement of the new ontological mode means to dissect man into two constituents, the soul and the body, and to eradicate the latter. Here the term *liberation* is relevant.³³⁵

Anthropology of Gregory Palamas, being holistic, is contradicted to the dualistic anthropology of Barlaam. For Hesychasm all the components of human being are equal

1. The source of any true cognition is what senses perceive. The sensuous reception is the only authentic one. 2. Human mind acts only according to the rules of his nature. The mind is capable to grasp the nature of things because ideas of the mind and real phenomena are equal. The best means of cognition is logic. The mind is self-sufficient and is not dependent on Grace. Cognition of Christians and that of Hellenes are identical. Coming of Jesus Christ has not essentially altered the relationship between God and man. 3. The above statements are the basis for the third one: man can never recognise God because the human being and God are of different natures. Man can never take part in Divine nature. However, a human being is able to acquire natural knowledge about God. This sort of gnosis is restricted in its capacities and is deprived of any kind of supernatural life, postulated by Gregory Palamas. Barlaam abandoned human ability to possess supernatural knowledge of God. Gregory Palamas, on the contrary, accepted the idea of two forms of knowledge (natural and supernatural), based upon different types of perception. (from Г. Г. Сильницкий, “Исихазм и схоластика” // *Синергия: проблемы аскетики и мистики Православия*, ред. С. С. Хоружий (Москва: Ди-дик, 1995), сс. 268-269.)

³³⁴ Gregory Palamas, *The Triads* (1,1), ed. John Meyendorff, trans. by Nicholas Gendle (New Jersey: Paulist Press, 1983), p. 25.

³³⁵ С. С. Хоружий, *Диптих безмолвия: Аскетическое учение о человеке в богословском и философском освещении*, сс. 22-23.

in their relation to God. The mind has never been of any elevated ontological status for it is a created entity in the same way, as the body is, and differs from the uncreated to an equal extent as the body does. At the same time all the components, the mind and the soul and the body, should achieve glorification in the future age. Only together, forming the undifferentiated unity, can these parts transform into new ontological image of man. According to Gregory Palamas the body together with the soul and the mind goes the evangelical path³³⁶.

Acquainted with the above statement, one is tempted to compare neoplatonic anthropology with the Buddhist doctrine of living being, including its notion of reincarnation and liberation. Are the Buddhist doctrine of liberation and that of Neoplatonics equal? Can we assert that Hesychast anthropology as the holistic system is opposed to the Buddhist one as to some sort of dichotomy?

It is common knowledge that Buddhists and Hindus designate the soteriological aim as *liberation*. To achieve liberation means *to release* from reincarnation, i.e. from the *samsāric* form of being bound by impermanence and sufferings. Hence, in classic Buddhism the body is something wrong; it is a sign of imperfection and should be abolished. To make use of Hesychast term *ontological*, the body in classic Hinduism and Buddhism is deprived of ontological status for it is not supposed to achieve liberation. The body is an entity from which a living being might be liberated. This is, however, a superficial and rather generalised conclusion, which can be valid only in the case of Hindu teaching about *ātman* and its liberation from reincarnation. The case of Buddhism, however, should be reviewed.

The first question, we should discuss, concerns the term *body*. Are the notion of the body in platonism and that in classic Buddhism identical? In the former doctrine the body is imperfect because it consists of matter. Matter is an exact opposite of spiritual entity. In Buddhism the body is termed as one of five *skandhas* and is called in Sanskrit *rūpam* (Tib. *gzugs*). As O. O. Rozenberg notices, *Rūpa* literally means “form”, “shape”, without indicating whether this form is material or immaterial, concrete or imagined, apprehended by the senses (the sensuous), or conceived by the mind (ideal). The expression “*rūpa-skandha*” has been rendered generally as “corporeal group”, “material aggregate”, “aggregate of bodily form”, etc. — while in terms like “*rūpāvacara-citta*”, “consciousness of the realm of form”, or “*rūpadhyāna*”, the state of spiritual vision in meditation, *rūpa* signifies an awareness of pure, immaterial or ideal form. Worlds (*loka*) or realms (*avacara*) of existence corresponding to those ideal forms, have been called

³³⁶ Св. Григорий Палама, *Триады в защиту священнобезмолвствующих*, сс. 97-98; 23-32.

‘fine material spheres’ (*rūpāvacara*), but since they are invisible to the human eye and are only perceived clairvoyantly, they certainly do not correspond to our human concept of materiality nor to that of physics.”³³⁷

Besides, there is one more even stronger argument why *rūpa* can’t be translated matter or materiality. It is enough just to list those *dharmas*, *rūpa-skandha* consists of. Here they are,

1. Skt. *caksuh* - Tib. *mig* - Eng. Sense of vision
2. *śrotram* - *rna ba* - Sense of audition
3. *ghrānam* - *sna* - Sense of smelling
4. *jihvā* - *lce* - Sense of taste
5. *kāyah* - *lus* - Sense of touch
6. *rūpam* - *gzugs* - Colour and shape
7. *śabdah* - *sgra* - Sound
8. *gandhah* – *dri* - Odour
9. *rasah* - *ro* - Taste
10. *sparsāh* - *reg bya* - Tangibles
11. *avijnāptih*³³⁸ - *rnam par rig byed ma yin pa* - The intangible³³⁹

As is evident, none of the *dharmas* represents matter as such. According to O. O. Rozenberg, the so called materiality of the body is expressed in the sum of what is seen, smelled, tasted and touched. Supplementary, tangibles can be dissected into the hard, the smooth, the warm and the heavy elements. Hence, the inanimate “matter” must be explained as a union of the mentioned elements (*visaya*, i.e. objects of perception), which do not belong to the matter in the proper sense of the word. If the inanimate matter is communed with the so called *indriya* (the senses of vision, audition, smell, taste and touch) in the act of sensuous

³³⁷ Otto Rosenberg, *Die Probleme der buddhistischen Philosophie* (Heidelberg, 1924), p. 160. (from Lama Anagarika Govinda, *Foundations of Tibetan Mysticism According to the Esoteric Teachings of the Great Mantra OM MANI PADME HŪM*, p. 67.)

³³⁸ As O. O. Rozenberg states, *avijnāptih* are *dharmas* which are contradicted to the tangible ones, i.e. to the *dharmas* from the 6th to the 10th of the above *mātrkā*. *Avijnāptih* gives the ethical connotation to the deeds and the words of man, whereas *viñāptih* only possess the sensuous features. (the footnote from В.П. Андросов, *Будда Шакьямуни и индийский буддизм. Современное истолкование древних текстов* (Москва: Восточная литература РАН, 2001), с. 170.

³³⁹ Ibid.

perception, the animated matter is originated. As in the case of *visaya*, the receptive faculties or *indriya* can't be rendered by "matter" either, but rather as "the sensuous". In this connection it would be relevant to notice that from the Buddhist stand-point *atom* is not a material element, but a small unit of the sensuous experience. That is why an object of Buddhist analysis is not anything objectively heard or seen, but the act of audition and vision.³⁴⁰

Buddhism escapes dualism of the accidentally combined matter and mind, rendering the famous term of *nāma*³⁴¹-*rūpa* (the fourth member of the Buddhist chain of causality) by *the sensuous and mind*, and not by *matter and mind* as it is in platonism. Due to this kind of rendering, the abyss between *nāma* and *rūpa* is destroyed.³⁴² In this respect it is a misconception to assume that the notion of body in platonism and that of the Buddhist doctrine are identical. Matter and mind of platonism are independent and accidentally united entities, whilst *rūpa* of Buddhism is completely dependent on *nāma* and doesn't exist without it. Lama Anagarika Govinda explains the topic as follows, "*Rūpa* is a particular kind of sense-impression or mental experience which accordingly takes its place among the elements or faculties of consciousness. The principle of materiality can be considered under two points of view: 1. as a phase in the process of perception, i.e., as the starting-point of consciousness arising from a sense-impression (Skt. *sparśa*) or a combination of sense-impressions; 2. the result (*vipāka*) of repeated sense-impressions of this kind and of the attachment arising from it, on account of which the individual takes bodily form."³⁴³ [...] "This psycho-physical organism (*nāma-rūpa*), according to Buddhist conception, is so to say the coagulated, crystallised, or materialised consciousness of the past. It is the active principle (*karma*) of consciousness which as effect (*vipāka*) steps into visible appearance. Thus the body is a product of our consciousness, while

³⁴⁰ O. O. Розенберг, цит. соч., с. 138.

³⁴¹ *Rūpa* is a name of the first skandha, whereas *nāma* designates the sum of the other four skandhas, which will be dealt with below.

³⁴² O. O. Rozenberg admits, that the translation of *nama-rūpa* by *the sensuous and mind* is to some extent close to *Sinnlichkeit und Verstand* of Kant. (In O. O. Розенберг, сс. 132-133.)

³⁴³ Lama Anagarika Govinda, *Foundations of Tibetan Mysticism According to the Esoteric Teachings of the Great Mantra OM MANI PADME HUM*, p. 68.

the latter is not, or only to a very small extent, a product of the body, in so far, as it transmits through its sense-organs the impressions of the outer world. The acceptance and digestion of these impressions depends on the emotional and intellectual reactions of our inner consciousness and our volitional attitude or decision depending on those reactions.”³⁴⁴ Here the holistic view of living being is clearly represented. *Nāma* and *rūpa* are two components of the animated whole of individual and do not exist independently. They form each other and can never be declared as united accidentally.

In order to grasp the sharp distinction between the platonic doctrine of the body and the Buddhist one, it is important to mention the soteriological aspect of the problem. As is stated above, in platonism the body is deprived of any ontological status for it doesn't have anything in common with the Divine and, therefore, is not supposed to be liberated. On the contrary, it should be abolished. The task is to clarify the question, if *rūpa* in the Buddhist doctrine is supposed to achieve liberation together with *nāma*, or should it be abolished in the same way as it happens in platonism?

To answer, one should go deeper in the abhidharmic theory of *dharma*s. According to O. O. Rozenberg, every *dharma* consists of the course (*dharma-svabhāva*) and of the effect (*dharma-lakṣana*). *Dharma-svabhāva*'s are really existing, transcendent and ineffable bearers of transiently manifesting features called *dharma-lakṣana*'s. The latter construct the empirical flood of consciousness. If to make use of *Vaiśiṣṭika* soteriology, the goal of each *dharma* is to cease the swing, i.e., the manifestation, and this way to abolish the effect as such. It would mean a total appeasement of the cause (*dharma-svabhāva*). *Abhidharma* declares that all *samskrta* *dharma*s, including those of *rūpa*, are intended to become tranquil, to achieve the unmanifested condition of the course and this way to achieve liberation.³⁴⁵ In other words, *rūpa* is supposed to achieve liberation together with *nāma*.

³⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 68-69.

³⁴⁵ According to Abhidharmic analysis all *dharma*s can be bifurcated in conditioned and unconditioned, *samskrta* and *asamskrta*. *Samskrta dharma*s submit to the law of impermanence: they are bound by the principles of birth, existence, change and death. *Asamskrta dharma*s are not dependent on these principles and are just three, those are

The assertion is confirmed by *Madhymaka*'s idea of equality of *nirvāna* and *samsāra*. The undifferentiated ultimate reality *nirvāna* manifests as empirical beings and their worlds. This manifestation is called *samsāra*. In *samsāra* one encounters the same ultimate reality of *nirvāna*. Therefore, all existing or manifesting *dharmas*, constituting *samsāra*, are potentially liberated because they are the same ultimate *dharmas* of *nirvāna*.³⁴⁶ It means that *dharmas*, constructing *rūpa*, shouldn't be abolished but should be just realised as being the same *nirvānic* reality.

Hence, *rūpa dharmas* possess the same ontological significance as the other *samskrta dharmas* do. It means that from the standpoint of Buddhist soteriology the body, similarly to the body in Christian holistic anthropology, is equal to the other constituents of man, being supposed to release together with the other components of sentient continuity.

To generalise, in Buddhism a sentient being can never be analysed in categories of dichotomism. Vice versa, he/she is holistic according to the two arguments. The first one concerns the abhidharmic definition of *rūpa-skandha* as 'the sensuous' and not as the material form; *rūpa-skandha* is a product of consciousness. The second argument attaches the soteriological capacity to *rūpa dharmas*.

As it has become apparent, the Buddhist doctrine of sentient being and the Christian doctrine of man can be unified under the title *holistic*, which should be here understood as an exact opposite to any sort of *dichotomy*. However, it would be a misconception to assume, that the Buddhist concept and the Christian one do not possess any intrinsic differences. To realise that one should remember the Christian idea of permanence in the context of the only body, possessed constantly by a certain human being, and the Buddhist concept of impermanence (*anitya*) expressed in the idea of innumerable reincarnations.

Christian view is well-founded by Thomas Aquinas and will be dealt with below in the chapter about Somatics. At the moment it is sufficient to notice that the focus of the problem is the definition of the soul as *the substantial form of the body*. A certain soul can construct only one unique body according to *commensutatio animae ad hoc corpus* (the soul's correlation to the body) principle. In other words, the substantial form can

ākāśa , or space, as an absence of any obstacles, and the two elements of so called *appeasement*, i.e., the element of absence of birth (*pratisam khyānirodha*) and the element of absence of death (*apratisam khyānirodha*). (O. O. Розенберг, цит. соч., сс. 110, 120.)

³⁴⁶ Ibid., c. 187.

never construct any other personality. The correspondence between the soul and its body is eternal.³⁴⁷

Buddhist position of bodily impermanence is perfectly analysed by Lama Anagarika Govinda like this, “What appears as form does belong essentially to the past, and is therefore felt as alien by those who have developed spiritually beyond it. The whole misunderstanding of the dualistic conception of mind and matter, body and soul, etc., is based upon this feeling, and precisely on this account the spiritually advanced are more susceptible to it than the average man. Because for the majority of men, whose consciousness has not yet grown beyond the past from which their visible form sprang, the body may rightly be claimed as belonging to the present. It corresponds to the existing state of mind. However, the greater the spiritual progress and the quicker the psychic growth within and the same span of life, the greater will be the distance between bodily form and spiritual attainment, because the body, due to its greater density, has a lesser degree of move ability and therefore a longer amplitude of vibration, which cannot keep pace with that of the mind. The body adapts itself only slowly and within certain limits, which depend on the conditions of organic growth, the structural laws of matter and the nature of its primary elements. The corporeal form may be compared to a heavy pendulum which, even after the original impulse has ceased, goes on swinging for a long time. The longer and heavier the pendulum, the slower the rate of oscillation. When the mind has already reached a state of peace and harmony by having balanced or counteracted through a change of attitude the after-effects of previous actions, the karmic effect (*vipāka*) crystallised in the bodily form can still oscillate for a long time before complete harmonisation has been achieved in the form of bodily perfection. This can only be hastened by a conscious penetration, spiritualization and transfiguration of the body, as it has been reported of certain *Siddhas* and, above all, of the Buddha, whose body is said to have been of such unearthly beauty and radiance that even the golden robes which were offered to him, lost their lustre.”³⁴⁸

The above scheme of the continuous alteration of bodily form during innumerable reincarnations is based upon the ideas of impermanence (*anitya*) and insubstantiality (*anātman*) as the characteristics of phenomenal existence. These two features of being are contradicted to Christian permanence (expressed in *commensutatio animae ad hoc corpus* of Thomas Aquinas) and substance (Latin *essentia*, Gr. ἡ οὐσία). Due to the

³⁴⁷ С. Свежавски, *Святой Фома, прочитанный заново (лекции в Ласко) / Символ*, 33 (Париж, Июль 1995), сс. 90-98.

³⁴⁸ Lama Anagarika Govinda, *Foundations of Tibetan Mysticism According to the Esoteric Teachings of the Great Mantra OM MANI PADME HŪM*, p. 69.

fact that for Buddhists substance or soul as a possessor of constant status of a personality does not exist, but there only exists a continuity of transient elements, the body is not bound by any permanent 'substantial form' and is destined to be replaced by another body. Hence, unlike Christian *substantial* anthropology, Buddhist doctrine of sentient being can be termed as *insubstantial*.

Besides, due to the fact that of the three basic facts of existence (*dukkha, an-ātman, anitya*), the keynote is impermanence (*anitya*)³⁴⁹, the above term should be precised as *insubstantial impermanent holism*.

It can be added that the dynamism or impermanence³⁵⁰ as a characteristic of sentient being underscored by Lama Anagarika Govinda, is not completely extraneous for Hesychasm. According to S. S. Horuzhy, the dynamic nature of man is uncovered by Hesychast anthropology in the context of *theosis*. Man is able to alter his mode of *being* from the imperfect to the Divine one. Therefore, Hesychast anthropology may be called *dynamic*. It is important to note that *being* (syn. *nature*) is a notion including *substance* (ἡ οὐσία) and *energies* (αἱ ἐν ἔργειαι). The intrinsic transformation takes place at the level of energies, leaving aside the created substance of man as being completely static.³⁵¹ To make more precise definition, Christian anthropology should be termed as *substantially static* and *energetically dynamic*.

The comparative analysis of the two holisms, Christian and Buddhist is not yet completed and will be continued in the next section. In order to get a complete picture one should inscribe *rūpa* in the common list of components of sentient being and realise that, similarly to the human body in Hesychasm, Buddhist *rūpa* doesn't possess any special status among other constituents. The question is what this status is and what exactly is supposed to be abolished by a Buddhist, if he (or she) still considers the notion of liberation to be so important.

³⁴⁹ Dr. Chinda Chandrkaew, *Nibbāna: The Ultimate Truth of Buddhism* (Mahachula Buddhist University, 1979), p. 3.

³⁵⁰ Here the terms *dynamic* and *impermanent* can be conceived as identical. Relatively little attention can be here attached to the fact that the word *dynamic* is usually interpreted as purposeful, whereas the term *impermanent* is a characteristic of a chaotic existence. The term *dynamic*, as well as *impermanent* seem to be acceptable for the Buddhist scholars. For instance, Dr. Chinda Chandrkaew, writing about impermanence, terms the world to be "dynamic, instead of being static". (In Dr. Chinda Chandrkaew, *Nibbāna: The Ultimate Truth of Buddhism*, p. 6.

³⁵¹ С. С. Хоружий, *Диптих безмолвия: Аскетическое учение о человеке в богословском и философском освещении*, сс. 37-46.

Constitution of Man in Abhidharma

Due to the idea of *anātman* in Buddhism human personality (and each living being) is postulated to be deprived of any substantial core and consisting of a huge number of *dharmas*. There are various manners to group the *dharmas*. The most popular one is to consider man as a combination of five *skandhas* (Pāli *khandha*) called also ‘Fivefold Attached Group’ (Skt. *panca skandhāḥ*, Pāli *pancupādānakkhandha*, Tib. *phung po lnga*)³⁵²,

1. <i>rūpam</i> (Skt.)	<i>gzugs</i> (Tib.)	the sensuous
2. <i>vedanā</i>	<i>tshor ba</i>	feeling
3. <i>sañjñā</i>	<i>’du shes</i>	perception
4. <i>samskārah</i>	<i>’du byed</i>	dispositions
5. <i>viññānam</i>	<i>rnam shes</i>	consciousness

The first *skandha* has already been discussed above. As Moti Lal Pandit states, the second aggregate, called *vedanā*, “represents the emotional content of all our experiences. Feelings are said to be of three types: pleasant (Pāli *manapa*, *sukha*), unpleasant (Pāli *amanapa*, *dukkha*) and neutral (Pāli *adukkham*, *asukha*). The third component of personality is perception. It denotes the mental operation whereby one perceives. Perception does not take place in isolation; it occurs in relation to other components. Whatever we perceive is always textured by our memories, concepts and dispositions. There is no pure perception, viz., a precept is a metaphysical idea and not an empirical fact. Dispositions constitute the fourth aggregate. Dispositions represent our inner tendencies and determine our personality. It is the dispositions which determine our cognitive content as they represent what we term as self-interest.”³⁵³ Another name of *samskārah* is *karma*, i.e. the force and the influence of the former deeds³⁵⁴, “caused by conscious volition”³⁵⁵. “Finally, we have the

³⁵² *Mātrkā* from В. П. Андросов, op. cit., c. 169.

³⁵³ Moti Lal Pandit, *Beyond the Word. Buddhist Approach to Knowledge and Reality* (New Delhi: Intercultural Publications, 1997), p. 132.

³⁵⁴ В.П. Андросов, *Будда Шакьямуни и индийский буддизм. Современное истолкование древних текстов*, c. 169.

³⁵⁵ Lama Anagarika Govinda, *Foundations of Tibetan Mysticism According to the Esoteric*

aggregate of consciousness. It is in terms of consciousness that the continuity in the person is explained. Consciousness sustains itself by depending upon the other aggregates. For the Buddha consciousness denotes being conscious (*vijnānatīti*).³⁵⁶

Although the division of personality in *skandhas* is the most popular one, there are also other classifications of *dharmas* in Buddhist scholasticism. Living being can be analyzed as consisting of twelve bases (*āyatana*). O. O. Rozenberg explains that the term *āyatana* is rendered by *base* because upon these twelve groups of elements man's consciousness of a certain moment is based.³⁵⁷ Here are the 12 bases or *dvādaśa āyatanāni* (Skt.), *kye mched bcu gnyis* (Tib.),

1. *caksuh* (Skt.) - *mig* (Tib.) - sense of vision
2. *śrotram* - *rna ba* - sense of audition
3. *ghrānam* - *sna* - sense of smelling
4. *jihvā* - *lce* - sense of taste
5. *kāyah* - *lus* - sense of touch
6. *mana āyatanāni* - *yiḍ kyi skye mched* - faculty of intellect
7. *rūpam* - *gzugs* - colour and shape
8. *śabdah* - *sgra* - sound
9. *gandhah* - *dri* - odour
10. *rasah* - *ro* - taste
11. *sparsah* - *reg bya* - tangibles
12. *dharmā-āyatanāni* - *chos kyi skye mched* - non-sensuous objects³⁵⁸

These bases of perception are divided in the two already mentioned groups of 1) the internal bases or receptive faculties (*indriya*), mentioned in the first six links of the matrix, and 2) the objective bases (*visaya*) in the 7 — the 12th links.

The third well known manner to analyse living being is to resolve him (or her) in eighteen *dhātu* (Skt. *astādaśa dhātavaḥ*, tib. *hams bco brgyad*), i.e., eighteen elements³⁵⁹ or parts, inscribed in the below matrix,

Teachings of the Great Mantra OM MANI PADME HŪM, p. 71.

³⁵⁶ Moti Lal Pandit, *Beyond the word. Buddhist Approach to Knowledge and Reality*, p. 133.

³⁵⁷ O. O. Розенберг, цит. соч., с. 127.

³⁵⁸ The *mātrkā* is taken from В.П. Андросов, *Будда Шакьямуни и индийский буддизм. Современное истолкование древних текстов*, с. 178-179.

1. *caksuh* (Skt.) - *mig* (Tib.) - sense of vision
2. *śrotram* - *rna ba* - sense of audition
3. *ghrānam* - *sna* - sense of smelling
4. *jihvā* - *lce* - sense of taste
5. *kāyah* - *lus* - sense of touch
6. *manah* - *yid* - faculty of intellect
7. *rūpam* - *gzugs* - colour and shape
8. *śabdah* - *sgra* - sound
9. *gandhah* - *dri* - odour
10. *rasah* - *ro* - taste
11. *sparsāh* - *reg bya* - tangibles
12. *dharma-dhātavaḥ* - *chos kyi kham*s - non-sensuous objects
13. *caksur-vijnānam* - *mig gi rnam par shes pa* - the consciousness of vision
14. *śrotra-vijnānam* - *rna ba'i rnam par shes pa* - the consciousness of audition
15. *ghrāna-vijnānam* - *sna'i rnam par shes pa* - the consciousness of smell
16. *jihvā-vijnānam* - *lce'i rnam par shes pa* - the consciousness of taste
17. *kāya-vijnānam* - *lus kyi rnam par shes pa* - the tactile consciousness
18. *mano-vijnāna-dhātavaḥ* - *yid kyi rnam par shes pa'i kham*s - the mental consciousness³⁶⁰

As is evident, the third classification does not only mention the bases of consciousness (upon which consciousness is based), but also different constituents of this consciousness corresponding to the certain bases, i.e., to senses and objects of perception. Although the classifications differ, they do not contradict each other because they are just different manners to group the same *dharmas*. For instance, *rūpa-skandha* includes five *indriya* and five *visaya* of the twelve *āyatana*, and the first ten of the

³⁵⁹ Not to be mixed with *dharmas*, which are also rendered by *elements*.

³⁶⁰ The *mātrkā* from В.П. Андросов, *Будда Шакьямуни и индийский буддизм. Современное истолкование древних текстов.*, с. 179.

eighteen *dhātu*. Conformity of the classifications is represented by O. O. Rozenberg like this³⁶¹,

<u><i>skandha</i></u>	<u><i>āyatana</i></u>	
<u><i>dhātu</i></u>		
<i>rūpa-skandha</i>	<u><i>5 indriya</i></u>	
<i>cakṣur-indriya-dhātu</i>	<i>cakṣur-indriya-āyatana</i>	
<i>śrotrenindriya-dhātu</i>	<i>śrotrenindriya-āyatana</i>	
<i>ghrānendriya-dhātu</i>	<i>ghrānendriya-āyatana</i>	
<i>jihvendriya-dhātu</i>	<i>jihvendriya-āyatana</i>	
<i>kāyendriya-dhātu</i>	<i>kāyendriya-āyatana</i>	
	<u><i>5 viśaya</i></u>	
<i>rūpa-dhātu</i>	<i>rūpa-āyatana</i>	
<i>śabda-dhātu</i>	<i>śabda-āyatana</i>	
<i>gandha-dhātu</i>	<i>gandha-āyatana</i>	
<i>rasa-dhātu</i>	<i>rasa-āyatana</i>	
<i>sparśa-dhātu</i>	<i>sparśa-āyatana</i>	
<i>vijnāna-skandha</i>	<i>mana-indriya-āyatana</i>	
<i>mana-indriya-dhātu</i> ³⁶²		<i>cakṣur-</i>
<i>vijnāna-dhātu</i>		<i>śrotra-</i>
<i>vijnāna-dhātu</i>		

³⁶¹ Abhidharmakośa (1, 16b) (from O. O. Розенберг., c. 226.)

³⁶² *Mana-indriya-dhātu* is the same *manah* (*vid*) or faculty of the intellect of the above *mātrkā* of the 18 *dhātu*.

<i>viññāna-dhātu</i>	<i>ghrāna-</i>
<i>viññāna-dhātu</i>	<i>jihva-</i>
<i>viññāna-dhātu</i>	<i>kāya-</i>
<i>viññāna-dhātu</i>	<i>mano-</i>
<i>vedana-skandha</i>	<i>dharmā-āyatana</i> and <i>avijñapti</i>
<i>dharmā-dhātu</i>	
<i>saṃjñā-skandha</i>	and
<i>avijñapti</i>	
<i>samskāra-skandha</i>	

There are two more generalised classifications of *dharmas*. According to them living being consists of 1) *nāma* and *rūpa*; 2) *rūpa*, *citta* and *caitta*. The first classification has been already mentioned. Usually it is rendered by “name and form”, or “mind and body”, or “mind and matter”. We have made more precise the meaning of *rūpa* above as *the sensuous*, while *nāma* as uniting all elements of consciousness. *Nāma* is non-sensuous, for it deals with pure ideas unlike *rūpa* which employs senses. O. O. Rozenberg compares *rūpa* and *nāma* with the sensuous and mind (*Sinnlichkeit und Verstand*) of Kant.³⁶³

According to the second generalised classification sentient being can be resolved in *rūpa*, *citta* and *caitta*. *Citta* (or *viññāna*) is the pure form of consciousness apart from the objects of what it is aware. *Caitta* is the psychic processes or phenomena of so called inner life: pleasant, unpleasant and neutral feelings, the acts of perception, attention, memory, anger etc. This way *caitta* unites *vedana*, *saṃjñā* and *samskāra skandhas*. It is curious that *citta* is considered to be the centre of the common whirlwind of *dharmas*. In this respect Buddhists can interpret *citta* as the “self”. Nevertheless, this ‘self’ is an agent which is just aware of experiences and doesn’t represent an independent soul. *Citta* is a single *dharma*; its division in the six types of consciousness according to *dhātu* classification is conventional. In fact *citta* and *caitta* are mutually complementary; they are born and destroyed together.³⁶⁴

³⁶³ O. O. Розенберг, цит. соч., сс. 131-132.

³⁶⁴ Ibid., сс. 450-452.

As Vasubandhu explains in his *Abhidharmakośa*, various classifications of *dharmas* are elaborated in order to organise in an appropriate way the spiritual life of different human beings. Each of us is subject to one of the three main errors. Some of us think that psychic phenomena constitute the self; the others are in firm belief that sensuous phenomena form the self; the third group of living beings are sure that both psychic and sensuous phenomena compose the self. For those who attribute the true self to psychic phenomena, the system of *skandhas* is appropriate. For the second group of individuals *āyatana* classification is created. The third type of living beings should abolish the illusion making use of *dhātu* classification. Nevertheless, the three classifications do not differ essentially. Each system includes the same 75 types of *dharmas*.³⁶⁵

In other words neither *skandhas*, nor *āyatanas*, nor *dhātu* have a real existence. The classifications of *dharmas* are according to their functional character and can be termed as conventional or nominal units. A *skandha* is just a nominal combination of *dharmas* like a forest is a sum of trees. A forest as well as a *skandha* can't be conceived as an independently existing unit. As Vasubandhu resumes, *skandhas* are conventional units consisting of really existing *dharmas*.³⁶⁶ The same idea is expressed by Th. Stcherbatsky like this, “Buddhism, accordingly, can be characterised as a system of Radical Pluralism (*sanghāta-vāda*): the elements alone are the realities, every combination of them is a mere name, covering a plurality of separate elements”.³⁶⁷

To complete the definition, one should make use of the term *ontological* as it is interpreted in the Buddhist context by O. O. Rozenberg. The scholar explains the term as ‘real being’. Therefore, what can be defined as real, can also be rendered as *possessing the ontological status*. It means that neither a living being as a whole, nor his constituent parts (*skandhas*, *āyatanas*, *dhātu*) have any ontological significance, only the *dharmas* do, for they are termed by early Buddhists as the only ultimate reality. In Hīnayāna the idea of *dharmas* as an opposite to the concept of all-organising self or *atman*, has an ontological meaning, whereas the division of living continuity in conventional groups of *dharmas*, called *skandhas*, *āyatanas* and *dhātu* is just functional.

According to the Buddhist doctrine, man suffers because he is bound by a *samsāric* illusion. He is not capable of grasping the true nature of things because he

³⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, c. 124.

³⁶⁶ *Abhidharmakośa* (1, 15b) (O. O. Розенберг, цит. соч., с. 125.)

³⁶⁷ Th. Stcherbatsky, *The Central Conception of Buddhism and the Meaning of the Word "Dharma"* (London: Royal Asiatic Society, 1923), pp. 73-75. (from *Buddhism*, ed. Richard A. Gard (New York: George Braziller, 1962), p. 111.)

attributes the ontological status to the nominal entities, i.e., to the composites of *dharmas*. He perceives *rūpa* and *nāma* as being real and constituting his true self (this is the concept of man accepted in Christianity) and in this way makes a mistake. To think that *nāma* is supposed to be liberated from *rūpa* (here the doctrine of Hinduism is represented) is also a misconception because neither *nāma* nor any other constituent part is destined to release. All *skandhas* are nominal and illusory units. Even more than that: they are equally illusory and are deprived of ontological status to the same extent. It means that illusion can never liberate, on the contrary, it should be destroyed. (Similarly Hesychasm declares that all the constituents of man are equal in their relation to God and, therefore, insists upon their equal ontological status. But unlike Buddhism, Hesychast doctrine attributes the positive ontological meaning to these components. In Buddhism *skandhas* as mere illusion should be abolished, in Christianity the composites are real and are supposed to be ontologically transformed or deified.)

A conflict between the proposed idea of liberation of *rūpa* and the idea of a necessity to destroy *rūpa* can be solved like this. According to the abhidharmic positive ontology of *dharmas* and the conventional character of *skandhas*, these very *skandhas* (including *rūpa*) should be identified as being an illusion and this way should be abolished, whereas the *dharmas*, constructing these nominal composites (also the *dharmas* constructing the body), are supposed to be liberated. In other words the body, instead of being violently mortified, should be just looked at in a different way and should be ignored as being illusion. This is the true path of liberation from reincarnation.

It is important, however, that although a living being is just a sum of *dharmas*, it is analysed by Buddhists as a whole, including his body, psychic activity and the objects that he perceives. As O. O. Rozenberg concludes, all *dharmas* are linked together in the whole and do not exist separately.³⁶⁸ This contradiction between the ontologically significant dissection of living being in elements and its simultaneous holism was analysed by Th. Stcherbatsky from the standpoint of historical development of the doctrine, “In Hīnayāna the elements, although inter[de]pendent (*samskrta* = *pratītya-samutpanna*), were real (*vastu*). In Mahāyāna all elements, because interdependent, were unreal (*śūnya* = *svabhāva-śūnya*). In Hīnayāna every whole (*rāśi* = *avayavin*) is regarded as a nominal existence (*prajñaptisat*) and only the parts or ultimate elements (*dharma*) are real (*vastu*). In Mahāyāna all parts or elements are unreal (*śūnya*), and only the whole, i.e., the Whole of the wholes (*dharmatā* = *dharmakāya*), is real. [...] In

³⁶⁸ O. O. Розенберг, цит. соч., с. 124.

Hīnayāna, in a word, we have a radical Pluralism, converted in Mahāyāna in a radical Monism”.³⁶⁹

In any way, in Buddhism all arguments have been created in order to underscore the absence of the *self* (*ātman*). Hence, individual does not exist as something real because he does not possess the permanent core called *ātman*. He can be qualified as “the individual karmic process”, deprived of “the eternal possessor of karma”. As Vasubandhu states, solely “the flow of individual life” exists; this continuity, however, does not belong to anybody.³⁷⁰ The assertion makes O. O. Rozenberg elaborate the term of *empirical personality*³⁷¹ contradicted to *ontological personality* of Christian East. Personality³⁷² in Buddhism is something illusory for it is composed of transient states. This process of transition is deprived of any subject (*ātman*). To explain the mechanism of universal change the Buddha makes use of an example: living continuity can be likened to the process of transformation which takes place in milk turning into sour milk; sour milk transforms into sour cream; the latter is usually turned into butter.³⁷³

Characterising the whole picture of being, Th. Stcherbatsky contended, “Early Buddhism (Hīnayāna) as a system of metaphysics contained an analysis of existence into its component elements, and established a certain number of ultimate data (*dharma*). Every combination of these data was then declared to represent a nominal, not an ultimate, reality. A substantial Soul was thus transformed into a stream of continuously flowing discrete moments of sensation or pure consciousness (*vijñāna*), accompanied by moments of feeling, of ideation, volition (*vedanā-samjñā-samskāra*) etc. Matter (*rūpa*) was conceived on the same pattern, as a flow of momentary flashes without any continuant stuff, but characterised by impenetrability, and representing the senses and sense-data (*āyatana*). The world was thus transformed into a cinema. The categories of substance, quality and motion — were denied, but the reality of sense data and of elements of mind, was admitted. All these elementary data were conceived as obeying causal laws”.³⁷⁴

³⁶⁹ Th. Stcherbatsky, *The Conception of Buddhist Nirvāna* (Leningrad: Publishing Office of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, 1927), pp. 39-43. (from *Buddhism*, ed. Richard A. Gard, pp. 117-118.)

³⁷⁰ O. O. Розенберг, цит. соч., с. 173.

³⁷¹ *Ibid.*, с. 85.

³⁷² Buddhists do not distinguish *personality* and *individual*.

³⁷³ *Dīgha Nikāya* (I. 201) (from В. Г. Лысенко, *Ранняя буддийская философия.*, с. 216.

³⁷⁴ Th. Stcherbatsky, *The Conception of Buddhist Nirvāna*, pp. 39-43 (from *Buddhism*, ed. Richard A. Gard, pp. 116-117.)

The definition of living being as “continuously flowing discrete moments” is also accepted by V. G. Lisenko. These very “discrete moments” (*dharmas*) are rendered also by “events”, which follow each other according to the law of causality. Hence, *ātman* has been replaced in Buddhism by continuity of “events”, whilst the holism of subject (the agent of reincarnation) has been changed by the holism of conglomerate of *dharmas*.³⁷⁵ Besides, this very conglomerate of *dharmas* includes the outer world experienced by a certain subject.

We will find similar concepts of human constitution in Hesychasm, however, the notion of non-self, which is the doctrinal core in Buddhism, can never be noticed in Christianity. On the contrary, the concept of self is an explicit feature of Christian reflection.

Constitution of Man in Hesychasm

The Orthodox Christian tradition declares that man consists of two parts, i.e., of immaterial intelligent soul and of material body. D. B. Makary in his *Orthodox Dogmatic Theology* explains that this statement is in conformity with the Old and the New Testaments, which proclaim man to be composed of two parts, of body and soul (ἡ ψυχή); or of body and spirit (τὸ πνεῦμα). It means that in the Bible *soul* and *spirit* are two different names of the same constituent. Nevertheless, Paul in his Epistle to the Hebrews (4, 12)³⁷⁶ and in the First Epistle to the Thessalonians (5, 23)³⁷⁷ distinguishes between soul and spirit. The orthodox scholar interprets these words of St. Paul as follows. In the quotation from the Epistle to the Hebrews soul and spirit are just two parts of one composite similarly to joints and marrow which together construct one body. In the extract from the Epistle to the Thessalonians spirit is the highest faculty of the soul.³⁷⁸

D. B. Makary contends that among the Fathers and the teachers of the Church there were dichotomists and trichotomists, nevertheless, in agreement with the Biblical

³⁷⁵ В. Г. Лысенко, *Ранняя буддийская философия*, с. 224.

³⁷⁶ “For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any doubleedged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow.”

³⁷⁷ “May Your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

³⁷⁸ Д.Б. Макарий, *Д.Б. Макария, архиепископа Харьковского Православно-догматическое богословие*, том 1 (Санктпетербург, 1868), сс. 42-444.

tradition, the trichotomists have never conceived spirit as an independent constituent. Here three arguments are mentioned. According to the first one, soul and spirit are just two sides or functions of the same spiritual nature of man; soul is the lower and spirit is the higher one. As Tertullian taught, these two were different points of departure for the same immaterial substance. The soul is the intelligent one whereas the spirit is the vivifying one.³⁷⁹ In a similar way Clement of Alexandria admitted that soul and spirit are two different names of the same immaterial substance. They differ only when they are supposed to designate various functions and conditions of this very substance.³⁸⁰

According to the second argument spirit is a designation of God's spirit, i.e., God's grace, which vivifies man. For this respect St. Irenaeus stresses that spirit (τὸ πνεῦμα), i.e., God's Spirit, is possessed only by pious men, whereas sinners are deprived of that, and thus consist only of two parts (of body and soul).³⁸¹ Tatian also attributes spirit solely to the pious ones.³⁸²

The third argument is as follows. The three constituents of man have been formulated in order to realise in man the image of Trinity. For instance, St. Ephraim insisted upon the thrice-repeated summon of St. Trinity for it was able to sanctify our body, soul and spirit and to make our trinity perfect.³⁸³

The contemporary Orthodox theology accepts and continues the ideas of the Fathers and teachers of the Church. Spirit is conceived to be the main factor in the psycho-physiologic unity of man in a similar way as abhidharmic *citta* is the centre of the common whirlwind of *dharmas*. Spirit is the life giving source and the active core of the soul. At the same time spirit and soul are two functions of the same substance; spirit is inclined to the Absolute and fulfils man's life in relationship with God; soul has tendency to the self-realisation in the world of created things. Spirit constitutes the

³⁷⁹ Hic (homo) cum ex duabus substantiis constet, ex corpore et anima... (adv. Marcion. IV, 37, cf. de resurr. carn. XXXIV; adv. Gnost. Scorp. IX; de poenit. cap. III). Quidam volunt, aliam illi (homini) substantiam naturalem inesse, spiritum; quasi aliud sit vivere, quod venit ab anima; aliud spirare, quod fiat a spiritu... Atenim vivere spirare est, et spirare vivere est. Ergo totum hoc, et spirare et vivere..., est animae... Si duo sunt, anima et spiritus, dividi posunt... Sed nullo modo eveniet... Ita cum de anima et spiritu agitur, ipsa erit anima spiritus (lib. de anima cap. X). (from Д.Б. Макарий, Д.Б. Макария, цит. соч., сс. 445-446)

³⁸⁰ Strom. IV, 3.25.26; V,12; VII,12 (ibid., c. 446)

³⁸¹ Adver. haeres. II, 33,n 5; V,12, n. 2. (ibid.)

³⁸² Contr. Graec. XII. XIII. (ibid.)

³⁸³ Adv. Scrutat. Serm. XVIII. (ibid., c. 447)

personality, whereas soul is the agent constructing individual.³⁸⁴ It is not possible to realise a strict distinction between soul and spirit for they represent the same immaterial substance.³⁸⁵

In this context Archimandrite Kiprian Kern explains that there can never be any essential contradiction between dichotomy and trichotomy because Christian literature of the ancient period has not created a systematic teaching about man's constituents. A controversy between dichotomists and trichotomists has never taken place during Church history. Undoubtedly, trichotomism is more perceptive anthropological model than dichotomism is, nevertheless, it is not wide enough either. Hence, neither of the two models is perfect.³⁸⁶

Hesychasts haven't elaborated any new idea in this field. Both the dichotomous model of man and the trichotomous one are employed by Hesychasts. Nevertheless, it would be difficult to deny that the founders of the traditions, namely, Macarius the Egyptian, Symeon the New Theologian and Gregory Palamas preferred dichotomism. Spirit as a constituent of man is mentioned by them rather rarely.

It is curious that both the dichotomous and the trichotomous Christian anthropological models show some sort of similarity with the classifications of Abhidharmic tradition. For instance, the dichotomous anthropological models of St. Symeon the New Theologian and of St. Gregory Palamas remind us of the Buddhist idea of *nāma-rūpa* (*mind and the sensuous*). St. Symeon in his Hymns of Divine Love wrote, "It is man, simply, that I have named, endowed with reason amidst creatures without reason, for he is double, composed of one and the other, *sensible and intellectual*. [...] Know then that you are double and that you possess two eyes, the sensible and the spiritual. Since there are also two suns, there is also a double light, *sensible and spiritual*, and if you see them, you will be the man as you were created in the beginning to be."³⁸⁷ The following words of the passage are written in agreement with the idea of the holistic deification, "If you see the sensible sun and not the spiritual sun, you are really half dead. He who is half dead is also a corpse, for he is without

³⁸⁴ The difference between personality and individual in Orthodox theology is discovered by S. S. Horuzhy as follows. Man can be called 'person' only when he has been deified. An ordinary man is called 'individual' or 'pre-person'. In other words he is a person only potentially. (С. С. Хоружий, *Диптих безмолвия: Аскетическое учение о человеке в богословском и философском освещении*, сс. 15-17.)

³⁸⁵ ³⁸⁵ Л.И.Василенко, *Краткий религиозно-философский словарь*, сс. 63-64.

³⁸⁶ Архимандрит Киприан (Керн), *Антропология Св. Григория Паламы*, с. 323.

³⁸⁷ St. Symeon the New Theologian, *Hymns of Divine Love* (23), pp. 114, 123.

activity in all domains.”³⁸⁸ Similarly Gregory Palamas insisted upon *sensible and intelligent* parts of man³⁸⁹, reminding us once more the dichotomous model of the *sensuous and mind* in Buddhism.

The famous Christian trichotomous model of man, in its turn, can be compared with the Buddhist *citta-caitta-rūpa*. The indivisible character of soul and spirit in Christianity makes us to remember, noticed by O. O. Rozenberg, the Buddhist idea of *citta* and *caitta* being mutually complementary; they are born and are destroyed together.³⁹⁰

There is one more very important classification of constituents, the fourfold one, rooted mainly in the Aristotelian psychological analysis of man. In Hesychasm this classification can be found in the works of Macarius the Egyptian. According to this typology man consists of two major parts, i.e., of the body and of the soul. The body consists of different organs. An important role in the body is played by the five senses. The body, as it is formulated by the Orthodox Christian tradition, may be to some extent compared to the *rūpa-skandha* of Buddhist doctrine.

The soul, in its turn, consists of three parts or ‘activities’. The first one is the so-called “sensual” one. It is responsible for the feelings of pleasant, un-pleasant and neutral precisely in the same way as *vedana skandha* does in Buddhist psychology. The “cognitive” activity of the soul deals with different notions and intellectual processes bearing resemblance to *samjñā skandha*. Finally, the “passionate” activity of the soul, called “will” by the fathers, is a source of desire and certain deeds. This last constituent may be compared to *samskāra skandha* of the Abhidharmic tradition.³⁹¹ The only *skandha* which doesn’t have its equivalent in the Christian classification is *vijnāna skandha*. It is already indicated that *vijnāna skandha* is interpreted as awareness of certain psychic processes. According to the Christian scheme the same awareness

³⁸⁸ Ibid.

³⁸⁹ Ном. 17, col. 221 С. (from Архимандрит Киприан (Керн), *Антропология Св. Григория Паламы*, с. 324).

³⁹⁰ О. О. Розенберг, цит. соч., с. 450-452.

³⁹¹ A more detailed analysis of parallels between ‘passions’ of Christian doctrine and *samskāra skandha* of Abhidharmic philosophy will be performed in the next chapter of the research.

(together with the self-awareness)³⁹² is not mentioned among constituents of the soul, but rather among the “features” of the soul.³⁹³

The question is, if the “spirit” is represented in this scheme. The answer is yes. Any of the mentioned constituents or “activities” of the soul is dissected in three levels. The highest level of every activity corresponds to the entity of human spirit. We shall begin with the sensual activity. It consists of 1) the lower sensual perception which deals with the feelings of pleasant and unpleasant that have a physical origin. In other words, these feelings are responsible for the evaluation of the sense data, perceived by sense organs of the body. 2) The middle level is represented by the senses of the soul whereas 3) the highest level is denoted as the spiritual senses. The latter is responsible for the sensual perception of God (Rus.боговкушение).

The cognitive activity also consists of three levels: 1) the lower one is represented by the cognition of attributes of material objects through senses, by imagination and also by memory. 2) The middle level is expressed by the natural intellect whilst 3) the highest one is called ‘mind’ which is responsible for the contemplation of God.

The passionate activity of the soul is endowed with 1) the lowest, i.e., sensual desires and 2) the will which 3) at the level of spirit transforms itself into conscience, desiring only to fulfil God’s will.³⁹⁴

Our next question is why this spiritual level of constituents is not present in the Buddhist fivefold classification. The answer is simple, being, again, rooted in the agapeic and gnostic religious models. The spiritual level of constituents presenting the forms of communication with the Divine Other is just necessary for Christian doctrine. In Buddhism, incarnating monism, there is no space for the Divine Other and, consequently, for the receptacles which perceive Him.

Finally, it is important to indicate, that likewise the Abhidharmic tradition, Hesychasm has attributed just a functional meaning to the classifications of constituents of man. Neither the trichotomous model, nor the dichotomous one possesses an ontological status. They have an explicitly functional meaning because, if not united with the other parts of psycho-physiological complex, any constituent, even spirit, is just

³⁹² The awareness is responsible for objects around man whereas the self-awareness deals with awareness of the self.

³⁹³ Иерей Вадим Коржевский, *Пропедевтика аскетике: компендиум по православной святоотеческой психологии*. (Москва: Центр Информационных Технологий Информатики и Информации, 2004), сс. 217-218, 71.

³⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, сс. 218-219, 645. The threefold constitution of the soul is discussed also in Протоиерей Стефан Кашменский, *Систематический свод св. Отцов о душе человеческой*. (Пермь: Панагия, 2002.).

nonsense. Every part constituting man has its own task in the process of salvation. Nevertheless, this fact doesn't mean that different tasks determine different ontological status of the composites. Neither one part, nor another one can achieve salvation independently and represent man independently. Only together they form a personality.³⁹⁵

Hence, in early Buddhism the functional status of different classifications of *dharmas* aims to divide man in *dharmas* and to prove that living being does not possess any ontological status. He is just a mere illusion, composed of transient elements. In Mahāyāna the constituents and man himself exist only as a part of the universal Whole. Here, again, we can't speak about an ontological status of man. On the contrary, in Christianity the functional status of the various divisions means that only together the composites are endowed with this ontological status and constitute man as a certain being possessing true existence. In Christianity we deal with the wholeness of man whereas in Buddhism we realise the universal wholeness.

Although the holism of man becomes the most important factor in the process of ontological realisation, the presence of constituents in ordinary man is an evidence of the split mode of his being. God doesn't consist of parts and, therefore, is perfect. Man, possessing constituents, is not perfect. Human being is defined by Orthodox theology as "being fraught of ontological consequences", in other words he tries to go out of himself and to alter his mode of being. Man urges to get over his own bounds. Another example of human imperfection is death to which man is subject. Hence, man is mortal and limited whereas the Ultimate Reality is eternal and boundless. God neither dies, nor consists of parts. By his fundamental aspiration to change his situation man unites all his energies and transforms them into the boundless God. The limited situation of man becomes a condition of fundamental aspiration to become God by energies.³⁹⁶

Although the above theological and anthropological constructions with their idea of two substances, as well as with the idea of substance as such, are completely extraneous for Buddhism, one can find some sort of similarity between the notion of human limited and split condition and the Buddhist concept of *samsāric* form of existence. Men as well as the other living beings submit to the dichotomous conceptualisation and see the reality being split in a huge number of different phenomena. Every sentient being is even inclined to differentiate among his various constituents. So the aim of an intelligent being is to overcome the dualistic condition, characterised by the split perception of reality, and

³⁹⁵ С. С. Хоружий, *Диптих безмолвия: Аскетическое учение о человеке в богословском и философском освещении.*, с. 22.

³⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, сс. 67- 68.

to realise that anything and anybody can't be separated from the Whole of the wholes. Thus the transformation from the split mode of being into union represents the soteriological perspective which is common to Christianity and Buddhism.

Finally, it would be relevant to mention one more expanded Hesychast anthropological model skilfully analysed by S. S. Horuzhy. According to this view man consists of a huge number of different energies³⁹⁷ which, in their turn, can be arranged in three different configurations. Here the notion of energies and their configurations resembles the abhidharmic idea of *dharmas* and their various compositions. But unlike Buddhists, Hesychasts were not interested too much in compiling *mātrkā* or lists of energies, (the only energies, systematised by ascetics, were passions³⁹⁸). Nevertheless, configurations of the mentioned energies have been systematised perfectly.³⁹⁹ Here typically Christian terminology is employed by Hesychasts, namely, the main compositions of energies are termed as the *supernatural*, the *natural* and the *unnatural* ones.⁴⁰⁰

The terms can be called typically Christian, because we can't find the notion of "supernatural" in Buddhism. Indisputably, it is a derivative of the agapeic (which here is explicitly theistic) religious model, which insists upon the existence of two different natures: the uncreated and perfect nature of God or *supernature*, and the created

³⁹⁷ Orthodox theology accepts the Aristotelian interpretation of the term *energy* (ἐνέργεια). Energy is the actualisation of the potencies. To precise, energy is the process of actualisation or motion. The result of the motion (the Aristotelian *entelechia*), in turn, is not included in the notion of energy. (С. С. Хоружий, "Аналитический словарь исихастской антропологии" // С. С. Хоружий (гл. ред.), *Синергия: проблемы аскетики и мистики Православия* (Москва: Ди-Дик, 1995), с. 53.)

³⁹⁸ The founder of Christian Psychology Evagrius Ponticus was the first to propose the classical eightfold classification of passions (παθήματα), in which all later schemes right up to Saligia of the Western Middle Ages originate. The eight passions are following: gluttony, lechery, covetousness, sadness, anger, gloominess, vain and arrogance. (С. С. Хоружий, "Аналитический словарь исихастской антропологии", с. 53.)

³⁹⁹ The proposed below classification is not the only one. According to the dichotomous constitution of man the energies, likewise, are classified as the bodily and those which originate in the soul. Further, Gregory of Nyssa and Evagrius elaborated the threefold classification of the soul constituents. The three parts of the soul are *mind*, *desires* and *emotions*. Accordingly, the energies can be also classified as belonging to the spheres of the mind, of the desires and the emotional ones. (С. С. Хоружий, "Аналитический словарь исихастской антропологии", с. 54-57.)

⁴⁰⁰ С. С. Хоружий, *Диптих безмолвия: Аскетическое учение о человеке в богословском и философском освещении*, с. 76.

imperfect nature of man.⁴⁰¹ In Buddhism there is no place for any other nature except the only one, called ‘dependent origination of things’ or ‘the law of causality’ (*śūnyatā* of Mādhyamaka). God or supernature is just superfluous for this order of things.

As is mentioned above, according to Hesychast doctrine there exist three different configurations of energies, composing man: the supernatural, the natural and the unnatural ones. The most important factor calling forth a certain configuration is “what the energies are doing” or “what aim the energies are urging to achieve”⁴⁰². In other words, the energies can be arranged according to the global principle, when all of them are subordinate to one purpose. Sometimes energies can be in the chaotic relationship with each other acting without any unified purpose.

The energies, if globally arranged, can submit to the transcendent purpose, i.e., to God. In this case the global configuration is called *supernatural*. The other possibility for energies is to be globally subordinate to a worldly purpose. According to the Orthodox Asceticism this sort of combination can be termed as the *unnatural* or the *passionate* configuration. The third manner of how energies can be arranged is called *natural*; its feature is the absence of any global organisation of energies. This is the condition when man is partially concentrated and partially absent-minded, when the seeds of different manifestations of human nature exist “below one root” and are given a choice to develop and to transform into anything else. The natural configuration of energies is possessed by the largest part of humankind.

The unnatural order of arrangement, although global, is the undoubted antithesis to the supernatural configuration, because it already has its own strict global worldly organisation, excluding any other sort of order. That is why the transition from the passionate configuration to the supernatural one is extremely complicated. The natural combination of energies, in its turn, can be transformed into the supernatural one easier,

⁴⁰¹ Obviously, the notion of *supernature* can be seized in the context of *ecstasies* as the supernatural mode of human existence during prayer. As St. Maximus teaches, contemplation takes place out of the created nature of man, i.e., at the level of the divine or supernatural form of existence. This condition is perfectly expressed in the term ‘ecstasies’ (ἔκστασις, Gr. *rapture*), for it is rendered by the Orthodox theologians as going out of the self. (Диакон Георгий Завершинский, “Богословский Экзистенциализм о. Софрония”/ *Преподобный Силуан и его ученик архимандрит Софроний: По материалам “Силуановских чтений”*, сост. А.Л. Гуревич (Клин: Христианская жизнь, 2001), с. 178.) Strictly speaking, the term ‘ecstasies’ can be employed only in the case of theism. For monism (for Buddhism) the term ‘ecstasies’ should be replaced by ‘enstasies’ because Buddhist *samādhi* is the realisation of one’s own true nature in the process of introversive cognition.

⁴⁰² С. С. Хоружий, *Диптих безмолвия: Аскетическое учение о человеке в богословском и философском освещении*, с. 76.

for it is deprived of any organisation. It is much easier to organise the chaotically acting energies than to reorganise a configuration of energies which already possesses a certain global arrangement.⁴⁰³

In order to grasp the mechanism of the transition from one configuration to another the notions of *dominant* and *synergia* should be discussed. Human being can be interpreted as a complex of a huge number of energies. If globally organised, energies constructing man are subject to a central, i.e., the most powerful energy. Theoretically any energy can become central; it determines tendencies of a certain individual and subordinates all other forces of his psycho-physical organism. Conventionally it can be termed as *dominant*. There exist various dominants, worldly and transcendent ones.⁴⁰⁴ The former ones are called *passions* (τὰ παθήματα), those are responsible for the *passionate* or *unnatural* configuration of energies. The latter, i.e., transcendent dominant can be just one and is termed as *synergia*.

Usually *synergia* (ἡ συνέργεια) is defined as *co-operation* of the uncreated energy of God and the created energy of man in the process of salvation.⁴⁰⁵ Starecz Silouan spoke about the co-operation of two wills, the Divine will and the created human one.⁴⁰⁶ Nevertheless, S. S. Horuzhy proposes one more interpretation of the term. He defines *synergia* as one of energies possessed by man, namely, the energy of the fundamental aspiration. *Synergia* is *indestructible*; it is given to man initially and never can be destroyed completely. Even when the energies of man are globally organised in the unnatural configuration, the seeds or sparks of *synergia* are present in man. They insure the possibility to go out of the passionate order of existence. Although the

⁴⁰³ Ibid., cc. 76-77.

⁴⁰⁴ As in the case of configurations, the classification of dominants, proposed below, is not the only one. According to the trichotomous anthropology dominants can represent body or soul or spirit. These three classes of dominants postulated by Asceticism correspond to the three different types of men in secular psychology according to which human beings possess bodily or psychic or spiritual constitution. (С. С. Хоружий, "Аналитический словарь исихастской антропологии", с. 55.)

⁴⁰⁵ See, for instance В. Н. Лосский, *Очерк мистического богословия Восточной Церкви* // В. Н. Лосский, *Очерк мистического богословия Восточной Церкви. Догматическое богословие* (Москва: СЭИ, 1991), с. 148; Протопресвитер Иоанн Мейендорф, *Жизнь и труды святителя Григория Паламы: введение в изучение*. пер. Г.Н. Начинкина под редакцией И. П. Медведева и В. М. Лурье // *Subsidia Byzantinorossica*, Т. 2 (Санкт-Петербург: Византинороссика, 1997), с. 227; С. С. Хоружий, "Аналитический словарь исихастской антропологии", с. 108.

⁴⁰⁶ Старец Силуан, *Жизнь и поучения* (Москва, Ново-Казачье, Минск: Православная община, 1991), с. 147.

unnatural configuration of energies is extremely stable, it is, however, subject to destruction.⁴⁰⁷

Here the indestructible seeds of *synergia* bear resemblance to the three *dharmas* of the abhidharmic tradition, called ‘three roots of the good’, those are *non-hatred*, *non-selfishness* and *non-ignorance*. The three roots are believed to be potentially indestructible. The *dharmas* can be destroyed by a human being only in their actualised form (i.e., in the form of manifestation). It happens in the occasion when a mortal sin is committed by man. Then he is destined to take birth in hell. Nevertheless, when the poor *karma* is exhausted, the roots of the good begin the process of manifestation again and the *naraka* reincarnates in another samsāric realm. The germinating of the roots is an irrevocable principle and can never be abolished. This is the reason why adherents of the tradition think that Buddhism is a rather optimistic religion for it doesn’t allow any living being to be ruined in hell for ever.⁴⁰⁸

On the other hand, the seeds of *synergia* can be compared to the indestructible drop of the tantric mystic physiology which being constructed of the extremely subtle wind and mind, can’t dissolve, manifesting as the Clear Light of bliss during death. The vision of Light is experienced by any living being and is not determined by his or her *karma*. Even when he is destined to take birth in hell, the indestructible Light dwells in the depths of his being.⁴⁰⁹ Similarities of this kind make us to draw a conclusion that in Christianity as well as in Buddhism man is potentially saved/liberated.

In Hesychasm *synergia* is responsible for the transition from one configuration of energies to another. The purpose is to destroy the passionate configuration and to reorganise energies into the natural configuration. In Orthodox asceticism this operation performed by *synergia* is called *repentance*. When the natural configuration is achieved, *synergia* gathers the chaotically abiding energies together. This process, in turn, is known to adherents of the tradition as *praxis* (ἡ πρᾶξις) that means “the natural phase of prayer”. When, finely, the global arrangement of energies is achieved, *synergia*’s task is to bring the energies into the supernatural mode of being, when the energies are united

⁴⁰⁷ С. С. Хоружий, *Диптих безмолвия: Аскетическое учение о человеке в богословском и философском освещении*, с. 78.

⁴⁰⁸ More about the topic see Т. В. Ермакова, Е. П. Островская, *Классический буддизм* (СПб.: Петербургское Востоковедение, 1999).

⁴⁰⁹ See, for instance, Geshe Kelsang Gyatso, *Clear Light of Bliss: Mahamudra in Vajrayana Buddhism*, trans. by Tenzin Norbu, ed. by Jonathan Landaw with Chris Kolb (London: Wisdom Publications, 1982), p. 67sq.

with God in ecstasis. The process is known as the next, supernatural form of prayer called *theoria* (ἡ θεωρία).⁴¹⁰

Although several parallels with the Buddhist doctrine of man and with the Buddhist soteriological ideas are realised, it would be hard to ignore the difference between the Buddhist teaching of non-self (*anātman*) and the Christian idea of the self. So far as the Buddhist concept of non-self is discussed, we shall explore the Christian idea of the self making use of the classification of human constituents proposed by B. P. Visheslavcev. The philosopher analyses man as consisting of seven ontological “stages”: 1) the physically chemical energy; 2) the animated energy, i.e., the animated cell; 3) the psychic energy which constitutes the collective unconscious as the basis for the development of individual soul; 4) the personal unconscious which is based upon the collective unconscious; 5) the conscious soul; 6) the spiritual consciousness or spirit or spiritual personality; 7) the highest stage is man himself or *human self*⁴¹¹ which is qualified as the metaphysical and metapsychic entity.⁴¹²

What should be noticed in the above classification is that the *human self* does exist. The soteriological perfection represented by the term *meta* is associated with the achievement of the state of *human self*. The highest stage of spiritual progress is *spiritual personality* endowed with the supernatural mode of being, whereas the *collective unconscious* is just the middle stage between the physically chemical energy and the highest realisation of man. In Buddhism the situation changes vice versa. Any form of realisation of *human self*, even the spiritual one, is just a sign of the dichotomous conceptualisation, while the merging of the self with the collective unconscious is the liberation from the dualistic condition and suffering.

The Ālaya-Vijnāna as the Link Between the Abhidharmic Notion of Anātman and the Tantric Doctrine of Light

As is already realised, the notion of the *self* is irrelevant for abhidharmic tradition. According to Buddhism there does not exist either the soul (*ātman*) or any other

⁴¹⁰ С. С. Хоружий, *Диптих безмолвия: Аскетическое учение о человеке в богословском и философском освещении*, сс. 75, 78.

⁴¹¹ Russian самость.

⁴¹² Б. П. Вышеславцев, *Вечное в русской философии* // Б. П. Вышеславцев, *Этика преображенного эроса* (Москва, 1994), с. 284. (from Свящ. Олег Климов, *Опыт безмолвия: человек в мирозерцании византийских исихастов* (Санкт-Петербург: Алетейя, 2001), с. 176.)

possessor of the individual karmic process exists. Dr. Chinda Chandrkaew notices in this connection, “Since the matter, feeling, perception, mental formations and consciousness are impermanent or perishable, and thus are *duhkha*, it is not possible to regard them as a self or as belonging to the self. Even the consciousness (*vinnāna*) is included, which is the innermost mental faculty and always regarded as a self or soul. Consciousness comes into being on account of duality, viz., the eye and the visible objects, which are impermanent, changing and becoming other. The eye-consciousness which arises through this changing duality, therefore, cannot be otherwise than changing. The same is applied to the other sense organs and the consciousness is called after them.”⁴¹³ Really, this is the ontological situation proposed by Abhidharma, but it changes to some extent in Vijnānavāda.

According to the abhidharmic classification, consciousness may be decomposed in six kinds like eye-consciousness (*caksur-vijnānam*), ear-consciousness (*śrotra-vijnānam*), tongue-consciousness (*jihvā-vijnānam*), body-consciousness (*kāya-vijnānam*), and mind-consciousness (*mano-vijnāna-dvātavaḥ*) corresponding to sight, sound, taste, touch, and thought. Thus each mode of consciousness functions in and through a particular sense organ. The Yogācārins, while accepting the above classification, have added two more to the list, and thereby the number has been raised to eight.⁴¹⁴ The seventh one is *manas* which has been already mentioned as one of the six *indriyas*. In Vijnānavāda *manas*, however, acquires a new meaning, being adopted by the school as one of the eight stages of consciousness.

Manas together with the six consciousnesses represent the surface-level of mind because they all move towards the object that lies outside. It is the very nature of extroverted or active consciousness to go out of itself in search for an object of cognition. All these consciousnesses, according to Yogācārins, have their basis in the eighth level of consciousness called the storehouse-consciousness (*ālaya-vijnāna*). *Ālaya-vijnāna* is a completely new idea proposed by Yogācārins and representing the unconscious aspect of mind. *Ālaja* is treated neither to be involved in purposive activity nor in any cognitive act. Rather it represents the underlying substratum of mind. The storehouse-consciousness, according to Asanga, is identical with the “realm (*dhātu*) without beginning in time, which is the basis of all *dharmas*”⁴¹⁵. As the basis of active

⁴¹³ Dr. Chinda Chandrkaew, *Nibbāna: The Ultimate Truth of Buddhism*, pp. 11-12.

⁴¹⁴ Moti Lal Pandit, *Śūnyatā: The Essence of Mahāyāna Spirituality* (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers, 1998), p. 271.

⁴¹⁵ Asanga, *Mahāyānasamgraha* (1.7) (quotation from Moti Lal Pandit, *Śūnyatā: The Essence of Mahāyāna Spirituality*, p. 272).

consciousness, it is the storehouse-consciousness which is responsible for projecting and “feeding” the active consciousness out of itself. *Ālaya-vijnāna* is said to be even and same, and so transcends the dichotomous mode of active consciousness.⁴¹⁶

It is discernible that Western scholars and Buddhists themselves, beginning with the founder of *Vijnānavāda*, have repeatedly attributed the positive ontological status to *ālaya-vijnāna*. Asanga’s definition of *ālaya-vijnāna* was based on the concept of *absolute realm* which is the same *nirvāna*. From the absolute point of view the whole universe is situated in *nirvāna*, whilst *samsāra* doesn’t at all exist. Here the ideological conflict between Mādhyamaka and Vijnānavāda is clearly represented. According to Asanga *nirvāna* (*ālaya-vijnāna*) exists, but *samsāra* doesn’t, whereas according to Nāgārjuna they both are unreal.⁴¹⁷ To put it differently, Asanga attributes the ontological significance solely to *ālaya-vijnāna*. O. O. Rozenberg, defining *ontology* as the science of really existing things, insists upon the ontological status of *ālaya-vijnāna* in Vijnānavāda and terms it as “the absolute consciousness” of Yogācārin.⁴¹⁸

Shashi Bhushan Dasgupta, underscoring the positive ontological status of *ālaya-vijnāna*, even compares it with Hindu Brahman, “The Yogācāra’s school conception of the reality as the *Abhūta-parikalpa* or as pure consciousness (*vijnapti-mātratā*) drives us very near to the Vedāntic conception of the ultimate reality as the *Nirguna* (qualitiless) Brahman who transcends all knowledge, knower and the knowable. It has always been vehemently argued by the Vijnānavādins that *śūnyatā* was never spoken by the Lord as pure nothing; while it is the negation of all duality, it implies at the same time the reality of the *Abhūta-parikalpa*, which is pure consciousness — unchanging, unthinkable, all good, eternal, all bliss, the ultimate element of the nature of salvation.”⁴¹⁹

Shashi Bhushan Dasgupta skilfully inscribes the statement in the historical context of the Hindu and Buddhist philosophy, “It seems that as time was passing on, Buddhist philosophy began to come more and more in contact with the Upanishadic literature and through its influence began to be more and more positive regarding the ontological problem, — and we are not quite sure if we shall be far off from the truth if we assert that the Advaita-vedānta of Śankara with its colourless *Brahman* contradicting all the

⁴¹⁶ Moti Lal Pandit, *Śūnyatā: The Essence of Mahāyāna Spirituality*, p. 274.

⁴¹⁷ В.П. Андросов, *Будда Шакьямуни и индийский буддизм. Современное истолкование древних текстов*, с. 317, 321.

⁴¹⁸ О. О. Розенберг, цит. соч., с.с 187-188.

⁴¹⁹ Shashi Bhushan Dasgupta, *An Introduction to Tantric Buddhism*, pp. 30-31.

empirical realities is in its turn the culmination of the evolution of the Upanishadic Buddhist thought.”⁴²⁰

The idea of Dasgupta is somewhat akin to Rozenberg’s attempt to attribute the positive ontological context to the Buddhist philosophy on the whole. He writes that from the ontological point of view all Buddhists are realists; they all believe in really existing essence beyond the chain of moments. It means that they can never be called nihilists or agnosticists.⁴²¹

The idea of positive ontology in Vijnānavāda and Buddhism on the whole is contested by Agehananda Bharati. He underscores that ontology should be defined as the notion of self, and insists upon “avoidance of all ontological terms when we deal with the Buddhist philosophy, because it is not ontology in it; Buddhism is *bdag med gyi bstan pa* (*anātmavāda*), the doctrine of no-self.”⁴²² The scholar stresses that “Buddhism has no ontology, no metaphysics; Hinduism has a powerful ontology — this is the one unbridgeable difference between all of its forms and Buddhism of all schools.”⁴²³ In another place he writes, “Hindu scholars, with no exception, believe in a virtual doctrinary identity of Advaita monism and Mādhyamaka absolutism, and this is detrimental to the study of Indian absolutistic philosophy, and irrelevant to any tantric study.”⁴²⁴

Although the ideas of the scholars about the ontological content of Buddhist reflection obviously are in contradiction, we can attempt to resolve the conflict. The meaning of the term *ontology* is understood by O. O. Rozenberg and Agehananda Bharati in completely different ways. The former scholar presents it as a *belief* in some sort of entity, which really exists; the latter interprets the term as *the notion of the self*. O. O. Rozenberg (and we believe that the other scholars who adopt the idea of ontology in Buddhism) deals with the phenomenological sphere of religious experience, which is apparently positive. Agehananda Bharati, in his turn, concerns solely the doctrinal side of the matter.

At the same time Agehananda Bharati distinguishes between the philosophical and psycho-experimental aspects of religion. Designating the latter one as *sādhana*, the scholar accepts the idea of identity of religious experiences acquired by the adherents of

⁴²⁰ Ibid.

⁴²¹ O. O. Розенберг, цит. соч., сс. 113-114.

⁴²² Agehananda Bharati, *The Tantric Tradition* (Bombay, Calcutta, Madras, Delhi: B.I. Publications, 1976), p. 50.

⁴²³ Ibid., p. 26.

⁴²⁴ Ibid., pp. 21-22.

different religious philosophies. Bharati devotes a discussion to the question as follows, ‘That the psycho-experimentalist, the tantric, or anyone who takes *sādhanā* seriously (and taking *sādhanā* seriously means regarding it as more important, though not necessarily more interesting, than philosophy), may come to feel that there is some sort of identity between *śūnyatā* and *brahman*, is a different matter: it does not conflict with what is said above, and there is no gainsaying the fact that reports on the ‘feeling’ in Vedānta-trained *enstasis* and in tantric *enstasis* is very similar indeed. Yet, even if two authentic reports on *enstasic* experience should coincide, it does not follow from this that the schools from which these reports derive teach a similar philosophy. The notion upheld among religious teachers in India today that a specific *sādhanā* yields a specific philosophy or vice versa, I believe to be wrong. [...] To put this point succinctly: no specific *sādhanā* follows from any one particular philosophy, nor does any specific philosophy follow from any particular *sādhanā*.’⁴²⁵

Going back to *ontology*, Agehananda Bharati also admits, that “the language of Vajrayāna suggests ontology to a degree where a scholar, who did not know Hindu or Buddhist philosophy, but did know Sanskrit and modern occidental philosophy, would be at loss to realise that Buddhist philosophy was non-ontological as opposed to Hindu philosophy”. The scholar asserts that ontological vocabulary was employed by the tantric Buddhist commentators in order to vindicate their preceptors’ facile use of ‘surrounding’ terminology. The doctrine was deliberately “put into naive language for the benefit of the crowd”.⁴²⁶

Although the above idea of explicit difference between *sādhanā* and philosophy seems to put the correct accents and to solve the mentioned ideological conflict, we believe that the idea of V. N. Lossky about the quite natural link between mysticism and doctrine in the context of Orthodox Christian tradition can become a good counter-argument to what is claimed by Agehananda Bharati. V. N. Lossky writes that theology and mysticism can never be contradicted. On the contrary they complement each other. Each theology is mystical because doctrine just describes the religious experience in the language of logic. And vice versa, the subjective religious experience expresses “the common faith”.⁴²⁷

Likewise, we can never distinguish completely *sādhanā* (or religious experience) from philosophy (or doctrine). If one accepts the idea of identity of mystical experiences

⁴²⁵ Ibid., pp. 26-27.

⁴²⁶ Ibid., pp. 28-29.

⁴²⁷ В. Н. Лосский, *Очерк мистического богословия Восточной Церкви* / В. Н. Лосский, *Очерк мистического богословия Восточной Церкви. Догматическое богословие* (Москва, 1991), сс. 8-9.

in different religions, he or she would not be able to deny that not only religious experiences but also different doctrines are and should be comparable. Hence, all philosophies, although different, have a common root in religious experience.

To seize the matter completely one should go back to the notion of storehouse-consciousness and realise the doctrinal difference between *ālaya-vijñāna* and Brahman which undoubtedly can't be ignored. Brahman is interpreted by Hinduism as being changeless while *ālaya-vijñāna* is a flowing reservoir containing karmic seeds and fruits.⁴²⁸ Moti Lal Pandit states precisely that the storehouse-consciousness is a container of the seeds (*bija*) of *karman* effects, of memories, of desires, of everything that we do, or think. *Ālaya-vijñāna* can be compared to the flow of water in a stream that carries everything along that comes to it.⁴²⁹ Shashi Bhushan Dasgupta, although insisting upon Brahman's and *ālaya-vijñāna*'s similarity, underscores that "this *ālaya-vijñāna* is not an eternal and unchanging principle — it is like an unceasing flow of water which glides on and on through the evolution of cause and effect"⁴³⁰.

In spite of the more accurate definition we can't deny that there is a strong tendency to attribute to *ālaya-vijñāna* the status of an absolute unchanging realm. The storehouse-consciousness has been repeatedly compared to the clear sky which can't be obscured by the clouds of karmic seeds. Moti Lal Pandit observes, "Although the ultimate realm is said to be substratum of *samsāra*, yet the former, paradoxically speaking, remains untouched by the latter. It is so because purity is innate to that which is absolute."⁴³¹ In order to base his argument, the scholar quotes *Lankāvatārasūtra*, "As gold is pure, water free from dirt, the sky without a cloud, so is it (the ultimate realm) pure when detached from imagination."⁴³² The pure and unchanging realm of *ālaya-vijñāna* is luminous. Upon the removal of defilements, the pure nature of consciousness reflects itself like the light of a lamp. Primal consciousness has been described as being "luminous at all times, but blemished by adventitious faults."⁴³³

The conflict between the attempt to characterise the storehouse-consciousness as a transitive reservoir and the endeavour to attribute to it the features of eternity, purity and luminosity, takes us back to the necessity to distinguish between the doctrinal and the

⁴²⁸ В.П. Андросов, *Будда Шакьямуни и индийский буддизм. Современное истолкование древних текстов*, с. 318.

⁴²⁹ Moti Lal Pandit, *Śūnyatā: The Essence of Mahāyāna Spirituality*, p. 273.

⁴³⁰ Shashi Bhushan Dasgupta, *An Introduction to Tantric Buddhism*, p. 28.

⁴³¹ Moti Lal Pandit, *Śūnyatā: The Essence of Mahāyāna Spirituality*, p. 281.

⁴³² *Lankāvatārasūtra*, trs., D. T. Suzuki (London, 1932), p. 131. (Quoted by Moti Lal Pandit, *Śūnyatā: The Essence of Mahāyāna Spirituality*, p. 281.)

⁴³³ *Mahāyānasūtrālamkāra*, ed. Sylvain Levi (Paris, 1907-11). (Ibid., p. 277.)

psycho-experimental aspects of *ālaya-vijñāna*. Obviously, the latter and not the former has been extremely important for Tibetan religious practice.

Discussions concerning simultaneous transitoriness and purity of storehouse-consciousness took place also among Tibetan Buddhist scholars. It is relevant to notice that we have encountered a complicated topic which is not intended to be discussed here completely. We shall mention just a position of rDzogs chen. As Samten Gyaltzen Karmay notices, due to the fact that the question was complicated enough, it remains unresolved by the Nying ma pa rDzogs chen philosophy. However, it is in a Bonpo work that a solution seems to have been offered to this ontological problem which has been the focus of debate for centuries. The quotation from *Zhang zhung snyan brgyud kyi bla ma brgyud pa'i rnam thar* follows:

“Some people doubt that if *kun gzhi* (*ālaya-vijñāna*) is pure from the beginning, it cannot be accepted as the ground on which one accumulates one’s impressions (*bag chags*), but if it is the ground for storing the *bag chags*, it cannot be pure from the beginning.

The essence of *kun gzhi* at no time has ever experienced being defiled by the *bag chags* since it is absolutely pure from the beginning. In that case, one might think that it cannot be the “ground” for storing the *bag chags*. However, the *bag chags* are stored there only through the “co-ordination” of all the eight kinds of consciousness. *Kun gzhi* is therefore merely the ground for storing the *bag chags*. It is like a treasury. Although in the sphere of space, many a world came into existence and remains, the essence of space remains undefiled by the dirt of the world, even a particle of it.”⁴³⁴

Samten Gyaltzen Karmay draws such a conclusion, “For the Bonpo, *kun gzhi* is therefore *ab aeterno*, pure from the beginning, and can also be the ground for storing the *bag chags*. The question of nescience which is innate within *kun gzhi* for the Buddhists does not arise for the Bonpo till “co-ordination” of all the consciousness begins and once this begins *kun gzhi* then becomes *kun gzhi rnam shes* (*ālaya-vijñāna*), the veritable samsāric ground.” The crux of the matter lies in the Bonpo’s attempt to distinguish between *kun gzhi* (the pure from the beginning basis of all) and *kun gzhi rnam shes* (the storehouse-consciousness as the veritable samsāric ground).⁴³⁵

⁴³⁴ sPa bsTan-rgyal bzang-po, *Zhang zhung snyan brgyud kyi bla ma brgyud pa'i rnam thar* (comp. in 1419), p. 427. (from Samten Gyaltzen Karmay, *The Great Perfection (rDzogs chen): A Philosophical and Meditative Teaching in Tibetan Buddhism* (Leiden: New York: Kobenhavn: Köln: E. J. Brill, 1988), p. 183.

⁴³⁵ Samten Gyaltzen Karmay, *The Great Perfection (rDzogs chen)*, pp. 183-184.

The already mentioned collection of *Zhang zhung snyan brgyud kyi bla ma brgyud pa'i rnam thar* texts of Bonpo rDzogs chen tradition presents the luminous nature of *kun gzhi* and elaborates the concept of emanation stages of the phenomenal world from *kun gzhi*. Man with his corrupted perception of the reality and his physical body are skilfully inscribed in the evolutionary scheme which, in its turn, completes with the attainment of soteriological goal, i.e., with the return of living being to the *nirvānic* state that is the same *ālaya-vijnāna*.

The section of the text dealing with the matter is entitled '*Khor lo bzhi sbrags* and is divided in four smaller sections called '*khor lo* (wheel). The first wheel is "of the static basis" (*gnas pa gzhi'i 'khor lo*). This refers to *kun gzhi*, the genetic state where the notion of *samsāra* and *nirvāna* are undifferentiated. This state is personified with the name of Rang Shes-rig-gi rgyal-po ("King of Self-knowledge") existing in milieu of three elements: "sound" (*sgra*), "light" (*'od*) and "ray" (*zer*).⁴³⁶ We believe that the genetic state of *kun gzhi* existing in the three elements can be compared with the Hesychast idea of God abiding in His uncreated energies manifesting as the Divine Light.

The second wheel is "of interdependence concerning awakening and error" (*rtogs 'khrul rten 'brel gyi 'khor lo*). This is the stage of emanation where the phenomenal world is originated. But this is also a point where the enlightenment can be achieved. The section is about Rang Shes-rig moving away from his milieu. If he comprehends the three elements as being of his own and therefore not originating anywhere, the *nirvānic* state is realised, but if he makes the error of thinking of those three elements as being from elsewhere, a dichotomous conceptualisation is produced. The ensuing result is the *samsāric* state. When the *nirvānic* state is about to be realised the light among the three elements shines forth in five colours. Each of these creates what are known as sixteen kinds of "manifestations of the enlightened state" (*mya ngan las 'das pa'i rnam sprul*), eighty kinds of them in all. On the other hand, when the error is committed, the *samsāric* state appears, and each light engenders sixteen kinds of illusory appearance (*'khrul snang*) associated man's physical body and of his external world, eighty in all in opposition to the eighty "manifestations of the enlightened state".⁴³⁷ Obviously, the idea of eighty illusory manifestations has its analogue in the idea of eighty gross conceptions in the tantric mystical physiology.

⁴³⁶ sPa bsTan-rgyal bzang-po, *Zhang zhung snyan brgyud kyi bla ma brgyud pa'i rnam thar* (comp. in 1419). (from Samten Gyaltsen Karmay, *The Great Perfection (rDzogs chen)*, pp. 203-204.

⁴³⁷ Ibid.

We believe that the mentioned wheel corresponds to the stage of consciousness called *manas* in Vijnānavāda, defined as being of the double-nature, because it participates in the empirical-intellectual as well as in the universal (intuitive) consciousness. In the *Mahāyāna-Śraddhodpāda-Śāstra* is said, “”The mind has two doors from which issue its activities. One leads to realisation of the mind’s Pure Essence (*ālaya-vijnāna*), the other leads to the differentiations of appearing and disappearing, of life and death.⁴³⁸

When compared to the Christian doctrine, the wheel’s parallel is found in the biblical narrative of temptation. In that point Adam, obviously, had two possibilities, the two doors, i.e., the door of obedience and that of sin. The situation of the first Adam, incontestably, is deprived of its strict historical context because every man is endowed with the free will to make his choice.

The third wheel is “of the psychic veins in the vital points of the human body” (*lus gnad rtsa’i ‘khor lo*). Here the human body is assimilated to the Indian tantric conception of the physical world. Different parts of human body are thought to symbolise different continents, mountains, the sun, the moon etc. The luminous Rang Shes-rig himself resides in the heart of the body like a lighted lamp placed in a vase.⁴³⁹ The notion has got its obvious analogue in the Buddhist tantric concept of subtle body and of the extremely subtle indestructible luminous mind and its wind, situated in the heart. Although in Hesychasm one can not find the concept of subtle body, it can’t be denied that the heart is considered by Hesychasts to be the abode of Light experience.

Finely, the fourth wheel deals with “time in the intermediate state” (*bar do dus kyi ‘khor lo*). This is the period between death and taking on another birth. It is mainly concerned with the rDzogs chen adept who has not yet succeeded in accomplishing the realisation of the “Rainbow Body”, but confident enough to traverse the dreaded “intermediate state” just after the cessation of breath. It is in this state when the sound, light and rays appear most vividly and the rDzogs chen adept is expected to “recognise” instantly three elements as being of his own. As a result the nirvānic state is reached.⁴⁴⁰

The scholar draws a following conclusion, “The lights which shine forth from the Primordial Basis are here presented as the source of the phenomenal world and its

⁴³⁸ Lama Anagarika Govinda, *Foundations of Tibetan Mysticism According to the Esoteric Teachings of the Great Mantra OM MANI PADME HŪM*, p. 79.

⁴³⁹ sPa bsTan-rgyal bzang-po, *Zhang zhung snyan brgyud kyi bla ma brgyud pa’i rnam thar* (comp. in 1419). (from Samten Gyaltzen Karmay, *The Great Perfection (rDzogs chen)*, p. 204.

⁴⁴⁰ Ibid.

transcendental state, illustrating well the rDzogs chen philosophical conception of the mind being capable either of creating its own illusory world or releasing itself to its own former state, the Primeval Purity.”⁴⁴¹

Here, in this stage of discussion, it would be relevant to take up the tantric doctrine of man which being combined with Bon peculiar attitude to Light experiences, represents human body as the abode of this very Clear Light of bliss.

Doctrine of Man in Tantric Buddhism

As Badzar Baradiyn underscored in his article about Buddhist monasteries, Tantric Buddhism has elaborated a completely different doctrine of man. The already mentioned non-tantric traditions of Buddhism have expressed an explicitly negative attitude to man. The psycho-physical constitution of an individual has been represented by the classic schools of Buddhism as belonging to the imperfect mode of being called *samsāra*. On the contrary, tantric Buddhism considers psycho-physical organism of man to be the most precious and perfect means of liberation.⁴⁴²

According to Vijnānavāda philosophy, human body (and all other phenomena) is produced by consciousness. Body is deprived of any ontological status and is mere illusion while consciousness is the only really existing entity. Tantric Buddhism, in its turn, not only attributes an equal status to the body and to consciousness, but also proclaims body to be united with consciousness inseparably. To be precise, “in tantric physiology⁴⁴³, consciousnesses⁴⁴⁴ are said to travel throughout the body “mounted” on the winds⁴⁴⁵, which serve as their support. (These very winds represent what is called

⁴⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴⁴² Б. Б. Барадийн, *Буддийские монастыри: краткий очерк // Orient: Альманах*, выпуск 1. *Буддизм и Россия*, с. 106.

⁴⁴³ The term of *tantric physiology* will be dealt with below.

⁴⁴⁴ Here different levels of consciousness from the gross to the subtlest ones are implied.

⁴⁴⁵ Winds (Tib. *rlung*) or energy currents are the equivalent of *prāna* (Skt.) in Tantric Hinduism. *Prāna* in Upanishads denotes the universal energy being inseparable with Brahman like the sun which can't be separated from its rays. In Tantric Hinduism it is considered to be the same *Śakti* of macrocosm. In microcosm *prāna* is energy represented by body, speech, breath, etc. Nevertheless, *prāna* should not be literally interpreted as the mentioned bodily functions, rather as the life-giving engine or motor of these functions. (Б. В. Мартынов, “Йога в индийском мироустройстве, текстах и за их пределами” // *Упанишады Йоги и Тантры*, пер. Б. В. Мартынова (Москва: Алетейа, 1999), с. 65.)

body in Tantrism.) Consciousnesses cannot function without the support of the winds, but the winds lack the direction without consciousnesses. Because of this, consciousnesses by themselves are said to be like people without legs, while winds by themselves are like blind people. Each needs the other, and they function in tandem, with winds providing movement and consciousnesses providing direction. Because of this intimate connection, whatever affects one also affects the other, and so meditators wishing to gain control over consciousness must also learn to influence the movements of winds.⁴⁴⁶

To generalise, “the basic idea of Tantrism is that both the mind and the body are the different forms or modes of manifestation of one and the same Reality”⁴⁴⁷. In the context of Nāgārjuna’s idea of the equality of *samsāra* and *nirvāna*, body and consciousness likewise are conceived as being just the same and, hence being equal means of liberation.⁴⁴⁸

A curious similarity may be noticed between the mentioned macrocosmic *prāna* and the uncreated Divine energies in Hesychasm. The latter are believed to co-exist with the Divine substance in the same way as *prāna* is co-eternal with Brahman and *Śakti* is always together with *Śiva*.

In spite of the fact that B. V. Martinov has mentioned only the Upanishadic and Tantric context of *prāna*, the counterpart of the notion is found in the Vedic idea of revelation. “The Vedic corpus of literature is referred to as *Śruti*, i.e., that which has been heard or as “revealed literature”. The Vedic literature is considered to be revealed in the sense that what is revealed is eternal. Since the revelation is eternal, revelation as contained in the Vedas in the form of mantras or words is origin less. Revelation in Hinduism does not signify or mean the self-disclosure of God to man; rather revelation is co-eternal with the Supreme Being, in that it exists independently from the Ground of Being. Revelation is not contingent, in that it is not disclosed by God or the absolute in terms of history or events in history. Revelation pre-existed before the existence of time. Since revelation is not the self-disclosure of God to man in time and space, it cannot be said that the knowledge of God is given to man in this revelation. Hindu thinkers have always thought of revelation as an eternal truth about the liberation of man, which is seen by *rishis* or about which they have insight into the truths of revelation.” Hence, “the Vedas, being revelation, possess an internal and unimpeded power (*akunthita śakti*) of its own.” (Moti Lal Pandit, *Philosophy of the Upanishads: A Christian Understanding* (Delhi: I.S.P.C.K., 1978), p. 10, 12.)

⁴⁴⁶ John Powers, *Introduction to Tibetan Buddhism* (Ithaca: New York: Snow Publications, 1995), p. 247.

⁴⁴⁷ Moti Lal Pandit, *A Historico-Analytical Study of Yoga as a Method of Liberation* (New Delhi: Intercultural Publications, 1991), p. 170.

⁴⁴⁸ *Tibetan Yoga and Secret Doctrines or Seven Books of Wisdom of the Great Path, According to the Late Lāma Kazi Dawa-Samdub’s English rendering*, ed. W. Y. Evans-Wentz (London: Oxford: New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), pp. XXVIII-XXIX.

Shashi Bhushan Dasgupta has underscored the positive approach to the somatic matter in Tantrism in the context of tantric idea of correspondence between the macrocosm and microcosm, “On the practical side, which obviously is the fundamental side of the Tantras, the most important thing is the stress laid on the body as the medium in and through which truth can be realised. The Buddhist Tantrikas, in unison with the other schools of Tantra, hold that the body is the abode of all truth; it is the epitome of the universe or, in other words, it is the microcosm, and as such embodies the truth of the whole universe. Attempt has actually been made in many Tantras to identify the universe completely with the body even by locating the seas, rivers, mountains, etc., in the different parts of the body. Whether we are ready to accept them in *toto* or not, the fact remains that the importance of the Tantras, as a science of religious methodology, consists in its analysis of the body and the discovery of all *tattvas* in the nervous system and in the plexus and thus making the body, with the whole physiological and biological process, a perfect medium (*yantra*) for realising the ultimate truth.”⁴⁴⁹

Everything said above about human body means that this very body should be properly analysed and employed in order to achieve liberation. Any sort of somatic analysis in Tantrism has been performed with the aim to elaborate the perfect *sādhana*. It should be noticed that the body, Tantrism analyses, is not the physical body, but the subtle one (Skt. *sūksma-śarīra*⁴⁵⁰, Tib. *rdo rje' i lus* (*/ sku*), i.e., diamond body). Subtle (or diamond) body is some sort of link between physical body and consciousness. Undoubtedly, there is a relationship between the physical body and the subtle one. The processes which take place in the physical body influence those of the subtle body and vice versa.

As Chagyal Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche stresses, diamond body can be resolved in three main component elements, those are *prāna* (Skt., Tib. *rlung*), *nāḍī* (Skt., Tib. *rtsa*) or channels through which winds travel⁴⁵¹, and *bindu* (Skt., Tib. *thig le*) or drops, which

⁴⁴⁹ Shashi Bhushan Dasgupta, *An Introduction to Tantric Buddhism*, p. 146.

⁴⁵⁰ According to Hinduism there are three kinds of *śarīra*. They are defined as the three surrounding protections or supports for the *ātman*: 1) *sthūla-śarīra*, the apparent or physical body; 2) *sūksma-śarīra*, also *linga-śarīra*, the subtle body, not evident to direct sight; 3) *kāraṇa-śarīra*, the body that supports the possibility of the attainment of bliss (*ānanda*). (*The Oxford Dictionary of World Religions*, ed. John Bowker (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 858.

⁴⁵¹ B. V. Martinov explained the term *nāḍī* as currents and not as channels. *Nāḍī* indicate the direction of movement of *prāna*, which, in its turn, doesn't need any tubes to take its direction. A current of *prāna* can be compared with a river without banks and bottom. (Б. В. Мартынов, "Йога в индийском мироустройстве, текстах и за их пределами", с. 68)

represent the essence of the winds. The drops resemble the notion of *kundalinī* in Tantric Hinduism because in *kundalinī* the subtle essence of *prāna* is present in a similar way as in *bindu* the subtle essence of *rlung* is preserved.⁴⁵²

According to Tantric Buddhism there are five types of winds called “five basic (or root) winds” (Tib. *rtsa ba’i rlung lnga*):

1. Life-bearing wind (*srog ‘dzin kyi rlung*). Its seat is at the heart and in its coarse form it causes inhalation, exhalation, burping, spitting and so forth. (Skt. *prāna* in the strictest, narrowest sense of the word).

2. Upward-moving wind (*gyen rgyu’i rlung*). Its seat is in the centre of the chest, operating throughout the throat and mouth; it mainly causes speech and the swallowing of food and saliva, but it also works in the joints. (Skt. *udāna-vāyu*).

3. Pervasive wind (*khyab byed kyi rlung*). Its seat is at the crown of the head, causing pliant movement, stretching and contacting the limbs and opening and closing the mouth and eyelids. (*vyāna-vāyu*).

4. Equally abiding wind (*mnyam gnas kyi rlung*). Its seat is in the third stage of stomach, and it moves throughout the internal organs — lungs, heart, liver, gall bladder and so forth — as well as through the channels in the limbs. It causes digestion of nutriment, separating refined and unrefined parts, etc. (Skt. *samāna-vāyu*).

5. Downward-voiding wind (*thur sel gyi rlung*). Its seat is in the lower abdomen and it moves about in the womb or the seminal vesicle, in the urinary bladder, in the thighs and so forth. It stops and starts urination, defecation and menstruation. (Skt. *apāna-vāyu*).⁴⁵³

Each root wind serves as the support for a particular element (Tib. *‘byung ba*). The first is known as the wind of the *water* element because it is responsible for the increase of blood, sperm and other liquids in the body. In a similar fashion the second wind is of the *fire* element and increases the bodily heat. The third one is responsible for the *space* element; it causes an increase in the size of the internal spaces and cavities of the body and is thereby related to growth. The fourth one is responsible for the *wind* element

⁴⁵² Чогъял Намкхай Норбу Римпоче, *Хрусталь и путь света: Сутра, Тантра и Дзогчен по учениям Намкхай Норбу Римпоче*, пер. с англ. Маликовой Фарида Х., сост. глоссария Сидорова С. А. (Новокижингинск: Рандолгар Санти Маха Сангха, 1991), самиздат, с. 85.

⁴⁵³ From Jeffrey Hopkins, “Preface” in Lati Rinbochay, Jeffrey Hopkins, *Death, Intermediate State and Rebirth in Tibetan Buddhism* (London:Rider and Company, 1979), p. 14; John Powers, *Introduction to Tibetan Buddhism* (Ithaca, New York: Snow Publications, 1995), p. 294; Lama Anagarika Govinda, *Foundations of Tibetan Mysticism According to the Esoteric Teachings of the Great Mantra OM MANI PADME HŪM*, p. 151.

because it increases the flow of the wind element through the channels. The fifth one corresponds to the *earth* element and is responsible for the growth of the bones, teeth and nails. This correspondence of the winds and elements are the purpose for the second kind of designation of the mentioned winds according to the element a certain wind supports. For instance, the life-bearing wind is also called the water element wind.⁴⁵⁴

Of all the root winds the most important one is the life-bearing wind situated in the heart, because the branch winds take their origin in it. They each flow to a particular sense organ, thereby enabling the consciousness of that organ to move or turn to its appropriate object. The life-bearing wind is also essential because it has three levels: the gross (*rlung rags pa*), the subtle and very subtle. These are the very subtle wind (*shin tu phra pa'i rlung*) and the very subtle mind or consciousness (*shin tu phra pa'i sems*), mounted on it, which are indestructible and travel from life to life.⁴⁵⁵ In the extremely subtle wind all the winds dissolve during death whilst this very indestructible wind together with its mind is the only one experiencing Clear Light of death.⁴⁵⁶ Here for the first time we have encounter the extremely important role of the heart in Tantric Buddhism, which will be compared with that in Hesychasm below.

The subtle level of the life-supporting wind manifests only during death, meditation and dreaming state and needs all the gross winds to be dissolved in the central channel, to be precise, in the heart. The subtle level of the wind (*phra ba'i rlung*) is of three types:

- 1) The wind mounted by the mind of white appearance (*snang ba dkar lam pa'i sems*);
- 2) The wind mounted by the mind of red increase (*mched pa dmar lam pa'i sems*);
- 3) The wind mounted by the mind of black near-attainment (*nyer thob nag lam pa'i sems*).⁴⁵⁷

The very subtle level of the wind will be discussed in the context of the third constituent of the subtle body, i.e., of the drops (Skt. *bindu*; Tib. *thig le*).

The second component of the subtle body is represented by channels (Tib. *rtsa*). As is indicated above, channels can't be imagined as tubes; *rtsa* should be interpreted as

⁴⁵⁴ Geshe Kelsang, *Clear Light of Bliss: Mahamudra in Vajrayana Buddhism*, trans. Tenzin Norbu, ed. Jonathan Landaw, Chris Colb (London: Wisdom Publications, 1982), p. 26.

⁴⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 26-27.

⁴⁵⁶ Jeffrey Hopkins, "Preface" in Lati Rinbochay, Jeffrey Hopkins, *Death, Intermediate State and Rebirth in Tibetan Buddhism*, p. 14.

⁴⁵⁷ Geshe Kelsang, *Clear Light of Bliss: Mahamudra in Vajrayana Buddhism*, pp. 70-248.

currents. We have already noted that *rlung* has the same rendering as *current*. That is why it is important to be precise in stating that any kind of wind is never restricted by the natural movement-direction (i.e., current) which is usually taken by *rlung* in the body of a samsāric sentient being. Rather the direction of the flowing *prāna* can be altered. It happens during death, meditation and dream state. In this way *rtsa* should be rendered as various possible currents (or movement directions) of a certain *rlung*. For instance, the central channel being a potential current of all the winds is empty in ordinary circumstances.

The channels are said to be 72,000 in human body. The three main ones running from the forehead across the top of the head and down along the spinal column into the sexual organ. The channel centres along these three main channels are the so called ‘wheels’, those are located at the forehead, top of the head, throat, heart, solar plexus, base of the spine and sexual organ. At these wheels, the right and left channels wrap around the central one⁴⁵⁸, constricting it and lessening or preventing the passage of wind.⁴⁵⁹

The three main channels⁴⁶⁰ are called *Lalanā*, *Rasanā* and *Avadhūti*. They correspond to *Idā*, *Pingalā* and *Susumnā* of the Hindu system. *Lalanā* (Tib. *rtsa rkyang ma*) is the channel in the left side and *Rasanā* (*rtsa ro ma*) in the right side. Through the central channel called *Avadhūti* (Tib. *rtsa dbu ma*) the Bodhicitta flows, and this *Avadhūtikā* leads to the Sahaya-bliss. The nerves in the left and the right have been identified with Śūnyatā and Karunā, Prajnā and Upāya, the two cardinal principles of Mahāyāna Buddhism; and the *Avadhūti*, as their commingling, is the Bodhicitta. The three nerves have also been identified with the three *Kāyas*, viz., *Sambhoga*, *Nirmāna* and *Dharma*. Again, *Lalanā* is said to carry the seed and *Rasanā* the ovum and *Avadhūti* to carry Bodhicitta which is a mixture of the seed and the ovum.⁴⁶¹

At death, meditation and dream state, the winds which serve as the foundations of consciousness dissolve into the winds in the right and left channels. These in turn dissolve into the wind in the central channel, whereupon the constrictions are loosened,

⁴⁵⁸ B. V. Martinov precised the term ‘wheel’ or *cakra* as the points where the three main channels meet yielding, this way, some sort of current field. the term ‘wheel’ indicates the idea of whirlwind in which consciousness circulates as a chip in an eddy. (Б. В. Мартынов, “Йога в индийском мироустройстве, текстах и за их пределами” // Упанишады Йоги и Тантры, с. 70)

⁴⁵⁹ Jeffrey Hopkins, “Preface” in Lati Rinbochay, Jeffrey Hopkins, *Death, Intermediate State and Rebirth in Tibetan Buddhism*, p. 14.

⁴⁶⁰ Sometimes channels are called ‘nerves’.

⁴⁶¹ Shashi Bhushan Dasgupta, *An Introduction to Tantric Buddhism*, pp. 154, 155, 156.

in the sense that the outer channels become deflated, thereby loosening the central channel and allowing movement of wind inside it.⁴⁶²

As for the channel-wheels (Tib. *rtsa 'khor*) the four of them are of particular importance in Tantric Buddhism, those are the wheel of great bliss, situated at the crown of the head (*gtsug tor*⁴⁶³ *du bde chen 'khor lo*⁴⁶⁴); the wheel of enjoyment, located in the throat (*mgrin pa longs spyod kyi 'khor lo*⁴⁶⁵); the wheel of phenomena in the heart (*snying ga chos kyi 'khor lo*⁴⁶⁶) and the wheel of emanation in navel zone (*lte ba sprul pa'i 'khor lo*⁴⁶⁷).⁴⁶⁸ It is discernible that the highest state of Buddha body is associated with the heart wheel because during death in the heart *cakra* all the gross and subtle winds dissolve and clear Light manifests in the consciousness of the deceased.

Again, the heart wheel is considered to be the most important among all the *cakras* because all the 72,000 channels start in the heart wheel like this. The Dharma wheel of the heart has eight spokes or petals which, in their turn, are arranged in the cardinal and intermediate directions (with the east in front) and in each spoke mainly flows the supporting wind of a particular element as it is indicated in the chart:

<i>direction</i>	<i>name of spoke</i>	
<i>supporting wind</i>		
east	the triple circle	of the
earth element		
south	the desirous	of the
water element		
west	the householder	of the fire
element		
north	the fiery	of the wind
element		
south-east	channel of form	of the
element of form		

⁴⁶² Jeffrey Hopkins, "Preface" in Lati Rinbochay, Jeffrey Hopkins, *Death, Intermediate State and Rebirth in Tibetan Buddhism*, p. 15.

⁴⁶³ Lit. tuft of hair on the crown of the Buddha's head.

⁴⁶⁴ Lit. the *cakra* of great bliss. It corresponds with *Sahajakāya*.

⁴⁶⁵ Lit. the throat centre of enjoyment. It corresponds with *Sambhogakāya*

⁴⁶⁶ Lit. the Dharma wheel of the heart *cakra*; corresponds to *Dharmakāya*.

⁴⁶⁷ *lte ba* - navel; Lit. emanation wheel of the navel; corresponds with *Nirmānakāya*.

(Tibetan terms from Чогьял Намкхай Норбу Римпоче, *Хрусталь и путь света: Сутра, Тантра и Дзогчен по учениям Намкхай Норбу Римпоче*, с. 85.)

⁴⁶⁸ Geshe Kelsang, *Clear Light of Bliss: Mahamudra in Vajrayana Buddhism*, p. 22.

south-west element of smell	channel of smell	of the
north-west element of taste	channel of taste	of the
north-east element of touch	channel of touch	of the

From each of the eight petals, or channel spokes of the heart, three channels split off. These twenty four are the channels of the twenty four places. They are divided into three groups of eight: through those called the channels of the mind mainly wind flows; those of the speech contain mostly blood, or the *red drops*; those of the body contain mostly *white drops*. Each channel goes to a different place in the body. Each of these twenty four channels splits into three branches differentiated in terms of the elements — wind, red and white drops — mainly flowing through them. Each of these seventy-two then splits into a thousand so that there are 72,000 channels permeating the body.

At the present time the winds in the body of an ordinary person flow through most of these channels except the central one. Because these winds are impure the various minds they support are also impure. Therefore, as long as the winds continue to flow in the peripheral channels they continue to activate the various negative conceptions that trap beings in samsāric existence. Through the force of meditation these winds can be brought into the central channel. There they are no longer able to support the development of the conceptions of dualistic appearance and thus it is possible to gain a direct intuitive realisation of ultimate truth.⁴⁶⁹

The last constituent composing man is represented by the so called *drops* (Skt. *bindu*, Tib. *thig le*⁴⁷⁰) which are the same subtle level of *winds* in a similar way as *kundalinī* in Hindu Tantric tradition is the subtle essence of *prāna*.⁴⁷¹ There are two types of drops in the body: the white and the red ones (Tib. *thig le dkar dmar*). The former is the pure essence of the white seminal fluid; the latter is the pure essence of blood. The former is inherited from one's father; the latter comes from his or her mother.

⁴⁶⁹ Ibid., pp. 22-24.

⁴⁷⁰ The term *thig le* can also be rendered as essences. This indicates that the term has both the external (the indestructible wind and its consciousness are imagined to have a form of a drop) and the internal meanings (the subtlest level of the drops, i.e., the indestructible wind and its consciousness are imperishable and this way are associated with some kind of essence).

⁴⁷¹ Чогъял Намкхай Норбу Римпоче, *Хрусталь и путь света: Сутра, Тантра и Дзогчен по учениям Намкхай Норбу Римпоче.*, с. 86.

The drops flow through the channels of the body while their principal seat is concretely located. The principal seat of the white drop (also known as the white bodhicitta) is the crown of the head and it is from here that the white seminal fluid originates. The principal seat of the red drop is the navel and it is from here that blood originates. The red drop at the navel is also the foundation of the warmth of the body and the basis for attaining the inner fire.⁴⁷² Here the gross level of *bindu* has been discussed.

The subtlest form of the drops is just one and is situated inside the vacuole of the central channel of the heart. The drop has a size of a large mustard seed or small pea and has a white top and red bottom.⁴⁷³ This subtle drop is called indestructible because it represents the very subtle life-bearing wind and the very subtle mind (consciousness) it is mounted by, which are imperishable. To put it differently, the residence of the mind (or consciousness) is not the brain, but the heart. The subtlest consciousness of man, free from any conceptualisation, is declared to be eternal and completely indestructible because it endures throughout all of one's life, from beginningless time and into the future.⁴⁷⁴

So man can be imagined as *yantra* or *mandala* which consists of its principal centre (*bindu*) as a symbol of the essential and everlasting core of existence, and of its perishable periphery. All perishable constituents of the diamond body may be depicted as the periphery of *mandala* whereas the indestructible drop manifesting as the Clear Light is represented by the center of *mandala*. The notion of everlasting consciousness (identical with Hindu *ātman*) which travels from life to life is relevant in Tantric Buddhism. This very consciousness deprived of any perishable cover manifests as Clear Light during death. The presence of the imperishable constituent in man makes the comparative analysis of the Tantric doctrine of man and Christian anthropology easier.

Normally the very subtle mind is not functioning. At the time when Clear Light is experienced by a person, it awakens and becomes active. If a person is trained in the techniques of yoga and has become proficient in them, he will be able to perceive Clear Light consciously during meditation and recognise it as his or her own nature during death.⁴⁷⁵

⁴⁷² Geshe Kelsang, *Clear Light of Bliss: Mahamudra in Vajrayana Buddhism*, p. 28.

⁴⁷³ Jeffrey Hopkins, "Preface" in Lati Rinbochay, Jeffrey Hopkins, *Death, Intermediate State and Rebirth in Tibetan Buddhism*, p. 15.

⁴⁷⁴ John Powers, *Introduction to Tibetan Buddhism*, p. 247.

⁴⁷⁵ Geshe Kelsang, *Clear Light of Bliss: Mahamudra in Vajrayana Buddhism*, p. 28.

The Concept of the Heart in Hesychasm and Tibetan Buddhism

It is common knowledge that the idea of subtle body and its liberating physiology is not present in Hesychasm as well as in Christian tradition on the whole. Nevertheless, it can't be denied that Gregory Palamas and other Hesychasts employed the physiological methods during prayer because "the body which is united to us has been attached to us as a fellow-worker."⁴⁷⁶ These methods which sometimes seem to be so similar to the Tantric ones are termed by the Orthodox theologians as 'psycho-physical methods of prayer.'⁴⁷⁷

We are not going to undertake a profound comparative research of these methods and therefore shall mention just a few of them. The psycho-physical techniques of Hesychast prayer are supposed to be a practical means for the beginners tending to calm and concentrate the wandering mind⁴⁷⁸; they include asceticism⁴⁷⁹, breath control and 'visualisation' of inhalation and exhalation moving together with the mind from head to the heart region. Several typical postures are also employed by Hesychasts; those help "to collect all the limbs around the heart" (a contemplator is kneeling; his head is bent forward and his attention is directed to his chest)⁴⁸⁰. The mentioned methods are

⁴⁷⁶ Gregory Palamas, *The Triads* (2, 2, 5), p. 48.

⁴⁷⁷ See, for instance, Протопресвитер Иоанн Мейендорф, *Жизнь и труды святителя Григория Паламы: введение в изучение...*, с. 204;

⁴⁷⁸ John Meyendorff has defined the process of the uniting of the mind as "gathering of the mind by the attention (προσοχή) and introversion. (Протопресвитер Иоанн Мейендорф, *Жизнь и труды святителя Григория Паламы: введение в изучение...*, с. 205.)

⁴⁷⁹ It is curious that the artificial attempt of ascetics to yield pain in limbs by staying immovably during prayer (See Архиепископ Антоний (Гольинский-Михайловский), *О молитве Иисусовой и божественной благодати* (Красногорск, 2000), с. 274-279) are similar to the methods of immovable meditations of Jesuits (Kārlis Freibergs, *Kārļa Freiberga vēstule L. Taivanam* (Austrija, Insbruka-Rīga, 2000), nepublicētie materiāli. (from Elizabete Taivāne, "Arziņas kontrole Vipassanā un Hesuhasmā" // *Latvijas Universitātes raksti: Acta Universitatis Latvianae* 652 (Rīga: Zinātne, 2003), 94. lpp.) and Theravada masters of dhyāna (Джек Корнфилд, *Современные буддийские мастера* (Москва: Издательство Ассоциации Духовного Единения "Золотой Век", с. 62-66). The Hesychast principles are expressed in the words of Gregory Palamas, "For us all who have experienced ascetical combat, sensation painful to the touch is of greatest benefit to those who practice inner prayer." (Gregory Palamas, *The Triads*, (2, 2, 5), p. 48.)

⁴⁸⁰ Cf. Gregory Palamas, *The Triads*, (2, 1, 8), p. 46-47: "How should such a one not gain great profit if, instead of letting his eye roam hither and thither, he should fix it on his breast or on his navel, as a point of concentration? For in this way, he will not only gather himself together externally, conforming as far as possible to the inner movement he seeks for his mind; he will also, by disposing his body in such a position, recall into the interior

combined with the recitation of 'Jesus prayer' which, "circulating" together with breath and mind, is supposed to leave brain and achieve the heart. While "the visualisation" of the descending breath helps to concentrate all the energies of the *mind* in one central point, i.e., in the heart, and to yield the condition of tranquillity of the mind, the prayer text opens the spiritual eye of the heart and performs the encounter of human soul with Christ in his own heart.

While employing the psycho-physical techniques Palamas needed to motivate them theoretically. This task, however, was not so easy because of the shortcoming of the dichotomous model of man in Christianity. Human being is proclaimed to consist only of two composites, namely, the body and the spiritual part. Hesychasm as well as Christian tradition on the whole has not elaborated any notion of the subtle body standing between the physical body and the soul. It is just possible that the absence of the appropriate terminology was a reason for the famous controversy between Palamas and his opponent Barlaam who, in his turn, being a follower of neoplatonic tradition accused Palamas of the positive Somaticism. In this point the compromise couldn't be achieved because of the absence of the link between the opposite concepts of man. The controversy is described by Palamas in his *Triads*.

Gregory Palamas has made an attempt to solve the conflict between the "spiritual" and the "somatic" theories like this. Discussing the complicated question of the abode of the mind, he combines two anthropological positions, i.e., those of Macarius the Great and of Gregory of Nyssa. Macarius taught that mind and all other functions of the soul abode in the heart which, in its turn, was defined as their organ. Gregory of Nyssa asserted that the mind was not at all situated in the body. The argument of Gregory of Nyssa is that the mind is not constructed of matter; in other words the mind is bodiless. Gregory Palamas attempts to prove that no contradiction is found between the two positions. Both Gregory of Nyssa and Macarius are right: it is correct to say that the mind is bodiless and does not abide in the body; but it is also relevant to accept the idea of Macarius who viewed the mind being united with the body in the heart. Gregory Palamas reconciles the two concepts making use of the Christological context, namely, of the idea of Incarnation. He writes that a person, who insists upon the notion of God being

of the heart a power which is ever flowing outwards through the faculty of sight. And if the power of the intelligible animal is situated at the center of the belly, since there the law of sin exercises its rule and gives it sustenance, why should we not place there "the law of the mind which combats" this power, duly armed with prayer, so that the evil spirit who has been driven away thanks to the "bath of regeneration" may not return to install himself there with seven other spirits even more evil, so that "the latter state becomes worse than the first".

completely bodiless and, hence, abiding nowhere, doesn't arguing with another one who accepts the notion of the incarnation of the Divine Who has become flesh.⁴⁸¹

Commenting on the passage, John Meyendorff stresses that employing the Christological context Gregory Palamas managed to reconcile the two concepts in a rather artificial way. At the same time Meyendorff agrees that the mentioned reconciliation of the ideas is not artificial in the proper sense of the word because, although the concepts seem to be opposite from the logical point of view, they both could be accepted by the Fathers.⁴⁸²

Here we shall not be wrong by observing that also John Meyendorff can't propose a sufficient logical solution of the problem and falls into a contradiction in the same way as Palamas does. What he wants to say by pointing out the artificial manner of reconciliation is that the logical solution of the problem of the link between the soul and the body can't be at all found by reason of the non-conceptuality and impenetrability of the topic. One deals with the questions which are inconceivable for the discursive analysis and, thus, mysteriously submit to the supernatural laws of Grace. No doubt, the absence of the complete logical solution of the mentioned anthropological problem is typical for the agapeic religious model wherein the categories of the "natural" and "supernatural" are properly distinguished.

John Meyendorff notices that Gregory Palamas has never tried to transform any physiological problem into a dogma. Revelation deals with eternal matters and not too much with physiology. The Spirit has not revealed to us clearly the questions of physiology, thus, each of us is authorised to explain the topic, and also other subjects which have not been revealed by the Spirit, as he wants.⁴⁸³

However, it would be a mistake to consider that Hesychasts haven't at all realised the intermediate entity between the body and the soul. For instance, Gregory Palamas writes about the mysterious and ineffable area where the spirit and the body contact.⁴⁸⁴ In other words, what is quite natural and accessible for human cognition in Buddhism, is a mysterious sphere of Grace in Christianity.

⁴⁸¹ Св. Григорий Палама, *Триады в защиту священно-безмолствующих* (2,2,29) (Москва: Канон, 1995), с. 187.

⁴⁸² Протопресвитер Иоанн Мейендорф, *Жизнь и труды святителя Григория Паламы: введение в изучение...*, с. 208.

⁴⁸³ Св. Григорий Палама, *Триады в защиту священно-безмолствующих* (2,2,30), с. 187; Протопресвитер Иоанн Мейендорф, *Жизнь и труды святителя Григория Паламы: введение в изучение...*, с. 208.

⁴⁸⁴ Св. Григорий Палама, *Триады в защиту священнобезмолствующих* (2, 2, 28), с. 187.

In the above extract from Gregory Palamas and in the statements of Meyendorff the idea of the subordinate role of physiology and the primary role of the Grace in the process of salvation is expressed clearly. The activity of the Spirit is determinant in the process of deification; that is why it is not so intrinsic to perform a complete analysis of the physical organisation of human being. In Tantrism the situation changes vice versa. The body is considered to be a perfect medium and the best means of realising the ultimate truth. Hence, the body is supposed to be properly analysed in order to elaborate the perfect *sādhana*. The role of Grace here is subordinate because any compassionate capacity of a *buddha* or *bodhisattva* is just a product of our mind. The ultimate truth together with *buddhas* and *bodhisattvas* don't abide anywhere outside man, rather inside his own psyche. Hence, since man didn't organise his own inner cosmos employing physiological methods⁴⁸⁵, no compassionate help can be afterwards received by him from *buddhas* and *bodhisattvas*. Again, one can realise that the mentioned differences are derivatives of the agapeic (here Christian) and of the gnostic (here Buddhist) forms of religiosity.

That this section dedicated to the heart has been started with the short discussion of the doctrinal problems has not been performed by chance. The absence of the appropriate notional apparatus in Hesychasm is the reason why we are not able to find a clearly formulated physiological theory of heart in Hesychasm. To put it differently, what is clearly defined by Tantrism about the heart and the subtle body on the whole, can be found in the writings of Hesychasts in the form of unshaped ideas. The agapeic background of Hesychast tradition entails quite abstract and emotional formulations of the heart reality despite the concrete and even dry physiological interpretation of the heart in Tantrism.

Before starting the analysis it would be relevant to clarify the meaning of the terms 'heart' and 'mind' in Tantric Buddhism and Hesychasm. In Hesychasm heart and mind are two basic notions because only when the mind is united with the heart a contemplation of the Divine can take place in man. In spite of the fact that the notion of the heart is not much discussed by mystics of the Christian West, a scholar in the field of Western mysticism, Evelyn Underhill has suggested a perfect definition of the heart. She writes that the heart is the entity "seeking to transcend the limitations of the individual

⁴⁸⁵ The physiological methods do not concern the body techniques alone. An important part of *sādhana* are the so called 'visualisations' when according to strict visual patterns an adept imagines distinct parts of his subtle body and the processes which take place in it. Here the Hesychast designation of the methods as "psycho-physical", where the psychic context is also mentioned, seems to be more relevant.

standpoint and to surrender itself to ultimate Reality. [...] The heart is the inmost sanctuary of personal being, the deep root of its love and will, the very source of its energy and life”.⁴⁸⁶

In the first part of the definition the scholar underscores the non-individualistic aspect of the heart. The definition is valid not only for the Hesychast doctrine, but also for the Tantric one, wherein the heart is a seat of non-individualistic very subtle consciousness, which, in its turn, is common to all sentient beings and can't be treated as belonging to anybody. In Tantric Buddhism the heart is a place where a destruction of an individual takes place. This very destruction process has been called by Jung Young Lee “regression” that is the opposite of “individuation” (or “embodiment”).⁴⁸⁷ In the second part of the definition formulated by Evelyn Underhill the central role of the heart as the source of life and any human activity is proclaimed. This idea is also relevant in Hesychasm and Tantric Buddhism.

Further a few Orthodox definitions of heart akin to that of Evelyn Underhill will be mentioned. In the beginning we shall employ the second part of Underhill's definition of the heart as the root of any human activity and the centre of personal life; afterwards we shall go to the first part of the definition underscoring the metaphysical meaning of heart.

In accord with Evelyn Underhill the Orthodox theologian S. Zarin defines heart as “the basis of personal being”.⁴⁸⁸ Bishop Theofan, in his turn, treats heart as “the centre of both the spiritual and the physical life”.⁴⁸⁹ Heart is much deeper than all other activities of man (i.e., than the mind and the will) being the basis or the “lining” of the mentioned activities. Hence, heart is the root of human being and the focus of all his spiritual and physical capacities.⁴⁹⁰

Metropolitan Yerofey (Vlahos) writes that heart is the focus of the psycho-physical organisation of man. The metropolitan admits that the body and the soul are

⁴⁸⁶ Evelyn Underhill, *Mysticism: A Study in the Nature and Development of Man's Spiritual Consciousness* (New York: Meridian Books, 1955), p. 71-72.

⁴⁸⁷ Jung Young Lee, *Death and Beyond in the eastern Perspective: A Study Based on the Bardo Thodol and the I Ching* (New York: Gordon and Breach, 1974), p. 49.

⁴⁸⁸ Сергей Зарин, *Аскетизм по православно-христианскому учению: этико-богословское исследование* (Москва: Православный паломник, 1996), с. 392.

⁴⁸⁹ Епископ Феофан, *Путь ко спасению*, с. 225. (from Сергей Зарин, *Аскетизм по православно-христианскому учению: этико-богословское исследование*, с. 225.)

⁴⁹⁰ Епископ Феофан, *Начертание Христианского Нравоучения*, с. 306. (Ibid.)

united inseparably; the link between them is called “heart”.⁴⁹¹ We shall come back to the definition of the heart as the link between different entities later. At the moment it is important to notice that human heart is considered to be a centre or a focus giving origin to the spiritual and to the bodily life of man. Besides, this focus is just one; it means that both the spiritual life and the physical existence of man originate in the same heart.

In a similar manner as the Tantric tradition considers the heart to be a place where all winds and drops originate and where they return and find their realisation, Bishop Theofan claims that any spiritual activity of man being originated in this heart fulfils its aspiration completely if it returns to the heart. The heart is a basis of human personality.⁴⁹² In this extract the motion of the activities from the centre and back to the centre of the psycho-physical organism resembles the symbolism of *mandala*.

B. P. Visheslavcev compares the heart with the *axis mundi*. He writes that human heart is “like an axis of the world, being present in all the depths, both in the centre of the globe and in its periphery. The centre is responsible for any event taking place in the periphery because everything revolves around the centre.”⁴⁹³ The statement of the philosopher resembles the idea of the correspondence of macrocosm and microcosm in Tantrism.

In agreement with Visheslavcev, P. D. Yurkevich defines the heart as the *axis* piercing through and keeping together both the spiritual and the bodily life of man. Insisting upon the idea of the heart as the unique and all embracing basis, Yurkevich assumes that the heart can never be treated as mere “flesh”, rather as the “becoming flesh” (or “embodiment”). The scholar makes us to recognise beside flesh the second, i.e., the spiritual entity which incarnates or becomes flesh.⁴⁹⁴ In the human heart the two realities, i.e., the spirit and the body, are communioned inseparably in the same way as in Christ the Divine (or the Uncreated) and the human (or the created) realities are united for ever. Here the heart as “the focus of the

⁴⁹¹ Митр. Иерофей (Влахос), *Православная духовность* (ТСЛ, 1998), с. 32. (from Николай Новиков, *Путь умного делания: О молитве Иисусовой и Божественной благодати. Сост. На основе келейных записей архиепископа Антония (Гольинского-Михайловского)* (Красногорск: Успенский храм, 2000), с. 176.)

⁴⁹² Епископ Феофан, *Путь ко спасению*, с. 239, 207, 226. (from Сергей Зарин, *Аскетизм по православно-христианскому учению: этико-богословское исследование.*, сс. 577-578.)

⁴⁹³ Б. П. Вышеславцев, “Сердце в христианской и индийской мистике”, с. 77. (from Свящ. Олег Климов, *Опыт безмолвия: человек в мирозерцании византийских исихастов.*, сс. 228-229)

⁴⁹⁴ П. Д. Юркевич, “Сердце и его значение в духовной жизни человека” // П. Д. Юркевич, *Философские произведения* (Москва, 1990), с. 73. (*Ibid.*, с. 223.)

indestructible union of the soul and the body”⁴⁹⁵ is likened to its pattern, i.e., to the incarnated Word. Furthermore, the heart is not only considered to be an image of Incarnation. The heart is also a literal point of contact of two realities, the Divine and the human one⁴⁹⁶.

The mysterious character of the union of the mind and the body in the heart and its christological implication was also discussed by Russian philosopher B. P. Visheslavcev in the beginning of the 20-th century. He writes that the spiritual heart is linked to the physical heart because spirit is embodied. The hidden centre of the spiritual substance is in a mysterious way connected to the hidden centre of the body. And, although the link between the two centres is obvious, it has not yet been properly analysed by scholars. According to Visheslavcev the union of the soul and the body called by philosophers “the psycho-physical matter”, has its deepest solution in the mystery of Incarnation (“The Word became flesh”).⁴⁹⁷

In this way the heart in Christianity is a parallel of the subtle body in Tantrism. The heart in Hesychasm is a sum of the spiritual reality and the body in the same way as the subtle body is none other than the union of consciousnesses and winds. Besides, the Christian heart has the same cosmic meaning as does the subtle body in Tantrism. Being an embodiment or a point of encounter of the Divine reality and the created one, heart can be termed as the field where the salvation of cosmos takes place. Staretz Silouan, for instance, underscores the cosmic meaning of the heart in his words, “When unceasing prayer becomes established in the depths of the heart all the world is transformed into a temple of God”⁴⁹⁸. In a similar way the subtle body of the tantric adept being a small copy of macrocosm is the place where the adept is liberated together with the whole cosmos.

Finally, the idea of *mandala* is clearly represented by B. P. Visheslavcev in the following words, “The heart in the language of religion is something very strict, even mathematically strict. It can be depicted as the centre of a circle, from where numerous

⁴⁹⁵ Архиепископ Антоний (Голынский-Михайловский), *О молитве Иисусовой и божественной благодати* (Красногорск, 2000), с. 176.

⁴⁹⁶ Свящ. Олег Климов, *Опыт безмолвия: человек в мирозерцании византийских исихастов*, с. 224.

⁴⁹⁷ Б. П. Вышеславцев, *Сердце в христианской и индийской мистике* (Париж, 1929). Перепечатано: *Вопросы философии*, 4 (Москва, 1990), с. 74. (from Свящ. Олег Климов, *Опыт безмолвия: человек в мирозерцании византийских исихастов.*, с. 222)

⁴⁹⁸ Archimandrite Sophrony, *The Monk of Mount Athos Staretz Silouan 1866-1938*, tr. Rosemary Edmonds (Chestwood, New York: St Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 2001), p. 75.

radiuses come out; or like a luminous centre, from which a huge number of different rays come out.”⁴⁹⁹ To summarise, the heart in Hesychasm is treated as the source and the focus of human being’s life. And, although the definitions of the Orthodox theologians are more abstract than the Tantric ones, they underscore the same central role of the heart.

The discussion of the first part of Underhill’s definition of the heart will be finished by the words of B. P. Visheslavcev, “The heart is the centre both of consciousness and of the unconscious; both of the soul and of the spirit; both of the spirit and of the body; both of the knowable and of the incomprehensible; to summarise, the heart is the absolute centre.”⁵⁰⁰ The heart is not a mere organ. It is even called “the absolute centre” (the name which is only attributed to the Divine reality), and, hence, can be defined as a metaphysical unity. The interpretation of the heart as the absolute centre can serve as a bridge to the discussion of the second part of Evelyn Underhill’s definition where this very metaphysical meaning of the term is realised.

The meaning of the sophisticated interpretation of the heart as the absolute centre is elucidated in a simple and rather common for the adherents of the agapeic religious tradition formula, “The kingdom of God is within You” (Lk. 17, 21). In agreement with the Scriptures, the famous Hesychast St. Seraphim of Sarov teaches that the heart is a place where God and His Kingdom are realised, “The Lord seeks the heart full of love to God and to neighbour; *heart* is the altar where God likes to reside [...] because in the heart there is the Kingdom of God.”⁵⁰¹

⁴⁹⁹ Б. П. Вышеславцев, “Сердце в христианской и индийской мистике”, с. 77. (Ibid., сс. 228-229)

⁵⁰⁰ Б. П. Вышеславцев, *Этика преображенного Эроса* (Москва, 1994), с. 63. (Ibid., с. 212.)

⁵⁰¹ *О цели христианской жизни. Беседа преп. Серафима Саровского с Н. А. Мотовиловым* (Сергиев Посад, 1914), с. 11.

The statement seems to be akin to the visionary experience described by Suso like this, “It happened one morning that the Servitor saw in a vision that he was surrounded by a troop of heavenly spirits. He therefore asked one of the most radiant amongst these Princes of the Sky to show him how God dwelt in his soul. The angel said to him, ‘Do but fix your eyes joyously upon yourself, and watch how God plays the game of love within your loving soul.’ And he looked quickly, and saw that his body in the region of his heart was pure and transparent like crystal: and he saw the Divine Wisdom peacefully enthroned in the midst of his heart, and she was fair to look upon. And by her side was the soul of the Servitor, full of heavenly desires; resting lovingly upon the bosom of God, Who had embraced it, and pressed it to His Heart. And it remained altogether absorbed and inebriated with love in the arms of God its well-beloved.” (*Heinrich Susos Leben und Schriften*, (cap. VI), ed. M. Diepenbrock (Regensburg, 1825). (From Evelyn Underhill, *Mysticism: A Study in the Nature and Development of Man’s Spiritual Consciousness*, p. 286.)

In a similar manner the heart has been compared with the altar of a temple by St. Macarius of Egypt. He teaches that human body is a sanctuary of God, whereas the heart is the altar of the Holy Spirit.⁵⁰² Monk of *skhima* Hilarion writes, “Heart is the gates of Heaven; it is the imperial throne of mind, where the Lord resides. When it [heart] is open by the finger of God, our mind comes inside it as the high priest or hierarch.”⁵⁰³ The Orthodox scholar M. S. Yevdokimov, in his turn, discloses the christological content of the heart, “In the depths of the heart man can realise the resurrected body of Christ, in which both the world and the Kingdom, both heaven and earth come together.”⁵⁰⁴

The metaphysical orientation of the heart can be also realised in the words of the great Hesychast Symeon the New Theologian who admits that the heart is a sanctuary where God mysteriously manifests Himself, “You must see in yourself the abundant grace of the Holy Spirit enlightening the interior of your heart and making it into a very sun, and clearly experience the miracle of the bush (Ex. 3, 2) taking place within you, so that you are inflamed by the union with the unapproachable fire, yet not consumed thereby because your soul is set free from all passion.”⁵⁰⁵ Hence, according to the Hesychast doctrine the heart is not just a source of the biological and psychological activities of man, but also a field where the transfiguration of man takes place. As M. Yevdokimov writes, “the heart is me, but at the same time it transcends me infinitely”.⁵⁰⁶ Heart is also defined as the mediator between the Divine Grace and man. To make use of the quotation of St. Macarius of Egypt “the Grace achieves all the limbs of the body through the heart.”⁵⁰⁷ In other words, man would never experience God, if he didn’t possess this mediator of supernatural perception.

The image of God and His Wisdom resting upon His bosom resembles the Tantric erotic portraits of variously named Buddhas with their celestial Consorts symbolising the union of Wisdom and Method.

⁵⁰² Преподобный Макарий Египетский, *Духовные слова и послания: собрание типа I (Vatic. Graec. 694)*, (7,18,3), пер. А. Д. Дунаева (Москва: Индрик, 2002), с. 517.

⁵⁰³ Схимон. Иларион, *На горах Кавказа* (СПб: “Воскресение”, 1998), с. 192. (from Николай Новиков, *Путь умного делания: О молитве Иисусовой и Божественной благодати*, с. 178.)

⁵⁰⁴ М. С. Евдокимов, “Сердце в восточной традиции и в “Мыслях” Паскаля” // *Страницы 1*, 1996, с. 241. (from Свящ. Олег Климов, *Опыт безмолвия: человек в мирозерцании византийских исихастов.*, с. 241.)

⁵⁰⁵ Symeon the New Theologian, *The Discourses* (18, 11), trans. C.J. deCatanzaro (New Jersey: Paulist Press, 1980), p. 217.

⁵⁰⁶ М. С. Евдокимов, “Сердце в восточной традиции и в “Мыслях” Паскаля”, с. 34. (from Свящ. Олег Климов, *Опыт безмолвия: человек в мирозерцании византийских исихастов*, с. 227.)

⁵⁰⁷ Макарий Египетский, *Н. XV*, с. XX, col. 589В. (from Сергей Зарин, *Аскетизм по православно-христианскому учению: этико-богословское исследование.*, сс. 580-581.)

In order to compare the Hesychast notion of the heart and that of the Tantric Buddhism, one should answer the question, why the Hesychast tradition formulates the heart reality in the abstract and also in the emotional manner, whereas Tantrism prefers the exact and even dry physiological interpretation. The crux of the matter lies in the fact that in Hesychasm the heart is a wide notion inscribing two meanings of the term: 1) the heart as a metaphysical unit, and 2) the heart as a concrete place or abode of the mentioned metaphysical unit. Tantrism, in its turn, accepts the latter meaning of the heart, but ignores the former one. Although the idea of metaphysical reality embodied in the heart is perfectly elaborated in Tantric Buddhism, this very reality is never termed as the heart.⁵⁰⁸ Tantrism distinguishes 1) the heart of the subtle body as the abode or reservoir of the metaphysical reality⁵⁰⁹, and 2) the metaphysical reality as such, called ‘mind’. In Hesychasm these two entities are often fused under the ‘heart’ title.⁵¹⁰

Abstract and even emotional descriptions in Tantrism usually deal with the reality of this very liberated mind abiding in the heart. This is the so called ‘very subtle mind’ (*shin tu phra pa’i sems*) accompanied by ‘the very subtle wind’ (*shin tu phra pa’i rlung*). The heart as a mere location or reservoir of the very subtle form of consciousness, in its turn, is usually described in the exact and physiological manner deprived of any emotional connotation. In Tibetan texts the very subtle mind manifesting as Light is usually endowed with attributes of mystery and glory. That is expressed, for instance, in the words of Tibet’s great *jogī* Milarepa,

“For the *Yogī* Who hath the perfect Divine *Mandala*

⁵⁰⁸ The exceptions, however, are present in the Tantric literature. For instance, Francesca Fremantle in her *Luminous Emptiness: Understanding the Tibetan Book of the Dead* calls the indestructible *bindu* the ‘awakened heart-awareness’, underscoring the metaphysical meaning of the term *heart* in a similar to the Hesychast tradition manner. Here the awakened consciousness (or awareness) is identified with the heart. (Франческа Фримантл, *Сияющая пустота: Интерпретация «Тибетской книги мертвых»* (Москва: София, 2003), с. 303.)

⁵⁰⁹ For instance, Tenzin Wangyal in his *Wonders of the Natural Mind: The Essence of Dzogchen in the Native Bon Tradition of Tibet* describes the heart as the reservoir with the pure and empty (*śūnya*) space inside. This very empty space is the abode of Dharmakāya (*kun gzhi*) where *Sambhogakāya* (as the manifestation of Dharmakāya) in the form of Light is produced. In the same bodily heart *Dharmakāya*, representing emptiness and *Sambhogakāya* as the manifested Light unite and produce *Nirmanakāya* or compassion. (See Тензин Вангьял, *Чудеса естественного ума: суть учений Дзогчен в тибетской традиции Бон*, пер. Т. Данилевич (Москва: Либрис, 1997), с. 223.) Although Tibetans are not used to attribute love (Buddh. compassion) to the heart, the idea of the heart as the source of high emotion is expressed here indirectly.

⁵¹⁰ This has been also noticed by professor S. M. Zarin in Сергей Зарин, *Аскетизм по православно-христианскому учению: этико-богословское исследование*, с. 375.

Well defined in his own body,
 What need is there of the *Mandala* outlined on the ground?
 For Him Who has kept the Lamp of Mind
 Ever burning bright, along with Vital Breath,
 What need is there of your petty [worldly] lamps?”⁵¹¹

The subtle body as well as the meditative methodology is also mentioned in the extract. Being painfully correct in his formulations the Yogī observes the mind (consciousness) and the vital breath (winds) together.

The abstract (i.e., philosophical) kind of analysis of the naked mind is demonstrated in *Bar do thos grol* like this, “Hey, noble one, this, your present conscious natural clear void awareness, this presence in clear voidness without any objectivity of substance, sign, or color--just this is the reality, the Mother, Buddha All-around Goodness! And this, your conscious awareness natural voidness, not succumbing to a false annihilative voidness, just your own conscious awareness, unceasing, bright, distinct and vibrant--just this awareness is the Father, Buddha All-around Goodness! Just this presence of the indivisibility of your awareness’s naturally insubstantial voidness and the vibrant bright presence of your conscious awareness--just this is the Buddha Body of Truth. Your awareness thus abides in this vast mass of light of clarity-void indivisible. You are free of birth or death--just this is the Buddha Changeless Light.”⁵¹²

Hence, Tibetan writings describe two entities which are connected to each other, those are the heart which *embodies*, and the imperishable “substance” which *is embodied* or located in the heart. This surprising conclusion takes us back to the Christian doctrine of the heart as “the becoming flesh” (or “embodiment”). But in spite of the fact, that in both Christian and Buddhist traditions the “embodiment” takes place, this very “embodiment” is understood by Christians and Tantric Buddhists in different ways. The former consider it to be a soteriological fulfilment of the deified person; the latter treats it as a temporary means of liberation.

In spite of the mixed meaning of the word “heart” in Orthodox theology, in the works of the great Hesychasts, however, the heart is mainly described as a container of all psychic activities. To precise, the heart should be understood as a root or a source of

⁵¹¹ *Tibet’s Great Yogī Milarepa: a Biography from the Tibetan Being the Jetsun-Kahbum or Biographical History of Jetsun-Milarepa, According to the Late Lāma Kazi Dawa-Samdup’s English Rendering*, (II, XII), ed. W. Y. Evans-Wentz, 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), p. 277.

⁵¹² Кщинуке Ф.А. Ергкьфт ъекфты. Ыб Еру Ешшует Ишшл ца еру Вуфѡб з. 126.

any thought, idea or emotion. Macarius the Great writes that the heart is a small vessel, nevertheless it contains lions and snakes; now evil spirits, now venomous animals nestle there; [all] hidden vices, and rough [roads], and abysses, and non-smooth paths take their place in the heart. But when [heart] is illumined, there is also God, and the angels; there is life and light; there are heavenly palaces, and apostles, and the hidden jewels of the kingdom — everything takes place in the heart.⁵¹³

It is discernible that the *heart*, as it is depicted by St. Macarius of Egypt, bears resemblance to the *ālaya-vijnāna* or the universal store-house consciousness of Vijnānavāda. On the one hand *ālaya-vijnāna* is a container of karmic seeds which manifest as the samsāric forms of being. On the other hand *ālaya-vijnāna* represents the ultimate (or the metaphysical) reality which is the universal source (and not just a temporal container) of any phenomena. *Ālaya-vijnāna* is the source both of enlightenment and ignorance. Obviously, that is what St. Macarius means by the idea of the heart where simultaneously God and evil spirits abide. There are many, — Macarius writes, — in whom beside the innate to them active and calming grace vices abide; and in one heart two spirits dwell, those of light and dark.⁵¹⁴ And again, as *ālaya-vijnāna* is the container of the traces of the past deeds transforming into the seeds of the future tendencies, likewise the heart of the Hesychast tradition is the point of arrival and of the further manifestation of the past events. M.S. Yevdokimov observes that “any activity taking place in human body, soul and intellect, move to the centre of life, i.e., to the *heart* and afterwards manifests.”⁵¹⁵

Although the heart of Macarius, being a source of any psychic and also physical activity, is rather similar to the store-house consciousness of Buddhism, it is an image of the Ultimate reality and is not the Divine reality itself. The heart is an image of the Divine because in the same way as nothing exists outside God, no psychic activity of man originates outside heart. As Visheslavcev notices, the heart is also an image of God because it is the deepest and the most mysterious part of man’s psycho-physical organisation. God can’t be acknowledged perfectly; the same can be declared about the heart of man.⁵¹⁶

⁵¹³ Преподобный Макарий Египетский, *Духовные слова и послания: собрание типа I (Vatic. Graec. 694)*, (14, 10), с. 556.

⁵¹⁴ Ibid. (16, 1, 7), с. 568.

⁵¹⁵ М. С. Евдокимов, “Сердце в восточной традиции и в ”Мыслях” Паскаля”, сс. 30-31. (from Свящ. Олег Климов, *Опыт безмолвия: человек в мирозерцании византийских исихастов*, с. 231.)

⁵¹⁶ Б. П. Вышеславцев, “Сердце в христианской и индийской мистике”, с. 64. (Ibid., с. 226)

The idea of the two realities, the Divine and the created one, is a reason why Hesychasts think that the metaphysical reality might be brought to the heart from outside. On the contrary, in Tantrism we deal with the idea of the permanent luminous content of the heart. Heart in Christianity is a perfect organ of perception of the Divine reality. God does not dwell there automatically. God is situated in the heart and in the body as “treasure in jars” (2 Cor. 4, 7). The Christian doctrine of heart “allows” its content to be changed. God dwells in a pure heart whereas the heart of a sinner is dark and full of demons.

The idea is explicitly elucidated in the words of St. Macarius of Egypt. He writes that theoretically the heart is the abode of the Lord, but [usually] it is unclean and full of crowds of evil spirits. That is why it should be renewed and rebuilt, and the inside rooms and bedrooms, and feast-rooms, and the door of the heart should be prepared. Do not treat heart as a small and contemptible vessel, because The Christ King together with angels and holy spirits comes to have a rest [in the heart] and to live, and to walk (cf. 2 Cor. 6, 16) and to establish His kingdom.⁵¹⁷ In the other place St. Macarius underscores that human heart is the altar of the Holy Spirit, and if unclean because of lust, hatred, anger and irritation, God then leaves the altar and comes out [of the heart].⁵¹⁸

To summarise, the idea of the “impermanent” divine content of human heart has been apparently entailed by the agapeic notion of the Divine Grace abiding outside the soul. The gnostic religious model, in its turn, changes the situation vice versa. Thanks to monism the ultimate reality is treated to be permanently innate to human consciousness. Hence, the ultimate reality is not able to leave man’s heart for it should mean a complete distortion of the monistic world view.

Although we have realised the difference between the agapeic and the gnostic religious models, they would never complete each other, if they didn’t penetrate each other; although the idea of Grace entering man, is rarely present in Buddhism, whereas the notion of the permanent

⁵¹⁷ Преподобный Макарий Египетский, *Духовные слова и послания: собрание типа I* (33, 1, 3), сс. 662-663.

⁵¹⁸ Ibid. (18, 3), с. 517.

luminous content of the sanctuary of human being can be noticed in the writings of Christian mystics.

As an example, the words of Tibet's yogī Milarepa can be quoted, "E'er since my Lord's Grace entered in my mind, my mind hath never strayed seeking various distractions"⁵¹⁹. St. Macarius of Egypt, in his turn, accepts the idea of the permanent luminous core of man, claiming that although the lamp [of the heart] burns and gives light all the time, the light is as if covered by a cloth⁵²⁰. However, in other place of Macarius' writings it is clearly indicated that the light of the human heart is kindled by the light of the Lord. It means that man does not have the light of his own and just borrows it from the Bride. "Let us all the time seek for the Bride and His face in order to kindle our lamp and to enter the wedding banquet. The fruits of love from a pure heart are within us (Cf. 1 Tim. 1, 5; 2 Tim. 2, 22); those are the weapon of the Lord, i.e., the lamp. Thanks to this lamp we see the wedding banquet of the Bride; and if He being the Lamp and the Light doesn't kindle our hearts and elucidate everything around, we shall not be able to enter the wedding banquet and to see Him."⁵²¹

The complex character of the problem is also expressed by a representative of the Western Christian mystical tradition St. Teresa of Avila in her *Interior Castle*. She compares a soul with a castle consisting of many rooms, which are located around the centre room wherein the Holy Trinity dwells. Usually a soul lives in the outer rooms while the centre of the castle is completely unknown to the person. The divine centre of the soul is luminous, and the light's measure doesn't depend on the ethical condition of the soul. At the same time Teresa indicates that man's soul is not God himself but His image. The soul of a sinner is compared to a crystal covered by a black cloth and unable to reflect the rays of God.⁵²²

⁵¹⁹ Although in this passage Milarepa is speaking about his teacher Marpa, this circumstance doesn't alter the meaning of grace essentially by reason of the monistic religious model. *Tibet's Great Yogī Milarepa: a Biography from the Tibetan Being the Jetsun-Kahbum or Biographical History of Jetsun-Milarepa*, (II, XII), p. 245.

⁵²⁰ Преподобный Макарий Египетский, *Духовные слова и послания: собрание типа I* (4, 9, 4), с. 457.

⁵²¹ *Ibid.*, (18, 4), с. 517.

⁵²² St. Teresa of Avila, *Interior Castle*, (II, 1, 3) (Garden City: New York: Doubleday, 1961).

There is one more obvious difference between the notion of the heart in Hesychasm and in Tantrism, which, we believe, is also a derivative of the same two models of thinking. The completely dispassionate character of the reality of the heart in Tantrism differs from the Hesychast idea of the heart as a source of love and any other emotion. According to Hesychasm the heart is a living and extremely sensual cover of the mind. S. M. Zarin contends that the mind is able to actualise its potential capacities only taking its seat in the emotional centre of psycho-physical organism, i.e., in the heart. The scholar confirms his statement with the words of bishop Theophan, “The cloth of the spirit is the [high] emotion⁵²³ coming upon it.”⁵²⁴

B. P. Visheslavcev, summarising the Orthodox teaching about the heart, writes that the heart is the centre of love while love expresses the deepest essence of personality. The subject which loves is not the mind; it is the heart which loves. Even this very mind and cognition are loved by the heart. If we want to achieve anything we have to place our heart at the disposal of the goal. All the values and treasures of the spirit are perceived by the heart according to Mt. 6, 21, “For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also”. Finely, a certain personality is determined by what he (or she) loves and hates. The deepest centre of personality is love or Eros, which can be defined as the attraction or the sudden longing which does not deal with immovability, quietism and cold intellectual contemplation.⁵²⁵ Thus, B. P. Visheslavcev underscores that from *gnosis* and *agape* the latter is more important because love “envelopes” any sort of cognition. The statement is rather typical for the agapeic form of religiosity.

Repentance as one of the intrinsic heart emotions can be mentioned beside love. Isaac of Syria teaches that only repentance is able to open the door of the heart.⁵²⁶ Here the ethical purifying of the self as the starting-

⁵²³ Russian *чувство* has a deeper meaning than the English equivalent of the term.

⁵²⁴ Епископ Феофан, *Начертание христианского нравоучения*, с. 318; *Путь ко спасению*, с. 238-239, 299, 301, 302. (from Сергей Зарин, *Аскетизм по православно-христианскому учению: этико-богословское исследование*, с. 578.)

⁵²⁵ Б. П. Вышеславцев, *Сердце в христианской и индийской мистике*, с. 70. (from Свящ. Олег Климов, *Опыт безмолвия: человек в мирозерцании византийских исихастов*, с. 224)

⁵²⁶ Авва Исаак Сириянин, *Иже во святых отца нашего аввы Исаака Сириянина слова подвижническия* (слово 55), пер. С. Соболевский (Москва: Правило веры, 1993), с. 255.

point of contemplation is contradicted to the Tantric purifying of the winds which acquires an explicitly physiological character and is deprived of any emotional connotation. The agapeic model deals with the presence of the Divine Other and the necessity to fulfil an act of repentance. The gnostic form of religiosity is free of the subject-object relationship; that is why the repentance is just irrelevant. “No one judges our actions but ourselves or rather, to be more accurate, it is again the nature of things which will judge us because implacable judgement inheres in its very substance.”⁵²⁷

Hitherto we have discussed the notion of the heart in Hesychasm and Tibetan Buddhism. However, it should not be forgotten that in practical Hesychasm the heart is always in pair together with the mind. During prayer Hesychasts try to carry the mind from the brain to the heart. The category of mind represented by different layers of consciousnesses is important also for Tantrism. Therefore, the next notion, discussed here, is the ‘mind’ (ὁ νοῦς) called also ‘spirit’ (τὸ πνεῦμα). Above in the chapter about man’s organisation in Hesychasm we have already defined mind as “the highest faculty of the soul” and as “the active core of the soul” “inclined to the Absolute” and “constituting personality”. (‘Personality’ is a term designating a deified man deprived of any individual tendencies). The same is said about the heart by Underhill. (She defines the heart as that which is “seeking to transcend the limitation of the individual standpoint and to surrender itself to ultimate Reality.”) Here we again see how Christian characteristics of the mind blend with those of the heart.

Bishop Theophan calls the mind “a cognitive and free power of man which is the starting-point of deification”. It means that after conversion man is united with God in the only point of his psycho-physical organism, i.e., in his mind. All other constituents are not yet involved in this union

⁵²⁷ Marco Pallis, *A Buddhist Spectrum: Contributions to Buddhist-Christian Dialogue* (World Wisdom, 2003), p. 26.

Marco Pallis devotes a discussion to the question of repentance and forgiveness as follows, “The to us familiar concept of forgiveness [in Buddhism] becomes practically unthinkable, being replaced by the idea of purification through knowledge; whereas for a Christian the divine prerogative to remit sins following on human repentance does evidently include the idea of purification as a consequence, for an adherent of the Buddhist religion it is knowledge alone which constitutes the lustral water wherewith to wash away the traces of sinful pollution in the human soul.” (Ibid., p. 27)

and are unclean. Mind then resembles a spark kindled by God's Grace and covered by ashes.⁵²⁸ This illumined mind has its seat in the heart and not in the brain and is able to influence the psychic life of man. It is the reason why the heart and the mind are mutually interrelated and sometimes are completely undifferentiated.

The question is what the equivalent of the Hesychast 'mind' in Tibetan Buddhism is. Human mind has different levels or layers in a similar way as the mind (or consciousness) of tantric Buddhism possesses the very subtle and the grosser levels. Gregory Palamas in his *Triads* writes, "Following the great Denys [...], one should realise that our mind possesses both an intellectual power which permits it to see intelligible things, and also a capacity for that union which surpasses the nature of the intellect and allies it to that which transcends it."⁵²⁹ According to both traditions the deepest layer of the mind (the passive mind) is usually covered by its outer layers (the active or extroversive mind), and the passive mind ("the very subtle mind" of tantrism, *ālaya-vijnāna* of Vijnanavāda, the illumined and deified *mind* of Hesychasm) is able to manifest only after "the cessation of all intellectual activity".⁵³⁰

Gregory Palamas has underscored the metaphysical orientation of the human mind by defining the mind as being able "to transcend itself" and "to acquire an angelic form"⁵³¹. The mind is capable of "being glorified and filled by the grace of the Word". During contemplation "the mind becomes supercelestial, and as it were the companion of Him who passed beyond the heavens for our sake, since it is manifestly yet mysteriously united to God, and contemplates supernatural and ineffable visions, being filled with all the immaterial knowledge of a higher light."⁵³² Here the glorified mind is an explicit equivalent of the very subtle mind (manifesting as the Clear Light of bliss) in Tantrism. In another place of his *Triads* Palamas expresses an idea of the location of the mind, purified

⁵²⁸ Епископ Феофан, *Путь ко спасению*, с. 187. (from Сергей Зарин, *Аскетизм по православно-христианскому учению: этико-богословское исследование.*, с. 114.)

⁵²⁹ *De div. nom.* VII.1, PG III, 708 D. (from Gregory Palamas, *The Triads*, (1, 3, 20), p. 37.)

⁵³⁰ Gregory Palamas, *The Triads*, (1, 3, 17), p. 35.

⁵³¹ *Ibid.*, (1, 3, 4), p. 32.

⁵³² *Ibid.*, (1, 3, 50), p. 33.

of any psychic activity, in the heart.⁵³³ The notion is rather similar to the tantric return of the consciousnesses to the heart. Likewise, Maximus the Confessor admitted that the pure heart places at God's disposal the mind deprived of material images. This very formless mind becomes a witness of God's apparition.⁵³⁴

It is curious that similarly to Tantrists, Hesychasts have noticed the "scattered" nature of the ordinary human mind. In this connection St. Gregory Palamas taught, "Those newly approaching this struggle find that their mind, when recollected, continually becomes dispersed again; but in their experience, they fail to grasp that nothing in the world is in fact more difficult to contemplate and more mobile and shifting than the mind."⁵³⁵ The passage can be compared with the quotation from *The Tibetan Book of the Dead* discussing the extremely mobile character of the mind which is not any longer bound by the heavy form of the gross body, "Hey, noble one! Driven by the swift wind of evolution, your mind is helpless and unstable, riding the horse of breath like a feather blown on the wind, spinning and fluttering."⁵³⁶

The ideas of 'the wind' and 'the horse of breath' should be here understood literally. In tantrism these are winds (*rlung*) which make the different levels of consciousness (*sems*) move. As is indicated above in the chapter about the mystical physiology "consciousnesses by themselves are said to be like people without legs, while winds by themselves are like blind people. Each needs the other, and they function in tandem, with winds providing movement and consciousnesses providing direction. Because of this intimate connection, whatever affects one also affects the other, and so meditators wishing to gain control over consciousness must also learn to influence the movements of winds."⁵³⁷ In *Bar do thos grol* the mind of a dead person, who is not used to concentrate, thinks about

⁵³³ Св. Григорий Палама, *Триады в защиту священнобезмолвствующих* (1, 3, 41) (Москва: Канон, 1995), с. 103.

⁵³⁴ Максим Исповедник, *Главы о богословии и о доостроительстве воплощения Сына Божия*. II. 82: PG. T. 90, col. 1164A. (from Свящ. Олег Климов, *Опыт безмолвия: человек в мирозерцании византийских исихастов*, с. 217.)

⁵³⁵ Gregory Palamas, *The Triads* (1, 2, 7), p. 45.

⁵³⁶ Кшиуке Ф.А. Ергкьфт ъекфты. Ёб *Еру Ешнуефт Ищил ша еру Вуфѳб* з. 84.

⁵³⁷ John Powers, *Introduction to Tibetan Buddhism*, p. 171.

different things giving, in this way, a command to *prāna* to take him to the object of his thoughts.

And vice versa, *prāna* (or the *winds*) is able to calm the mind. Usually it is performed through regular and calm breath as well as through the other breath exercises because breath is the grossest form of *prāna* and, thus, is a perfect means of the mind's concentration. Usually the correct breath, combined with visualisations, is invited to stimulate the mobile mind.

Also Gregory Palamas invited beginners to “look at themselves through the control of breathing”; “certain masters recommend them to control the movement inwards and outwards of the breath, and to hold it back a little; in this way, they will also be able to control the mind together with the breath — this at any rate, until such time as they have made progress, with the aid of God, and have restrained the intellect from becoming distracted by what surrounds it, have purified it and truly become capable of leading it to a “unified recollection”.⁵³⁸ In the same manner as Tantrists stimulate their mind with visualisations (which are the equivalent of *Vipassanā* in Theravāda Buddhism), Hesychasts give some work to do to their minds. “Most typically, the hesychastic masters recommend invocation of the name of Jesus as a focus of concentration upon God, the repetition of the Name of Jesus being regulated by the inhalation and exhalation of the breath.”⁵³⁹

So, what makes the mind move? Although irrelevant in Hesychasm, the idea of *prāna* (tib. *rlung*) is represented in *Triads* of Gregory Palamas in the form of implication. He speaks about the essence of the mind (which can be compared with the Tibetan *sems*) and its energy (which can be regarded as the equivalent of *rlung*), “The essence of the *mind* is one thing, its energy another”⁵⁴⁰.

Gregory Palamas employs the notion of “the most excellent and most appropriate activity of the mind” discussing the ideas of Dionysius about different movements of the mind, “The mind operates in part according to

⁵³⁸ Gregory Palamas, *The Triads*, (1, 2, 7), pp. 45- 46.

⁵³⁹ *Vid.* Kallistos Ware, ed., *The Art of Prayer* (London, 1966), introd., esp. pp. 27-37. (from Gregory Palamas, *The Triads* (com. to 1, 2, 7), p. 127, n. 51.

⁵⁴⁰ Gregory Palamas *The Triads* (1, 2, 5), p. 44.

its function of external observation: This is what the great Denys calls the movement of the mind “along a straight line”; and on the other hand, it returns upon itself, when it beholds itself; this movement the same father calls “circular”. This last is the most excellent and most appropriate activity of the mind, by which it comes to transcend itself and be united to God.”⁵⁴¹

The straight movement is an ordinary cognitive possibility of mind taking its direction from itself to the external objects. This kind of mind’s activity can be compared to the movement of the active or the extroverted mind of Vijnanavāda and with circulation of subtle and gross levels of consciousness and its *prāna* (*winds*), all around the subtle body in tantrism. The Dionysius’ circular movement of the *mind*, in its turn, can be compared with the passive consciousness of Vijnānavāda tending to introversion. It can be also compared to the tantric idea of consciousness and its *prāna* moving to the central channel and afterwards to the heart by the force of meditation. These two, consciousness and its energy construct the subtle body in Tantrism. Finding the equivalents of these two forces in Hesychasm, we have realised an implication of the idea of subtle body in Christianity.

That the genuine abode of the mind is in the heart is explicitly elucidated in the words of Staretz Silouan, “The Lord is glorified in the holy temples, while monks and anchorites praise God in their hearts. The heart of the anchorite is a temple and his mind an altar, for the Lord loves to dwell in the heart and mind of man”⁵⁴². Hence, the heart without the mind abiding in it is like a temple without the altar.

Hitherto we haven’t mentioned the traditional standpoint about brain (or head) as the abode of mind, and about *gnosis* (ἡ γνῶσις) originating in brain. The question is, “Does this traditional point of view contradict the teachings of the ascetics about the heart as the true abode of the mind?”. Firstly, Hesychasts have never denied the fact that the natural cognitive capacities of the mind have their source in the brain. Nevertheless, when a contemplator deals with the higher cognition, the

⁵⁴¹ Ibid.

⁵⁴² Archimandrite Sophrony, *The Monk of Mount Athos Staretz Silouan 1866-1938*, p. 75.

natural capabilities of the mind cease giving the way to the supernatural ones. Then the mind automatically travels to the heart. The absence of the conflict between the traditional point of view and the Hesychast one can be better grasped if we use the tantric idea of the indestructible *bindu* as the principal seat of the gross *bindu*. (See the chapter *The Tantric Doctrine of Man*.) The gross *bindu* are usually situated in the crown of the head and in the navel, but during meditation and death they come together in order to be united in their principal seat in the *heart*, discovering in this way the Clear Light of bliss. Likewise, the head is considered by Hesychasts to be the abode of ordinary mind whereas the heart is treated as the principal seat of the mind's essence. Only being situated in the heart during prayer the mind can disclose this essence, i.e., its own metaphysical potential.

The same solution concerns the question of the source of *gnosis*. S. M. Zarin devotes a discussion like this. St. Isaac of Syria considers *gnosis* to be an activity of the heart because *gnosis* can never originate if love (having its source in the heart) is not experienced by the contemplator.⁵⁴³ And in spite of the fact that in other places of the writings Isaac of Syria admits that wisdom and contemplation are the functions of the mind and not of the heart, no contradiction can be found here, for “the very life of the mind is the activity of the heart” (ἡ πολιτεία τῆς διανοίας ἔσται ἔργον τῆς καρδίας).⁵⁴⁴ By reason of this dependence of the mind on the heart the condition of the latter completely influences the quality of the mind's activity. As Isaac of Syria taught, “the truthfulness of his [i.e., contemplator's] heart determines the extent of his mind's contemplation” (τῆ ἀληθείᾳ τῆς καρδίας ἀετοῦ σωφρονίζει τὸν θεωρίαν τῆς διανοίας ἀετοῦ.) A complete knowledge can be achieved only when the mind is transported to “the region of love”.⁵⁴⁵ Hence, the heart in Hesychasm is the source of both 1) love and 2) wisdom derived from love.

⁵⁴³ Epist. IV, σ. 271. (from Сергей Зарин, *Аскетизм по православно-христианскому учению: этико-богословское исследование*, с. 393.)

⁵⁴⁴ Λ. XVII, σ. 87-88. (Ibid.)

⁵⁴⁵ Λ. I, σσ. 5, 574-575. (Ibid.)

To summarise, the heart is a place where “the two eternal passions of the self, the desire of love and the desire of knowledge”⁵⁴⁶ are satisfied. In Tantric Buddhism the true *gnosis* is realised in the heart; in Hesychasm the heart is the place where God is cognised through *agape*. That is why the heart is the metaphysical sphere which transcends the borders between the two religions. Precisely in the heart Christianity and Buddhism represented by love and wisdom are reconciled.

Psychic Introversion as a Means of Deification in Hesychasm and Liberation in Buddhism

According to Mircea Eliade the experience of Light can be of two kinds: the subjective and the objective ones. The former means that lumenophany has been experienced only by the contemplator, but has not been evident to others. In the latter case we deal with the vision of Light not only being experienced by the contemplator but also testified by witnesses.⁵⁴⁷

In this part of the research we are going to discuss the subjective phenomenology of Light experience which in rather an emotional manner has been described by Hesychast visionaries. The descriptive genre, however, is not so popular in the Tantric tradition. Although Tibetans experience a similar manifestation of Light, they try to avoid the emotional style of private descriptions preferring the theoretical interpretation of lumenophany. Here again, the two religious models, the agapeic and the gnostic ones, determine the genre presenting the experience.

The agapeic model, accepting the idea of the Supernatural and Beloved Other causes the “emotional attachment” to the luminous manifestation of the Beloved. The

⁵⁴⁶ Evelyn Underhill, *Mysticism: A Study in the Nature and Development of Man's Spiritual Consciousness*, p. 72.

⁵⁴⁷ Мирча Элиаде, *Мефистофель и андрогин*, пер. Н. Л. Сухачева // Мирча Элиаде, *Азиатская алхимия: переводы с румынского, английского и французского*, отв. ред. Н. Л. Сухачев (Москва: Янус-К, 1998), с. 362.

Hesychast views the relationship between him and the Supernatural Other as a special and very personal gift. That is why this sort of experience, treated by the Hesychast as unique, needs to be expressed in the descriptive manner of a personal story. At the same time the Hesychasts have never tried to grasp the physiological mechanism of Light experience because the main agent of that is Grace.

The gnostic model of Tantric Buddhism denies the idea of the Supernatural Other, transforming it into the notion of the natural One⁵⁴⁸. It is discernible that in Buddhism the One is something innate to us. To make use of the notional apparatus of tantric Buddhism, Buddha or the liberated luminous consciousness is situated in the body of any human being and, thus, is more than natural. It is innate to us in the same way as the organs of our physical body are. That is why it would be naive to adore or love the mentioned luminous reality.

On the other hand the absence of the subject-object relationship represented by the idea of *anātman* in Buddhism causes the absence of the personal character of Light experience. The manifestation of Light is not unique but universal. It is common to all sentient beings. During Light manifestation a yogi gets rid of the illusory self blending with the luminous One called Buddha. Hence, if the self does not exist, there is no sense to treat Light experience as anything personal.

These are the reasons why Tibetan *sādhakas* prefer not to attribute 1) the emotional and 2) the personal character to the Light experience. Situating the everlasting Light of Buddha inside the subtle body of man they deny the role of Grace in the process of liberation. What is innate to us should be grasped by our own means, i.e., by the perfect knowledge of tantric physiology and by the correct meditation based upon this very knowledge.

Although the doctrine of the subtle body and the idea of Light experience as a part of physiology is absent in Hesychasm because of the determinant role of Grace, some other sort of the speculative analysis of lumenophany is present in Hesychasm. Due to the fact that Hesychasm has attributed the luminous manifestation to the Supernatural Other and not to the human being, theology of Light expressed in the idea of the uncreated Divine energies has been elaborated. The question of how the Super-nature can be perceived by the nature is the main field of hesychast speculations. In spite of the

⁵⁴⁸ Here we are making use of the neoplatonic *One* as the best term expressing the Buddhist monistic point of view. The relationship between subject and object in Buddhism is not valid. The reality is just one; the ultimate reality is present in any human being without exception.

abstract character of the discussion it, however, differs to a large extent from the tantric Light methodology.

Although the Light experience has been presented by Hesychasts and tantric Buddhists in different ways, we shall try to combine the physiological stages of Light experience elaborated by Tibetans, and the personal descriptions of Light manifestation written by Hesychasts in order to realize the identity of Light experience in Christianity and Buddhism.

Introspection and Introversion: General Considerations

It is discernible that both traditions, Hesychasm and Tantrism, consider that in order to achieve the salvific/liberating experience of Light some sort of in-going or “introversion” of consciousness should take place. Other mystical traditions of Christian Mysticism, including the Western one, and meditatively-tended schools of Buddhism (for instance, Theravāda Buddhism) elaborate quite similar introversive techniques. Although the same introversion is performed by the adherents of different religions, the notional language, describing this process, is not one and the same.

As is indicated above, the introversion is expressed by Tantric Buddhists as the concentration of the mind and its winds in the heart. It is helpful to remember that according to the Tantric physiology of the subtle (diamond) body the winds of an ordinary man flow through the most of channels excluding the central one. As long as the winds continue to flow in the peripheral channels they continue to be a support to the certain types of consciousness which, in their turn, activate the negative conceptions trapping beings in cyclic existence. By the force of meditation the winds together with their consciousnesses might be gathered and dissolved in the central channel. In this way various conceptions including the notion of the “self” are automatically destroyed and the mind changes its dispersed orientation into the *oneness* deprived of any conception⁵⁴⁹. This is the necessary condition of a direct intuitive realization of ultimate truth.⁵⁵⁰

⁵⁴⁹ For tantric Buddhists the term “conceptions” means every thought, idea, sense, attachment of the illusory “self”. Tantrism considers the conceptions to be eighty. They will be listed below.

⁵⁵⁰ Geshe Kelsang Gyatso, *Clear Light of Bliss: Mahamudra in Vajrayana Buddhism*, trans. Tenzin Norbu, ed. Jonathan Landaw and Chris Kolb (London: Wisdom Publications, 1982), p. 24.

It is important to remember in this context that the process of dissolution of the winds in the central channel takes place during death. But since “the yogas are based on simulating death”⁵⁵¹ the same introversion of the winds and consciousnesses takes place during the correct meditation resulting in the vision of Light.

Geshe Kelsang Gyatso underscores that in order to complete the Light meditation, it is not enough for the winds to enter the central channel and dissolve in any channel-wheel. To imitate the vision of Light taking place during death the adept should make all the winds dissolve in the indestructible drop of the heart channel-wheel. If the winds dissolve in another channel-wheel the adept will experience similar, but artificial experiences.⁵⁵² Although the Tantric visualizations, responsible for the achievement of Clear Light, are very complicated to describe them in detail, they can be resumed as the visualization of the heart region or the focusing mindfulness in the heart channel-wheel. This consideration might be very important for Hesychasts who in a similar manner treat the Light experience to be genuine only if they had been cultivated in the heart.

In spite of the fact that Tibetans consider that the genuine Light experience without fail takes place in the heart *cakra*, they do not deny the decisive role of the other *cakras* in different kinds of meditative practices. Tibetan methodology, much wider than the Hesychast one, doesn't insist upon the idea of the heart as the only place where the energies of man can be gathered during meditation. Geshe Kelsang Gyatso writes that every channel-wheel has its own employment at the path to liberation. If the adept tries to concentrate his attention in the throat region (or, to use the Tantric terminology, to penetrate the channel-wheel of the throat) the dream practices will be very powerful. The penetrating of the heart *cakra* enables the adept to maintain the vision of Clear Light; of the navel increases the inner fire; of the secret place gives the experience of strong bliss. By penetrating the vital point of the channel-wheel that is located at the tip of the sex organ the experience of strong bliss will be enhanced and a quick, deep and long sleep will be induced.⁵⁵³ And, although all *cakras* are helpful in the process of liberation, the only channel wheel which is active during death is the heart *cakra*. That is why the meditation of Light might

⁵⁵¹ Lati Rinbochay and Jeffrey Hopkins, *Death, Intermediate State and Rebirth in Tibetan Buddhism* (London: Rider and Company, 1979), p. 13.

⁵⁵² Geshe Kelsang Gyatso, *Clear Light of Bliss: Mahamudra in Vajrayana Buddhism*, p. 76.

⁵⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

be treated as the most important one whereas the other practices are just preliminary techniques subjected to the main one. In the same way the heart *cakra* should be considered as the central one whilst the other ones are just supportive.

The topic can be continued by the example. While Hesychasts treat the true mystical heat being originated in the heart, Tibetans think that the navel zone is the best place where the inner fire (called by Tibetans *tummo*) can be cultivated during meditation. The physiological specifics of *tummo* which, by the way, is just a preliminary stage to the other meditations, doesn't deny the fact that the heart of a deceased *yogin* who has been skilled in meditation remains warm for several days after his death. This allegedly unexplained fact might be a confirmation of the idea that the heart is the genuine generator of Light and mystical heat in Tantric Buddhism. The heat here should be considered as the secondary phenomenon going side by side with Light experience.⁵⁵⁴ *Tummo*, being an excellent preliminary practice, can be characterized as a teaching aid, which is not any longer needed when the subject has been mastered. This solution of the problem is able to extenuate to some extent the categorical assertion of Hesychasts about the heart as the only region where Light and mystical heat can be generated. The only conclusion we can make is akin to what is underscored by Agehananda Bharati about different *sādhana* and one goal in Indian indigenous systematized traditions.⁵⁵⁵ Although the Tantric and the Hesychast psycho-techniques

⁵⁵⁴ As Sogyal Rinpoche indicated in his best-seller *The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying* there are many other signs that show they [realised yogins] are resting in the state of the Ground Luminosity: Some masters die sitting upright in meditation posture. There is still the certain colour and glow in their face, the nose does not sink inward, the skin remains soft and flexible, the body does not become stiff, the eyes are said to keep a soft and compassionate glow, and there is still warmth at the heart. Sogyal Rinpoche remembers in this connection Gyalwang Karmapa, the head of one of the four main schools of Tibetan Buddhism, who died in hospital in the United States in 1981. The nursing staff noticed that Karmapa's body did not follow the usual progression of rigor mortis and decay, but seemed to remain just as it had been when he died. After a while they became aware that the area around his heart was still warm. Dr. Sanchez said, "They brought me into the room about thirty-six hours after he died. I felt the area right over his heart, and it was warmer than the surrounding area. It's something for which there is no medical explanation." ("His Holiness in Zion, Illinois," in *Vajradhatu Sun*, vol. 4, no. 2 (Boulder, CO, Dec. 1981-Jan. 1982): 3.) (from Sogyal Rinpoche, *The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying*, ed. Patrick Gaffney and Andrew Harvey (HarperSanFrancisco, 1994), p. 270-271.)

⁵⁵⁵ To precise, various religious doctrines of Indian traditions, having the common target, are the main subject discussed by Agehananda Bharati. *Sādhana*s vary much less than ideological systems. Nevertheless, the question of differences among various *sādhana*s or

often differ and even contradict each other, the culmination of the mystical experience seems to be the same for the both traditions.

The detailed exposition of the mentioned psycho-techniques, as well as the objective phenomenology of Light experience, however, exceeds the tasks of this chapter. For this reason we should go back to the question of introversion. In order to generalize the Tantric idea of introversion one should employ the formulation of Sogyal Rinpoche according to which the Tantric introversion of the winds and consciousnesses is “the bringing the scattered mind home” and “the bringing the different aspects of our being into focus”. The process has received the name of “Calm Abiding”.⁵⁵⁶ Calm Abiding or *Samatha* is a certain psycho-technique which will be discussed below.

In another place of his best-seller Sogyal Rinpoche, inviting us “to look in”, makes one more interesting observation, “It’s interesting that the word for “Buddhist” in Tibetan is *nang pa*. It means “inside-er”: someone who seeks the truth not outside, but within the nature of mind. All the teachings and training in Buddhism are aimed at that one single point: to look into the nature of the mind, and so free us from the fear of death and help us realize the truth of life.”⁵⁵⁷

It would be difficult to deny that the above interpretation of the term is linked to the idea of introversion in the philosophical school of Vijnānavāda, fixed, for instance, in *Lankāvatāra-Sūtra*. As Lama Anagarika Govinda observes, according to the text “the arbitrarily discriminating intellect can only be overcome if a complete “turning-about” has taken place in the deepest seat of consciousness. The habit looking outwards, i.e., towards external objects, must be given up and a new spiritual attitude established of realizing truth or ultimate reality within the intuitive consciousness, by becoming one with reality. So long as this intuitive self-realization of highest knowledge and wisdom has not been attained, the process of progressive self-limitation of the empirical consciousness will continue.”⁵⁵⁸

among various doctrines is not so intrinsic. The main agent completing the process of achieving the target is not the content of a certain doctrine and religious practice. It is practice itself, or practice in action which lets the adept not to lose the path to the goal. The doctrine alone can never achieve the soteriological target. It needs the religious practice to become an object of the salvific experience. (Agehananda Bharati, *The Tantric Tradition* (Bombay, Calcutta, Madras, Delhi: B. I. Publications, 1976), p. 31- 34.)

⁵⁵⁶ Sogyal Rinpoche, *The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying*, p. 62.

⁵⁵⁷ Ibid, p. 52.

⁵⁵⁸ Lama Anagarika Govinda, *Foundations of Tibetan Mysticism According to the Esoteric Teachings of the Great Mantra OM MANI PADME HŪM* (New York: Samuel Weiser, 1975), p. 79-80.

The formulation of the introversion as “a complete turning-about” in the deepest seat of consciousness is extremely similar to that of S. S. Horuzhy. The Hesychast introversion of the mind is defined by the Orthodox scholar as a turning-about in consciousness or the turning of consciousness ‘from without to within.’⁵⁵⁹ The Hesychast interpretation of the introversion will be discussed below. At the moment it is helpful to go further to the idea of introversion in Theravāda Buddhism. To precise, Theravāda Buddhism elaborates two terms; those are the *introspection* and the *introversion*⁵⁶⁰. The difference between them is going to be clarified now.

To introduce the topic, it is important to indicate that the term “introspection” does not belong to the adherents of Theravāda Buddhism, but to the Western scholars investigating the matter. Russian scholar V. G. Lisenko, for instance, admits that *introspection* is a perfect rendering of the term *smṛti* (Pali *sāti*) because it expresses the true meaning of the seventh stage of the eightfold path in classical Buddhism⁵⁶¹. The word *smṛti* is usually translated into English as “mindfulness”, “self-possession”. Its meaning is explained in Satipatthanasutta.⁵⁶² *Smṛti* is the meditative practice cultivating *introversion* and consisting of four stages. The first three are invited to develop the one-pointed or the static meditation; those are the control of the body (*kāya*), of senses (*vedana*) and of thoughts (*citta*). The fourth one is the dynamic meditation called ‘the control of *dharma*s’. We shall leave the explanation of these stages aside for a while, noticing just one thing. *Introspection* is some sort of artificial *introversion* which can’t be understood as *introversion* in the proper sense of the word. Here the *introspection* is

⁵⁵⁹ Russian “отвне внутрь”.

⁵⁶⁰⁵⁶⁰ It bears noting that terminology is a conventional thing and does not influence the main point of the matter. Daniel F. Stramara, Jr, for instance, investigating the idea of in-going in the Mediterranean World, employs the term “introspection” as the basic one. Nevertheless, discussing the considerations on the matter expressed by Origen, the scholar agrees with Andrew Louth who distinguishes between the “preliminary stage in one’s interior development” and the “introspective contemplation” of “the things that are not seen” (Andrew Louth, *The Origins of the Christian Mystical Tradition* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981), p. 58, 59). (in Daniel B. Stramara, Jr, “Introspection in the Ancient Mediterranean World: Taking a Closer Look” in *St Vladimir’s Theological Quarterly: A Continuation of St. Vladimir’s Seminary Quarterly* 44, ed. Paul Meyendorff (New York: St Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 2000), p. 44.)

⁵⁶¹ The full name of the seventh stage of the eightfold path is *sammā sati* (Pali) or the true mindfulness.

⁵⁶² Russian rendering of the term as *памятование*, proposed by A. V. Paribok, is closer to the Pāli and Sanskrit original. (В. Г. Лысенко, Ранняя буддийская философия // В. Г. Лысенко, А. А. Терентьев, В. К. Шохин, *Ранняя буддийская философия. Философия Джайнизма* (Москва: Восточная литература РАН, 1994), с. 184.)

the same “turning-about” of consciousness which is the preliminary stage to a serious *introversion*. According to the Buddhist and the Hesychast mysticism introspection or “the turning-about” of consciousness supposes to be continued by several more introversive stages. But the main thing here is that *introspection* is an artificial method. It means that it is performed by effort of the will, and, thus, is never pleasant.

The well done *introspection*, finally, is followed by *introversion* or the eighth stage of the eightfold path called *samādhi*. V. G. Lisenko asserts that the term *samādhi* might be rendered as *synthesis* or *integration* that is the same *introversion*. The last term expresses the maximal concentration of the intellect, emotions, the will and the bodily functions in one focus. All the cognitive capacities of man are turned from *without to within*. The culmination of the *introversion* is some kind of *trance* or *coming out of the self* when consciousness is deprived of any attributes.⁵⁶³ It is discernible that the idea of *introversion* and of the further coming out of the self exactly coincides with the contemplative scheme of the Christian West resumed by St Augustine as 1) *introversion* in the depths of the heart (soul) (Lat. *intravi in ultima mea* (Confessiones 7.10.16)), and 2) the going out of the self when the vision of the Divine Light takes place (*et vidi qualicumque oculo animae meae, supra eundem oculum animae meae, supra mentem meam, lucem incommutabilem* (Confessiones 7.10.16)).⁵⁶⁴

Although the similarity of the above Christian and Buddhist ideas seems to be astonishing, it is necessary to precise that the explanation of *samādhi* as the “coming out of the self” (which is very well expressed in Greek as ἡ ἵκστασις) is the Western interpretation of the Indian term. The exact translation of the word *samādhi* is “introversion” or *enstasis* (ἡ ἵνστασις). As the translator of Yoga Upanishads B. V. Martinov indicates, the word *samādhi* can be dissected in three parts: *sam* means gathering of anything into one focus; *ā* is the motion within; *dhi* is the static condition.⁵⁶⁵

But, in spite of the fact that the topic of the correct translation of Indian terms is a basic one, we are interested in some other detail. Introversion or *samādhi*, as it is interpreted by Buddhists, is the natural condition of consciousness, when it is concentrated without any effort or strain. Experiencing the inner vision, the person is not any longer involved

⁵⁶³ Ibid., c. 188.

⁵⁶⁴ Bernard McGinn, *The Foundations of Mysticism*, vol. I in *The Presence of God: A History of Western Christian Mysticism* (London: SCM PRESS, 1992), p. 233.

⁵⁶⁵ Б. В. Мартынов, “Источники и течения йоги” // Б. В. Мартынов (пер.), *Упанишады Йоги и Тантры* (Москва: Алетея, 1999), с. 42.

in the events which take place around him. The described situation, when nothing can disturb contemplation, is called by Christians “the supernatural mode of being”. For the adherents of the latter tradition the mystic experiencing the supernatural vision of the reality, is deprived of his natural or created cognitive capacities and participates the supernatural or the uncreated form of existence.

Before we are going to the discussion of the notions in Christian tradition, it is useful to complete the explanation of the Buddhist ones. The ideas of *introspection* and of *introversion* in Theravāda Buddhism have their approximate equivalents in Tantric Buddhism. Those are so called *stage of generation* (Tib. *rdzogs rim*) and *stage of completion* (Tib. *bskyed rim*). The difference between them is clarified by John Powers, “In the stage of generation one trains the mind with imaginative visualisation. One creates a vivid image of a deity that possesses all the physical marks of buddha, as well as all the mental qualities of an enlightened being. The purpose of this stage is to develop one’s imaginative powers to such a degree that what one visualises begins to become *real*. In the stage of completion, one finalises the process by transforming oneself in accordance with the visualisations of the stage of generation. [...] In the stage of completion one acquires the ability to cause winds to enter the central channel and dissolve in the “indestructible drop” in the centre of the heart. [...] As one causes winds to enter into it and dissolve, one experiences a profound bliss, and concomitantly one actualises progressively subtler levels of the mind. When all the winds have been dissolved in the indestructible drop, the mind of clear light manifests, and this can be used to cognise emptiness directly.”⁵⁶⁶ John Myrdhin Reynolds precises that the completion stage of meditation “represents an actual alchemical process wherein energies of the base passions are transmuted within the vessel of the physical and subtle bodies into the elixir of primordial awareness or gnosis (*ye shes*).”⁵⁶⁷

⁵⁶⁶ John Powers, *Introduction to Tibetan Buddhism* (Ithaca: New York: Snow Publications, 1995), p. 246-248.

⁵⁶⁷ John Myrdhin Reynolds, “Introduction” in *The Golden Letters: The Three Statements of Garab Dorje, the first teacher of Dzogchen, together with a commentary by Dza Patrul Rinpoche entitled “The Special Teaching of the Wise and Glorious King”*, trans. John Myrdhin Reynolds (Ithaca: New York: Snow Lion Publications, 1996), p. 28.

The difference between the two stages of meditation is also summarised by Roger Jackson like this. During generation stage “one mentally creates the mandala-abode of the deity, imagines oneself as the deity at its centre, and populates the mandala with various other deities. The meditations of the generation stage are preparatory to those of the completion stage (*rdzogs rim*) whereby one manipulates one’s winds and drops within the subtle body so as to attain the actual form and dharma bodies of the deity who is a buddha.”⁵⁶⁸

The topic is observed in the most useful for us manner by Geshe Lhundub Sopa, “The steps of generation mainly ripen the meditator for the practice of the steps of completion. The former anticipate through the use of symbolism and imagination. [...] They commence with the meditator’s imagining arising from emptiness, passing through a set of transformations, and being generated as the deity together with the deity’s mandala (symbolic of the deity’s abode) and circle of attendant gods. Here the deity (*ishtadevata*), mandala, and entourage of gods represent the *nirmanakāya*. The steps of generation are said to be concluded when the meditator can visualise lucidly, in every detail, and for as long as desired, the deity, mandala, and circle of gods altogether in a space the size of a mustard seed. From here begin the steps of completion and the *nonimaginary* process of development leading to the abandonment of the passion (*klesha*) and knowledge (*jneya*) obscurations (*avarana*).”⁵⁶⁹

Although the explanations are not deprived of the tantric specifics, the two stages of Buddhist meditation are here clearly presented, i.e., the *introspection*, performed by effort of attention and imagination, and the *nonimaginary introversion* as the “real” vision of deity resulting in the

⁵⁶⁸ Roger Jackson devotes his article to the topic of generation-stage *sadhanā*. Among the standard generation-stage practices are preparatory offerings and meditations, the creation of a protective circle, the generation of a mandala and its resident deities, the absorption of actual deities of “gnosis beings” (*ye shes pa*) into the imagined deities or “pledge beings” (*dam tshig pa*), the repetition of mantras, etc. (Roger Jackson, “The Kalachakra Generation-Stage Sadhana.” (In Geshe Lhundub Sopa, Roger Jackson, John Newman, *The Wheel of Time: The Kalachakra in Context*, ed. Beth Simon (Madison, Wisconsin: Dear Park Books, 1985), p. 119-120.)

⁵⁶⁹ Geshe Lhundub Sopa, “The Subtle Body in Tantric Buddhism” in Geshe Lhundub Sopa, Roger Jackson, John Newman, *The Wheel of Time: The Kalachakra in Context*, ed. Beth Simon (Madison: Wisconsin: Dear Park Books, 1985), p. 143-144.

processes of dissolution taking place in the diamond body and in the vision of Clear Light as such. The same difference between two phases of rDzogs chen psycho-technique is noted by Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche. Calling the two phases “meditation” and “contemplation” (the same designations are suggested by scholars concerning the phases of prayer in Western Christian mysticism), he points out that the former is performed by an effort whereas the latter is out of any activity.⁵⁷⁰ Hence, the *enstasis* or *introversion* in the proper sense of the word, when the winds, consciousnesses and other constituents of the subtle body are involved, concerns the second stage of tantric meditation and not the first one. It is discernible that the completion stage is already “supernatural” as Hesychasts would say, for the capacities of intellect, entering the central channel of the subtle body together with the gross winds, are gradually destroyed in the central channel. The Christian parallels will be devoted attention to below. At the moment we’ll just note that Tantric visualisations have something in common with the meditations on the life of Jesus, represented in the works of Western Christian Mystics, for instance, in the *Spiritual Exercises* of Ignatius Loyola and in the *Interior Castle* of Teresa of Avila. The described by Avila’s Teresa transition from the imaginary meditation to the nonimaginary one, when all senses, images and thoughts fall asleep and the soul, performing true introversion, has a direct vision of the Divine matters⁵⁷¹, is an explicit parallel of the described Tantric transition from the generation stage of meditation to that of the completion.⁵⁷²

⁵⁷⁰ Чогьял Намкхай Норбу Ринпоче. *Хрусталь и путь света: Сутра, Тантра и Дзогчен по учениям Намкхай Норбу Ринпоче*, сс. 72-73.

⁵⁷¹ See Teresa of Avila, *Interior Castle* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1961).

⁵⁷² The comparison with the Western and with the Eastern Christian mysticism has been here performed because Hesychasm and the Eastern Christian contemplative tradition on the whole deny the imaginary kind of prayer at all. All images should be destroyed in order to have a vision of the Unseen. S. S. Horuzhy, defending the non-imaginary sort of prayer, writes that imagination is rooted in senses and, thus, causes false or illusory visions. The conclusion of the scholar is, that this sort of visions can’t come from God because God is the object of the trans-sensual experience. (С. С. Хоружий, “Аналитический словарь исихастской антропологии” // С. С. Хоружий (гл. ред.), *Синергия: проблемы аскетики и мистики Православия*, с. 98.)

The Western Christian mysticism, vice versa, employs imagination during meditations on the life of Jesus. The image should be a precise copy of what is demanded by the

Further, the classification of the Completion stage of Tantric meditation, proposed below, makes us to draw a conclusion that for tantrists the introversion is a wide notion, including both the “decreasing” of consciousness (called by Christians the *purification*) and the direct vision of Light. The six levels of the stage of Completion are following: 1) physical isolation (is the somatic consequence of the dissolution of the winds in the central channel); 2) verbal isolation (breathing exercises combined with mantra help to enter the subtle level of sound and to identify breath with it, performing in this way the “eternal return”⁵⁷³); 3) mental isolation (the adept gets rid of the conceptions). The three mentioned levels are three aspects of one process called “the simulation of death” during which the winds and consciousnesses enter the indestructible vacuole in the heart; 4) illusory body (Skt. *maya deha*) (is a creation of one’s imaginative visualisation. It is made of subtle winds that are manifested in the form of a deity which is called “impure illusory body” because the man still has not overcome all afflictions); 5) actual Clear Light; and 6) learner’s union (is the stage when after the dissolution oneself into the state of emptiness and after the resulting experience of Clear Light, the winds begin to move again and the meditator arises in an illusory body. This body is called “the pure illusory body” because it is not afflicted by the obstructions. It is manifested from the extremely subtle wind.⁵⁷⁴ Unlike the period of time before the stage of union, when the Clear Light and illusory body exist alternately, and not at the same time, during learner’s union the pure illusory body and Clear Light are finely united (Skt. *yuganaddha*). This is the stage of enlightenment through the attainment of the three bodies.⁵⁷⁵

spiritual guide. Here a parallel with the Tantric attempt to follow precisely the instruction during visualisation is obvious.

⁵⁷³ The idea of the cosmic sound (in Tantric Hinduism *nāda*) is explicitly Indian and can’t be found in Christianity. Due to the idea of cosmic sound the Tantric method of *mantra* recitation has been elaborated. Through *mantra yoga* the senses are withdrawn and the yogin becomes aware of the *nāda* within him reverberating in the central channel. Thus the vocalised sound of mantra becomes the unvocalized, representing the inner sound of the Ultimate reality. (*The Oxford Dictionary of World Religions*, ed. John Bowker (Oxford: New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 674.

⁵⁷⁴ John Powers, *Introduction to Tibetan Buddhism*, p. 249.

⁵⁷⁵ Geshe Lhundub Sopa, “The Subtle Body in Tantric Buddhism”, p. 145.

In spite of the explicitly Tantric specifics of the mentioned stages they correspond to a large extent to the stages of prayer classified by the scholars of Western Christian Mysticism. For instance, what is called here “the actual Clear Light” and “the learner’s union”, can be likened to the *ecstasis* and the *contemplation* in Western Mysticism.⁵⁷⁶ The Tantric notions of “the actual Clear Light” and “the learner’s union” can also be compared with the Spiritual Betrothal and Spiritual Marriage of St. Teresa of Avila.⁵⁷⁷ The forth level called “illusory body”, in its turn, can be compared with the stage of visions in Christian Mysticism, defined by Evelyn Underhill as “the *media* by which the “seeing self” truly approaches the Absolute” or as the agent which “establishes a communication between the two planes of existence”, i.e., man and God⁵⁷⁸.

The discovered difference between the Buddhist notions of *introversion* and *introspection* invites us to perform the analysis of the terms in Hesychasm. In the beginning some words will be said about the necessity of *introversion* as such. As Gabriele Winkler claims, “the Fathers often insist that in true prayer we move from being outwardly dispersed into an inward recollectedness. This movement from without to within will undergo a growth process to such an extent that we will learn to descend into the deepest level of our heart, remaining in this inmost inwardness of our being while praying.”⁵⁷⁹ In another place the scholar confirms the idea by the quotation from Theophan who is very close to Tantrism in his

⁵⁷⁶ Evelyn Underhill characterises the ecstasies or trance as the “intense concentration of the self upon its transcendental perceptions [which] results in the narrowing of the field of consciousness to a point at which all knowledge of the external world is lost, all the messages of the senses are utterly ignored. [...] Whereas the orison of union, which is one of the forms in which pure contemplation appears at its highest point of development, is still controlled to a large extent by the will of the subject, and “may be hindered”. (St. Teresa, *Vida*, 10, 1; 10, 3.) (from Evelyn Underhill, *Mysticism: A Study in the Nature and Development of Man’s Spiritual Consciousness* (New York: The Noonday Press, 1955), p. 329.

⁵⁷⁷ Святая Тереза Авильская, *Внутренний замок* (7, 2), пер. Натальи Трауберг (Москва: Истина и жизнь), с. 141-145.

⁵⁷⁸ Evelyn Underhill, *Mysticism: A Study in the Nature and Development of Man’s Spiritual Consciousness*, op. cit., p. 270, 273. Cf. also with the words of Evelyn Underhill, “Visions and voices [...] are forms of symbolic expression, ways in which the subconscious activity of the spiritual self reaches the surface-mind”. (Ibid., p. 271.)

⁵⁷⁹ Gabriele Winkler, *The Jesus Prayer in Eastern Spirituality* (Minneapolis: Light and Life Publishing Company, 1986), p. 16.

formulations, “All our disorder is due to *the dislocation of our powers*, the mind and the heart each going their own way”. Gabriele Winkler concludes that the situation will never change “until the mind comes to an initial concord with the heart, growing eventually into a union of the mind with the heart”.⁵⁸⁰

As S. S. Horuzhy indicates, the process, when consciousness is unified and is taken to its centre, is called by Hesychasts κατάβασις τοῦ νοῦς εἰς καρδίαν or ‘taking the mind down to the heart’. The process has also been called by ancient Hesychasts ‘the creation of the heart.’⁵⁸¹ Describing the situation of the psycho-physical organism of an ordinary man, S. S. Horuzhy employs the term ‘energies’ like Gabriele Winkler does. He writes that the energies are usually dispersed and should be recollected in the existentially- energetic centre of human being called ‘heart’.⁵⁸²

The classic Hesychast notion of ‘introversion’ is resumed also by other theologians. For instance, Alexandr Heronimus claims that in order to ascend, the mind should recollect the soul from without to within. The scholar proposes two quotations, the first one is from Pseudo-Dionysius, the second one is from *Triads*.⁵⁸³

Pseudo-Dionysius in his *Divine Names* writes, “A sort of fixed revolution causes it [the soul] to return from the multiplicity of externals, to gather in upon itself and then, in this undispersed condition, to join those who are themselves in a powerful union. From there the revolution brings the soul to the Beautiful and the Good, which is beyond all things”.⁵⁸⁴ The idea of introversion discussed by Pseudo-Dionysius, is intrinsic for the research. It is common knowledge that Russian theologians are tended to make difference between the mystics of Dionysius, ascribing his theology to *the abstractly-speculative mysticism*, and that of Gregory Palamas who is attributed to *the ethically practical tradition* of Eastern Christian Mysticism⁵⁸⁵. But, in spite of the fact, that the belonging of Pseudo-Dionysius’ mysticism to Christianity is even contested by

⁵⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 19.

⁵⁸¹ С. С. Хоружий, “Аналитический словарь исихастской антропологии” / С. С. Хоружий (гл. ред.), *Синергия: проблемы аскетике и мистики Православия*, с. 95.

⁵⁸² Ibid.

⁵⁸³ Прот. Александр Геронимус, *Богословие священнобезмолвия* // С. С. Хоружий (гл. ред.), *Синергия: проблемы аскетике и мистики Православия*, с. 162.

⁵⁸⁴ Pseudo-Dionysius, *The Divine Names* (4, 9) in Pseudo-Dionysius, *The Complete Works*, trans. Colm Luibheid (New York: Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1987), p. 78.

⁵⁸⁵ The classification is proposed by P. Minin. See: П. Минин, *Главные направления древне-церковной мистики* // *Мистическое богословие* (Киев: Путь к Истине, 1991).

many Russian theologians because of the author's neoplatonic background⁵⁸⁶, his idea of introversion, expressed in the usual for Hesychasts manner, realizes some mystical link between the theology of Dionysius and Hesychasm.

The second extract is taken by Heronimus from *Triads*. Here the "the entry of the soul within itself" and its somatic consequences are discussed.⁵⁸⁷

The necessity of the onto-psychological technique⁵⁸⁸ of "introversion" is spoken much about by the great master of Jesus prayer Staretz Silouan and is retold by

⁵⁸⁶ The introspective methods of Plotinus and of the future generation of Neo-platonists are observed by Daniel B. Stramara, Jr in his *Introspection in the Ancient Mediterranean World*. Among Christian theologians advocating the Stoic and Neoplatonic introspective method, are also Origen, Gregory Thaumaturgos and the Cappadocians. As to Plotinus himself, "the introversive principle is applied by Plotinus throughout the *Enneads*, "The soul must let go of all outward things and turn altogether to what is within." (Plotinus, *Enneades* 6.9.7, trans. A.H. Armstrong, *Loeb Classical Library: Plotinus* 7 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988), p. 329.) By looking inward, one comes to know the soul's inner beauty (Plotinus, *Enneades* 5.8.2.35-43). Plotinus expounded,

"And what does this inner sight see? ... How can you see the sort of beauty a good soul has? Go back into yourself and look; and if you do not yet see yourself beautiful, then, just as someone making a statue which has to be beautiful cuts away here and polishes there and makes one path smooth and clears another till he has given his statue a beautiful face, so you too must cut away excess and strighten the crooked and clear the dark and make it bright, and never stop "working on your statue" [Plato *Phaedrus* 252d7] till the divine glory of virtue shines out on you, till you see "self-mastery enthroned upon its holy seat" [Plato *Phaedrus* 254b7]. If you have become this, and see it, and are at home with yourself in purity, with nothing hindering you from becoming in this way one, with no inward mixture of anything else, but wholly yourself, nothing but true light, not measured by dimensions, or bounded by shape into littleness, or expanded to size by unboundedness, but everywhere unmeasured, because greater than all measure and superior to all quantity; when you see that you have become this, then you have become sight; you can trust yourself then." (Plotinus, *Enneades* 1.6.9., Loeb 1:258-60; Armstrong 259-61.)" (Daniel B. Stramara, Jr, "Introspection in the Ancient Mediterranean World: Taking a Closer Look", p. 42.)

It is curious that the explanation of the introversion performed by Plotinus, is rather similar to that proposed by Nicholas of Cusa (1401-1464) in his *De quaerendo deum* 5:94. Nicholas characterises the introversion as *ablationis terminatorum* or the way of removal of qualities, which is compared with the working on a statue. The searcher of God removes body, senses, conceptions, imagination and intellect in order to see God who is above all qualities. (Николай Кузанский, "Об искании Бога" / Николай Кузанский, *Сочинения в двух томах*, т. 1 (Москва: Мысль, 1979), с. 302-303.)

⁵⁸⁷ Gregory Palamas, *The Triads* (1, 2, 8), trans. Nicholas Gendle, ed. John Meyendorff (New Jersey: Paulist Press, 1983), p. 46.

⁵⁸⁸ The term of S. S. Horuzhy in С. С. Хоружий, "Аналитический словарь исихастской антропологии" // С. С. Хоружий (гл. ред.), *Синергия: проблемы аскетики и мистики Православия*, с. 99.

Archimandrite Sophrony as follows, “The usual way to acquire knowledge, the one we all know, consists in the directing of the intellectual faculty outwards where it meets with phenomena, sights, forms, in innumerable variety – a differentiation *ad infinitum* of all that happens. This means that the knowledge thus acquired is never complete and has no real unity. Insistently seeking unity, the mind is forced to take refuge in synthesis, which cannot help being artificial. The unity arrived at in this way does not really and objectively exist. It is merely a form of abstract thinking *natural* to the mind. The other way to acquire knowledge of being is to turn the spirit in and towards itself and then to God. Here the process is the exact reverse. The mind *turns away* from the endless plurality and fragmentariness of the world’s phenomena, and with all its strength addresses itself to God in prayer, and through prayer is directly incorporated in the very act of Divine Life, and begins to see both itself and the whole world.”⁵⁸⁹

In the extract we recognize the contemplative scheme of St. Augustine consisting of two contemplative stages. The first one is the turning of the mind from without to within, while the second one is going out of the self. The scheme can be classified as belonging to the agapeic type of thinking because its necessary feature is the notion of the beloved Divine Other. One more characteristics of the agapeic type of thinking is the already mentioned idea of the “natural” and of the ‘supernatural’, clearly represented in the quotation.

As is in the case of the Buddhist “introspection” (*smṛti*) and ‘introversion’ (*samādhi*), the Hesychast “introspection” is completed by effort whilst the “introversion” is deprived of any feat. Palamas asserts that “in the case of those who have made progress in Hesychasm, all this comes to pass without painful effort and without their worrying about it, for the perfect entry of the soul within itself spontaneously produces such inner detachment. But with beginners none of these things comes about without toil; for patience is a fruit of love, “for love bears all” (1 Cor. 13, 7), and teaches us to practice patience with all our strength in order to attain love; and this is a case in point.”⁵⁹⁰

According to S. S. Horuzhy in Hesychast prayer introversion starts when consciousness “turns from without to within” and results in the union of the mind and

⁵⁸⁹ Archimandrite Sophrony, *The Monk of Mount Athos Staretz Silouan 1866-1938*, trans. Rosemary Edmonds (New York: St Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1973), p. 60.

⁵⁹⁰ Gregory Palamas, *The Triads* (1, 2, 8), trans. Nicholas Gendle, ed. John Meyendorff (New Jersey: Paulist Press, 1983), p. 46.

the heart called the ‘keeping’ or ‘preservation’ of the heart (Gr. ἡ φυλακὴ καρδίας; Rus. блюение, хранение сердца).⁵⁹¹ The *introspection* and the *introversion* of Hesychasts may be characterized as the “natural” and “supernatural” stages of prayer denoted as ἡ πράξις and ἡ θεωρία. The former means “activity”, “feat” whereas the latter means “contemplation”, literally “vision”, the “seeing”. S. S. Horuzhy asserts that ἡ θεωρία should be rendered as “knowledge” (ἡ γνῶσις) of the transcendent, or supernatural knowledge⁵⁹².⁵⁹³ The literal meaning of the term, i.e. “vision”, is the best one for those who try to realize difference between the *introspection* and the *introversion*. During ἡ θεωρία the contemplator sees the Divine Other by his inner sight. For Buddhists it might sound like this: to see the reality as it is or to see the true nature of things. An excellent description of ἡ θεωρία is found in the book of Archimandrite Sophrony in which he writes about Starecz Silouan, “What he taught was that pure prayer draws the mind into the innermost depths of the heart and there gathers the whole man, even his body, into one. With the mind thus submerged in the heart all earthly images are set aside and the soul, straining towards God in inner prayer, in the light proceeding from God sees herself after a quite particular fashion. She sees, not external phenomena or circumstances, but herself stripped bare, her profundities unveiled.”⁵⁹⁴ The extract is a perfect summary of the discussed topic. Besides, it mentions the vision of the Divine Light which is basic for the Hesychast experience of God.

The two mentioned stages of Hesychast prayer correspond to the three stages of Dionysius. Those are: κάταρσις or purification (corresponding to πράξις of Hesychasm); ὁ φωτισμός or illumination; and ἡ τελείωσις or the mystical knowledge of God out of the natural cognitive capacities of the mind; (ὁ φωτισμός together with ἡ τελείωσις corresponds to the Hesychast ἡ θεωρία).⁵⁹⁵

⁵⁹¹ The term of S. S. Horuzhy in С. С. Хоружий, “Аналитический словарь исихастской антропологии” // С. С. Хоружий (гл. ред.), *Синергия: проблемы аскетики и мистики Православия*, с. 96-97.

⁵⁹² The synonym of the term *gnosis* is *mystical theology* widely employed by Eastern and Western Christian theologians such as Pseudo-Dionysius and Juan de la Cruz.

⁵⁹³ “Аналитический словарь исихастской антропологии” // С. С. Хоружий (гл. ред.), *Синергия: проблемы аскетики и мистики Православия*, с. 83, 120.

⁵⁹⁴ Archimandrite Sophrony, *The Monk of Mount Athos Staretz Silouan 1866-1938*, p. 59.

⁵⁹⁵ П. Минин, Главные направления древне-церковной мистики // *Мистическое богословие* (Киев: Путь к Истине, 1991), с. 353-362.

Finally, it is important to indicate that the Buddhist ideas of *smṛti* and *samādhi* and the Hesychast notions of *praxis* and *theoria* have their equivalents in Western Christian Mysticism. Evelyn Underhill notes in this respect that “the act of perfect concentration, the passionate focussing of the self upon one point, when it is applied “with a naked intent” to real and transcendental things, constitutes in the technical language of mysticism the state of *recollection*: a condition which is peculiarly characteristic of the mystical consciousness, and is the necessary prelude of *pure contemplation*, that state in which the mystic enters into communion with Reality.”⁵⁹⁶

In another place of her book Evelyn Underhill specifies the usual for Eastern Christians term of *recollection* (its Greek equivalent is *praxis*) as *meditation*. The threefold classification of the mystical path is observed by her as follows, “Recollection, Quiet, and Contemplation, then, answer to the order in which the mystic’s power unfold. Roughly speaking, we shall find that the form of spiritual attention which is called “Meditative” or “Recollective” goes side by side with the Purification of the Self; that “Quiet tends to be characteristic of Illumination; that Contemplation proper – at any rate in its highest forms – is most fully experienced by those who have attained, or nearly attained the Unitive Way. [...] In the preparative process of Recollection, the unruly mind is brought into subjection. In “Quiet” the eager will is silenced, the “wheel of imagination” is stilled. In Contemplation, the heart at last comes to its own – *Cor ad cor loquitur*. In their simplest forms, these three states involve the deliberate concentration upon, the meek resting in, the joyous communing with, the ineffable Object of man’s quest. They require a progressive concentration of the mystic’s powers, a gradual handing over of the reins from the surface intelligence to the deeper mind; that essential self which alone is capable of God. In Recollection the surface-mind still holds, so to speak, the leading strings: but in “Quiet” it surrenders them wholly, allowing consciousness to sink into that “blissful silence in which God works and speaks.” This act of surrender, this deliberate negation of thought, is an essential preliminary of the contemplative state.”⁵⁹⁷

The threefold classification of the Western scholar does not contradict the twofold schemes of Theravāda, of Vajrayāna and of Hesychasm. On the one hand the proposed scheme by Underhill is very similar to the threefold classification of Dionysius. On the other hand, what is called by her “Quiet” is just some kind of border between the two

⁵⁹⁶ Evelyn Underhill, *Mysticism: A Study in the Nature and Development of Man’s Spiritual Consciousness*, p. 49-50.

⁵⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 310-311.

basic stages of prayer, i.e., between the natural stage called *meditation*, and the supernatural one, designated as *contemplation*.

The twofold classification of prayer also is employed by Western mystics and scholars as, for instance, Harvey D. Egan, writing about the Western mystical classic of the fourteenth century *The Cloud of Unknowing*, admits that “in line with many in the Christian mystical tradition, the author of the *Cloud* makes a sharp distinction between premystical “meditation” and strictly mystical “contemplation”. [...] One must pass through the “door” of meditation, therefore, to ascend in the mystical life. Although the author of the *Cloud* had no intention of giving detailed instructions about meditation, he strongly insisted that “it is the safest entry to contemplation in this life.”⁵⁹⁸

The next question, which will be dealt with, is of the means of *introversion*. It has been already mentioned that in Theravāda Buddhism these are the static meditation and the dynamic one. 1) The former includes three stages or three variants because often it is enough to practice just one of them in order to achieve the goal of onepointedness; those are the control of or attention (Skt. *smṛti*) turned to the body (*kāya*), to senses (*vedana*) and to thoughts (*citta*). These three, united under the title *samatha* (Pāli; Skt. *śamatha*) and rendered as “tranquil abiding” help to collect the mind from diversity to oneness. The Tibetan equivalent of *samatha* is *zhi gnas*.

2) The dynamic meditation or the control of *dharmas* is the meditation helping to achieve the inner sight, or insight (the term usually employed by the English speaking Theravāda Buddhists), or superior seeing (the term of Geshe Kelsang Gyatso) by which the true nature of things (i.e., their transitoriness (Skt. *anitya*), the absence of the self (Skt. *anātman*) and sufferings (Skt. *duhkha*)), is discovered. The dynamic meditation is the basic one and is called *vipassanā* (Pāli; Skt. *vipaśyana*).⁵⁹⁹

The sense of the two parts of Buddhist meditation is explained by the famous Tibetan scholar of the 14th- 15th centuries Rje Tsong kha pa in his *Lam rim chen mo*. He writes that tranquil abiding is the condition when the mind is not disturbed by the winds of discursive thoughts, like the flame of a butter lamp is tranquil when the wind doesn't blow. The insight is compared by the scholar with the eye of wisdom which perceives the reality as it is. They both need each other: *samatha* needs *vipassanā* because trained only in *samatha* but not in *vipassanā*, one is not able to see the truth;

⁵⁹⁸ William Johnston, S.J., *The Book of Privy Counselling* (chap. 15) in William Johnston, S.J., ed., *The Cloud of Unknowing and the Book of Privy Counselling* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1973), p. 176. (In Harvey D. Egan, S.J., *Christian Mysticism: the Future of Tradition*, p. 82.)

⁵⁹⁹ В. Г. Лысенко, Ранняя буддийская философия, сс. 183-193.

vipassanā needs *samatha* because without the one-pointed concentration man is deprived of the clear vision of the truth due to the disturbing wind of the discursive thoughts.⁶⁰⁰

Samatha and *Vipassanā* have their analogies in Hesychasm. In the same manner as *samatha* is meaningless without *vipassanā* in Buddhism, ‘attention’ (ἡ προσοχή) can do nothing without ‘prayer’ (ἡ προσευχή) in Hesychasm. The meaning of attention in Hesychasm is intrinsic. According to the introversive scheme, described by S. S. Horuzhy, the mind descends the heart together with attention. Only being together, the mind and attention are able to perform the turning-about, to get over the obstacles of images and thoughts and, finely, to enter the heart. The word *prayer* (ἡ προσευχή) in the above formulation is employed in its narrow meaning. Prayer, in order to be permanent, should have the form of a short text, but at the same time it should express the main points of Christian doctrine. S. S. Horuzhy observes that the history of Hesychast prayer (of the so called Jesus Prayer⁶⁰¹) is very old. In the 4th century the hermits of Egypt used to recite by lips or in the mind the verses of psalms or their own formulas expressing the contrition of heart (τὸ πένθος) and petition to God to have mercy upon them. John Climacus and the fathers after him began to call this kind of prayer monosyllabic, i.e. consisting of one syllable or of one phrase (ἡ μονολόγιστος προσευχή). Nevertheless, these prayer texts were often deprived of their Christological context and, hence, couldn’t be complete. Jesus Prayer, mentioned for the first time in the writings of John Climacus, was finely accepted by the masters of contemplation of Christian East as the best one for it unifies the main points of Christian doctrine and ortho-praxis. Jesus prayer ensures the intimate relationship between God and the contemplator. As S. S. Horuzhy indicates, the content of Jesus prayer and its fruit are unique being absent in other religions of the impersonal Absolute.⁶⁰²

The consideration of the scholar, however, should be considered with precision. Of course, due to its Christocentricity Christian prayer and

⁶⁰⁰ Чже Цонкапа, *Большое руководство к этапам Пути Пробуждения* (309а; 309б), т. 4., пер. А. Кугявичус, гл. ред. А. Терентьев (Санкт-Петербург: Нартанг, 1998), сс. 14-15.

⁶⁰¹ Its text is, “Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy upon me, a sinner”.

⁶⁰² ”Аналитический словарь исихастской антропологии” // С. С. Хоружий (гл. ред.), *Синергия: проблемы аскетике и мистики Православия.*, сс. 99-101.

Jesus Prayer in particular, is unique, as is unique any other religion with its specific gods. The intimate relationship established between God and the one, who prays, in its turn, can't be any longer called "unique" for the intimacy is a characteristic of any agapeic religious system. Even more than that, due to fact that the elements of agape are also present in gnostic religions and vice versa, a lot of devotional practices are found, for instance, in Mahāyāna Buddhism (see Amidaism etc.). As for the twofold trend to combine the static and the analytical aspects of psycho-technique, it is common not only for Hesychasm and Tantric Buddhism, but for the gnostic and the agapeic religious models on the whole.⁶⁰³

Dissolution of Gross Winds and Its Hesychast Parallels

A necessary condition of the true introversion of consciousness is a simplification of the mind and its return to the oneness. According to the Bonpo rDzogs chen tradition the primal state of mind called *kun gzhi* is endowed with the luminous and undivided nature. It is completely united and undifferentiated. Only thanks to the process of emanation different phenomena originate. The already mentioned collection of texts called *Zhang zhung snyan brgyud kyi bla ma brgyud pa'i rnam thar* presents how the complicated psycho-physical organism of living being constructed of a great variety of consciousnesses, winds and other constituents, comes into being from the ultimate oneness of *kun gzhi*. The evolutionary scheme, however, completes with the return of the living being to the nirvanic state of undifferentiation through the

⁶⁰³ The introversive techniques are common to many religious and philosophical systems. An interesting conclusion has been made by Daniel. B. Stramara about the presence of introspective techniques in the Ancient Mediterranean area, "The brief survey of classical literature demonstrably proves that Pre-Socratics, Platonists, Aristotelians, Pythagoreans, Stoics, Epicureans, Neoplatonics, Jews, Christians, and other Mediterraneans all used introspective means by which to analyse psychological make-up, to assess oneself and others, as well as to reform one's habits and personality. Such a subjective introspection was common among classical Greeks, Latin and Semitic societies. Philosophers, religious devotees, social leaders, playwrights, ascetics and common folk all employed introspection in various ways to attain divers ends." (Daniel B. Stramara, Jr, "Introspection in the Ancient Mediterranean World: Taking a Closer Look", p. 59.)

recognition of the sound, light and rays, manifesting during death, as being of his own.⁶⁰⁴

In Bonpo rDzogs chen the primal state of the mind is personified with the name of *Rang Shes-rig-gi rgyal-po*. In Vajrayāna Buddhism it is associated with the *Ādibuddha* or the primordial Buddha. He is a transcendent symbol of the Dharma as primordial principle of oneness under the image of a hypothetical Buddha. From this single, all-embracing and universal Buddha the whole schema of deities unfolds.⁶⁰⁵

The concept of the division or dispersal of the innate to the mind oneness, innate to the mind, elaborated by the Bonpo rDzogs chen and the Vajrayāna tradition, is in quite conformity with the idea of the division or differentiation of the mind in the philosophical system of Vijnānavāda of Mahāyāna Buddhism. According to that the original or primal state of the mind is undivided and pure, representing the non-dual reality. A defiled mind suffers from the fissures of division, yielding the so-called empirical structures of differentiation. But once the enlightenment is gained, there arises the realization that the multitude of phenomena is just the projections of mind.⁶⁰⁶

The idea of the dispersal of the ultimate oneness, being a natural derivative of the monistic world view, is also elucidated within the Hesychast tradition. Although the latter tradition, being theistic, makes use of the relative dualism, the concept of the division of the undifferentiated ultimate reality is expressed both by the ancient and contemporary scholars of Eastern Christian Mysticism. The Russian theologian S. S. Horuzhy has summarized the Hesychast ideas about the matter like this. The ultimate reality is infinite, undivided and without any constituents or features. The existential situation of man, on the contrary, is finite and dispersed. The multitude of details, features, entire limits etc. gives origin to the imperfect structure called man. Human being is not only differentiated in his constitution but also in his actions. The task of man is to unify all the energies, transforming them into the undivided transcendent and infinite mode of being.⁶⁰⁷

⁶⁰⁴ sPa bsTan-rgyal bzang-po, *Zhang zhung snyan brgyud kyi bla ma brgyud pa'i rnam thar* (comp. in 1419). (from Samten Gyaltsen Karmay, *The Great Perfection (rDzogs chen)*, pp. 203-204.

⁶⁰⁵ Detlef Ingo Lauf, *Secret Doctrines of the Tibetan Books of the Dead*, tr. Graham Parkes (Boulder & London: Shambala, 1977), p. 50.

⁶⁰⁶ Moti Lal Pandit, *Śūnyatā: The Essence of Mahāyāna Spirituality* (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers, 1998), pp. 33,129.

⁶⁰⁷ С. С. Хоружий, *Диптих безмолвия: Аскетическое учение о человеке в богословском и философском освещении* (Москва: Центр психологии и психотерапии, 1991), сс. 68-70.

In this context the logical disparity of the idea of the maximal simplicity of God and of the idea of the manifold Divine energies and their difference from God's substance in Hesychasm endures. The solution of the problem is proposed by Gregory Palamas and concerns the traditional notion of difference between God and His relation to creatures. The multiplication can be only the feature of God in the others, but not in Himself. The Divine energies are manifold and varied only when perceived by creatures. In themselves the Divine energies are unitary and are identical to the Divine substance, "Essence is one, even though the rays are many, and are sent out in a manner appropriate to those participating in them, being multiplied according to the varying capacity of those receiving them".⁶⁰⁸

The idea of the division of ultimate reality and of the return to oneness, however, is not so young. The same notion is expressed also by Pseudo-Dionysius in his *Divine Names*. Designating God as *the Good*, the master of contemplation writes, "The Good returns all things to itself and gathers together whatever may be scattered, for it is the divine Source and unifier of the sum total of things."⁶⁰⁹ Each being looks to it as a source, as the agent of cohesion, and as an objective. The Good, as scripture testifies, produced everything and it is the ultimately perfect Cause."⁶¹⁰ Pseudo-Dionysius employs the image of sun in order to explain the idea of the all embracing Good, "So it is with light, with this visible image of the Good. It draws and returns all things to itself, all the things that see, that have motion, that are receptive of illumination and warmth, that are held together by the spreading rays. Thus it is the "sun" for it makes all things a "sum" and gathers together the scattered."⁶¹¹

In the other place of *The Divine Names* Pseudo-Dionysius discusses the matter in the context of the notions of *ignorance* and *true knowledge*, "[the Good] assembles into a union everything possessed of reason and of mind. For just as it is ignorance which scatters those in errors"⁶¹², so it is the presence of the light of the mind which gathers

⁶⁰⁸ Gregory Palamas, *The Triads* (III, 2, 13), p. 99.

⁶⁰⁹ Cf. "The one God and his one activity are not divided into many different things, but they unite many things and gather together what has been divided. Thus, the One or Unity is not divided into numbers, but unites numbers in itself." (Meister Eckhart, *Selections from the Commentaries on Genesis* (C: 15) in Meister Eckhart, *The Essential Sermons, Commentaries, Treatises, and Defence*, trans. Edmund Colledge, O.S.A. and Bernard McGinn (New York: Ramsey: Toronto: Paulist Press, 1981), p. 98.

⁶¹⁰ Pseudo-Dionysius, *The Divine Names* (4, 4), p. 75.

⁶¹¹ *Ibid.*

⁶¹² Cf. "What falls from the One and proceeds outside it, since it is divided and distinct from the One, is no longer one." (Meister Eckhart, *Selections from the Commentaries on Genesis* (C: 11), p. 97.)

and unites together those receiving illumination. It perfects them. It returns them toward the truly real. It returns them from their numerous false notions and, filling them with the one unifying light, it gathers their clashing fancies into a single, pure, coherent, and true knowledge.”⁶¹³

The Dionysian notions of *ignorance* and *true knowledge*, being sources of the dispersal and of the return to oneness, are rather close to the Buddhist idea of *ignorance* and *wisdom*. *Ignorance* or *avidyā* (Skt.), being the first member of the twelve-link chain of *pratītya-samutpāda* (or the causal nexus of interconnected appearance) can be treated as the root source of all sorrow and suffering. According to Advaita Vedānta ignorance is the perception of plurality where there is unity, keeping in this way a person bound.⁶¹⁴ Wisdom (Skt. *prajna*), in its turn, is the direct awareness of *śūnyatā* beyond propositions, arguments, or concepts. In Hinduism wisdom is the competence of *ātman* to realize itself for what it is.⁶¹⁵

Finally, in his *Mystical Theology* Pseudo-Dionysius shows how the going away from the Divine causes the emergence of manifold conceptions, “The fact is that the more we take flight upward, the more our words are confined to the ideas we are capable of forming; so that now as we plunge into that darkness which is beyond intellect, we shall find ourselves not simply running short of words but actually speechless and unknowing. In the earlier books my argument traveled downward from the most exalted to the humblest categories, taking in on this downward path an ever-increasing number of ideas which multiplied with every stage of the descent. But my argument now rises from what is below up to the transcendent and the more it climbs, the more language falters, and when it has passed up and beyond the ascent, it will turn silent completely, since it will finely be at one with him who is indescribable.”⁶¹⁶

The idea of Pseudo-Dionysius resembles the philosophical position of Mādhyamaka about the two-level truth. The absolute truth, in contrast to the relative truth, is said to be beyond the reach of words, whereas the relative truth is usually expressed in concepts, which, in their turn, are treated by *mādhayamika* as being conventional and, thus, lacking ontological own-being. We thereby experience the world within the frame of language covering the absolute truth. The aim of *mādhyamika*

⁶¹³ Ibid (4, 6), p. 76.

⁶¹⁴ *The Oxford Dictionary of World Religions*, ed. John Bowker (Oxford: New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 115.

⁶¹⁵ Ibid., p. 759.

⁶¹⁶ Pseudo-Dionysius, *The Mystical Theology* (3) in Pseudo-Dionysius, *The Complete Works*, trans. Colm Luibheid (New York: Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1987), p. 139.

is to deconstruct or to remove the coverings and to let reality appear as Suchness (*tathatā*).⁶¹⁷

As the Orthodox theologian P. Minin notes, for Pseudo-Dionysius the ultimate reality is identified with the neoplatonic idea of the Good, whereas evil is considered by him to be the divided or the scattered Good. It means that the return to the Good is the unification (ἡ βνωσις) of the mind through the abolition of concepts and images. At the same time for Pseudo-Dionysius, as well as for Gregory of Nyssa (the both belong to the neoplatonic school), God is the supernatural Simplicity and nonqualified Purity. The human soul in its essence, being the image of God, reflects these metaphysical features of God and, hence, also can be defined as nonqualified simplicity. It means that during prayer man should cultivate simplification (ἡ ἀπλωσις), i.e., he should become completely pure of any qualities.⁶¹⁸ As to the idea of Dionysius about the neglecting of words (the so called *silence of mind*), it has been completely elaborated by Hesychasts in the idea of *hesychia* (ἡ ἡσυχία).⁶¹⁹

The simplification and the unification of the mind, when all its manifestations are brought from dispersal into oneness, is represented in the mystical physiology of tantric Buddhism by the process of unification of the winds (Tib. *rlung*) in the heart channel-wheel of the diamond body, better known as the entering, the abiding, and the dissolution of the winds in the mentioned area. It is important to remember that the process usually takes place during the completion phase of meditation. The latter one is supposed to imitate the process of dissolution of the winds occurring during death. (The imitation of death during meditation is termed by Jung Young Lee as *thanatomimesis*.⁶²⁰)

The process of the unification and simplification of the mind⁶²¹ starts with the entering and the dissolution of gross winds in the heart channel-wheel. Here the four

⁶¹⁷ Moti Lal Pandit, *Śūnyatā: The Essence of Mahāyāna Spirituality*, p. 252-255.

⁶¹⁸ П. Минин, *Главные направления древне-церковной мистики // Мистическое богословие*, сс. 352, 358.

⁶¹⁹ *Ibid.*, с. 356.

⁶²⁰ Jung Young Lee, *Death and Beyond in Eastern Perspective: A Study based on the Bardo Thodol and the I Ching* (New York: An Interface Book, 1974), p. 56.

⁶²¹ The process will be described according to Geshe Kelsang Gyatso, *Clear Light of Bliss: Mahamudra in Vajrayana Buddhism*, trans. Tenzin Norbu, ed. Jonathan Landaw and Chris Kolb (London: Wisdom Publication, 1982), p. 68-90; Lati Rinbochay and Jeffrey Hopkins, *Death, Intermediate State and Rebirth in Tibetan Buddhism* (London: Rider and Company, 1979), p. 15-18.

basic (or root) winds (Tib. *rtsa ba' i rlung lnga*) are implied, namely, the earth element wind, the water element wind, the fire element wind, the wind element wind.

The first gross wind which is supposed to enter the central channel is the earth element wind. As is mentioned above, the wind is associated with the earth element in the body, e.g. bones, cartilage, fingernails and so forth. Because of that along with the dissolution of the earth element wind the limbs of the body become thinner and the body becomes weak and loses its power. One has the feeling of sinking underground.

The second gross wind, which is subject to the process of dissolution, is the water element wind. In the body the wind increases and supports the liquid elements of the body. During the dissolution of the water element wind the saliva, sweat, urine, blood and regenerative fluid of the body begin to dry up.

The fire element wind is the next one dissolving in the central channel. Usually it increases and supports fire element in the body and is responsible for bodily heat. After its dissolution the heat leaves the body and the digestion stops.

Finally the wind element wind responsible for the flow of the wind element through the channels enters and dissolves in the central channel. Inhalation and exhalation from the nostrils ceases.

When the earth element wind has dissolved within the central channel and the power of the earth element is diminished, it seems as though the water element has increased. As the power of the former diminishes, the latter is perceived more clearly. For this reason the dissolution of the earth element wind is often described as the earth element dissolving into the water element. For similar reasons the subsequent dissolutions are referred to as the water element dissolving into the fire element, the fire element dissolving into the wind element and the wind element dissolving into consciousness. Due to the fact that the objects of dissolution are the winds and not the elements, the process of “dissolution of elements” into each other does not take place in the proper sense of the word.

It is curious that the aggregates (*skandhas*) are not forgotten in the Tantric scheme of dissolution of the winds. The Tantric scheme has been elaborated skilfully enough to include not only the *skandhas* of Abhidharmic tradition, but also *indriyas* and *viśayas*. Each mentioned wind is related to one of the aggregates or *skandhas*, to one of *indriyas* or sense faculties and to one of *viśayas* or objects perceived by the sense faculties. The earth element wind is associated with the aggregate of form (or *rūpa skandha*), with the sense faculty of the eye and with the forms included within one's own continuum. For this reason during the dissolution of the earth element wind, *rūpa skandha*, the sense faculty of eye and the forms, perceived by eye, dissolve together with the wind. The

external sign of the abolishing of *rūpa skandha* is the weakness of the body, whereas the dissolution of the eye sense is the reason why one cannot open and close eyes. At the same time the dissolution of the *viśaya*, i.e. of colours and shapes makes lustre of body to diminish.

The water element wind dissolves together with the aggregate of feelings, with the hearing sense and sounds. Body consciousness can no longer experience the three types of feelings, i.e., pleasure, pain and neutrality. Besides, one no longer hears external and internal sounds and *ur* sound in ears no longer arises.

The fire element wind diminishes together with the aggregate of discriminations, with smelling sense and odours. One is no longer mindful of the affairs of close persons, his inhalation is weak, exhalation is strong and lengthy, and he cannot smell.

Finally, the wind element wind is associated with the aggregate of compositional factors, with tastes, body sense and tangible objects. When they go through the process of dissolution, one cannot any longer perform physical actions, cannot experience tastes, smoothness or roughness.

One more aspect, except elements, associated with the winds, are wisdoms. Together with the earth element wind the basic mirror-like wisdom (our ordinary consciousness that clearly perceives many objects simultaneously) dissolves, and sight becomes unclear and dark. When the water element wind enters the central channel, it is accompanied by the basic wisdom of equality (our ordinary consciousness mindful of pleasure, pain and neutral feelings). During death and the completion stage of meditation one is no longer mindful of the feelings of the mental consciousness. The companion of the fire element wind is the basic wisdom of analysis (our ordinary consciousness mindful of the individual names, purposes and so forth of close persons) which, entering the central channel, deprives the deceased person of the ability to remember the names of close persons. Basic wisdom of achieving activities (our ordinary consciousness mindful of external activities, purposes and so forth) dissolves together with the wind element wind and cases the state, when one is no longer mindful of external worldly activities and purposes.

It is important to grasp the role of the wisdoms in the scheme of dissolution of the winds in order to perform the complete comparative analysis of Buddhist meditation and of Christian prayer. The idea of five types of wisdom (only four of them have been mentioned above), being a natural derivative of the idea of Wisdom as such, belongs to the gnostic religious system. The decisive role of *gnosis* or Wisdom in Buddhism can't be contested. This standpoint is once more confirmed by the fact that the idea of

Compassion is incorporated in the Buddhist concept of five Wisdoms⁶²² as its part, and not vice versa. On the other hand the concept of five Wisdoms is explicitly Buddhist because all together they represent the main points of Buddhist doctrine which can be only partially compared with Christian teaching.

The search for Christian analogues of five wisdoms is not so necessary due to the fact that the mentioned wisdoms and five skandhas are interrelated. They are mutually complementary. In other words, if separated, they can't function. Hence, the realising of Christian equivalents of the Buddhist five *skandhas* will be enough in order to realise the common features of Buddhist and Christian introversion.

Now the statement will be discussed in detail. The described five types of wisdom subject to the process of dissolution are the samsāric equivalents of the five Wisdoms of Dhyāni Buddhas. In other words the ordinary or *samsāric* wisdoms are transformed by the enlightened *yogīn* into five Wisdoms, which, in their turn, allow the *yogīn* to perceive the true vision of reality. The five samsāric *wisdoms* cooperate with five *skandhas*. Hence, *skandhas* are also involved in the process of transformation together with the five wisdoms. In the process of enlightenment the five aggregates and five wisdoms are completely united in their purposes.

The samsāric “basic mirror-like wisdom” transforms into the “Mirror-Like Wisdom” of the enlightened being. Thanks to it he or she reflects the forms of all things without clinging to them, without being touched or moved by them. The forms of all things are recognised as exponents of the Great Void (*śūnyatā*). Together with the wisdom *rūpa skandha* or the individual corporeality is converted into the universal body. Exactly in this body the true nature of things, i.e., their voidness is realised.⁶²³ The knowledge of insubstantiality of phenomena is a typical illustration of how the Wisdoms represent the specific standpoints of Buddhist doctrine. The acquiring of the universal body is a product of the monistic (here Buddhist), and not of the theistic (Christian) world view.

The ordinary “basic wisdom of equality” is transformed by the enlightened being into the “Wisdom of Equility”. The *samsāric* form of the mentioned wisdom and *vedanā skandha* together are responsible for the feelings of pleasure, pain and neutrality. The *skandha* represents the feelings as such, whereas the wisdom makes one become mindful of the feelings. During the process of enlightenment the self-centred feeling of

⁶²² Under the title *five Wisdoms* the enlightened equivalents of the mentioned *five samsāric wisdoms* are implied.

⁶²³ Lama Anagarika Govinda, *Foundations of Tibetan Mysticism According to the Esoteric Teachings of the Great Mantra OM MANI PADME HŪM*, p. 108.

pleasure, pain and neutrality is converted into the feeling for others. In order to realise this compassion for all that lives, the Wisdom of Equality is necessary. Its task is to make man to grasp that all beings are essentially identical with him and with each other. Without this sort of knowledge the equal compassion to all sentient beings is not possible.⁶²⁴ An equivalent of compassion in Christianity is love. The completely new perception of reality makes Christian mystic pray for the whole world.

The *samsāric wisdom of analysis* which is supposed to make man mindful of the individual names, purposes and so forth of close people, transforms by the enlightened being into the *Wisdom of Discriminating Clear Vision* which, being intuitive, is not influenced by logical or conceptual discriminations. This kind of Wisdom depends upon the conversion of *samjñā skandha*, or intellectual discrimination, into the transcendental faculties of inner vision and spiritual discernment in the practice of meditation.⁶²⁵ The mentioned level of transformation can be, obviously, compared to the results of Christian prayer.

Finally, *the basic wisdom of achieving activities*, being mindful of external activities, purposes and so forth performed by the aggregate of the karmically decisive mental formations or of volitional tendencies (*samskāra skandha*), transforms into All-accomplishing Wisdom which together with the transformed *skandha* is responsible for the karma-free activity of the saint, like that of Buddha or Bodhisattva. Their activity is determined by the universal compassion.⁶²⁶ This sort of transformation can be compared with the Christian one with the only reserve. Compassion, being the analogue of Christian love, is supposed to function only in the relation to sentient beings. The main object of Christian love is God.

After the process of dissolution of the four gross winds and of the corresponding four *skandhas*, four wisdoms, five *viśayas* and five *indriyas*, the only *skandha* which remains, is *vijnāna-skandha* or the aggregate of consciousness. The *Wisdom of the universal law* (the Wisdom of *dharmā-dhātu*), being the companion of *vijnāna-skandha*, is also supposed to dissolve, discovering the indestructible very subtle level of consciousness.

It is interesting that the fifth Wisdom, the pure transcendental Buddha-knowledge, the realisation of the universal law, is the sum total as well as the origin of the four Wisdoms, in the same way as the four *skandhas*, namely, *rūpa*, *vedanā*, *samjñā*, and *samskāra*, are the modifications of *vijnāna-skandha*. The fifth Wisdom can be placed at

⁶²⁴ Ibid., p. 109.

⁶²⁵ Ibid.

⁶²⁶ Ibid., p. 110.

the beginning as well as at the end of sequence, according to whether we regard the four Wisdoms as an unfoldment of the Buddha-knowledge from the centre of undifferentiated Suchness towards an active, differentiated existence — or as a progressive approach from the active aspects of knowledge towards the ultimate realisation of perfect Buddhahood.⁶²⁷ The proposed idea again reminds us of the scheme of introversion of consciousness which can be depicted as mandala.

Up until now most of the gross consciousnesses and their winds have dissolved. What remains is the experience of the dissolutions of the aggregate of consciousness. *Vijnāna skandha* has gross and subtle levels. The last gross mind to dissolve is one called *the eighty indicative conceptions*. The abolition of the eighty conceptions is the fifth cycle of dissolution. The eighty gross conceptions are divided into three groups: thirty-three indicative of the mind of white appearance, forty indicative of the mind of red increase and seven indicative of the mind of black near-attainment. The conceptions are so divided because, for instance, the first group of conceptions is an imprint or effect of the mind of white appearance when proceeding in reverse order from the subtler to the grosser state. In a similar fashion, the second and the third groups of conceptions are imprints of the mind of red increase and of the mind of black near-attainment.⁶²⁸

The thirty three conceptions indicative of the mind of white appearance are following⁶²⁹: 1) great separation from attachment: a mind not desiring an object; 2) middling separation from attachment; 3) small separation from attachment; 4) mental going and coming: a mind going to external objects and coming to internal ones; 5) great sorrow: the mental anxiety experienced upon separation from an attractive object; 6) middling sorrow; 7) small sorrow; 8) peace: a mind remaining peacefully; 9) conceptuality: a mind distracted towards an external object; 10) great fear: the mind of fright generated upon meeting an unpleasant object; 11) middling fear; 12) small fear; 13) great craving: a mind attached to a pleasant object; 14) middling craving; 15) small craving; 16) grasping: a mind thoroughly holding to objects of desired enjoyment; 17) non-virtue: doubt with respect to virtuous actions; 18) hunger: a mind desiring food; 19) thirst: a mind desiring drink; 20) great feeling: feelings of pleasure, pain and neutrality; 21) middling feeling; 22) small feeling; 23) conception of cognizer; 24) conception of cognising; 25) conception of an object cognised; 26) individual investigation: a mind

⁶²⁷ Ibid., p. 113.

⁶²⁸ Geshe Kelsang Gyatso, *Clear Light of Bliss: Mahamudra in Vajrayana Buddhism*, pp. 81-82.

⁶²⁹ The list of eighty conceptions is taken from Geshe Kelsang Gyatso, *Clear Light of Bliss: Mahamudra in Vajrayana Buddhism*, p. 82-85.

investigating what is suitable and unsuitable; 27) shame: abandoning misconduct because of one's own disapproval or religious convictions; 28) compassion: a mind wishing for separation from suffering; 29) mercy: a mind thoroughly protecting an object of observation; 30) desire to meet the beautiful; 31) qualm: a captivated mind, one not abiding in certainty; 32) collection: a mind of gathering possessions; 33) jealousy: a mind disturbed by others' good fortune and excellent qualities.

The forty conceptions indicative of the mind of red increase are: 1) attachment; a mind attached to an object not yet attained; 2) adherence: a mind attached to an object already attained; 3) great joy; a joyous mind upon seeing what is attractive; 4) middling joy; 5) small joy; 6) rejoicing: a happy mind from having achieved a desired object; 7) rapture: a mind repeatedly experiencing a desired object; 8) amazement: contemplating an object that did not arise before; 9) excitement: a mind distracted through perceiving an attractive object; 10) contentment: a mind satisfied with a pleasant object; 11) embracing: a mind wishing to embrace; 12) kissing: a mind wishing to kiss; 13) sucking: a mind wishing to suck; 14) stability: a mind of unchanging continuum; 15) effort: a mind tending towards virtue; 16) pride: a mind of considering oneself high; 17) activity: a mind of completing a activity; 18) robbery: a mind wishing to rob wealth; 19) force: a mind wishing to conquer others' troops; 20) delight: a mind becoming accustomed to the path of virtue; 21) the great inner born: a mind engaging in non-virtue because of arrogance; 22) the middling innate born; 23) the small innate born; 24) vehemence: wishing to debate with the excellent for no reason; 25) flirtation: desiring to play upon seeing the attractive; 26) angry disposition: a mind of resentment; 27) virtue: a mind desiring to make an effort at virtuous actions; 28) clear word and truth: a mind wishing to speak so that others can understand; a mind that does not change its discernment of the facts; 29) untruth: a mind wishing to speak having changed one's discernment of the facts; 30) definiteness: a mind of very steady intent; 31) non-grasping: a mind not desiring to hold an object; 32) donor: a mind wishing to give away possessions; 33) exhortation: a mind wishing to exhort the lazy to practice the dharma; 34) heroism: a mind wishing to overcome enemies such as the delusions; 35) non-shame: a mind engaging in non-virtue, not abandoning misconduct despite one's own disapproval or religious prohibitions; 36) pretension: a mind deceiving others through hypocrisy; 37) tightness: a mind of sharp conscientiousness; 38) badness: a mind used to a bad view; 39) non-gentleness: a mind desiring to injure others; 40) dishonesty: a mind of crookedness.

The seven conceptions indicative of the mind of black near-attainment are: 1) middling attachment: a mind of equal attachment and hatred; 2) forgetfulness: a mind of

degenerated memory or mindfulness; 3) mistake: a mind that apprehends water in a mirage and so forth; 4) non-speaking: a mind not wishing to speak; 5) depression: a mind of annoyance; 6) laziness: a mind having displeasure in virtue; 7) doubt: a mind of uncertainty.

In order to perform the comparative analysis of Buddhist and Christian ideas, it is helpful to pay attention to how the conceptions are divided by Geshe Dzhampa Tinley. The scholar divided all conceptions in three groups: 1) the conceptions qualified as recognition of objects and, thus, deprived of *avidyā*. These conceptions are also free from the understanding of *śūnyatā*; 2) the second group of the conceptions are those which are signed by attachment and, hence, are the root of *samsāra*. 3) The third group of the conceptions are those which are endowed with the understanding of the emptiness of objects.⁶³⁰ All the three classes of conceptions can be found in the proposed list of eighty conceptions.

The return of all energies to the oneness during prayer has been underscored also by Hesychasts. The human mind, unified during prayer, has been compared by the Eastern masters of Christian contemplation to the river-bed where all the tributaries come together and blend completely.⁶³¹ Here the comparison is rather similar to the tantric idea of winds (together with their consciousnesses) circulating in different channels of the diamond body and coming together in the central channel during death and meditation. During such a unification of the energies in Christian asceticism the annihilation of ordinary functions of these energies takes place. It means that Christian ascetics experience the same destruction (or the *dissolution* as Tibetans would say) of ordinary functions of psyche during prayer as Tibetan *yogīns* do. The contemplating mind is proclaimed by Christian ascetics to be free of all its qualities and ideas about things.⁶³² It is completely deprived of sensual images and any specific features which, in their turn, are compared with a cloth covering the mind.⁶³³ Hence, the purpose of Christian prayer

⁶³⁰ Геше Джампа Тинлей, *Ум и пустота*, пер. с англ. М. Малыгиной и Т. Проваторовой (Москва: Московский буддийский центр Ламы Цонкапы, 1999), с. 21

⁶³¹ Каллист Катафигиот, Каллиста Катафигиота о Божественном единении и созерцательной жизни (29) // Каллиста Катафигиота о Божественном единении и созерцательной жизни, Иоанна Карпафийского Слово подвижническое (Казань, 1898), с. 31. The father being a contemporary of Gregory Palama, expressed similar to Hesychasts ideas.

⁶³² Ibid. (78), с. 75.

⁶³³ The comparison of ordinary activities of psyche with the cloth, covering its genuine essence, has something in common with the idea of Origen about the human soul as the source of water covered by sand. (Ориген, *Гомилия на книгу Бытия, 1-4* (Оливье Клеман, *Истоки: Богословие отцов Древней Церкви: Тексты и комментарии*, пер. с фр. Г. В. Вдовиной, (Москва: Путь, 1994), с. 128.)

is to recover the essence of the mind or to achieve the state of *nakedness* of the mind (τῆ διανοία γυμνῆ) in order to unite with God who is beyond senses.⁶³⁴ The process of annihilation of ordinary functions of psyche is defined by Pseudo-Dionysius and by Gregory of Nyssa as purification (ἡ κάθαρσις). Isaac of Syria has described it as “mortification of all that is transient” (εἰς τὴν θνήσιον τῶν παρερχομένων)⁶³⁵. It is noteworthy that the process of gradual destruction of ordinary activities of consciousness has been discussed much by Hesychasts and their predecessors, nevertheless, the stages of this very experience have never been properly classified.

Some sort of classification, for instance, can be found in the passages from the works of Gregory of Nyssa and Pseudo-Dionysius about the Sinai experience of Moses, however it can't be perceived as the classification in the proper sense of the word. The mentioned schemes proposed by the mediaeval masters of prayer, consisting just of two stages, can't even remind us the expanded classification of the dissolution of the gross phenomena elaborated by Tibetans. Yet, for the lack of better schemes, we shall use those of Gregory of Nyssa and of Pseudo-Dionysius.

As Belden C. Lane notices, “the apophatic tradition, critical as it is of every image one might use to describe the unsayable mystery of God, resorts again and again to the fierce metaphor of Sinai as a way of questioning and deconstructing all other images. [...] The discipline of focusing on a deconstructed image of this sort has a way of limiting the imagination, emptying the mind of preconceived notions, and stripping the self so as to encounter a God beyond all that is anticipated”.⁶³⁶

⁶³⁴ Марк Подвижник, *De temperantia et virtute* c. X, col. 1057; cnfr. XXXI, col. 1064CD; c. IX, col. 1057; c. II, col. 1053D-1056A. (From Сергей Зарин, *Аскетизм по Православно-Христианскому учению: Этико-богословское исследование* (Москва: Православный паломник, 1996), с. 433.)

⁶³⁵ Исаак Сирий, Л. LXXVIII, σ. 442. (from Сергей Зарин, *Аскетизм по Православно-Христианскому учению*, с. 422.)

⁶³⁶ Belden C. Lane, “The Sinai Image in the Apophatic Tradition” in *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly*, vol. 39, ed. Paul Meyendorff (New York: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1995), pp. 50-51.

The theologian discovers the universal character of mountain image as follows, “The image of the cloud-covered mountain, seen on the desert horizon, half-hidden from human view, is an intriguing one in the history of religions. That which is not seen can often be more compelling to the imagination than what is seen. The metaphor of the partially disclosed mountain, compelling in its mystery and inaccessibility, has often gripped the human imagination – from Tibetan Buddhist tales of Mt. Meru to the Muslim fascination with Mt. Kaf, from Augustine's remote island of paradise with its pear-shaped mountain in the East to Rene Daumal's haunting vision of Mount Analogue. It recurs

Translated from the notional language of cosmology into that of anthropology, the Sinai image can be grasped as the very centre of human being, i.e. the naked mind, united with God in the heart. If visually depicted, the Sinai Mountain together with the area adjoining to it would remind a *mandala* with its centre and periphery. It goes without saying, that any *mandala* or *yantra* is supposed to be simultaneously an image of macro- and microcosm. The same implication can be found in the Sinai image: Sinai itself is a symbol of the human mind which is completely naked and united with God beyond qualities, whereas the adjoining to Sinai territory is an image of all the activities of the mind covering its true essence.

As to Gregory of Nyssa, “he became one of the first Christian theologians to develop a thoroughgoing theology of darkness, emphasising that one is continually lured by God, through increasing levels of obscurity and vulnerability, to a deeper knowledge and love. [...] In the subsequent history of Christian spirituality, the image of Sinai, after the pattern of Gregory of Nyssa, would continue to persist as a reminder of God’s incomprehensibility to the human mind.”⁶³⁷

In order to grasp the order of the pacification of ordinary activities of human mind during meditation, proposed by Gregory of Nyssa, we should cite the passage utterly.

“When this has been accomplished and the herd of irrational animals had been driven as far from the mountain as possible, Moses then approached the ascent to lofty perceptions. That none of the irrational animals was allowed to appear on the mountain signifies, in my opinion, that in the contemplation of the intelligibles we surpass the knowledge which originates with the senses. For it is characteristic of the nature of irrational animals that they are governed by the senses alone divorced from understanding. Their sight and hearing often lead them to what stimulates their appetites. Also, all other things through which sense perception becomes active assume an important place in irrational animals.

continually in the history of Christian spirituality: in Gregory and Basil, in Hildegard of Bingen, John of the Cross, Thomas Merton, and others.” Besides, “many stories are told of the spiritual hero who disappears on the cloud-covered peak – passing over, in the process, into a higher form of consciousness. Jesus is transfigured in the thick cloud of Mt. Tabor (Mt 17:1-9) and ascends into heaven from the cloud-covered slopes of Mt. Olivet (Acts 1:9-12). An Iranian hero and great spiritual teacher in the Muslim tradition, King Kay Khusraw, is said to have disappeared in the swirling mists of Mt. Kaf. The *Mahabharata*, India’s great epic narrative, ends with King Yudhistira’s ascent into heaven from the clouds surrounding Mt. Meru.” (Ibid., pp. 56, 59.)

⁶³⁷ Ibid., p. 55, 66.

The contemplation of God is not effected by sight and hearing, nor is it comprehended by any of the customary perceptions of the mind. For no eye has seen, and no ear has heard, nor does it belong to those things which usually enter into the heart of man. He who would approach the knowledge of things sublime must firstly purify his manner of life from all sensual and irrational emotion. He must wash from his understanding every opinion derived from some preconception and withdraw himself from his customary intercourse with his own companion, that is, with his sense perceptions, which are, as it were, wedded to our nature as its companion. When he is so purified, then he assaults the mountain.

The knowledge of God is a mountain steep indeed and difficult to climb – the majority of people scarcely reach its base. If one were a Moses, he would ascend higher and hear the sound of trumpets which, as the text of the history says, becomes louder, as one advances. For the preaching of the divine nature is truly a trumpet blast, which strikes the hearing, being already loud at the beginning but becoming yet louder at the end.

The Law and the Prophets trumpeted the divine mystery of the incarnation, but the first sounds were too weak to strike the disobedient ear. Therefore the Jews' deaf ears did not receive the sound of the trumpets. As the trumpets came closer, according to the text, they became louder. The last sounds, which came through the preaching of the Gospels, struck their ears, since the spirit through his instruments sounds a noise more loudly ringing and makes a sound more vibrant in each succeeding spokesman. The instruments which ring out the Spirit's sound would be the Prophets and Apostles whose voice, as the Psalter says, goes out through all the earth: and their message to the ends of the world.⁶³⁸ [...]

For leaving behind everything that is observed, not only what sense comprehends but also what the intelligence thinks it sees, it keeps on penetrating deeper until by the intelligence's yearning for understanding it gains access to the invisible and incomprehensible, and there it sees God."⁶³⁹

In the above passage several moments should be noted. Firstly, senses, being the grossest human activity, become active through tangible things. In this way the appetites of the body are satisfied. Here senses and the outer objects are the same *indriyas* and *viśayas* of Abhidharmic tradition. The knowledge originated from the senses, is

⁶³⁸ Gregory of Nyssa, *The Life of Moses* (156-159), trans. Abraham J. Malherbe and Everett Ferguson (New York: Ramsey: Toronto: Paulist Press, 1978), p. 93-94.

⁶³⁹ *Ibid.* (163), p. 95.

contradicted by Gregory to the knowledge of God. Hence, if to use the symbolism of *mandala*, senses are those which occupy its periphery.

Further the “customary perceptions of the mind” or opinions “derived from some preconception” are mentioned as those which should be destroyed by those who climb the mountain of Divine knowledge. And although they are not the grossest activities and are subtler than bodily senses, belonging to the psychic part of man, they are united with these very senses, because they are fed through what is perceived by the senses. By the annihilation of sensuous together with the mind based upon the sensuous, the subtler layer of psyche is disclosed, that is the psyche which accepts the divine revelations. This kind of knowledge is much subtler and closer to the essence of mind than the previous one. Yet, being subject to conceptions, it should also be subverted by the person climbing the mountain of the Divine Darkness. And in the same way as the teaching of the Buddha, being good enough to induce one to follow Dharma, is just a part of conventional (or relative) truth (Skt. *vyavahāra-satya*) and might be forgotten by the enlightened⁶⁴⁰, the sounds of “the preaching of the divine nature” are denied by Gregory’s contemplator. In this way the very essence, which is completely pure, simple, and free of any activity and quality, is disclosed.

To sum up the teaching of Gregory of Nyssa, the two stages of the divine ascent are mentioned by the scholar; those are 1) the pacification of senses and of everything comprehended by them; and 2) the annihilation of the discursive mind and conceptions, produced by the mind. The same stages are summed up by the Orthodox theologian P. Minin as 1) the release of the spirit from its attachment to the matter and from the matter as such; and 2) as the liberation from the empirically rational content of consciousness.⁶⁴¹ The subversion of the senses can be compared to the first four cycles of the Tantric dissolution, i.e., to the dissolution of gross consciousnesses together with their winds, senses, sensuous objects etc. Gregory’s annihilation of the discursive mind and conceptions, produced by the mind, has much in common with the fifth cycle of the Tantric dissolution, i.e., the destruction of eighty conceptions.

Pseudo-Dionysius in his *Mystical Theology* discussed the question of subversion of all ordinary functions of psyche like this, “[...] the good cause of all is eloquent and taciturn, indeed wordless. It has neither word nor act of understanding, since it is on a plane above all this, and it is made manifest only to those who travel through foul and

⁶⁴⁰ The teachings of the Buddha, expressing itself in terms of oppositional dualism, may be true at the relative level, but have no meaning at the absolute level. (Moti Lal Pandit, *Śūnyatā: The Essence of Mahāyāna Spirituality*, p. 253.)

⁶⁴¹ П. Минин, *Главные направления древне-церковной мистики.*, с. 358.

fair, who pass beyond the summit of every holy ascent, who leave behind them every divine light, every divine voice, every word from heaven, and who plunge into the darkness where, as scripture proclaims, there dwells the One who is beyond all things. It is not for nothing that the blessed Moses is commanded to submit first to purification and then to depart from those who have not undergone this. When every purification is complete, he hears the many-voiced trumpets. He sees the many lights, pure and with rays streaming abundantly. Then, standing apart from the crowds and accompanied by chosen priests, he pushed ahead to the summit of the divine ascents. And yet, he does not meet God himself, but contemplates, not him who is invisible, but rather where he dwells. This means, I presume, that the holiest and highest of the things perceived with the eye of the body or the mind are but the rationale which presupposes all that lies below the transcendent One. Through them, however, his unimaginable presence is shown, walking the heights of those holy places to which the mind at least can rise. But then he [Moses] breaks free of them, away from what sees and is seen, and he plunges into the truly mysterious darkness of unknowing. Hence, renouncing all that the mind may conceive, wrapped entirely in the intangible and the invisible, he belongs completely to him who is beyond everything.”⁶⁴²

In the same way as Gregory of Nyssa, Pseudo-Dionysius insists upon the idea of God’s incomprehensibility. God, being wordless, resembles Suchness (Skt. *tathatā*) or the absolute truth (Skt. *paramārtha-satya*) beyond the reach of words of Mādhyamaka.⁶⁴³

As to the stages of subversion of ordinary psychic functions, the “purification” including the departure “from those who have not undergone this” is mentioned as the first. The same purification (ἡ κάθαρσις) of Dionysius has been defined by the Russian theologian P. Minin as the release of the mind from the *sensuous* and the *material* modes of being.⁶⁴⁴ If compared with the above passage from the treatise of Gregory of Nyssa and with the Tibetan scheme of dissolution, the “purification” of Dionysius concerns senses or what is called by Abhidharmic tradition *indriyas* (or the subjective entity⁶⁴⁵). Those, who are supposed by Dionysius to be left behind because “they have not undergone this”, are similar to Buddhist *viśayas* (or the objective entity⁶⁴⁶). This twofold content of Dionysius’ purification is quite in conformity with

⁶⁴² Pseudo-Dionysius, *The Mystical Theology* (1,3), p. 136-137.

⁶⁴³ Moti Lal Pandit, *Śūnyatā: The Essence of Mahāyāna Spirituality*, p. 254.

⁶⁴⁴ П. Минин, *Главные направления древне-церковной мистики.*, с. 353.

⁶⁴⁵ О. О. Розенберг, *Труды по буддизму* (Москва: Наука, 1991), с. 127.

⁶⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

the above definition of purification by P. Minin as the release of the mind from the *sensuous* and the *material* modes of being.

In the end of the passage together with the annihilation of the sensuous, when Moses is “wrapped entirely in the intangible and the invisible”, the renouncement of everything conceived by the mind is also mentioned. Hence, we can draw a conclusion that ordinary discursive activity of intellect is attributed by Dionysius to the same group of natural faculties where senses belong.

After Moses is purified, the subtler level of his mind becomes active. He hears the many-voiced trumpets and sees the many lights, pure and with rays streaming abundantly. Unlike Gregory of Nyssa, Dionysius doesn't interpret this Genesis passage as the preaching of the Word, preferring the literal understanding of the events. (The “word from the heaven”, however, is also inscribed in the common context of the described mystical experience.) It goes without saying that Moses' experience of 1) “the many-voiced trumpets”, of 2) “the pure lights”, and of 3) “rays streaming abundantly” can be compared with similar phenomena of *Chonyid Bardo*.

To forestall a little bit, we should mention the doctrine of *kung zhi* manifesting as three elements, i. e., sound (Tib. *sgra*), light (*'od*), and ray (*zer*), elaborated by Bonpo rDzogs chen tradition. As is described in the chapter about Anthropology, the three elements should be recognized by a person as being of his own. In this occasion the enlightenment is achieved. But if he makes an error of thinking of those three elements as being from elsewhere, a dichotomous conceptualization is produced.⁶⁴⁷

The idea of the recognition of the three manifestations has been developed in the texts concerning death and liberation of Bonpo rDzogs chen tradition. Speaking of *Chonyid Bardo*⁶⁴⁸, the text called *The Doctrine of the Six Lights* underscores that

⁶⁴⁷ sPa bsTan-rgyal bzang-po, *Zhang zhung snyan brgyud kyi bla ma brgyud pa'i rnam thar* (comp. in 1419). (from Samten Gyaltsen Karmay, *The Great Perfection (rDzogs chen)*, p. 203-204.

⁶⁴⁸ According to *rDzogs-pa chen-po* or “Great Perfection” tradition the three bar do have the same designation as in *Bar-do thos-grol*, nevertheless, their content is a little bit different. The dissolution of gross phenomena takes place during *'Chi-kha'i bar-do*. It ends with the death of the body. Unlike *'Chi-kha'i bar-do* of *Bar-do thos-grol*, the experience of clear light does not yet occur. *Chos-nyid bar-do* is the intermediate period of quintessential reality. Death has occurred and, to the individual who has experienced it, there appears luminous intrinsic nature of reality. According to *The Doctrine of Six Lights* those individuals who have medium and lesser capacities, experience the luminous nature of reality in its manifestation of sounds, lights, and rays. *Srid-pa bar-do* is the intermediate period of existence which includes all the phases of renewed involvement in the different dimensions of samsāric existence. (*Sacred Tibetan Teachings on Death and*

sounds, lights, and rays are not *kung zhi* in its primordial mode of being, but its differentiated manifestation, corresponding to the vision of luminous peaceful and wrathful deities of *Chonyid Bardo* in *Bar do thos grol*.

To be precise, there are three types of experiences after death according to *The Doctrine of the Six Lights* (*sGron-ma drug-gi gdams-pa*). The first one, called superior, “refers to the way in which liberation occurs for those who possess superior capacities”⁶⁴⁹. A yogin of superior capacities is not supposed to experience lights, sounds, and rays at all, being “hurled out of the abyss of samsāra”⁶⁵⁰ and uniting the Basis of All (*kung zhi*) instantaneously. The second type of after death experience is the medium one. During Chonyid Bardo yogin of medium capacities experiences lights, sounds and rays and recognizes them as belonging to him and, in this way, achieves liberation. Here is the passage from the text,

“Because one does not follow the manifestations
of sounds, rays, and lights,
one liberates oneself through recognition
of them as illusory mental projections.
Because liberation occurs through
Recognition of the manifestations
As one’s own projections, the illusion dissolves in itself.”⁶⁵¹

The third type of after death experience, described in the text, concerns those of lesser capacities. They differ from the people of medium capacities because the three manifestations of *kung zhi*, being obscured for their sight, and are not recognized by them as of their own. These persons can’t perceive the manifestations as their own mental projections and have to reincarnate again. Besides, Giacomella Orofino, commenting the passage of the text, where it is claimed that “from virtues and vices two different kinds of visions arise”⁶⁵², distinguishes between two groups inside the category of people of lesser capacities and proposes a curious description of their after death experience. “For those who have accomplished virtuous actions visions arise that are like the light of the sun at dawn: a clear light is seen and one hears melodious sounds, one has the sensation of climbing and going through a land that is full of

Liberation: Texts from the Most Ancient Traditions of Tibet, trans. And com. Giacomella Orofino (Great Britain: Prism Unity, 1990), p. 10.)

⁶⁴⁹ *The Doctrine of the Six Lights* (Section II) in *Sacred Tibetan Teachings on Death and Liberation*, p. 70.

⁶⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

⁶⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 73.

⁶⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 76.

flowers, and so on. Pure vision arises and one is reborn in the higher realms. Those who have acted in a negative manner are enfolded in darkness, they see a dull light, they hear different sounds such as people struggling and killing each other, they have a vision of the damned who are shouting and weeping. Impure vision arises and one is precipitated into the places of perdition.”⁶⁵³

As is mentioned above, the vision of luminous peaceful and wrathful deities of *Chonyid Bardo* in *Bar do thos grol* corresponds to the experience of sounds, lights, and rays in *rDzogs chen* texts. In *Bar do thos grol* the Clear light, described in the part about ‘*Chi-kha’i bar-do*, is the highest experience of the reality of *dharmakāya*. “Thereafter consciousness begins slowly to perceive the rays of the five elements, which develop into lights and visionary images of the peaceful and wrathful deities of the mandalas of the Tibetan Book of the Dead. This is the radiant, “heavenly” realm of the *sambhogakāya*.”⁶⁵⁴ To illustrate the statement we propose a passage from *Bar do thos grol*.

“Hey, noble one! At this time when your mind and body are parting ways, pure reality manifests in subtle, dazzling visions, vividly experienced, naturally frightening and worrisome, shimmering like a mirage on the plains in autumn. Do not fear them. Do not be terrified! Do not panic! You have what is called an “instinctual mental body,” not a material, flesh and blood body. Thus whatever sounds, lights, and rays may come at you, they cannot hurt you. You cannot die. It is enough just for you to recognize them as your own perceptions. Understand that this is the between. Hey, noble one! If you don’t recognize them as your own perceptions in this way—whatever other meditations and achievements you may have experienced in the human world, if you did not meet this particular instruction—the lights will frighten you, the sounds will panic you, the rays will terrify you.”⁶⁵⁵

An interesting characteristic of sounds is found in the part of *Bar do thos grol* describing *The Srid-pa Bardo*, “You will hear sounds of avalanches, flood waters, forest fires, and hurricanes.”⁶⁵⁶ Finally, this last description can be compared with what has been evidenced by the persons going through the near-death experience and written down by R. A. Moody.⁶⁵⁷ The experiences have been discussed and summarized by

⁶⁵³ Ibid.

⁶⁵⁴ Detlef Ingo Lauf, *Secret Doctrines of the Tibetan Books of the dead*, trans. Graham Parkes (Boulder&London: Shambala, 1977), p. 39.

⁶⁵⁵ Кшиуке Ф.А. Ергкьфт ъекфты.Ъб Еру Ешшефт Ишшл ша еру Вуфвб зз. 132-133.

⁶⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 172.

⁶⁵⁷ R. A. Moody, Jr., *Life after Life* (New York: Batam, 1975).

Harold R. Nelson like this, “Some experience sounds of bussing, bells, or music. Some have reported unpleasant buzzing while others have been blessed with the sound of bells or beautiful music. Still others have experienced a whistling sound like the wind.”⁶⁵⁸

To return to the Dionysius’ scheme of the subversion of ordinary activities of psyche during prayer, it should be noticed that “every divine light, every voice” and “every word from heaven” should be left behind in order to disclose the naked essence of mind beyond qualities and activities.

The process of gradual annihilation of natural activities, starting with the grossest ones, is described also by St. John of the Cross, the adherent of the Western Christian mystical tradition. Similarly to Gregory of Nyssa and Pseudo-Dionysius, the Western mystic belongs to the apophatic tradition of the Divine Darkness. The poetic figure “dark night”, being one of the central notions of St. John, designates the entire way of annihilation leading to the union with God.⁶⁵⁹ Besides, the image of “the high mountain of perfection” has been employed by the scholar in the same way as it has been done by the two mentioned Eastern Christian mystics. By calling one of his works *The Ascent of Mount Carmel* John of the Cross has emphasized the great importance of the mountain symbol. As is depicted by St. John of the Cross in his sketch of Mount Carmel, all the “goods of heaven and earth” should be abandoned by a contemplator while climbing the mountain of the Divine union.⁶⁶⁰

The gradual process of pacification of natural human activities during prayer is compared by St. John of the Cross to the three phases of night, i.e., to twilight, midnight, and dawn. The twilight darkness starts when the contemplator begins war against worldly appetites. The midnight phase means the annihilation of intellect. The goal is to arrive at the dawn phase, in which God as Light is experienced as a Divine Darkness.⁶⁶¹

⁶⁵⁸ Harold R. Nelson, M.A., “The New Death Experience: Observations and Reflections from a Retured Chaplain” in *The Journal of Pastoral Care*, Summer 2000, Vol. 54, No. 2, p. 160.

⁶⁵⁹ As is noticed by Kieran Kavanaugh, there are three reasons for calling the path to union with God a dark night. They are: the mortification of the appetites; the journey in faith; and God’s communication to the soul. (Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D., “Introduction to the Ascent of Mount Carmel-the Dark Night” in *The Collected Works of St. John of the Cross*, trans. Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D. (Washington: ICS Publications, 1979), p. 47.)

⁶⁶⁰ St. John of the Cross, *The Ascent of Mount Carmel* in *The Collected Works of St. John of the Cross*, p. 66-67.

⁶⁶¹ Harvey D. Egan, S. J., *Christian Mysticism: the Future of a Tradition* (New York: Pueblo Publishing Company, 1984), p. 174.

In other words, the purgative path includes two stages: 1) the night of senses, and 2) the night of spirit. John of the Cross in his *Ascent of Mount Carmel* writes, “The first night pertains to the lower, *sensory* part of man’s nature and is consequently more external. As a result the second night is darker. The second, darker night of faith belongs to the rational superior part; it is darker and more interior because it deprives this part of its rational light, or better, blinds it. Accordingly, it is indeed comparable to midnight, the innermost and darkest period of night.”⁶⁶²

The classification of St. John, however, is more refined than those of Gregory of Nyssa and Pseudo-Dionysius. He divides the soul into two main parts: the sensory, and the spiritual. The sensory part, which has to do with sensible or corporal objects, possesses the exterior sense faculties of sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch; it also claims inner sense faculties, those are the fantasy and the imagination. This part of the soul, being the grossest one, should be abandoned the first. The spiritual part of the soul, which is concerned with spiritual or incorporeal objects, numbers three faculties: intellect, memory, and will. The sensory faculties as well as the spiritual faculties of intellect and memory are cognitive. The will on the other hand is an appetitive faculty. It inclines toward the good; to it are related the appetite and the emotions or passions of joy, hope, fear, and sorrow.⁶⁶³ The spiritual faculties are those which are annihilated the last during contemplation.

To make the terminology of St. John more precise, the two *interior bodily senses*, i.e., the imagination and the fantasy, “are of service to each other in due order, because the one is discursive and the other forms the images.” The scholar notes that here there is no need of differentiating between them. “All that these senses, then, can receive and construct are termed imaginations and phantasms. These are forms represented to the interior senses through material images and figures. [...] Meditation is the work of these two faculties, since it is a discursive act built upon forms, figures, and images, imagined and fashioned by these senses.”⁶⁶⁴

The relationship among the interior bodily senses, the memory, and the intellect is explained by St. John like this, “the fantasy⁶⁶⁵ coupled with the memory, is for the intellect the archives or receptacle in which all the intelligible forms and images are

⁶⁶² St. John of the Cross, *The Ascent of Mount Carmel* (2, 2, 2), p. 109.

⁶⁶³ Kieran Kavanaugh, O.C.D., “Introduction to the Ascent of Mount Carmel-the Dark Night”, p. 47.

⁶⁶⁴ St. John of the Cross, *The Ascent of Mount Carmel* (2, 12, 3), p. 137.

⁶⁶⁵ St. John of the Cross notes, that the imagination and the fantasy can’t be differentiated. Hence, if one of them is mentioned in the text, the other one is also meant. (Ibid.)

received. Like a mirror, this faculty contains them within itself, whether they come to it from the five bodily senses or supernaturally. It in turn presents them to the intellect, and the intellect considers and makes a judgment about them.”⁶⁶⁶ The role of the will, in its turn, will be explained later when compared with the same faculty in the Eastern Christian tradition.

Further, the description of the two nights follows. Similarly to Gregory of Nyssa and Dionysius, St. John of the Cross makes use of the image of the ascent to the mountain Sinai, “He [God] did this that Moses might be able to speak to Him. He commanded Moses not only to ascend alone, and leave the children of Israel below, but to rule against the pasturing of beasts on the mountainside. [Ex. 34:3] The meaning is that a person ascending this mount of perfection to converse with God must not only renounce all things, by leaving them at the bottom, but also restrict his appetites (the beasts) from pasturing on the mountainside, on things which are not purely God. For in God, or in the state of perfection, all appetites cease.”⁶⁶⁷

In another place of his treatise, John of the Cross writes about the gradual annihilation of the senses, “The more spiritual a man is, the more he discontinues trying to make particular acts with his faculties, for he becomes more engrossed in one general pure act. Once the faculties reach the end of their journey, they cease to work, just as a man ceases to walk when he reaches the end of his journey.”⁶⁶⁸ In his *Dark Night* the mystic writes that during the night of the senses God “binds the interior faculties and leaves no support in the intellect, nor satisfaction in the will, nor remembrance in the memory.” One more sign of the purgation of the senses is the powerlessness, in spite of one’s efforts, to meditate and make use of the imagination, the interior sense, as one’s previous custom. At this time God does not communicate Himself through the senses as He did before, by means of the discursive analysis and synthesis of ideas, but begins to communicate Himself through pure spirit by an act of simple contemplation, in which there is no discursive succession of thought. The exterior and interior senses of the lower part of the soul cannot attain to this contemplation. As a result the imaginative power and fantasy can no longer rest in any consideration not find support in it.”⁶⁶⁹

The night of the spirit on the other hand is described by St. John as the sequel of that of senses. It involves “the darkness of my intellect, the distress of my will” and “the

⁶⁶⁶ Ibid. (2. 16. 2), p. 150.

⁶⁶⁷ Ibid. (1, 5, 6), p. 83.

⁶⁶⁸ Ibid (2, 12, 6), p. 139.

⁶⁶⁹ St. John of the Cross, *The Dark Night* (1, 9, 7-8) in *The Collected Works of St. John of the Cross*, p. 315-316.

affliction and anguish of my memory”. The mentioned spiritual faculties of human being transform “from natural to divine”. The intellect “no longer understands by means of its natural vigor and light, but by means of the divine wisdom to which it was united”. The will “united with the divine love, no longer loves in the lowly manner, with its natural strength, but with the strength and purity of the Holy Spirit.” The memory, “too, was changed into presentiments of eternal glory”.⁶⁷⁰

St. John of the Cross discusses visions and similar phenomena as the night of the senses uncompleted. He underscores that the supernatural communications are the sign of the transformation of the lower part of human soul. “God, to achieve His work gently and to lift the soul to supreme knowledge, must begin by touching the low state and extreme of the senses.” That is why “when these senses are somewhat disposed, He is wont to perfect them more by granting some supernatural favors and gifts to confirm them further in good. These supernatural communications are, for example: corporal visions of saints or holy things, very sweet odors, locutions, and extreme delight in the sense of touch. [...] Besides this the interior bodily senses, such as the imagination and fantasy, are gradually perfected and accustomed to good through considerations, meditations, and holy reasonings, and the spirit is instructed. When through this natural exercise they are prepared, God may enlighten and spiritualize them further with some supernatural imaginative visions from which the spirit, as we affirmed, at the same time profits notably.” St. John of the Cross admits that in spite of the fact that the supernatural communications refine spirit, “all sensory apprehensions concerning God” should be annihilated by “the perfect spirit” which “pays no attention to the senses; it neither receives anything through them, nor uses them principally, nor judges them to be requisite in its relationship with God”.⁶⁷¹

The classification of St. John of the Cross bears resemblance to the Hesychast introversive scheme observed by the Orthodox theologian S. S. Horuzhy. According to it the two stages of in-going are 1) the destruction of images and of fantasy which produces them; 2) the submission of intellect, producing thoughts.⁶⁷² Besides, the idea of St. John of the Cross about the imagination and the fantasy as a part of the low, sensual part of human being, allows us to combine the introversive scheme of S. S.

⁶⁷⁰ Ibid. (2, 4, 1-2), p. 334-335.

⁶⁷¹ St. John of the Cross, *The Ascent of Mount Carmel* (2, 17, 4-5), p. 156-157. About supernatural communications see also *The Ascent of Mount Carmel* (2, 11), and the chapter called “Secondary Mystical Phenomena” in Harvey D. Egan, S. J., *Christian Mysticism: the Future of a Tradition*, p. 304ff.

⁶⁷² С. С. Хоружий, “Аналитический словарь исихастской антропологии” // С. С. Хоружий (гл. ред.), *Синергия: проблемы аскетике и мистики Православия*, с. 96.

Horuzhy and those of Gregory of Nyssa and Pseudo-Dionysius. The fantasy, mentioned by S. S. Horuzhy as the first faculty of the soul which should be destroyed, is united with the *senses* of Gregory of Nyssa and Dionysius.

To sum up, the above schemes of subversion, proposed by Gregory of Nyssa, Pseudo-Dionysius, and St. John of the Cross, have something in common. The process has been described by all of them as the gradual destruction of natural capacities of human psyche starting with the grossest phenomena and ending with the subtlest ones. Here the schemes are similar to the Tantric classification of dissolution. Nevertheless, the process is not very well classified in Orthodox mysticism. The stages of introversion mentioned by the Christian mystics are just two or three and, hence, can't be exhaustive. Although chaotically, a lot of other phenomena subject to dissolution during contemplation are mentioned by Hesychasts. For instance, among the objects of pacification are the physical activities of the body, thoughts, passions etc. In order to present all these phenomena systematically and to compare them with those of the Tantric scheme of dissolution, we shall follow some other scheme found in the treatises of the Hesychast scholars, namely, the scheme of the development of passions. It is curious that this scheme involves the cognitive process as such. Only in its latest phase the process of cognition grows into passions. The same link between the process of cognition and that of the development of karma is noticed in Buddhist doctrine of *skandhas*. Both traditions, Christian Orthodoxy and Buddhism, agree that cognitive process starts at the level of the grossest psychic activities and develops into passions or karmic formations at the level of the subtlest activities of psyche.⁶⁷³ It is discernible, that the process of destruction of the psychic activities during Tantric meditation occurs in the same order, i.e., starting with the grossest ones and being completed by the subversion of the subtlest forms of the mind. That is why we assume that the destruction of phenomena during Christian prayer, similarly, has the same order as cognition continued by the development of passions.

The cognitive process, as well as the process of the development of passions, starts when an object is perceived by a sense (ἡ αἰσθησις) or senses (αἱ αἰσθησεις).

⁶⁷³ The cognitive process starts at the level of *rūpa skandha*, continues at the level of *vedana-* and *sanjnā skandhas*, and completes, forming *karma* at the level of *sanskāra skandha*. If to be viewed in the reversed order, the mentioned four *skandhas* are the gradual unfoldment of *vijnāna skandha* according to the idea of *Vijnānavādins* about the real existence of just one *skandha*, namely *vijnāna*. (Lama Anagarika Govinda, *Foundations of Tibetan Mysticism According to the Esoteric Teachings of the Great Mantra OM MANI PADME HŪM*, p. 113.)

John Chrysostom associated senses with the body contending that while the soul abides in this world, it is imprisoned by the body and the senses (τὸ σῶμα καὶ αἱ τοῦ σώματος αἰσθήσεις); the sense faculties of hearing, as well as those of sight, touch, smell, and taste, bring many evils from outside into the soul (καὶ γὰρ ἀκοὴ καὶ ὄψις καὶ ἀψὴ καὶ ὄσφρησις καὶ γλῶττα πολλὰ τῶν ἕζωθεν εἰς αὐτὴν ἐναποτίθενται καθῶν).⁶⁷⁴

Hence, the corruption starts at the level of senses and objects perceived by them. Those are called by Abhidharmic Buddhism *indriyas* and *viśayas*. It is obvious that Christian masters of contemplation do not always mention both senses and the sensual objects, referring to the latter or to the former ones. The reason of the inexactitude of the theologians is perfectly explained by Meister Eckhart like this, “The sense faculty and the sense object, the intellect and the intelligible object, though two in potency, are one in act. The one act belongs to both. The faculty of sight is actually seeing and the visible object is actually seen in the same utterly simple act.”⁶⁷⁵

Being the starting point of samsāric existence according to the Buddhist doctrine, and of the passionate condition according to the Christian one, senses and sense objects are the first phenomena becoming inactive during meditation or prayer. Symeon the New Theologian, for instance, has left the following testimony about his own experience of contemplation, “My dear fathers and brethren, as soon as I called to mind the beauty of undefiled love, its light suddenly appeared in my heart. I have been ravished with its delight and have ceased to perceive outward things; I have lost all sense of this life and have forgotten the things that are at hand.”⁶⁷⁶ Hence, the experience of Divine Light demands the inactivity of senses and sense objects.

The standpoint of Gregory Palamas is similar. Besides, the great Hesychast has skillfully united the contemplative context with the topic of development of passions. The desirable aspect of psyche, bearing a close resemblance to *vedana skandha* of Abhidharmic Buddhism, has also been included by the scholar in the common chain of development of passions, “A fountain of holy joy that attracts the soul to itself,

⁶⁷⁴ И. Злагоуст, *De compunct.* C. I. T. XLVII, col. 412. (In Сергей Зарин, *Аскетизм по Православно-Христианскому учению*, с. 428.)

⁶⁷⁵ Meister Eckhart, *Selections from the Commentaries on Genesis* (C, 33) in Meister Eckhart, *The Essential Sermons, Commentaries, Treatises, and Defense*, trans. Edmund Colledge, O.S.A. and Bernard McGinn (New York: Ramsey: Toronto: Paulist Press, 1981), p.105.

⁶⁷⁶ Symeon the New Theologian, *The Discourses* (I,3), trans. C. J. deCatanzaro (New Jersey: Paulist Press, 1980), p.43.

liberating it from multiform and material images and making it joyfully despise every fleshly thing. (I call “fleshly thing” that which in our thoughts derives from the pleasures of the body, which attaches itself to our thoughts, appearing as something agreeable to them and dragging them downwards.)”⁶⁷⁷ The starting point of cognition (here of development of passions) is the sense objects, perceived by senses. The perception is accompanied by pleasure or pain. Pleasure usually yields attachment at the level of thoughts. The main agent of the attachment, however, is not yet mentioned by Gregory Palamas, and will be discussed later.

In the other passage of his *Triads* the scheme of development of passions by Gregory Palamas is even wider, “In every case, those who practice true mental prayer must liberate themselves from the passions, and reject any contact with objects which obstruct it, for in this way they are able to acquire undisrupted and pure prayer. As for those not yet arrived at this degree, but who seek to attain it, they must gain the mastery over every sensual pleasure, completely rejecting the passions, for the body’s capacity to sin must be mortified; that is, one must be released from domination by the passionate emotions. Similarly the judgment must vanquish the evil passions which move in the world of mind, that is, it must rise above the sensual delights.”⁶⁷⁸ Firstly, passions as such are here mentioned. They are derived from sensual pleasures and are accepted by the mind in the form of attachment to these very sensual delights. The source of the sensual pleasures is the contact with objects. Gregory Palamas insists upon the abolishment of the attachment to the sensual pleasures. To resume, the sensual aspect of human being, called by Abhidharmic tradition *rūpa skandha*, should be pacified by the contemplator together with the desirable one (designated by Buddhism as *vedana skandha*).

It is interesting that John of the Cross discovers the link between the senses and the desirable aspect of man in a fashion similar to Palamas. In his *Ascent of Mount Carmel* he writes that the main means of sensory night is to empty the sense faculties of desire for their objects.⁶⁷⁹ It means that the subversion of senses depends only on the rejection of the desirable aspect.

A curious dilemma has been proposed in this context by Isaac of Syria. He contended that life in God, i.e., life of the heart, is death for senses, whereas the

⁶⁷⁷ Gregory Palamas, *The Triads* (2, 2, 9), trans. Nicholas Gendle, ed. John Meyendorff (New Jersey: Paulist Press, 1983), pp. 50-51.

⁶⁷⁸ *Ibid* (2, 2, 6), p. 49.

⁶⁷⁹ St. John of the Cross, *The Ascent of Mount Carmel* (2, 6, 6), p. 120.

resurrection of senses is death for the heart.⁶⁸⁰ Here the statement of Isaac of Syria has affinities to the Tantric idea of manifestation of Clear Light (situated in the heart) only after the dissolution of all gross phenomena, including senses.

It would be also difficult to ignore the pacification of bodily functions which usually accompanies the pacification of the sensuous during prayer. In his *Triads* Gregory Palamas writes, “One can state that this recollection is a spontaneous effect of the attention of the mind, for the to-and-fro movement of the breath becomes quietened during intensive reflection, especially with those who maintain inner quiet in body and soul. Such men, in effect, practice a spiritual Sabbath, and, as far as is possible, cease from all personal activity. They strip the cognitive powers of the soul of every changing, mobile and diversified operation, of all sense perceptions and, in general, of all corporal activity that is under our control; as to acts which are not entirely under our control, like breathing, these they restrain as far as possible.”⁶⁸¹

The observations made by St. Teresa of Avila are even stronger. In her *Inner Castle* she underscores that during contemplation breath ceases, the person is not able to speak, his (or her) usual functions of psyche are abolished, and his (or her) body becomes cold as dead bodies do. At the moment when rapture is at end, the body returns to its natural functions.⁶⁸²

The testimony of Teresa bears a close resemblance to the experience of the winds abiding in the central channel during tantric meditation. As Geshe Kelsang Gyatso resumes, “the signs that the winds are abiding in the central channel are two-fold: (1) your breathing will become weaker and weaker and will eventually cease completely and (2) all abdominal movement normally associated with the breath will stop.”⁶⁸³ It is discernible that Teresa of Avila compares the phenomenological aspect of prayer with death in the same fashion as the masters of Tantric meditation designate meditation as “the imitation of death”.

According to the Tantric scheme of dissolution the next phenomenon subject to destruction is *samjnā skandha* (that is responsible for conceptions). If to make use of the scheme of cognitive process, the next *skandha* involved in cognition is the same *samjnā skandha*. Here also the Buddhist scheme of cognition coincides with the

⁶⁸⁰ Авва Исаак Сирин, *Аввы Исаака Сирина слова подвижнические* (слово 85) (Москва: Правило веры, 1993), с. 411.

⁶⁸¹ Gregory Palamas, *The Triads* (1, 2, 7), p. 46.

⁶⁸² Святая Тереза Авильская, *Внутренний замок* (4, 13), пер. Н. Трауберг (Москва: Истина и жизнь, 2000), с. 98.

⁶⁸³ Geshe Kelsang Gyatso, *Clear Light of Bliss: Mahamudra in Vajrayana Buddhism*, op. cit., p. 69.

Christian one. Hesychasts admit that the sense object, when perceived by senses, is accepted by psyche in the form of an image. The image, in its turn, develops into a thought (an equivalent of the Buddhist *conception*). The idea is clearly represented in the teaching of Hesychy. The ascetic underscores that any thought comes into the heart by imagining the sensuous.⁶⁸⁴ It means that the source of any thought is the sensuous. Hesychy resumes that in order to perceive the vision of the Divine Light the mind should become pure of any image (ἀσχημάτιστος ἀπὸ τούτου γίνεται); the Divine Light manifests in the pure mind emptied of all thoughts (ἡ λαμπρότης ἐκείνη κατὰ στέρησιν τῶν πάντων νοημάτων παραφαίνεται τῷ καθαρῷ νοί).⁶⁸⁵

The above Orthodox definition of ‘thought’ as a derivative of the image, formed by the mind, is rather close to the Buddhist definition of *conception*, formulated by Geshe Dzhampa Tinley in the following manner, “Conception is the perception through the image created by the mind.”⁶⁸⁶

In spite of the fact that according to the Hesychast doctrine images and thoughts derive from the sensuous, the cognitive process can “go against the current”. It happens in the case of the development of *fantasy*, when images and thoughts, being uncontrolled by the will and the mind, multiply and feed the sensuous.⁶⁸⁷ In this way, according to Hesychast doctrine images and thoughts have their origin in the sensuous and are just two stages of conceptualization. Thoughts are subtler and derive from images. Images together with thoughts correspond to *samjnā skandha* in Buddhism.

Further, thoughts are usually divided into two or three groups. 1) The thoughts of the first type are those acquired in the process of cognition and deprived of any passionate content. The neutral character of this class of thoughts is expressed in Greek terms τὸ νόημα (thought, design, intention, Rus. помышление), or ἀπαθεστέρος λογισμός (*non-passionate thought*, Rus. бесстрастный помысел). The first group of thoughts can be compared with the first category of conceptions in the classification of Geshe Dzhampa Tinley, defined by the Buddhist scholar as those being a recognition of objects and, thus, deprived both of *avidyā* and of the understanding of *śūnyatā*. Usually the simple or non-passionate thoughts are the gate (ἡ εἴσοδος) for 2) the second type of

⁶⁸⁴ Similarly to Hesychy, John Cassian defines *images* as the material objects reflected. (И. Кассиан, Collat. X, с. VI, col. 826В. (in Сергей Зарин, Аскетизм по Православно-Христианскому учению, с. 434.))

⁶⁸⁵ Исихий, *De temperantia et virtute*. Cent. I, 86, col. 1508В. (in Сергей Зарин, Аскетизм по Православно-Христианскому учению, с. 434.)

⁶⁸⁶ Геше Джампа Тинлей, *Ум и пустота*, с. 33.

⁶⁸⁷ Сергей Зарин, Аскетизм по Православно-Христианскому учению, с. 429.

thoughts called *passionate* or *sinful thoughts* (οἱ ἐμπαθεῖς παρέπονται)⁶⁸⁸. Being endowed with the passionate content, they are the main enemies of the ascetic. They should be recognized by the zealot in good time and be ignored. The sinful or passionate thought is usually designated as ὁ λογισμός or ὁ διαλογισμός (Rus. помысел) and is considered to be the source of a passion. This very group of thoughts bears a close resemblance to the second category of conceptions in the classification of Geshe Dzhampa Tinley, namely, those which are signed by attachment and, hence, are the root of *samsāra*. 3) The thoughts of the third type are the holy or spiritual thoughts of zealots. This class of the thoughts constructs some sort of ethically-psychological background of contemplation⁶⁸⁹ and has strong affinities to the Buddhist conceptions endowed with the understanding of emptiness of objects (this is the third class of conceptions in the classification of Geshe Dzhampa Tinley).

It is also important to note that the first group of thoughts, being free of any passionate background, undoubtedly, corresponds to *samjnā skandha*, whereas the second and the third type of conceptions is situated at the border between the Abhidharmic *samjnā skandha* and *samskāra skandha*. Being endowed with the positive or negative passionate content, they construct passions. According to the definition of Olivier Clement, sinful thoughts are rudiments of passions; they can be also defined as inducements or impulses hidden in the subconscious.

That both non-passionate and passionate (i.e., sinful and holy) thoughts should be abolished during contemplation, is emphatically insisted upon by the Eastern (and also by the Western) ascetics. The master of apophatic theology Pseudo-Dionysius, for instance, discusses the topic in the context of the apophatic theology like this, “we must not dare to resort to words or conceptions concerning that hidden divinity which transcends being, apart from what the sacred scriptures have divinely revealed.”⁶⁹⁰ In unison with Pseudo-Dionysius St. John of the Cross writes, “There is no ladder among all created, knowable things by which the intellect can reach this high Lord. Rather, it should be known that if the intellect did desire to use all or many of these objects as a proximate means to this union, they would be not merely an encumbrance to it, but also an occasion of many errors and deceptions in the ascent of this mount.”⁶⁹¹

⁶⁸⁸ Исихий, *De temperantia et virtute*. Cent. II, 61, col. 1532. (in Сергей Зарин, Аскетизм по Православно-Христианскому учению, с. 431.)

⁶⁸⁹ Сергей Зарин, Аскетизм по Православно-Христианскому учению, с. 430.

⁶⁹⁰ Pseudo-Dionysius, *The Divine Names* (1, 1), p. 49.

⁶⁹¹ St. John of the Cross, *The Ascent of Mount Carmel* (2, 8, 7), p. 128.

An interesting description of Light experience beyond words and concepts can be found in the Discourses of St. Symeon New Theologian, “He, however, who is united to God by faith and recognizes Him by action is indeed enabled to see Him by contemplation. He sees things of which I am not able to write. His mind sees strange visions and is wholly illuminated and becomes like light, yet he is unable to conceive of them or describe them. His mind is itself light and sees all things as light, and the light has life and imparts light to him who sees it. He sees himself wholly united to the light, and as he sees he concentrates on the vision and is in ecstasy. In his ecstasy he sees it from afar, but as he returns to himself he finds himself again in the midst of the light. He is thus altogether at a loss for words and concepts to describe what he has perceived in his vision.”⁶⁹²

A similar observation has been made by the author of *Mahāyānasūtrālamkāra* (representing the ideas of Yogācāra philosophy). He underscores that the mind is “luminous at all times, but blemished by adventitious thoughts”⁶⁹³. It means that when the discursive ability of mind to perceive reality through concepts is destroyed, the mind acquires a new form of perception beyond words.

Kensur Yeshey Tupden in his *Path to the Middle* admits that during meditation “like an eye consciousness it [the mind] just sees what it sees and, because it is a yogic direct perceiver, it ascertains all that appears to it. There are no conventional appearances and no movement (*rgyu ba, cārana*) of conceptual thought. Such a mind is very strong. Although there is no movement of thought, this mind has great activity and comprehends many reasons. Such cannot come about except through meditation, which refines the mind until it becomes the entity of yogic direct perception. Not a single factor of a mental image or meaning generality appears to this mind — only emptiness.”⁶⁹⁴

To understand the idea of Kensur Yeshey Tupden, it is useful to remember the definition of ‘conception’ suggested by Geshe Dzhampa Tinley. According to it ‘conception’ is the perception through the image created by the mind. The scholar

⁶⁹² Symeon the New Theologian, *The Discourses* (II,12) , p. 56.

⁶⁹³ *Mahāyānasūtrālamkāra*, ed. by Sylvan Levi (Paris, 1907-10), vol. 1. (from Moti Lal Pandit, *Śūnyatā: the Essence of Mahāyāna Spirituality*, p. 32.)

⁶⁹⁴ Kensur Yeshey Tupden, *Path to the Middle: Oral Mādhyamika Philosophy in Tibet: the Spoken Scholarship of Kensur Yeshey Tupden Commenting on Tsong-kha-pa’s Illumination of the Thought, Extensive Explanation of (Candrakīrti’s) ‘Entrance to (Nāgārjuna’s) ‘Treatise on the Middle Way’ ‘: (dbu ma dgongs pa rab gsal), the Sixth Chapter, “Perfection of Wisdom” verses 1-7*, trans. And ed. by Anne Carolyn Klein, trans. of Tsong-kha-pa’s text by Jeffrey Hopkins and Anne Klein (New York: State University of New York Press, 1994), p. 33.

continues the observation by saying that Buddha doesn't need this form of perception because he cognizes all phenomena in the direct way, i.e., beyond any mediation.⁶⁹⁵

The theme of the pacification of thoughts by the means of unification of the heart and the mind is discussed by Archbishop Anthony as follows. When the mind enters the heart, the head becomes empty of any thoughts. The seat of the thoughts is the head; here, i.e., in the head, they follow each other and can't be controlled. That is why in order to abolish thoughts it is necessary to make the mind enter the heart. Usually the conceptions about God abide in our head, whereas God himself is outside, — it means that this sort of activity of the mind is exterior. When the mind is in the heart, thoughts are destroyed and the spiritual atmosphere becomes completely pure.⁶⁹⁶

A curious experience of the discursive activity reanimated after contemplation is described by Archimandrite Sophrony. He practiced the inner prayer at the Mount Athos for seven years. After this period of time the hegumenos made him learn Greek. When Sophrony returned from the library to his cell, he opened the book and physically felt how his mind was coming out of the heart and moving to the head. Afterwards the mind of the ascetic had to leave head in order to move to the book. Sophrony remembers that it became clear to him that his mind has been situated in his heart during all these seven years.⁶⁹⁷

The topic of the concentrated prayer beyond thoughts has been also discussed by Archimandrite Sophrony. "The main object of the monk is to achieve the stillness of prayer in the heart, with the mind, free from reflections, keeping quiet watch like a sentry to make sure that nothing enters into the heart from without. Where this state of sacred silence exists, heart and mind feed on the Name of Christ and His commandments. They live as one, controlling all happenings within, not by logical investigation but intuitively, by a specific spiritual sense."⁶⁹⁸

Four moments should be noticed in the quotation. Firstly, the state when the heart is united with the mind is accompanied by the absence of reflections. Secondly, the manner of mind's activity, designated by Buddhist scholars as the "yogic direct perception", is called by Archimandrite Sophrony "a specific spiritual sense". Thirdly,

⁶⁹⁵ Геше Джампа Тинлей, *Ум и пустота*, с. 33.

⁶⁹⁶ Архиепископ Антоний (Гольинский-Михайловский), *О молитве Иисусовой и божественной благодати* (Красногорск, 2000), с. 174.

⁶⁹⁷ Игумен Иларион (Алфеев), "Архимандрит Софроний" // *Преподобный Силуан и его ученик архимандрит Софроний: по материалам «Силуановских чтений»*, сост. А. Л. Гуревич (Клин: Христианская жизнь, 2001), с. 156.

⁶⁹⁸ Archimandrite Sophrony, *The Monk of Mount Athos Staretz Silouan 1866-1938*, trans. Rosemary Edmonds (New York: Crestwood: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2001), p. 76.

the state when conceptions are destroyed, is associated with the so called “stillness in the heart” or the “state of sacred silence”. Fourthly, the means of contemplation of God is *attention*. It means that the mind keeps quiet watch like a sentry.

The Hesychast tradition has termed the mentioned state of sacred silence as ἡ ἡσυχία⁶⁹⁹. The term has been translated as ‘stillness’, ‘peace’, ‘silence’, as well as ‘solitude’ and an ‘isolated place’. The Russian equivalent of the term ἡ ἡσυχία is ‘безмолвие’, literally the ‘state beyond speech’. S. S. Averincev has defined ἡ ἡσυχία as “the pattern of a solitary and renounced concentration of the ascetic”⁷⁰⁰.

It is curious that ἡ προσοχή (‘attention’) as the means of contemplation is identified by theologians with the same ἡ ἡσυχία (‘silence’). S. S. Horuzhy underscores that this very *state beyond words* differs from the *state beyond passions*, i. e., ἡ ἡσυχία is not yet ἡ ἀπάθεια, because *silence* is not supposed to overpower passions completely. Passions are not yet mortified and are able to attack the ascetic again. Nevertheless, the passionate configuration of energies has already been changed by inner peace and harmony of these very energies. They are now oriented inwards and not outwards. The zealot is not any longer interested in the matters of this world.⁷⁰¹

At the stage of thoughts the cognitive process as such has been completed. The process of development of passions, however, is continued by the next (and the last) stage, i. e., by the act of the will accepting the passionate thought and, consequently, creating the passion. Hence, the next phenomena which are supposed to be destroyed during prayer, are passions.

That passions should be subverted by the contemplator is emphatically insisted upon, for instance, by Gregory Palamas. He writes that only the mind deprived of passions is able to see himself as light being illuminated by the Divine light.⁷⁰² Gregory admits that “the human mind [...] transcends itself and by victory over the passions acquires the angelic form. It, too, will attain to that light and will become worthy of a supernatural vision of God”.⁷⁰³

The essence of passions has been perfectly explained by S. M. Zarin. The scholar has defined passions as the decease of the will (ὁ θυμός). Although other human

⁶⁹⁹ The word *Hesychasm* is a derivative from ἡ ἡσυχία.

⁷⁰⁰ С. С. Авепинцев, *Поэтика ранневизантийской литературы* (Москва, 1977), с. 47. (from С. С. Хоружий, “Аналитический словарь исихастской антропологии”, с. 93.)

⁷⁰¹ С. С. Хоружий, “Аналитический словарь исихастской антропологии”, с. 92.

⁷⁰² Св. Григорий Палама, *Триады в защиту священно-безмолвствующих* (1, 3, 7) (Москва: Канон, 1995), с. 66-67.

⁷⁰³ Gregory Palamas, *The Triads* (1, 3, 4), p. 32.

capacities are also disordered, the main agent of the decease is the will. It is curious that the bodily passions are situated in the psychic sphere. It means that they also originate in the corrupted act of the will.⁷⁰⁴ In the context of the definition the admonition of St. Symeon the New Theologian can be grasped in its true sense, “Consider, brother, that what is called perfect retirement from the world is the complete mortification of self-will. [...] Those who walk in a different way and, however slightly, follow their own wills or some other apparent good will never see that life which those see who are cut off from the world and have died to their own wills.”⁷⁰⁵

According to another definition proposed by Zarin, passion is a strong and prolonged desire (ἡ ἐπιθυμία) which, in its turn, is a conscious need for satisfaction according to the previous experience of satisfaction. In the case of the bodily passions the nervous system, responsible for the senses, is irritated to a large extent and induces man to look for satisfaction which is not necessary for organism.⁷⁰⁶ In agreement with S. M. Zarin, Olivier Clement defines passions as those which corrupt, overpower and usurp the fundamental human ability to desire.⁷⁰⁷

Hesychast ‘desire’ bears a close resemblance to *tanhā*’ (Pali) or thirst after the objects of the senses and the mind in Buddhism. *Tanhā* being the root cause of all suffering, is included in the causal nexus of interconnected appearance (*pratītya-samutpāda*) as its eighth link. The next, i.e., the ninth link of the chain is *upādāna* or clinging. It means that clinging is a derivative of thirsting.

Here clinging has been mentioned in order to point to the following quotation from Symeon’s *Discourses* and to realize the link between *desire* and *clinging* (or *attachment*) in the Hesychast context. Discussing the question of the retirement from the world, Symeon writes, “But what is “the world”? What are “the things that are in the world”? Listen! It is not gold, silver, or horses, or mules. All these things that serve our physical needs we ourselves possess. It is not meat, nor bread, nor wine, for we ourselves partake of these things and eat them in moderation. It is not houses, nor baths, nor fields, nor vineyards, nor suburban properties, for great and small monasteries consist of these. So what is the world? It is sin, brethren, and attachment to things and passions.”⁷⁰⁸

⁷⁰⁴ Сергей Зарин, *Аскетизм по Православно-Христианскому учению*, с. 236, 240.

⁷⁰⁵ Symeon the New Theologian, *The Discourses* (VI, 8) , p. 126.

⁷⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, с. 138.

⁷⁰⁷ Олиае Клеман, *Истоки: Богословие отцов Древней Церкви: Тексты и комментарии*, пер. Г. В. Вдовиной (Москва: Путь, 1994), с. 165.

⁷⁰⁸ Symeon the New Theologian, *The Discourses* (V, 17) , p. 109.

Hence, not sense objects, but the corrupted attachment to them, is the true source of passions. That senses and their contact with sense objects is the first step of cognition (and of the development of passions) doesn't mean that they are the main reason of passions. The observation is illustrated by the adherent of Western Christian mysticism St. John of the Cross. He admits that "the real purgation of the senses begins with the spirit. Hence the night of the senses we explained should be called a certain reformation and bridling of the appetite rather than a purgation. The reason is that all the imperfections and disorders of the sensory part are rooted in the spirit and from it receive their strength. All good and evil habits reside in the spirit and until these habits are purged, the senses cannot be completely purified of their rebellions and vices."⁷⁰⁹ The consideration, made by St. John of the Cross, repeats to some extent the definition of passions formulated by S. M. Zarin. Both, the Western mystic of the 16th century and the Orthodox theologian of the beginning of the 20th century, insist upon the secondary role of the senses in the development of passions.

Similar conclusions concerning the primary role of the correct attitude to sense objects have been drawn by Lama Anagarika Govinda in the context of Buddhist meditation, "So long as this intuitive self-realization of highest knowledge and wisdom has not been attained, the process of progressive self-limitation of the empirical consciousness will continue. This does not mean an annihilation of sense-activities or a suppression of sense-consciousness, but a new attitude towards them, consisting in the removal of arbitrary discriminations, attachments and prejudices, in other words in the elimination of karmic formations which fetter us to this world – or, more correctly, which create the illusion of *samsāra*: the world of birth and death. 'Discrimination' means here the biased judgement of things from the standpoint of an ego."⁷¹⁰

In agreement with the above statement of Anagarika Govinda, as well as with that of Christian theologians, Geshe Dzhampa Tinley stresses that when ignorance is abolished by man, he is able not to crave after the good emotions obtained during the contact with sense objects.⁷¹¹ It means that in fact senses can never be treated as the source of karma.

Again, the process of the development of karma has been described by Lama Anagarika Govinda as follows. The impressions of the outer world are transmitted through sense organs (*rūpa skandha*) to the emotional (*vedanā skandha*) and

⁷⁰⁹ St. John of the Cross, *The Dark Night* (2, 3, 1) in *The Collected Works of St. John of the Cross*, p. 333.

⁷¹⁰ Lama Anagarika Govinda, *The Foundations of Tibetan Mysticism*, pp. 79-80.

⁷¹¹ Геше Джампа Тинлей, *Ум и пустота*, цит. соч., с. 16.

intellectual (*samjnā skandha*) cognition. Further, these impressions can be accepted or denied by the volitional act (*samskāra skandha*). It is only the latter which becomes effective as deed (*karma*) and which subsequently appears as visible and tangible effect (*vipāka*).⁷¹²

The same conclusion has been implicitly drawn by the leading representative of the Buddhist logic, Dharmakīrti. In his *Nyāyabindu* the scholar has discussed the true cognition of reality. He has distinguished between the *own feature* (Skt. *svalaksana*, tib. *rang gi mtshan nyid*) of the object (Skt. *visaya*, tib. *yul*) and its *common feature* (Skt. *sāmānalaksana*, tib. *spyi' i mtshan nyid*). The former is defined as the ultimate reality (Skt. *paramārtha*, tib. *don dam pa*) whereas the latter is just the result of discrimination (Skt. *anumāna*, tib. *rjes su dpag pa*). In other words the first step of cognition is perception (Skt. *pratyaksa*, tib. *mngon sum*) of an object by senses. Only the senses are able to have the direct contact with the true feature of an object⁷¹³. The second step of cognitive process is discrimination consisting of two stages. The first one is the forming of an image (Skt. *pratibhasa*, tib. *snang ba*) of the perceived object by consciousness. During the second one the image of the object interacts with words (Skt. *abhilāpa*, tib. *brjod pa*). The latter is just the conventional designation of the object as belonging to a certain class of objects. In this way the image of the perceived object acquires the *common feature* taking us far away from the genuine situation. It means that man has a direct contact with the ultimate reality which, however, is usually cognized by human being in the context of the relative mode of being restricted, in its turn, by subject-object relationship. Due to the fact that cognition is not able to consist just of perception by senses and needs to be completed by the creation of the image by consciousness, the purpose of a true Buddhist is to deprive the image of any common features designated by the Tibetan scholars as *conceptions*. The image of the object reflected by consciousness and the *own feature* of the object which is beyond any concept should completely coincide (Skt. *sārūpya*, tib. *'dra ba*).⁷¹⁴

The parallels between the process of the development of karma in Buddhism and the development of passions in Christianity are obvious. The notions of *karma* and of *passions* seem to be interdependent. In order to prove our conclusion it is enough to deepen into the definition of the both terms.

⁷¹² Lama Anagarika Govinda, *The Foundations of Tibetan Mysticism*, pp. 68-69.

⁷¹³ The idea of *svalaksana* can be grasped only in the context of Sautrantika philosophy.

⁷¹⁴ Дхармакирти, *Трактат Дхармакирти "Ньяя-бинду" как введение в буддийскую логику и теорию познания*, пер. и ком. Е. А. Островская // Е. П. Островская, сост., *Категории буддийской культуры* (Санкт-Петербург: Петербургское Востоковедение, 2000), сс. 209-230.

Karma is “the law of consequence with regard to action, which is the driving force behind the cycle of reincarnation”⁷¹⁵. *Karma* “imprisons” sentient beings, making them reincarnate and suffer.

The Greek word παθήματα means passions or passive sufferings of the one being in servitude. Ephraim of Syria has defined passions as the submission of the soul, the confusion of the mind and servitude.⁷¹⁶ According to the teaching of Theofan the Recluse passions are not innate to the human being. They are deprived of their own substance; passions come into the soul from outside and can be banished. That is why they are usually called “demons”⁷¹⁷. As to the activities of man, passions paralyze the spirit. The sinner can be compared to the one who is tied up in bonds, which, in their turn, make the sinner suffer pain. And in the same way as a captive is not free to go where he wants, the sinner obeys the passion even if he doesn’t want to.⁷¹⁸ Hence, passions as well as karma are the main reason of imprisonment.

Nevertheless, the question is, if *karma* is some sort of the effect remaining after death and determining the next incarnation, can it be compared to passions? The answer is found in the teaching of Theofan the Recluse claiming that after death passions accompany the soul and make it suffer because they (passions) can’t be any longer satisfied.⁷¹⁹

Finally, the equivalent of the Buddhist understanding of karma as the biased judgment of things from the standpoint of an ego, is one more definition of passions proposed by S. M. Zarin. Passions disorient the energies of a human being, constituting something like “the second nature of man”. The core of this pseudo-nature is selfishness or egoistic orientation. Under the pressure of passions man is not any longer capable of the correct perception.⁷²⁰ All his (or her) reactions are corrupted by what is called by Buddhists *avidyā* or ignorance.

To resume, the process of the development of passions in Christianity coincides with that of the originating of karma in Buddhism. Besides, the stages of dissolution of

⁷¹⁵ John Bowker (ed.), *The Oxford Dictionary of World Religions*, p. 535.

⁷¹⁶ Ефрем Сирин, *Уроки о покаянии //Добротолубие*. (Св.-Троицкая Сергиева Лавра, 1992), 2 : с. 344. (from С. С. Хоружий, “Аналитический словарь исихастской антропологии”, с. 55.)

⁷¹⁷ The designation “demons” or “spirits of the certain sins” is the equivalent of passions and is conventional among Eastern ascetics. (Архимандрит Киприан (Керн), *Антропология Св. Григория Паламы* (Москва: Паломник, 1996), с. 408.

⁷¹⁸ Архимандрит Георгий (Тертышников), *Св. Феодан Затворник и его учение о спасении* (Москва: Правило веры, 1999), 418-419.

⁷¹⁹ Ibid.

⁷²⁰ Сергей Зарин, *Аскетизм по Православно-Христианскому учению*, с. 234-35.

gross phenomena during Buddhist meditation are the same as those of the scheme of the development of karma. It has been discovered that Hesychast fathers mention the same “gross phenomena” subject to subversion during prayer, as the masters of Buddhist meditation do. But due to the fact that Hesychasts haven’t elaborated any scheme of the pacification, systematizing only the development of passions, the Hesychast scheme of pacification has been artificially reconstructed by us according to the Buddhist pattern of the conformity between the scheme of the development of karma and that of dissolution of gross phenomena during meditation. This very restored scheme, however, doesn’t pretend to be absolutely correct. The most important thing was to find Christian equivalents for the Buddhist gross phenomena subject to dissolution and to prove that independently of cultural features both, the Tantric and the Hesychast traditions, deal with the same psychic phenomena during the introversion of psyche.

Entering Mysterious Darkness

According to the foundations of tantric physiology human psyche may be compared to a luminous core covered by the layers of different psychic activities. When the layers represented by gross consciousnesses together with the winds they are mounted upon cease (or dissolve), those presented by subtle consciousnesses and their winds are disclosed and become manifest.⁷²¹

The first manifesting subtle consciousness is called the *mind of white appearance* (*snang ba dkar lam pa’i sems*). When the mind of white appearance arises, the meditator perceives the vision of whiteness which is like that of an empty sky on a clear autumn night pervaded by the bright light of the full moon. At this point mind has no longer gross conceptualizations such as the eighty indicative conceptions.⁷²²

As is indicated in the Anthropological part of the research, the subtle level of consciousness (and its winds) is represented by *drops* (Skt. *bindu*, tib. *thig le*). With respect to this fact, the manifestation and the eventual dissolution of the mind of white

⁷²¹ The consideration may be compared with the idea expressed by Gregory of Nyssa in his *Commentary to the Song of Songs*. He writes that in order to open the gates of the heart and to invite the Word inside, it is necessary to take off the veil from the heart. (Григорий Нисский, *Точное изъяснение Песни Песней // Творения святых отцов, в русском переводе*, т. 39 (Москва, 1862), с. 283.)

⁷²² Geshe Kelsang Gyatso, *Clear Light of Bliss: Mahamudra in Vajrayana Buddhism*, p. 72.

appearance is none other than the releasing of the white drop. DbYang's can dga' ba'i blo gros in his *Lamp Thoroughly Illuminating the Presentation of the Three Basic Bodies — Death, Intermediate State and Rebirth*⁷²³ observes that by the force of the fact that all the winds in the right and left channels above the heart enter the central channel through its upper opening [at the top of the head], the knot of the channels at the top of the head is loosened, and the white drop obtained from the father comes downward through the central channel.⁷²⁴ The bright white light appears while the drop is descending towards the heart channel-wheel and lasts until it reaches the top of the indestructible drop. The vision is pervaded by whiteness because of the descending white drop.⁷²⁵

When the subtle wind mounted by the mind of white appearance dissolves, the mind of red increase arises. This mind and its wind are more subtle than the mind and the wind of the white appearance. The sign that appears with the arising of this mind is the vision of an empty sky pervaded by sunlight.⁷²⁶ All the winds in the right and left channels below the heart have entered the central channel through its lower opening [at the base of the spine or in the sexual organ]. Thanks to this, the knot of the channel-wheel in the sexual organ and the navel channel-wheel gradually loosen. The red drop that is obtained from the mother and is situated in the middle of the channel-wheel at the navel, comes upward.⁷²⁷ As it ascends and until it reaches the bottom of the indestructible drop, the dying person perceives the appearance of the mind of red increase.⁷²⁸

⁷²³ The Tibetan original called *gZhi'i sku gsum gyi rnam gzhag rab gsal sgron me* is written by an eighteenth-century scholar and yogi of the dGe lugs pa order of Tibetan Buddhism. The sections on the intermediate state and rebirth depend on Tsong ka pa's presentation of Vasubandhu's *Abhidharmakosha* in his *Great Exposition of the Stages of the Path (Lam rim chen mo)* as well as on his commentary to Nagabodhi's *Ordered Stages of the Means of Achieving Guhyasamaja (Samājasādhanavyavasthāli)*. (Jeffrey Hopkins, "Preface" in Lati Rinbochay and Jeffrey Hopkins, *Death, Intermediate State and Rebirth in Tibetan Buddhism*, p. 21.)

⁷²⁴ Yang-jen-ga-way-lo-dro, *Lamp Thoroughly Illuminating the Presentation of the Three Basic Bodies — Death, Intermediate State and Rebirth* in Lati Rinbochay and Jeffrey Hopkins, *Death, Intermediate State and Rebirth in Tibetan Buddhism*, p. 42.

⁷²⁵ Geshe Kelsang Gyatso, *Clear Light of Bliss: Mahamudra in Vajrayana Buddhism*, p. 85-86.

⁷²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 72-73.

⁷²⁷ Yang-jen-ga-way-lo-dro, *Lamp Thoroughly Illuminating the Presentation of the Three Basic Bodies — Death, Intermediate State and Rebirth*, p. 43.

⁷²⁸ Geshe Kelsang Gyatso, *Clear Light of Bliss: Mahamudra in Vajrayana Buddhism*, p.86.

BbYangs can dga' ba'i blo gros writes that after that, the mind of red increase together with its wind dissolves into the mind of black near-attainment. The upper and lower winds inside the central channel have gathered at the heart, and through the force of this the six-circled knot of the right and left channels at the heart is loosened. The white drop that is above descends, and the red drop that is below ascends. These enter into the middle of the white and red indestructible drops that exist in the manner of a closed case in the center of the central channel at the heart. Due to their meeting, the radiant appearance of near-attainment arises like an autumn sky free of defilement and pervaded by the thick darkness of the beginning of night. The first part of the mind of black near-attainment is accompanied by a sense of an object when the vision of the thick darkness is perceived. During the latter part one is not mindful of any object, as if swooning unconsciously.⁷²⁹

The physiological process of the meeting of the white and red drops, resulting in the vision of the thick darkness, is presented by Geshe Kelsang Gyatso in a different way. He has specified that “the indestructible drop is completely enclosed within the two drops: the white which descended from the crown and the red which ascended from the navel. These two drops cover the indestructible drop like a box. Just as the joining of the upper and lower halves of a box produces utter darkness inside, so too is there an experience of darkness here.”⁷³⁰

The description bears some sort of resemblance to the Christian idea of darkness covering the Divine Light. The topic will be discussed in detail later. At the moment it is sufficient to note that the tantric vision of darkness continued by an overwhelming unconsciousness has strong affinities to the experience of apophatic exhaustion of all human attributes before the vision of Divine Light in Christian mysticism. The designation of the dark state as *near-attainment* can be perfectly grasped in this context. As is precised by Lati Rinbochay and Jeffrey Hopkins, *near-attainment* means the condition near the clear light.⁷³¹

⁷²⁹ Yang-jen-ga-way-lo-dro, *Lamp Thoroughly Illuminating the Presentation of the Three Basic Bodies — Death, Intermediate State and Rebirth*, p. 43.

⁷³⁰ Geshe Kelsang Gyatso, *Clear Light of Bliss: Mahamudra in Vajrayana Buddhism*, p.86.

⁷³¹ The scholars note in their commentary that in order to get the experience of Clear Light, it is necessary to get rid of conceptual and dualistic perception of reality. “Although the eighty conceptions have dissolved, the mind of appearance is conceptual, albeit of a more subtle variety, and dualistic. It is not discursive but involves an imagistic element, and thus is ‘conceptual’. The mind of clear light, on the other hand, is totally non-conceptual and non-dualistic.” (Yang-jen-ga-way-lo-dro, *Lamp Thoroughly*

According to the foundations of Orthodox theology the notion of *darkness* is rather wide and has several meanings. As V. Lossky admits, there exists a possibility to understand *darkness* in the ethical sense of the word. *Darkness* (σκότος τῷ ἕξώτερον) is a metaphorical designation of ignorance contradicted to the light of the divine knowledge. On the other hand the term *darkness* (ἡ γνόφος) is employed by theologians in order to describe the incomprehensibility of God's substance in the context of the apophatic theology.⁷³² At the same time the notion of *darkness* expresses also the particular religious experience of the exhaustion of any psychic attributes during prayer.

In order to find a Hesychast equivalent of the Tibetan state of black near-attainment it would be helpful to mention Staretz Silouan's experience of darkness of divestiture described by his disciple Archimandite Sophrony. For Staretz the term *darkness* in relation to God was not at all acceptable. "He spoke only of the "darkness of divestiture" into which the soul is plunged during mental prayer, when, by means of particular methods, the ascetic strips himself of all presentment and imaginings, all intellectual concepts, arresting mind and imagination and withdrawing himself from thought of this world."⁷³³ The idea of the exhaustion of human being of anything that doesn't represent the apophatic Divinity, is obvious. In order to experience God it is necessary to become similar to Him, i.e., to get rid of any attribute.⁷³⁴ The darkness of divestiture is a result of subversion of psychic activities called by Tibetans "the dissolution of consciousnesses and their winds".

In accord with Lati Rinbochay and Jeffrey Hopkins admitting that *near-attainment* means the condition near the clear light, Staretz Silouan taught, "If we would 'place' this darkness we may say that it lies on the bournes of Uncreated Light. But if the prayer of the soul entering this darkness of divestiture is not powerfully bent on

Illuminating the Presentation of the Three Basic Bodies — Death, Intermediate State and Rebirth, p. 43.) Hence, the swoon as the complete destruction of any awareness of concepts obviously prepares the light vision beyond dualism.

⁷³² Владимир Лосский, "«Мрак» и «свет» в познании Бога", пер. В. Решиковой // Владимир Лосский, *Богословие и боговидение*, ред. Владимир Писляков (Москва: издательство Свято-Владимирского Братства, 2000), с. 68-69.

⁷³³ Archimandite Sophrony, *The Monk of Mount Athos Staretz Silouan 1866-1938*, p. 111.

⁷³⁴ See, for instance, Каллист Катафигиот, *Каллиста Катафигиота О Божественном единении и созерцательной жизни* (29) // Каллиста Катафигиота *О Божественном единении и созерцательной жизни. Иоанна Карпафийского Слово подвижническое* (Казань, 1898), с. 30-31.

God, free of all presentments (visual and conceptual), she may dwell for a time in this darkness without beholding God, for God is not here inherent in it.”⁷³⁵

In another place of his book Archimandrite Sophrony discovers a link between the experience of darkness of divestiture and the heart. This is the heart where darkness and the following meeting with God’s luminous energies are experienced. Archimandrite writes that the mind is able to go very deeply into the heart and to unite with the heart. At this time the mind divests any image and notion, the entrances of the heart close. Thereby the soul experiences darkness that is a precondition of meeting with God.⁷³⁶ The image of the closed heart entrances and the resulting isolation of the soul in darkness can be compared to the physiology of the state of black near-attainment described by Geshe Kelsang Gyatso. According to the Tibetan scholar the indestructible drop is completely enclosed within the two subtle drops like in a box. As a result thick darkness is experienced.

Another great Hesychast mentioning the experience of divine darkness was St. Symeon the New Theologian. Quoting the words of the psalm, “He made darkness his covering” (Ps. 18, 11), Symeon underscores that God being the only Light, has covered His luminosity by darkness of incomprehensibility.⁷³⁷ To put it differently, God’s luminous nature is unapproachable and is experienced by us as darkness. This very darkness perfectly expresses the apophatic nature of the Divinity. Symeon proposes also the ethical understanding of darkness. Here darkness is the appropriate word to qualify the human mode of being which, in its turn, is contradicted to the divine one. God is light whereas we are darkness. Nevertheless, the Divine illumination transforms the souls of the devoted ones into light.⁷³⁸

Hence, Symeon’s interpretation of darkness is double. During spiritual growth the ethical darkness of a human being gradually transforms into the experience of the apophatic darkness of Divine incomprehensibility which, in its turn, is just the threshold of the Divine Light. The Orthodox theologian Archbishop Basil Krivoshein admits that St. Symeon’s darkness should be interpreted in relation with human being and not with

⁷³⁵ Ibid.

⁷³⁶ *Старец Силуан: Жизнь и поучения* (Москва, Ново-Казачье, Минск: Православная община, 1991), с. 128.

⁷³⁷ Преподобный Симеон Новый Богослов, *Божественные гимны (LIX) // Творения*, т. 3 (Свято-Троицкая Сергиева Лавра, 1993), с. 272.

⁷³⁸ Ibid. (VIII), с. 55, (XVII), с. 84. The mentioned hymns are absent in the Latin version of *Hymns*.

God. God is not darkness but the unapproachable Light. In order to preserve us from death He had mercy on us and covered us (and not Himself) with darkness.⁷³⁹

St. Symeon the New Theologian, discussing the condition of the contemplating mind, has underscored that during prayer it loses any motion and is not able to look outside. The mind is covered by darkness (ἡ γυῶφος) and by light. It becomes light inside light, but not light in itself, and is not any longer aware of itself.⁷⁴⁰ Commenting the passage, Archbishop Basil Krivoshein assumes that St. Symeon is speaking here about the ecstatic state of psyche when swoon is experienced by a contemplator.⁷⁴¹ The interpretation of Archbishop is rather helpful for our trend to find a Hesychast parallel for swoon experienced by Tibetan yogins during the manifestation of the mind of black near-attainment.

In accord with Tibetan scholars, V. N. Lossky in his *Mystical Theology of the Orthodox Church*, notes that ecstatic states of the mind, accompanied by the passive condition, subversion of will and a complete loss of self awareness, are usual for the beginners, and, thus, presuppose the experience of the Divine.⁷⁴²

In his other work called *Darkness and Light in the Cognition of God*, V. N. Lossky underscores the ancient roots of the theology of darkness. The theological constructions of Clement of Alexandria to some extent bear a resemblance to those of Symeon the New Theologian in spite of the fact that the former develops the theology of darkness whereas the latter is the adherent of the theology of light. For Clement there are two types of darkness. The first one (ἡ γυῶφος or τὸ σκοῦτος) expresses human ignorance concerning God. It is impossible to know God through our natural intellectual capacities. This is the so called *subjective* ignorance. The second mode of darkness is the *objective* ignorance concerning God. It means that even when a contemplator frees himself of any intellectual and emotional activity of his psyche, God remains unapproachable to him. Here ignorance is termed τὸ βάθος (or abyss) because

⁷³⁹ *Traites Theologiques et Ethiques* ed. Darrouzes I Theol 1-3; Eth 1-3 SChr 122 1966, II Eth 4-15 SChr 129 1967 (Eth. 1. 12. 129-133) (from Архиепископ Василий (Кривошеин), *Преподобный Симеон Новый Богослов (949-1022)* (Нижний Новгород: Издательство братства во имя святого князя Александра Невского, 1996), с. 248.

⁷⁴⁰ *Chapitres Theologiques, gnostiques et pratiques* ed. Darrouzes SChr 51 1957 (Сар. 2.17-18) (from Архиепископ Василий (Кривошеин), *Преподобный Симеон Новый Богослов (949-1022)*, с. 249.

⁷⁴¹ Архиепископ Василий (Кривошеин), *Преподобный Симеон Новый Богослов (949-1022)*, с. 249.

⁷⁴² В. Н. Лосский, *Очерк мистического богословия Восточной церкви* // В. Н. Лосский, *Очерк мистического богословия Восточной церкви. Догматическое богословие* (Москва: Центр СЭИ, 1991), с. 157.

Father's substance is fathomless for our cognition. Hence, the former darkness which is designated by us earlier as the *ethical* one, is some sort of threshold of the latter one. As in the case of St. Symeon the New Theologian, the ethical or subjective darkness of a human being gradually transforms into experience of the objective darkness of the Divine incomprehensibility.⁷⁴³

Another great representative of the Orthodox tradition, discussing darkness, was Gregory Nazianzen. According to him here on earth we have to contact God in the "cloud" as Moses did, for God has put darkness (τὴ σκῆτος) between Him and us in order to make us become attached to light which is achieved by us with a such difficulty.⁷⁴⁴ Commenting the passage V. N. Lossky in his *Theology of Light in the Teaching of St. Gregory Palamas* attributes the Christological content to the matter. He indicates that Christ's body [representing the human nature] can be interpreted as darkness covering His luminous divinity. The divine nature of Christ, in its turn, manifested in a miraculous way and became obvious to the three disciples on the mount Tabor.⁷⁴⁵

Finally, it would be essential to grasp the doctrinal background of the experience of darkness of divestiture in both traditions. If one accepts the idea of V. N. Lossky about doctrine as the attempt to inscribe mystical experience into the notional language of logic, he (or she) should search for the correspondence between the experience of darkness of divestiture (or of the mind of black near-attainment) and the doctrine both in Tibetan Buddhism and Hesychasm.

Here it is helpful to remember the idea of *śūnyatā* in Mahāyāna Buddhism. The meaning of *emptiness* is that every phenomenon is devoid of an intrinsic nature on account of dependent origination.⁷⁴⁶ To put it differently, anything, including man, does not possess an existence of its own. The human being and all other phenomena are just links of the chain of dependent origination and exist due to each other. Obviously, the idea of *śūnyatā* has much in common with the notion of *māyā* in Hinduism. *Māyā* is the

⁷⁴³ Климент Александрийский, *Stromata* V, 11-12, PG 9, 109. (in Владимир Лосский, "Мрак и свет в познании Бога", пер. В. Решиковой // Владимир Лосский, *Богословие и боговидение* (Москва: издательство Свято-Владимирского Братства, 2000), с. 69-70.)

⁷⁴⁴ Свт. Григорий Богослов, *Oratio* 38, in *Theophania*, 8, PG 36, 320. (in Владимир Лосский, "Мрак и свет в познании Бога", пер. В. Решиковой // Владимир Лосский, *Богословие и боговидение*, с. 186.)

⁷⁴⁵ Владимир Лосский, *Боговидение*, пер. В. Решиковой // Владимир Лосский, *Богословие и боговидение*, с. 186.

⁷⁴⁶ Moti Lal Pandit, *Beyond the Word: Buddhist Approach to Knowledge and Reality* (New Delhi: Intercultural Publications, 1997), p. 101.

illusory character of the self-existence of the world because the great number of forms originate in *brahman*. In other words they are none other than a projection of *brahman* and, therefore, do not exist outside *brahman*.⁷⁴⁷

On the other hand, it is common knowledge, that *brahman* in Hinduism, *nirvāna* in Theravāda, *tathatā* in Mādhyamaka, and *ālaya-vijnāna* in Vijñānavāda are beyond attributes and forms. Hence, all attributes, forms and concepts should dissolve before the direct experience of the ultimate reality is achieved. This means that during the manifestation of the mind of black-near-attainment, when all physical and psychic activities are subverted, man experiences this very absence of self-attributes as thick darkness. The following swoon is an obvious culmination of the experience of *śūnyatā*, i.e., of the absence of self-nature. Man is not any longer aware of himself because the illusory *self-existence* accompanied by non-existent self-attributes is going through the process of destruction. Human being is “going out” of the chain of co-arising; now he is beyond any change and is ready to be united with the disclosed *tathatā* or *ālaya-vijnāna* manifesting spontaneously as clear light.

A similar doctrinal implication can be found also in the case of Hesychast darkness of divestiture. According to Christian doctrine no-thing exists of itself. In unison with countless Christian mystics, St. Augustine in his *Confessiones* admits, “Thou art every where, Whom no place encompasseth! And Thou alone art near, even to those that remove far from Thee.”⁷⁴⁸ It is discernible that in the quotation the

⁷⁴⁷ The idea is in conformity with what has been admitted by Sydney Cave in his *Redemption Hindu and Christian*. He wrote that in the earliest parts of Upanishads (*Bṛihadāranyaka Upanishad* II. 4 and IV. 5) “it is clearly taught that it is only on account of the Self that anything has value. Only in so far as external objects are related to the self, do they exist. The sounds of a drum have no existence apart from the drum that is struck.” (Sydney Cave, D.D., *Redemption Hindu and Christian* (London, Edinburgh, Glasgow, New York, Toronto, Melbourne, Cape Town, Bombay: Humphrey Milford: Oxford University Press, 1919), p. 69.)

⁷⁴⁸ Saint Augustine, *The Confessions of Saint Augustine* (book V), trans. Edward B. Pusey, D. D. (New York: Pocket Books, 1951), p. 65.

The words of Augustine correspond to those of the 139th psalm, “Where can I go from Your Spirit? Where can I flee from Your presence? I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there. I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast. [...] For You created my inmost being.” (Ps. 139, 7-9, 13)

It is curious that the assertion of Augustine bears also a close resemblance to the words in the beginning of the beautiful *Īśā Upanishad*, “All this, whatsoever moves on earth, is to be hidden in the Lord (the self)”. (quotation from Sydney Cave, D.D., *Redemption Hindu and Christian*, op. cit., p. 69.).

question of God's "omni"-existence is discussed. God is everywhere in the form of His existence. In other words every phenomenon, including man, originates from God or shares God's existence. Thereby no-thing exists of itself. Obviously, this very illusory self-existence is called by Christians *nihil*. On the other hand God is the apophatic entity beyond any attribute and concept. To achieve the experience of the Divinity all psychic activities should be "dissolved" in this very *nihil*. The experience of *nihil* or the destruction of illusory self-existence together with illusory self-attributes manifests as darkness of divestiture when, according to V. Lossky, man loses self-awareness. In fact, the darkness is the threshold of a new experience, i. e., of the complete union with God at the other side of *nihil*, beyond any change and separation.

To sum up, Christian *nihil* and Buddhist *śūnyatā* are two notions describing the same mystical experience of divestiture before the essential union of the two, God and man in Hesychasm, and mother clear light and son clear light in Tibetan Buddhism, is achieved.

The Experience of Light in Hesychasm and Tibetan Buddhism

The culmination of the introversion in both traditions is the apparition of Light. In Hesychasm it is called the 'Uncreated Light' whereas in Tibetan Buddhism it is denoted as the 'Clear Light of Bliss'.

According to the monistic model of Buddhism the Clear Light is situated in man from the very beginning. Man possesses the ultimate reality in himself in the obscured form, hence, his task is to disclose this very ultimate reality called the 'indestructible very subtle mind and its wind' manifesting as Clear Light. As dbYangs can dga' ba'i blo gros stresses in his *gZhi'i sku gsum gyi rnam gzhas rab gsal sgron me* ('Lamp Thoroughly Illuminating the Presentation of the Three Basic Bodies – Death, Intermediate State and Rebirth') "the very subtle wind and mind that have existed in the

The stanzas of the 139th psalm in turn can be compared to the famous hymn dedicated to Varuna (Atharva Veda IV. 16): "If a man stands, or walks, or moves, in secret, or goes to his lying down or his uprising, what two men whisper as they sit together, King Varuna knows: he as the third is present. If anyone should flee afar beyond the heaven, King Varuna would still be round about him. Proceeding hither from the sky his envoys look, thousand-eyed, over the earth beneath them. All this the royal Varuna beholdeth, all between heaven and earth and all beyond them." (Quotation from Sydney Cave, op. cit., p. 41)

ordinary state from the beginning [in a non-manifest state] are made manifest [...]. Thus this is not a case of an appearance of vacuous sky from the outside.”⁷⁴⁹ The disclosing is possible only in the case of complete nakedness of the very subtle mind and its wind. The experience of Clear Light is denoted also as “all empty because it is empty of all gross and subtle winds; the only appearance perceived by it is that of being empty.”⁷⁵⁰

The description of the disclosed very subtle mind as being *naked* is usual for the Tibetan sources. For instance, in *Bar do thos grol* it is called the “naked, spotless intellect”⁷⁵¹ or “naked consciousness” which should be recognized as the Clear Light⁷⁵². According to the *rDzogs chen* text called *sGron madrug gigdams pa* (“Doctrine of the Six Lights”) the state of pure Awareness is experienced by contemplator “in its complete nakedness”.⁷⁵³ We can also read that the mentioned state is the result of “the completely purified condition” when “the Basis of All is not obstructed”.⁷⁵⁴ The author explains that during death “the state of pure Awareness is separated from the physical body of flesh and blood; it remains without any support, naked”.⁷⁵⁵

The term “nakedness” or “naked awareness” (Tib. *rig pa rjen pa*) seems to be conventional also among the modern scholars. For example, the translator and commentator of the Tibetan rDzogs chen texts, John Myrdhin Reynolds explains that the conventional mental structures encloses our “immediate naked Awareness”; for this reason man should make them dissolve in order to rediscover the naked awareness.⁷⁵⁶ The scholar mentions “the naked face of one’s (original) awareness” which should be uncovered “so that the knowledge becomes visible within oneself”.⁷⁵⁷

According to the theistic model of Hesychasm the Divine Light does not belong to man from the beginning. God and man are two separated entities endowed with their

⁷⁴⁹ Yang-jen-ga-way-lo-dro, *Lamp Thoroughly Illuminating the Presentation of the Three Basic Bodies – Death, Intermediate State and Rebirth* in Lati Rinbochay and Jeffrey Hopkins, *Death, Intermediate State in Tibetan tradition*, p. 45.

⁷⁵⁰ Geshe Kelsang Gyatso, *Clear Light of Bliss: Mahamudra in Vajrayana Buddhism*, p. 75.

⁷⁵¹ *The Tibetan Book of the Dead or the After-Death Experiences on the Bardo Plane* (I, I), p. 91.

⁷⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 97.

⁷⁵³ *The Doctrine of the Six Lights* (Section II) in *Sacred Tibetan Teachings on Death and Liberation*, p. 72.

⁷⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

⁷⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 71.

⁷⁵⁶ John Myrdhin Reynolds, *The Golden Letters: The Three Statements of Garab Dorje*, p. 98.

⁷⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 52.

own substances and modes of being. God and not man is the source of the uncreated Light. This fact, however, doesn't mean that man is unable to perceive this Light. The idea is explicitly presented by Archimandrite Sophrony like this, "Divine Light is eternal life, the kingdom of God, the uncreated energy of Divinity. It is not contained in created human nature and, being of a different nature, cannot be discovered by ascetic techniques. It comes exclusively as a gift of God's mercy."⁷⁵⁸ Although the created substance of man can't be changed, his mode of being can be altered from the created to the uncreated and luminous one. The perception of Light is possible beyond human created nature. Before the vision of Light happens, man, however, must be divested of all created qualities. The border between the natural mode of being and the supernatural one is called by Staretz Silouan *the darkness of divestiture*. As is already mentioned in the previous paragraph, this darkness lies "on the bourness of Uncreated Light"⁷⁵⁹. The term *divestiture* is somehow synonymous to the Buddhist *nakedness*.

However, it is apparent that in Buddhism the naked mind is luminous whereas the divested mind of Christians is dark: in Buddhism the mind itself is Light whereas in Christianity the emptied mind is just *nihil* – nothing waiting for the new content. The divested mind of Hesychasts can be compared with an empty jar or lamp which is supposed to accept the new content, i.e., Light, from outside. The idea is explained by the theologian of the 4th century Evagrius Ponticus like this. During prayer *ὁ νοῦς* becomes completely simple and naked (Gr. *γυμνός*). This is the state when all discursive thoughts are annihilated.⁷⁶⁰ In this very state the Light of Trinity is kindled in the mind; the mind, in turn, is compared with the sky brightened with this very Light of Trinity.⁷⁶¹ The necessity to contemplate God by the naked mind (*γυμνῆ τῆ διανοίᾳ*) is confirmed by Mark the Zealot as well.⁷⁶²

That the Divine Light becomes *implanted*⁷⁶³ in the heart of a zealot during prayer, is a matter of fact in Hesychasm and needs not to be elaborated. According to the writings of Christian theologians, the Light is usually *received* or *kindled* and not

⁷⁵⁸ Archimandrite Sophrony, *The Monk of Mount Athos Staretz Silouan 1866-1938*, p. 110.

⁷⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 111.

⁷⁶⁰ Евагрий Понтийский, *Kephalaia gnostica VII. 26.* (In Владимир Лосский, *Боговидение*, пер. В. Решиковой // Владимир Лосский, *Богословие и боговидение*, с. 210.)

⁷⁶¹ *Ibid.*, V, 79.

⁷⁶² Марк Подвижник, *De temperantia et virtute* c. X, col. 1057; cnfr. XXXI, col. 1064CD: c. IX, col. 1057: c. II, col. 1053D-1056A. (In Сергей Зарин, *Аскетизм по Православно-Христианскому учению*, с. 437.)

⁷⁶³ The term of Gabriele Winkler in Gabriele Winkler, *The JesusPrayer in Eastern Spirituality*, p. 23.

disclosed in the depth of the heart. For instance, St. Macarius teaches that in the hearts of the devoted ones the substantial Divine Light is *kindled*.⁷⁶⁴ St. Symeon the New Theologian writes about the “endeavor to *receive* the kingdom within us”⁷⁶⁵. In *Discourses* we can also read, “When the lamp of the soul, that is, the mind, has been *kindled*, then it knows that a divine fire has taken hold of it and inflamed it.”⁷⁶⁶ Gregory Palamas underscores that Light *illuminates*⁷⁶⁷; it is communicated by God to the soul.⁷⁶⁸

The clearest example of the Light coming from the outer space, is found in the *Hymns of the Divine Love* written by Symeon the New Theologian. The experience is presented by the mystic in the following way,

“[...] I was seated in the light of a lamp that was shining on me.
And it was illuminating the darkness and the shadows of night.
It seemed indeed to me that in the light I was occupied in reading,
but as if I were scrutinizing the words and examining the propositions.
Then as I was meditating, Master, on these things,
Suddenly You appeared from above, much greater than the sun
And You shone brilliantly from the heavens down into my heart.
But all the rest, I was seeing as a deep shadow.
However in the middle there was a column of light,
Cutting through the air completely
And it passed from the heavens down to me, miserable one.”⁷⁶⁹

In the extract Light is simultaneously transcendent and immanent, at the same time is situated in heaven and implanted in the heart without any division of the Light.

Going back to the notion of *nakedness*, the comparison of the mind to the sky made by Evagrius, is worthy of our attention. This Christian image of the sky as the symbolic location of God’s throne is employed here in order to designate the purified soul of man. It is discernible, that Evagrius is not the only Christian theologian employing the image of the sky in the context of *psyche*. The comparison is important for our research because the image of sky is typical for Tibetan Buddhism.

The sky, incarnating the deity *gNam* (the god of blue sky) in ancient Bon religion and symbolizing permanence, is a special image for Tibetans.⁷⁷⁰ rDzogs chen tradition

⁷⁶⁴ Преподобный Макарий Египетский, *Духовные слова и послания* (17, 1), с. 575.

⁷⁶⁵ Symeon the New Theologian, *The Discourses* (XV, 5), p. 197.

⁷⁶⁶ Ibid. (XV, 3), p. 195.

⁷⁶⁷ Gregory Palamas, *The Triads* (I, III, 18), p. 62.

⁷⁶⁸ Ibid. (I, III, 23), p. 39.

⁷⁶⁹ St. Symeon the New Theologian, *Hymns of Divine Love* (hymn 25), trans. George A. Maloney, S.J. (Denville, New Jersey: Dimension Books, n.d.), p. 135.

has inherited this image, proposing meditations on empty space (sky)⁷⁷¹. Besides, in Tibetan Buddhism sky is considered to be a projection of mind. The image of the sky, however, is so employed in other religious traditions as well. For instance, Indian treatises in *Vijnānavada* employ this image in order to describe *ālaya-vijñāna*, whereas the representatives of the early, medieval and modern Christian tradition make use of the image in order to describe the ultimate entity as well as the purified human soul. It is evident that the sky if free of clouds is just an empty formless transparent space. This is the reason why in the descriptions the words *sky*, *transparent*, *space*, *void* etc. are connected with each other and sometimes are even synonymous. Several extracts from the writings of Tibetan masters and Christian theologians and zealots will follow. The first extract is from the famous *Bar do thos grol*,

“O nobly-born (so and so by name), the time hath now come for thee to seek the Path [in reality]. Thy breathing is about to cease. Thy guru hath set thee face to face before with the Clear Light; and now thou art about to experience it in its Reality in the *Bardo* state, wherein all things are like the *void* and *cloudless sky*, and the *naked*, spotless intellect is like unto a *transparent vacuum* without circumference or center. At this moment, know thou thyself; and abide in that state.”⁷⁷²

Here the disclosed mind is described as a *transparent vacuum* without any form. All things which belong to the same mind are like the *void and cloudless sky*. The following extract explains the previous one,

“Thine own intellect, which is now voidness, yet not to be regarded as the voidness of nothingness, but as being intellect itself, unobstructed, shining, thrilling, and blissful, is the very consciousness (*rig pa*), the All-Good Buddha.”

Also dbYangs can dga' ba'i blo gros in his *gZhi'i sku gsum gyi rnam gzhas rab gsal sgron me* ('Lamp Thoroughly Illuminating the Presentation of the Three Basic Bodies – Death, Intermediate State and Rebirth') associates the very subtle mind and its wind with the *vacuous sky*.⁷⁷³

⁷⁷⁰ See more about the topic in Рамачандра Рао, *Тантрические традиции Тибета* // Рамачандра Рао, *Тантра, мантра, янтра. Тантрические традиции Тибета*, пер. А. Иванников (Беловодье, 2002), с. 128.

⁷⁷¹ The practice, called *thod rgal* is supposed “to integrate with this light, which although it seemingly manifests externally to the individual, is really internal”. (John Myrdhin Reynolds, *The Golden Letters: The Three Statements of Garab Dorje*, p. 158.)

⁷⁷² *The Tibetan Book of the Dead or the After-Death Experiences on the Bardo Plane* (I, I), p. 91.

⁷⁷³ Yang-jen-ga-way-lo-dro, *Lamp Thoroughly Illuminating the Presentation of the Three Basic Bodies*, p. 45.

In the *Doctrine of the Six Lights* we can also read, “The Basis of All is like the sky, without any limitations. Innate wisdom, like the sun, shines equally in all directions. The miraculous manifestations of the Three Bodies shine like the endless rays of the sun.”⁷⁷⁴ It is important to distinguish between the universal Basis of All, called in rDzogs chen tradition *gzhi* and compared in the texts to the empty space of the sky, and the individual awareness called *rig pa* and manifesting as light similar to the sun.

Commenting on Patrul Rinpoche text, known as the *mKhas-pa sri rgyal-po'i khyad-chos*, “The Special Teaching of the Wise and Glorious King”, John Myrdhin Reynolds also distinguishes between the mentioned notions, “this immediate Awareness which abides as the Base (*gzhir gnas kyi rig pa*) is the Dharmakāya itself. In his direct introduction, the master likens the Base (*gzhi*) to the empty open dimension of the infinite sky, while Rigpa, its capacity for awareness, is like the sun shining in the sky. The energy or potentiality of this Awareness (*rig pa'i rtsal*), its knowledge or gnosis (*ye shes*), is like the countless rays of sunlight that illumines all things in the world.”⁷⁷⁵

There are rather curious parallels concerning the images of sky, sun and its rays in Christian literature. It is common knowledge that in Christianity God is usually compared to the sun. Archimandrite Sophrony explains the symbol of clear blue sky in the context of mystical experience, “When thanks to the gift from Above I was endowed with vision of Uncreated Divine Light, with joy I recognized the blue sky of our “blue” planet as the symbol of the radiance of the transcendent glory. This very radiance is everywhere. It fills all the abysses of the universe, being permanently untouchable and unapproachable for the creatures. The blue is the color of transcendence.”⁷⁷⁶

The transcendent God, however, becomes immanent, i.e., is implanted in the soul in the form of Light similar to the sensual sun. The soul then becomes the container of the “sun”, and, therefore, is compared to the sky or space. St Gregory of Nyssa, for instance, discussing the mystical experience, admits that the object of contemplation is the Divine Light seen in the *clear air* (ἡ αἰθήρα) *of the heart*; that is the Kingdom of

⁷⁷⁴ *The Doctrine of the Six Lights* (Section II) in *Sacred Tibetan Teachings on Death and Liberation*, p. 62-63.

⁷⁷⁵ John Myrdhin Reynolds, *The Golden Letters: The Three Statements of Garab Dorje*, p. 84.

⁷⁷⁶ Архимандрит Софроний (Сахаров), *Видеть Бога как Он есть* (Essex: Stavropegic Monastery of St. John the Baptist, 1985), c. 159.

Heaven in us. It happens when the bodily vague is removed from the spiritual eyes.⁷⁷⁷ It is discernible that the journey to God transforms into the interior journey.⁷⁷⁸

A similar comparison may be founded the treatises of Evagrius. He teaches that while the mind acquires the knowledge of God, he simultaneously acknowledges himself as the container of God, as the place perceiving the Light of Trinity. For this reason he sees himself to be light as the ‘sapphire’ and the ‘sky’. This is the same naked mind (νοῦς γυμνός).⁷⁷⁹

St. Symeon the New Theologian, in turn, thanks God for the miraculous transformation in his soul purified of any passion. “You have released my sky of any cloud”, Symeon writes. The mystic admits he doesn’t understand how and where from God comes into the soul and manifests as the other sun.⁷⁸⁰ Often the implantation of the Divine Light in the heart during prayer is anticipated by the vision of God’s face as the sun without any image above in the sky.⁷⁸¹ For Symeon the apparition of Light is always connected with the emotional joy; when the Light disappears the mystic feels deep sorrow,

“But, as the radiant sun which penetrates into the clouds
And no longer lets itself be seen nor its light appear,
But sheds on the inhabitants of the earth a pale glimmer,
So, believe me, my God is hidden from us
And a vast and profound darkness envelops us all.”⁷⁸²

Passions are associated by the mystic with the cloud and smoke,
“These passions of anger and rage which in me raise
a smoke, a cloud over my head
and which obstructs the eyes of my mind;

⁷⁷⁷ Св.т. Григорий Нисский, *De beatitudinibus oratio VI*, PG 44, 1269. (In Владимир Лосский, “Мрак и свет в познании Бога”, пер. В. Решиковой // Владимир Лосский, *Богословие и боговидение*, с. 75; Владимир Лосский, *Боговидение*, пер. В. Решиковой // Владимир Лосский, *Богословие и боговидение*, с. 190.)

⁷⁷⁸ Владимир Лосский, *Боговидение*, пер. В. Решиковой // Владимир Лосский, *Богословие и боговидение*, с. 191.

⁷⁷⁹ Евагрий Понтийский, *Kephalaia gnostica III*, 6. (In Владимир Лосский, *Боговидение*, пер. В. Решиковой // Владимир Лосский, *Богословие и боговидение*, с. 210.)

⁷⁸⁰ Преп. Симеон Новый Богослов, *Слово 90* // *Слова*. Т. 2. С. 487-488. (In Владимир Лосский, *Боговидение*, пер. В. Решиковой // Владимир Лосский, *Богословие и боговидение*, с. 249.)

⁷⁸¹ Euch. 1. 175-180. (In Архиепископ Василий Кривошеин, *Преподобный Симеон Новый Богослов (949-1022)* (Нижегород: издательство братства во имя святого Александра Невского, 1996), 245.

⁷⁸² St. Symeon the New Theologian, *Hymns of Divine Love* (hymn 12), p. 40.

and, indeed, just as darkness covers the eyes
again and compels them,
alas, to close, in the same way they deprive me of You,
Light to which all aspire, but which very few really seek.”⁷⁸³

When purified, the true monks become like sun whereas their cells transform into
the sky,
“But he, who makes a heaven of his cell through virtue,
contemplates and looks upon the Creator of Heaven and earth,
installed in his cell.
And he adores Him and is united always with the Light that never sets.”⁷⁸⁴

The image of clouds is usual also for Tibetan Buddhism. Comparing the clear awareness to the cloudless sky, John Myrdhin Reynolds asserts that “On various days (that is during our various different lifetimes or incarnations experiences in Samsara) the sky may be filled with the clouds from horizon to horizon. The sun is there in the sky, shining all the time, but because of the thick layers of clouds, the face of the sun is invisible to us down here below, and we do not recognize its presence.”⁷⁸⁵

Concluding the discussion about the universal character of the images of sky, sun and clouds, we shall turn attention to the most astonishing affinities between Christian and Buddhist descriptions of Light experience. In Tibetan sources about death and dying the vision of Clear Light is usually compared to a *dawn sky in autumn*. The author of the mentioned “Lamp Thoroughly Illuminating the Presentation of the Three Basic Bodies” has proposed the following explanation, “The reason why an autumn sky is used in the example is that the summer rains have suppressed well the rising of earth particles into intermediate space, and the sky is free from the obstructions of clouds. Since a composite of these two features occurs frequently with great clarity during the autumn, an autumn sky is used in the example.”⁷⁸⁶ A similar effect of pure space is, obviously, observed in the European part of the continent in the spring, becoming a perfect image of Light experience for the Christian mystic Archimandrite Sophrony. He

⁷⁸³ Ibid., p. 39.

⁷⁸⁴ Ibid. (hymn 27), p. 143.

⁷⁸⁵ John Myrdhin Reynolds, *The Golden Letters: The Three Statements of Garab Dorje*, p. 84.

⁷⁸⁶ Yang-jen-ga-way-lo-dro, *Lamp Thoroughly Illuminating the Presentation of the Three Basic Bodies*, p. 46.

designates the Divine Light as *the dawn of Resurrection* because the Light is “calm as a dawn in spring”.⁷⁸⁷ It is interesting that, although Tibetans and Christians mention different seasons the image of the pure dawn space is common. Similarities in the descriptions of the Light experience are the reason for the conclusion about the universal character of the apparition of Light during psychological introversion.

One more universal feature of Light is the apophatic, i.e., the incomprehensible character of the Light. If described Light acquires the negative features which are supposed to distinguish Light from all other phenomena. It is common knowledge that Eastern Christian tradition prefers the apophatic theology to the kataphatic one. The negative theology is the appropriate manner of discussing God’s matters. Describing the experience of the uncreated Light, Hesychasm follows the apophatic tradition of the fathers. For instance, Gregory Palamas presents the vision of St. Paul and experiences of the Saints as follows, “This most joyful reality, which ravished Paul, and made his mind go out from every creature but yet return entirely to himself — this he beheld as a light of revelation, though not of sensible bodies; a light *without limit, depth, height or lateral extension*. He saw absolutely no limit to his vision and to the light which shone round about him; but rather it was as it were a sun infinitely brighter and greater than the universe, with himself standing in the midst of it, having become all eye. Such more or less, was his vision. This is why the great Macarius says that this light is *infinite and supercelestial*.”⁷⁸⁸

Going further to the topic of the divine ray containing the whole world, Gregory writes, “Another saint, one of the most perfect, saw the whole universe contained in a single ray of this intelligible sun — even though he himself did not see this light as it is in itself, in its full extent, but only to that extent that he was capable of receiving it. By this contemplation and by his supra-intelligible union with this light, he did not learn what it is by nature, but he learnt that it really exists, is *supernatural and supercelestial, different from all things*.”⁷⁸⁹

There are also many extracts from St. Symeon’s writings where he witnesses about the apophatic qualities of the Light. God shows to Symeon His face as the sun without image (ἥλιον ἄμορφον)⁷⁹⁰; the apparition is without tracing (τὸ σχῆμα),

⁷⁸⁷ Архимандрит Софроний, *Рождение в Царство непоколебимое* (Москва: Паломник, 2000), с. 201.

⁷⁸⁸ Gregory Palamas, *The Triads* (I, III, 21-22), p. 38.

⁷⁸⁹ Ibid. (I, III, 22), p. 38-39.

⁷⁹⁰ Euch. 2.175-180. (in Архиепископ Василий Кривошеин, *Преподобный Симеон Новый Богослов (949-1022)*, с. 245.)

look (τὸ εἶδος) and imprint (τὸ ἐκτύπωμα)⁷⁹¹. And, although the form of apparitions can differ (sometimes Light comes in the form of sphere⁷⁹² or cloud or is similar to light waters), it is simultaneously “simple” and “without look and image, in the image which is beyond image” (μορφῆ ἀμόρφω)⁷⁹³. The apparitions of Light are always “beyond understanding”.⁷⁹⁴ The indescribable character of the Light is explained by the mystic as follows,

“Here, I am speechless and my intellect knows
what is being fulfilled but *cannot explain it*;
it contemplates, it desires to express it
but does not find any words;
what it sees is *invisible, completely destitute of form,*
without any composition, simple, infinite in greatness.
In fact, it knows no beginning, never discovers any end
And knows not any kind of center; how then will it express what it knows?”⁷⁹⁵

Similarly Light is described by other Hesychasts. As is obvious, the features of the Light differ from those of creatures and, thus are often expressed in the form of negation or by the prefix *supra-*. The prefix is intended to present the transcending character of the Light and is vital only in the context of agapeic categories of the *natural* and *supra-natural*, of the *nature* and *other nature*.

The same absence of attributes of Light is noted also by Tantric Buddhists in *Bar do thos grol*, “Just as your breath stops, the objective clear light of the first between will dawn as previously described to you by your teacher. Your outer breath and you experience reality stark and void like space, your immaculate naked awareness dawning clear and void without horizon and center”.⁷⁹⁶

⁷⁹¹ Eth. 1.3.99-103. (in Архиепископ Василий Кривошеин, *Преподобный Симеон Новый Богослов (949-1022)*, с. 246.

⁷⁹² See, for instance, hymn 1. Here we can read, “It rises in me, within my poor heart, like the sun or like the solar disc it shows itself spherical, luminous, yes, like a flame. I repeat, I do not know what I can say about it and I would wish to be silent – if only I had been able to — but the tremendous marvel causes my heart to beat faster and opens my mouth, my tainted mouth, and makes me speak and write in spite of myself.” (St. Symeon the New Theologian, *Hymns of Divine Love* (hymn 1), p. 12)

⁷⁹³ Преп. Симеон Новый Богослов, *Божественные гимны* (гимн 46) (Сергиев посад, 1917), с. 212. (In Сергей Хоружий, *К феноменологии аскезы* (Москва: Издательство гуманитарной литературы, 1998), с. 167.) The hymn is not at all found in the Latin version.

⁷⁹⁴ Symeon the New Theologian, *The Discourses* (XVII, 1), p. 205.

⁷⁹⁵ St. Symeon the New Theologian, *Hymns of Divine Love* (hymn 1), p. 11.

⁷⁹⁶ Кшиуке Ф.А. Ергкьфт ъекфты. Ъб Еру Ешиуефт Ищшл ша еру Вуфѡб з. 122.

Here the words of the Tibetan master have strong affinities to the testimony of Symeon the New Theologian. The apophatic character of the enlightened mind is also confirmed by rDzogs chen sources. For instance, in the *mKhas pa sri rgyal po'i khyad chos* (“The Special Teaching of the Wise and Glorious King”) the state of the immediate intrinsic awareness is represented as being startled, directly penetrating and indescribable.⁷⁹⁷ Besides, according to the commentator’s explanation it means that “in the state of contemplation, we are freed from all conceptions (*gtad so dang bral ba*).”⁷⁹⁸ In other words, the presence of attributes needs the presence of conceptions in the human mind. When the conceptions are destroyed, the experience becomes devoid of any attributes. In order to explain the idea more completely, the translator and commentator of the text John Myrdhin Reynolds proposes a quotation from the *Prajnapāramitā Sūtra*, “The Perfection of Wisdom is inconceivable by the intellect and inexpressible in words (*blo ‘das brjod bral*),”⁷⁹⁹ underscoring once more the ineffable or apophatic character of the Light experience.

At the same time in Buddhism which represents the non-dualistic system there can never be the idea of the ‘other nature’. The ultimate reality is present in man from the very beginning. As John Myrdhin Reynolds underscores, the Clear Light is, in reality, the “natural condition or mode of being (*gnas lugs*)”.⁸⁰⁰ For this reason according to the theory there is no sense to speak about transcendence. Nevertheless, the experience of Light differs so much from any sensitive and mental impression we have in every day life that even in the works of the Tibetan masters and scholars we can find similarities to Christian descriptions of the transcending⁸⁰¹ character of the Clear Light. For example, in the commentary to the *Tshig gsum gnad du brdeg pa* (“The Three Statements That Strike the Essential Points”) of Garab Dorje one’s own Primordial State or the Clear Light is characterized as the “inherent *translucent* radiance

⁷⁹⁷ John Myrdhin Reynolds (trans.), *The Special Teaching of the Wise and Glorious King* in *The Golden Letters*, p. 44.

⁷⁹⁸ *Commentary on “The Special Teaching of the Wise and Glorious King,”* by the Translator in John Myrdhin Reynolds (trans.), *The Golden Letters*, p. 82.

⁷⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 83.

⁸⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 96.

⁸⁰¹ The terms *apophatic* and *transcending*, although not synonymous, are connected to each other. *Apophatic* means “without features”, whereas *transcending* is a condition *beyond* natural mode of being. Natural phenomena are always endowed with features whereas the divine matters are free of them. The experience of the absence of attributes usually causes the feeling of transcendence both in Hesychasm and Tibetan Buddhism.

(*rang gdangs*)⁸⁰². This very transcending experience is always connected with the apophatic character of the Light. In the commentary on *The Special Teaching of the Wise and Glorious King*, mentioned above, we deal with the “knowledge or primal awareness that has *transcended* the mind” (*sems las ‘das pa’ i ye shes ji bzhin par bzhugs pa*), with “a self-existing state which *transcends* all objects of thought and all efforts of speech and mind” (*ngag dang yid kyi rtsol rtog gi yul las ‘das pa’ i rang gnas*) and with a single ultimate reality “that transcends all dualities and pluralities”.⁸⁰³ It is obvious that the object of transcendence is none other than *sems* or the mind obscured by the dichotomous conceptualization. It means that Tibetans do not mean the apprehension of *the other nature*. The object of apprehension here is *the other*, i.e., the purified, *mode of being* of the same mind. In any way, independently of doctrinal details, the zealots of both traditions, i.e., of Hesychasm and of Tibetan Buddhism, experience some sort of going beyond themselves during meditation/prayer.

The transcending character of Light experience is described by the Hesychast master of contemplation Symeon the New Theologian in the following way. He is seemingly going out of his habitual “in the body” to a higher plane of spiritual existence during the vision of Light.⁸⁰⁴ Gregory Palamas, in his turn, tells us about the state of Divine contemplation wherein “the mind transcends prayer” and the mind “finds itself in ecstasy in the midst of incomprehensible realities”.⁸⁰⁵

It is discernible that in order to describe the Divine incomprehensibility, the image of darkness is often employed by representatives of the Eastern Christian tradition. V. Lossky admits that the image of the Divine Darkness is a dogmatic metaphor of God’s transcendence rather than a real experience of God which, in turn, manifests as the vision of Light.⁸⁰⁶ Nevertheless it would be very difficult to distinguish between Darkness and Light because the vision of Light is inexpressible in words. It is apophatic, i.e., dark by its character. Obviously, that is a reason for such a contradictory designation of God as the ‘translucent darkness’⁸⁰⁷. The metaphor is often employed by

⁸⁰² *Interlinear Commentary to “The Last Testament of Garab Dorje” by the Translator in John Myrdhin Reynolds (trans.), The Golden Letters, p. 158.*

⁸⁰³ *Commentary on “The Special Teaching of the Wise and Glorious King,” by the Translator in John Myrdhin Reynolds (trans.), The Golden Letters, p. 82-83, 96.*

⁸⁰⁴ George Maloney, S.J., “Introduction” in Symeon the New Theologian, *The Discourses*, p. 28.

⁸⁰⁵ Gregory Palamas, *The Triads* (I, III, 21), p. 38.

⁸⁰⁶ Владимир Лосский, “Мрак” и “свет” в познании Бога, пер. В. Решиковой // Владимир Лосский, *Богословие и боговидение*, с. 81.

⁸⁰⁷ Архимандрит Софроний, *Рождение в Царство непоколебимое*, с. 207.

Pseudo-Dionysius. In the letter to the deacon Dorotheus he writes that “the divine darkness is that “unapproachable light” where God is said to live.”⁸⁰⁸

In *Mystical Theology* Dionysius claims, “By an undivided and absolute abandonment of yourself and everything, shedding all and freed from all, you will be *uplifted* to the *ray of the divine shadow* which is above everything that is.”⁸⁰⁹ The *uplifting* of the self may be understood here as going beyond the self, whereas the point of the departure of the soul is the indescribable, i.e., dark light of the Divinity.

Rather interesting in this connection is the topic of the divine or supernatural knowledge. In Buddhist sources the form of the supernatural knowledge is acquired during meditation (*jnana, ye shes*), can’t be denoted as *divine* or *supernatural*. Besides, it differs from the mere intellectual knowledge (*go ba*) and of the self-originated discriminating wisdom (*prajñā, shes rab*). The difference between *jnana* and *prajñā* is following. “The function of Prajñā is to *discriminate*, and unlike *jnana*, it is still dualistic in its operation. Prajna discriminates wisely between what is good or bad, real or unreal, true or false, beautiful or ugly, worthwhile or worthless, and so on. [...] The wise man possesses Prajna; the fool lacks it.”⁸¹⁰ The term Prajna (*shes rab*) occupies a status, “located below that of Jnana or gnosis (*ye shes*), but above mere intellectual knowledge (*go ba*)”.⁸¹¹

Jnana, in turn, is a knowledge, *gnosis*, or cognition which is a direct and immediate intuition of reality. Its function is to know (*shes pa*, Skt. *jna*), but this knowing is nondual in its nature and transcending the dichotomy of subject and object.⁸¹² John Myrdhin Reynolds realizes the correspondence of the Sanskrit *prajñā* and Greek *sophia*, and the affinities between Sanskrit *jnana* and Greek *gnosis*. He admits, that “whether or not there are direct historical connections between Gnosticism and Buddhism, there exist clear parallels here. Thus Jnana (*ye shes*) should be translated as gnosis or knowledge, at times as cognition, and generally as primordial awareness; and Prajna (*shes rab*) should be translated as wisdom or discriminating wisdom.”⁸¹³

⁸⁰⁸ Pseudo-Dionysius, *Letter Five to Dorotheus, the deacon* in Pseudo-Dionysius, *The Complete Works*, p. 265.

⁸⁰⁹ Pseudo-Dionysius, *The Mystical Theology* (I, 1) in Pseudo-Dionysius, *The Complete Works*, p. 135.

⁸¹⁰ *Commentary on “The Special Teaching of the Wise and Glorious King,” by the Translator* in John Myrdhin Reynolds (trans.), *The Golden Letters*, p. 122.

⁸¹¹ *Ibid.*

⁸¹² *Ibid.*, p. 121.

⁸¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 123.

It is important to note that the mentioned Gnostic tradition⁸¹⁴, although connected to the Hesychast one, represents a different doctrinal basis. Gnosticism is rather close to Buddhism discussing the question of the nature. In the same way as Buddhism does not accept the idea of the other nature, Gnosticism deals only with one nature. Hesychasm as well as the Orthodox tradition on the whole distinguishes between the Divine (super-, or other) nature and the created nature. And in the same way as the super-nature transcends the created nature, the divine knowledge acquired in contemplation of the Divine Light, transcends the worldly wisdom. The super-nature differs completely from the nature; similarly the divine knowledge perceiving the other nature is beyond the worldly wisdom and deserves the same title of super- or other- knowledge. This divine knowledge is indescribable⁸¹⁵ or apophatic in the same way as God is ineffable; it is without any attributes. That is why in the works of Christian mystics the divine knowledge (ἡ γν« σις) is often expressed in the form of negation. It is usually called “the unknowing” (ἡ ἀγνωσία). The divine unknowing (ἡ ἀγνωσία) is defined by the Orthodox theologian P. Minin as the *mystical gnosis*; it is contradicted to the *rational gnosis* and is characterized as the contemplation of God beyond forms and images.⁸¹⁶

The divine knowledge is called by Pseudo-Dionysius “the truly mysterious darkness of unknowing” and is distinguished from the rational knowledge of the holiest and highest things (this latter one may be compared to the Skt. *prajñā*). In contemplation “being neither oneself nor someone else, one is supremely united by a completely unknowing inactivity of all knowledge, and knows beyond the mind by knowing nothing.”⁸¹⁷ As well as Dionysius, Maximus and Symeon discussed the question of the union with God in the unknowing.⁸¹⁸ To summarize, the notion of the ‘unknowing’ is typical for the agapeic mentality and not for the gnostic one for it requires the presence of the acknowledged super-nature. The absence of the super-nature, in turn, causes the notion of knowledge (*jnana*) which, although transcending

⁸¹⁴ The famous Christian representatives of the Gnostic tradition are Origen, Evagrius and Clement. Their ideas have much in common with those of neo-Platonism. See more about the topic in Владимир Лосский, *Боговидение*, пер. В. Решиковой // Владимир Лосский, *Богословие и боговидение*.

⁸¹⁵ Архиепископ Василий Кривошеин, *Преподобный Симеон Новый Богослов (949-1022)*, с. 243.

⁸¹⁶ П. Минин, *Главные направления древе-церковной мистики // Мистическое богословие*, с. 355.

⁸¹⁷ Pseudo-Dionysius, *The Mystical Theology* (I, 3) in Pseudo-Dionysius, *The Complete Works*, p. 137.

⁸¹⁸ Владимир Лосский, *Боговидение*, пер. В. Решиковой // Владимир Лосский, *Богословие и боговидение*, с. 248.

the dichotomous conceptualization, is just natural. Its object is the natural primordial state of the mind.

One more typical feature of the Light experience both in Tibetan Buddhism and in Hesychasm is the gradual apparition of the Light. Geshe Kelsang Gyatso explains that “in the same way that slowly removing the lid of a box exposes more and more light inside, the separation of the two enclosing drops results in the experience of the clear light.”⁸¹⁹ This very gradual apparition of Light during visions is described in a rather emotional manner by Symeon the New Theologian. In the Hymn, 22 he writes about Light coming from the outside into the heart of the contemplator and increasing in its measure,

“As a star, indeed, I see it which rises in the distance,
then it becomes like a large sun
which has not, in its greatness, either measure or weight or limit;
its ray rises small and then makes itself be seen as a flame
in the center of my heart and of my bowels’
turning without stopping and illuminating all
the interior of my entrails and rendering them light.”⁸²⁰

It is discernible that, although the Light is increasing, it is still without any attributes and even measure. The testimony of the contemplator seems to be contradictory to some extent. However, it is important to remember that mystical experience as such is often indescribable. For this reason the contradictory descriptions of the experience of the Divine are present.

It is often stressed by Symeon the New Theologian that the measure of the experienced Light depends on the ability of the contemplator to perceive and bear the vision. For instance, in the Hymn, 12 he admits,

“He shows Himself only to the worthy, approachable and seizable,
very little, I’ve said, in comparison with the total
radiance like that of the sun itself, when it will shine in all its splendor,
but, nevertheless, it is much, in comparison with those who are seated in
darkness’

because the worthy have been judged worthy to see a small ray.”⁸²¹

⁸¹⁹ Geshe Kelsang Gyatso, *Clear Light of Bliss*, p. 86.

⁸²⁰ St. Symeon the New Theologian, *Hymns of Divine Love* (hymn, 22), p. 107.

⁸²¹ *Ibid.* (Hymn, 12), p. 40.

God reveals Himself to those who have become worthy and ready to perceive the luminosity of God's vision. That a measure of the experienced Light can alter does not mean, however, that the Divine Light itself changes. As Archimandrite Sophrony contends, "Divine Light is constant in itself but man's receptivity varies"⁸²².

It is necessary to experience the Divine Light during this life time in order to see it in the future age. Symeon stresses that even the desire to see the uncreated Light allows to a certain extent to experience it after death.⁸²³ The idea is clearly expressed in the numerous treatises of the Tibetan masters. In order to be recognized during death, Light should be experienced in lifetime. During death the Clear Light of Bliss is experienced by anybody, can't be recognized by an ordinary sentient being. The apparition seems foreign and unbearable for him. "At the time of clear light an ordinary being generates the fright that he will be annihilated."⁸²⁴ It happens because during death Clear Light manifests in all its fullness and not partially as in meditation (prayer). In this way, the most important task of a zealot in both traditions is to become familiar with the Light.

One more necessary attribute of Light experience during meditation or prayer is the condition of deep peace. Keeping with the *Chos drug bsdus pahi zin bris bzhugs so* ('The Path of Knowledge: the Yoga of the Six Doctrines') the vision of Clear Light is always introduced by the sensation of peace, "By allowing the mind to rest free of thought-forming during the stages of the subsiding-process, the experiences of the subsiding-process accordingly merge into the natural state of *quiescence* as soon as they have dawned. Thereby dawneth the Offspring Clear Light."⁸²⁵ The contemporary representative of Tibetan tradition Sogyal Rinpoche also mentions "a deep state of stillness". He calls this "pervasive peaceful state" "the Rigpa itself"⁸²⁶.

⁸²² Archimandrite Sophrony, *The Monk of Mount Athos Staretz Silouan 1866-1938*, p. 109.

⁸²³ Архиепископ Василий Кривошеин, *Преподобный Симеон Новый Богослов (949-1022)*, с. 263.

⁸²⁴ Na-wang-kay-drup, *Presentation of Birth, Death and Intermediate State*, 466.2 in *The Collected Works*, vol. I, 459-74 (Leh: S. W. Tashigangpa, 1972). (Cited from Yang-jen-ga-way-lo-dro, *Lamp Thoroughly Illuminating the Presentation of the Three Basic Bodies – Death, Intermediate State and Rebirth* in Lati Rinbochay and Jeffrey Hopkins, *Death, Intermediate State in Tibetan tradition*, p. 45.)

⁸²⁵ *The Path of Knowledge: the Yoga of the Six Doctrines* (V, 22) in W.Y. Evans-Wentz (ed.), *Tibetan Yoga and Secret Doctrines or Seven Books of Wisdom of the Great Path, According to the Late Lāma Kazi Dawa-Samdup's English Rendering* (London, Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), p. 237.

⁸²⁶ Sogyal Rinpoche, *The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying*, ed. by Patrick Gaffney and Andrew Harvey (New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 1994), p. 164-165.

The sensation of peace during Light vision is mentioned also by the masters of Christian prayer Gregory Palamas and Staretz Silouan.⁸²⁷ Archimandrite Sophrony writes that “the Light is filled with deep peace” introducing a contemplator to the entity beyond death⁸²⁸, whereas Symeon the New Theologian calls the Divine Light “immortal” (ἴσχυρ πῆρ τῷ θεῷ ὡς ἄθανατον).⁸²⁹ In the works of Christian masters of prayer the sensation of peace is connected to the eternal character of the Light.

Another effect of the achieved Buddhahood is bliss. According to Yang-jen-ga-way-lo-dro the state is qualified as “manifesting a subtle bliss consciousness”⁸³⁰. Although Tibetan masters are not used to describe the meditative experience in the emotional manner, the fact of bliss can’t be denied by them. During meditation man feels a special satisfaction which is defined by Hindu and Buddhist masters as bliss (Tib. *bde ba*).

In agreement with Tibetan masters Hesychasts also mention the sensation of emotional satisfaction during the Light vision. St. Symeon the New Theologian mentions spiritual joy, high emotion and incomparable sweetness.⁸³¹ Gregory Palamas speaks about the “impassible joy”⁸³², whereas Archimandrite Sophrony calls this special sensation “sweetness of the love of God”⁸³³.

The last emotion, accompanying the Light vision, is love. According to the Buddhist doctrine there is no Supernatural Other who may love or be loved. Hence, the Clear Light of Bliss also can’t love and be loved. The Light representing the innermost essence of human being can only be acknowledged. Nevertheless, as a result of enlightenment the “complete filling with compassion” is experienced. Being a mode of the same love, the sensation of compassion is explained by the Buddhist master like this, “A mental continuum always and thoroughly suffused with compassion for

⁸²⁷ Gregory Palamas, *The Triads* (I, III, 22), p. 39; Archimandrite Sophrony, *The Monk of Mount Athos Staretz Silouan 1866-1938*, p. 110.

⁸²⁸ Архимандрит Софроний (Сахаров), *Видеть Бога как Он есть*, с. 159.

⁸²⁹ Преп. Симеон Новый Богослов, *Hymnus I* (cited from Владимир Лосский, *Боговидение*, пер. В. Решиковой // Владимир Лосский, *Богословие и боговидение*, с. 247-248..)

⁸³⁰ Yang-jen-ga-way-lo-dro, *Lamp Thoroughly Illuminating the Presentation of the Three Basic Bodies – Death, Intermediate State and Rebirth*, in Lati Rinbochay and Jeffrey Hopkins, *Death, Intermediate State in Tibetan tradition*, p. 27.

⁸³¹ Cat. 16.78-107. (In Архиепископ Василий Кривошеин, *Преподобный Симеон Новый Богослов (949-1022)*, с. 241.)

⁸³² Gregory Palamas, *The Triads* (I, III, 22), p. 39.

⁸³³ Archimandrite Sophrony, *The Monk of Mount Athos Staretz Silouan 1866-1938*, p. 110.

sentient beings”⁸³⁴. In Hesychast writings the “love of God”, experienced during the Light vision, is partially expressed as the “compassion and love for those human beings who were severe to the contemplator” as well as “the painless compassion for the creatures in common”⁸³⁵.

Finally, the Divine Light is defined by Archimandrite Sophrony as “both divine love and divine wisdom, indivisibly one in eternity”⁸³⁶. These “two eternal passions of the self”⁸³⁷, love and wisdom, are mentioned by Archimandrite Sophrony together in the same way as wisdom and compassion of the Mahāyānic doctrine are always inseparable.

The Perception of Light in Hesychasm and Tantric Buddhism

According to the both traditions, Light, in order to be experienced during mystical introversion, requires a certain transcending or going out of the natural self. The perception of Light is supra-mental and supra-sensual. This very Light vision is a special indescribable and ineffable state of the human psyche. As became obvious, Light can’t be perceived by senses or intellect. So, the main theme of this section is about Light perception.

In Buddhism man is able to perceive Light only in the state of “startled awareness”, which is the same “naked awareness” or “knowledge” or a directly penetrating naked awareness transcending the mind. In this state “there are no thoughts, yet there is awareness”. The scholar explains that the absence of thoughts doesn’t cause the absence of consciousness as such, “This is certainly not a state of unconsciousness, even though no thoughts are present”⁸³⁸. The naked awareness is known to Tibetans as *rig pa* whereas the dichotomous mind which, in turn, should be transcended, is called *sems*. The latter is the same *rig pa* by nature. It means that during meditation the

⁸³⁴ Yang-jen-ga-way-lo-dro, *Lamp Thoroughly Illuminating the Presentation of the Three Basic Bodies – Death, Intermediate State and Rebirth*, p. 27.

⁸³⁵ Архимандрит Софроний (Сахаров), *Видеть Бога как Он есть*, с. 175.

⁸³⁶ Archimandrite Sophrony, *The Monk of Mount Athos Staretz Silouan 1866-1938*, p. 109.

⁸³⁷ Evelyn Underhill, *Mysticism: A Study in the Nature and Development of Man’s Spiritual Consciousness* (New York: The Noonday Press, 1955), p. 72.

⁸³⁸ *Commentary on “The Special Teaching of the Wise and Glorious King,” by the Translator in John Myrdhin Reynolds (trans.), The Golden Letters*, pp. 82-83.

dichotomous mind is purified or divested from conceptions and transforms into the same *rig pa*.

The Tibetan notions of *sems* and *rig pa* somehow correlate to the Sanskrit *vijnāna* and *jnāna*. As Francesca Fremantle explains, *vijnāna* is our empirical consciousness which cognizes and experiences anything. The prefix *vi* means a division; this very division is an attribute of the empirical consciousness. *Vijnāna* is the dichotomous consciousness whereas *jnāna* or the enlightened consciousness is beyond any dichotomy. The scholar makes a rather interesting remark concerning the term *vijnāna*. The prefix *vi* can also mean the negation. In this case *consciousness* transforms into *unconsciousness*. In other words, for the true Buddhists the state of naked awareness is defined as *consciousness* whereas the unnatural and illusory state of dichotomous conceptualization is none other than *unconsciousness*.⁸³⁹ In the state of dichotomous conceptualization man is not capable of seeing the reality as it is and is similar to a blind person. His “spiritual eyes” are darkened and he is not aware, i.e. is “un-conscious” of the real situation.

The scholar notes that, according to the Jungian terminology this very naked awareness or *consciousness* is called *unconsciousness*. Although the meaning is the same, the Buddhist term of *consciousness* seems to be more suitable to the scholar because, as she asserts, the mentioned layer of *consciousness* is always present in man, even in the state of deep coma or deep sleep.⁸⁴⁰

However, scholars are unanimous choosing the terms. Jung Young Lee, for instance, writing about the experiences of *Bar do thos grol*, prefers to make use of the Jungian *unconsciousness*. As he notes, “the last moment of death or the Chikhai Bardo can reach the deepest abyss of unconsciousness”. This is a condition when the “empirical consciousness is totally nullified”. In this state “the dying person does not see anything but the Clear Light of the Void, which illuminates the true Self or the Cosmic Unconsciousness.”⁸⁴¹

Albeit discussing the same theme and expressing the same idea, the scholar employs the term of ‘consciousness’, conventional in Western psychology. Trying to combine the ideas of *Bar do thos grol* and *I Ching*, he inscribes the processes of *dying* (or *regression*) and *embodiment* (*individuation*) of the *Bar do thos grol* in the context

⁸³⁹ Франческа Фримантл, Сияющая пустота: Интерпретация ”Тибетской книги мертвых” (Москва: София, 2003), с. 174.

⁸⁴⁰ Ibid., с. 176.

⁸⁴¹ Jung Young Lee, *Death and Beyond in the Eastern Perspective: A Study Based on the Bardo Thodol and the I Ching* (New York: An Interface Book, 1974), p. 59.

of constant change of *I Ching*. In the same way as *yin* and *yang* change one another constantly, *regression* and *individuation* are just two sides of the same process of change. *Yang* is identified with life, while *yin* is the same death. Thus *yang* and *yin / life* and *death*, are complementary. The scholar differentiates also between *noumen* and *phenomenon*. *Noumen* or *essence* here is represented by *change* as such, whereas “the differentiation between *yang* and *yin* is only the existential moment of change”. “From the noumen or the essential continuum, both life and death or *yang* and *yin* are undifferentiated, even though they are two different forms of existence from the phenomenal point of view.”⁸⁴² Light in this context correlates with life and *consciousness* as the manifestations of *yang*, whereas darkness correlates with death and *unconsciousness*, those are the representatives of *yin*.⁸⁴³ According to the doctrine of *yang-yin* school the two elements can’t manifest simultaneously. During the process of *yang*’s regression, *yin* increases, and vice versa. “Life is death unmanifested and death is life unmanifested”⁸⁴⁴. It means that the state of ‘unconsciousness’ called by Tibetans ‘awareness’ can manifest only when the dichotomous or empirical consciousness has regressed and vice versa.

The idea is clearly expressed in *Bar do thos grol*. Only mind, freed from conceptions and egocentric features, can experience Light. In other words, a person must destroy his own ego in order to experience the universal ultimate reality, i.e., Clear Light. In the same way the process of individuation (incarnation) which is connected with the cultivation of an ego causes the situation when the ultimate reality is forgotten and the Light is hidden in the depths of the self. Nevertheless, the ultimate reality or our innermost being can’t be forgotten completely because it can never be destroyed. C. G. Jung writes in this connection, “Fear of self-sacrifice lurks deep in every ego, and this fear is often only the precariously controlled demand of the unconscious forces to burst out in full strength. No one who strives for selfhood (individuation) is spared this dangerous passage, for that which is feared also belongs to the wholeness of the self — the sub-human, or supra-human, world of psychic ‘dominants’ from which the ego

⁸⁴² Ibid., pp. 12, 14.

⁸⁴³ The concept of Jung Young Lee seems to be imperfect because according to the Chinese scheme *yin* correlates to *death* and *darkness*. However, in keeping with the *Bar do thos grol*, the moment of death is experienced by a deceased as the Clear Light of bliss. The idea of the scholar can be accepted only if we identify the state of swoon called in *Bar do thos grol* “the state of black near attainment” with the vision of Light. As Lee explains, ordinary sentient beings who are unfamiliar with the Light, can’t be aware of the apparition and experience the lucent reality as the swoon. (Ibid., p. 59)

⁸⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 14.

originally emancipated itself with enormous effort, and then only partially, for the sake of a more or less illusory freedom.”⁸⁴⁵

In keeping with the doctrine of Tibetan Buddhism the Clear Light, if not recognized during death or sleeping state, can never be remembered afterwards. A Christian scholar in the field of the philosophical anthropology L. V. Starodubceva writing about memory in the context of Christian mysticism, is quite in agreement with the Tibetan masters. She underscores that the border between *consciousness* and *unconsciousness* is memory. What is memorized on one side of this border is forgotten on the other side, and vice versa. The mnemonic circle is constructed of psychological states and processes changing one another – *itus et reditus* – going and coming, memory, forgetfulness and remembering. Consciousness is always in motion: it leaves light and passes to darkness, then darkness is forgotten and consciousness returns to light. According to the Christian idea of the sacred memory, the sacred can only be remembered if the profane is ignored, and vice versa. The border of memory is the same border between life and death. That is why the “remembrance of death” is a stable bridge to immortality. The scholar explains that Christian mysticism is ecstatic by experience. Only by going out of the self and forgetting the self it is possible to remember God. Finally, the unforgettable knowledge of Maximus the Confessor is a result of natural contemplation and enlightenment. Usually this very knowledge is hidden in our innermost “consciousness” or “sub-consciousness.”⁸⁴⁶

It is important to turn our attention to the above consideration: the means of the unforgettable knowledge is *contemplation* and *illumination*. Obviously, the same means is proposed by the Tibetan *lamas*. Thanks to meditation and in spite of the described *yang-yin* scheme, it is possible to acquire the experience of Clear Light during this life time and to remember it after meditation. If the sleeping yoga is practiced by a person, he or she remembers Light apparition in the awakening state as well. The psycho-techniques help to recognize/remember the Clear Light during death. The recognition of Light, in turn, allows a person to blend with Light and to achieve the liberation.

An interesting observation has been made in this context by a Russian theologian M. Lodzhensky. He also accepts the idea of the *supra-consciousness*, hidden in anybody. This very *supra-consciousness*, corresponding to *rig-pa* of Tibetans and the

⁸⁴⁵ Dr. C. G. Jung, *Psychological Commentary*, trans. by R. F. C. Hull from Das Tibetanische Totenbuch, in *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*, p. xlvii.

⁸⁴⁶ Л. В. Стародубцева, *Христианские концепции памяти и забвения: Опыт философско-антропологической интерпретации* (Библейско-Богословский Институт св. Апостола Андрея, 06.11. 2005) in <http://www.standrews.ru/index-ea=1&In=1&spp=1&chp=showpag>.

unconsciousness of Jung, becomes active only during contemplation or hypnosis. Besides, the intellectual and sensual capacities of the supra-consciousness are much higher than of the ordinary one. The place where the ordinary consciousness is situated is the head, whilst the supra-consciousness abides in the heart. Lodizhensky mentions the experiences of persons under hypnosis described by Werner. According to his testimony, while falling asleep, a person was worried much because of the great fight taking place between her head and heart. The both wanted to be the governors, to feel and to see. Finally, the head had to pass into the heart, and the latter gained a victory over the former.⁸⁴⁷

Lodizhensky suggests one more testimony left by A. Bezant. She describes a state of hypnosis of a countrywoman who in her ordinary life wasn't intelligent at all. When falling asleep the woman became more intelligent. She began to criticize and even to despise her ordinary self. When the state of trance grew deeper, one more form of woman's consciousness emerged. The latter was more intelligent than the previous ones. It was beyond the limits of the other two types of consciousness and criticized them impartially.⁸⁴⁸

Lodizhensky resumes that the "supra-consciousness", although isolated from the natural senses and intellection, is endowed with the "supra-senses" and "supra-intellect" of its own. The "supra-consciousness" is able to remember the self in his or her empirical manifestation, whereas the latter is not able to remember the state of the former when the hypnotic state is over. It means that an ordinary man can't employ both forms of consciousness simultaneously. The situation completely changes if a person is a clairvoyant. In this case the both levels of consciousness are active at the same time. A clairvoyant doesn't need to fall asleep in hypnosis in order to contact his or her "supra-consciousness". He can be in the awakened state and communicate the "supra-reality". Lodizhensky defines the "supra-consciousness" as "the non-emotional mental supra-consciousness".⁸⁴⁹

That the sensual and intellectual perception of the naked consciousness is higher than the ordinary one is confirmed by Lama Lodö, "At that time [during death] the person's consciousness is many times more acute and intelligent than during his lifetime. Because of this heightened state, whatever is told to the dead person will make a very deep impression. They will also know thoughts in the minds of people around

⁸⁴⁷ Митрофан Лодыженский, *Сверхсознание и пути его достижения* (Москва: ЭКСМО-ПРЕСС, 2002), с. 107.

⁸⁴⁸ Ibid., сс. 108-109.

⁸⁴⁹ Ibid., сс. 109, 116.

them, and understand whatever language is spoken. [...] In this moment the dead person has a natural intelligence that enables him to understand many things at a level beyond intellect.”⁸⁵⁰

Obviously, clairvoyants and Tibetan masters of meditation are not the only ones who can deliberately communicate the naked consciousness. As is mentioned above, Christian contemplation is a perfect means of the supernatural knowledge. Christian mystics also are aware of some other level of mind. Isaac of Syria called it the ‘supernatural knowledge given by God’s strength.’ The contemplation of this knowledge doesn’t come from outside but suddenly is discovered in the depths of the soul.⁸⁵¹

St. Macarius the Egyptian distinguished between two forms of the Divine revelation. The lower form is expressed in different visions which disclose to man the outward objects. Thus, visions are localized in the outward sense of sight. The highest form of revelation is the interior Light vision beyond any images filling the soul. Macarius underscores that there exist the eyes and the ears which are more interior than the bodily eyes and ears.⁸⁵² The soul then becomes light and face and eye. Every part of the soul is filled with Light and it seems to her that she is filled with spiritual eyes (ὅλη ὀφθαλμῶν γέμουσα): any side of the soul is similar to a face looking at God and perceiving the Light of Christ.⁸⁵³ Thus, mind during Light vision is endowed with its own intangible organs of Light perception.

Macarius admits that during formless contemplation man is convinced that the experience is extremely real. Visions perceived through the outer senses and manifesting as outer objects appear as being doubtful and even *illusory*.⁸⁵⁴ The statement of Macarius seems to be very curious in the context of the comparative analysis of the two religious traditions. It is common knowledge that illusory character of changeable dichotomous (*samsāric*) apparitions is postulated by the classic Hinduism and Buddhism. As is obvious, the idea of illusion, being not a part of Christian doctrine, belongs to phenomenology of Christian mysticism.

⁸⁵⁰ Venerable Lama Lodö, *Bardo Teachings: The Way of Death and Rebirth* (Ithaca, New York: Snow Lion Publications, 1987), p. 12.

⁸⁵¹ Святой Исаак Сирианин, *Подвижнические наставления Св. Исаака Сирианина // Добротолюбие* (Свято-Троицкая Сергиева Лавра, 1992), т. 2, с. 660.

⁸⁵² *Homilia* 28, 5, PG 34, 713; Рус. пер. с. 290. (И. В. Попов, *Святые отцы II-IV вв. // Труды по Патрологии* (Сергиев Посад: Свято-Троицкая Лавра, 2004), т. 1, сс. 138-139.)

⁸⁵³ Владимир Лосский, *Боговидение*, пер. В. Рещиковой // Владимир Лосский, *Богословие и боговидение*, с. 217.

⁸⁵⁴ И. В. Попов, *Святые отцы II-IV вв. // Труды по Патрологии*, с. 139.

According to Evagrius the organ of the Divine perception is thought. The theologian doesn't call it "spiritual eyes" because he thinks that the Divine Light is not seen by the bodily sight, rather it is perceived by the mind. Evagrius, being a representative of the Gnostic Christian tradition, admits that human mind becomes a literal reservoir of God (τόπος Θεοῦ). Besides, he asserts that soul (ἡ ψυχή) is a deformed mind (ὁ νοῦς), i.e., the mind which is separated from the contemplation of the One God.⁸⁵⁵ It means that only dematerialized and contemplating mind is the agent perceiving the Light vision. This very lofty mind is an equivalent of the Buddhist 'consciousness', of Jungian 'unconsciousness' and the 'supra-consciousness' of Lodziński.

It is obvious that Christian masters of prayer do not speak about *consciousness* or *supra-* or *un-consciousness* perceiving Light but about the organs of the purified soul. A famous Diadochus living in the 5th century and going the middle way between the intellectual mysticism of Evagrius and Macarius' sensual mysticism of the Divine Grace asserts that man can unite with God only by love. This very love (ἡ ἀγάπη) is the same interior sense called by Diadochus of Photice the "intellectual sense", the "sense organ of heart", the "sense of spirit", the "senses of the soul", the "experience of the soul" (αἴσθησις νοηρά, αἴσθησις καρδιάς, αἴσθησις πνεύματος, αἴσθησις τῆς ψυχῆς, πείρα αἰσθήσεως).⁸⁵⁶

St. Symeon the New Theologian distinguishes between the sensual eyes and the spiritual eyes of the spiritual heart.⁸⁵⁷ In a manner, similar to Macarius', Symeon explains that "from the Spirit who renews him he obtains new eyes as well as new ears."⁸⁵⁸ The following testimony of Symeon is rather curious. He admits, that "from henceforth unlike an [ordinary] man, he does not see the objects of sense with physical vision; he sees them spiritually as one who has become a superhuman, and sees them as images of things invisible, and their forms are to him formless and shapeless. One might say that he no longer hears any human voice or voices, but only the voice of the Living Word whenever it speaks through a human voice."⁸⁵⁹ It means that the

⁸⁵⁵ Евагрий Понтийский, *Kephalaia gnostica* VII, 26. (In Владимир Лосский, *Боговидение*, пер. В. Решиковой // Владимир Лосский, *Богословие и боговидение*, сс. 209-210.)

⁸⁵⁶ Св. Муч. Диадок Фотикийский, *Capita gnostica*, 1 (SC 5bis. 1955. P. 85); 91 (SC 5bis. P. 153) (In Владимир Лосский, *Боговидение*, пер. В. Решиковой // Владимир Лосский, *Богословие и боговидение*, сс. 219.)

⁸⁵⁷ St. Symeon the New Theologian, *Hymns of Divine Love* (hymn, 33), p. 184.

⁸⁵⁸ Symeon the New Theologian, *The Discourses* (XIV, 3), p. 189.

⁸⁵⁹ Ibid.

contemplator's supernatural senses not only perceive the Divine matters but also the physical objects. Here we find one of the explanations of the simultaneous perception of the divine matters and perishable things. Besides, the idea of Symeon about the new vision of creatures as images of the invisible things is very close to the Buddhist enlightened vision of the world as a manifestation of the same *rig pa* when the profane cosmos is completely transformed into the sacred one.

The question of the Divine perception has been specially discussed by Gregory Palamas. He distinguishes among three Lights: there are the sensual light, the mental light and the Divine or supernatural Light. The first two belong to the created entity of human beings. Neither senses nor intellect can perceive the Divine Light which is of the other nature. Only by the supernatural act of the Divine energy the whole man (i.e., his senses and intellect) is transformed into Light and sees Light by the same Light.⁸⁶⁰

According to Palamas the organs of Light perception and the man himself can't be differentiated in the union with the Divine Light, "But is the union with this light other than a vision? And since it is brought about by the cessation of intellectual activity, how could it be accomplished if not by the Spirit? For it is in light that the light is seen, and that which sees operates in a similar light, since this faculty has no other way in which to work. Having separated itself from all other beings, it becomes itself all light and is assimilated to what it sees, or rather, it is united to it without mingling, being itself light and seeing light through light. If it sees itself, it sees light; if it beholds the object of its vision, that too is light; and if it looks at the means by which it sees, again it is light."⁸⁶¹

From the passage it is obvious that during the Light vision it is rather difficult to distinguish among the supernatural Light, the perceiver of Light and the perception as such. Nevertheless, when making endeavor to formulate these matters doctrinally, differences in the two traditions emerge. Tibetan Buddhists usually speak about the *naked consciousness (rig pa)*, which, according to the foundations of Tantric anatomy, is the same *very subtle mind and its wind*. Hesychasts, in turn, discuss the question of the organs of Light perception. In fact, the question is about the nature of this Light. In Buddhism Light is none other than the interior core of our natural *consciousness*; that is why the notion of some *other interior consciousness* is so important for Buddhism. Hesychasm, on the contrary, underscores the supernatural and outward character of the Light. This is the purpose why the representatives of the tradition try to understand how

⁸⁶⁰ Владимир Лосский, *Боговидение*, пер. В. Решиковой // Владимир Лосский, *Богословие и боговидение*, сс. 264-265.

⁸⁶¹ Gregory Palamas, *The Triads* (II, III, 36), p. 65-66.

this external and super-natural phenomenon is perceived by a natural man in spite of the fact that he is not endowed by any appropriate organ. Light is the Divine uncreated energy of God which can be perceived through essential transformation of the natural senses and intellection and shared by the whole man. This very holistic perspective of the union of man and God when the body becomes a participant of the vision and salvation⁸⁶², is somehow close to the Tibetan holistic view according to which the body is supposed to merge with the luminous mind. The topic of the body of Light in Tibetan Buddhism will be discussed in the next chapter of this research.

Finally, the simultaneous experience of the physical and the Divine lights⁸⁶³, can be explained by the idea of *complicatio contrariorum*. Ultimate reality is beyond contradictions; to paraphrase, in God all contradictions coincide. It means that during meditation/prayer the mind captures the unlimited current of becoming and overcomes contradictions, i.e. life and death, *consciousness* and the *unconscious*. The phases do not any longer change each other because substance has conquered over the existence.⁸⁶⁴ The idea of the return to the substance, proposed by the Russian representative of philosophical anthropology, has strong affinities to the idea of Abhidharmic tradition about *nirvāna* as the achievement of a peaceful state by *dharma*s.

The Experience of Christian Deification and Buddhist Liberation

It is rather curious that sometimes Christian contemplators describe the apparition of two Lights following each other. For instance, Symeon the New Theologian using the third person narrative, witnesses about it in the following way,

“One day, as he stood and recited, “God, have mercy upon me, a sinner” (Lk. 18:13), uttering it with his mind rather than his mouth, suddenly a flood of divine radiance appeared from above and filled all the room. As this happened the young man lost all awareness (of his surroundings) and forgot that he was in a house or that he was under the roof. He saw nothing but light all around him and did not know whether he was standing on the ground. He was not afraid of falling; he was not concerned with

⁸⁶² Владимир Лосский, *Боговидение*, пер. В. Рещиковой // Владимир Лосский, *Богословие и боговидение*, сс. 266.

⁸⁶³ See, for instance, Archimandite Sophrony, *The Monk of Mount Athos Staretz Silouan 1866-1938*, p. 109.

⁸⁶⁴ Л. В. Стародубцева, *Христианские концепции памяти и забвения: Опыт философско-антропологической интерпретации* ([www. rambler. ru](http://www.rambler.ru)).

the world, nor did anything pertaining to men and corporeal beings enter into his mind. Instead, he was wholly in the presence of a immaterial light and seemed to himself to have turned into light. Oblivious of the world he was filled with tears and with ineffable joy and gladness. His mind then ascended to heaven and beheld yet another light, which was clearer than that which was close at hand.”⁸⁶⁵

We shall postpone our commentary at the moment and turn our attention to a Tibetan passage from the ‘Path of Knowledge: the Yoga of the Six Doctrines’. Unlike the emotional language of St. Symeon, the Tibetan passage is deprived of any emotion, “When about to die, cut off all entangling attachments [to the world and to worldly possessions], along with hatred [for any enemy or other person left behind]. By allowing the mind to rest free of thought-forming during the stages of the subsiding-process, the experiences of the subsiding-process accordingly merge into the natural state of quiescence as soon as they have dawned. Thereby dawneth the Offspring Clear Light. Then, as a secondary result, there dawns the Mother Clear Light [...]. The intellectual recognition of these two aspects of the Clear Light, being like the recognition resulting from meeting an old acquaintance [since death hath been previously experienced many times], is known as the blending of the Mother and Son Clear Light.”⁸⁶⁶

A good explanation of the apparition of two Lights in Tibetan mysticism is given by Yang-jen-ga-way-lo-dro. He asserts that “in general, clear light is of two types — the *objective* clear light that is the subtle emptiness [of inherent existence], and the *subjective* clear light that is the wisdom consciousness realizing this emptiness.”⁸⁶⁷ To paraphrase the words of the Tibetan scholar, the objective Clear Light represents the perfect and constant and unchangeable ultimate reality which can be compared to the Christian notion of the Divine. The subjective Clear Light is the capacity of our consciousness to discover the objective Clear Light. It is obvious that here we deal with the human perception of Light. Any concrete person is endowed with his/her own measure of Light perception. The Objective Light is constant and unchangeable, whereas the measure of the subjective Light can differ depending on our individual

⁸⁶⁵ Symeon the New Theologian, *The Discourses* (XXII, 4), p. 245-246.

⁸⁶⁶ *The Path of Knowledge: the Yoga of the Six Doctrines* (V, 21-24) in W.Y. Evans-Wentz (ed.), *Tibetan Yoga and Secret Doctrines or Seven Books of Wisdom of the Great Path, According to the Late Lāma Kazi Dawa-Samdup’s English Rendering* (London, Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), p. 237.

⁸⁶⁷ Yang-jen-ga-way-lo-dro, *Lamp Thoroughly Illuminating the Presentation of the Three Basic Bodies – Death, Intermediate State and Rebirth* in Lati Rinbochay and Jeffrey Hopkins, *Death, Intermediate State in Tibetan tradition*, p. 48.

capacities to perceive Light. As a Russian theologian Oleg Klimkov observes, the Divine Light exists as an objective reality independently of our individual consciousness. The divine Light is constant; our capacity to perceive Light can alter. Its measure can increase and decrease because it depends on our capacity to share the Divine life.⁸⁶⁸ Thus, the objective Clear Light called by the Tibetans *ma*, i.e., Mother [Clear Light] is compared to God, whilst the subjective Clear Light (Tib. *bu* or Son [Clear Light]) represents human being perceiving the objective radiance.

John Myrdhin Reynolds explains the apparition of the two Lights in a similar manner to Yang-jen-ga-way-lo-dro, “This Mother is something universal, rather than being individual, in the sense that, although many different individual Buddhas manifest throughout time and space, they all participate in a single Dharmakaya that transcends all dualities and pluralities. We come to recognize the Clear Light by means of the view to which we have been previously introduced by the master, who indicates it to us, saying, “This is the Clear Light of your own Rigpa, your state of intrinsic Awareness.” This individual Clear Light to which the master introduces us and which we experience again and again in our meditation experience throughout our lifetime, is known as the Clear Light of the Path (*lam gyi ‘od gsal*) rather than the Clear Light of the base (*gzhi’ ‘od gsal*). This luminosity met with on the path is also known as the Son Clear Light (*bu’i ‘od gsal*), in contrast to the Mother Clear Light (*ma’i ‘od gsal*).”⁸⁶⁹

The scholar adds, “This son or child is like a small spark of the totality of the Clear Light. For example, it is said to be no more than a small butter lamp held up against the midday sun that is a source of all light.”⁸⁷⁰ It means that the subjective human Light is much smaller than the objective one. Obviously, the same limited measure of the human light is underscored also by Archimandrite Sophrony,

“Having arrived at the darkness of divestiture, the mind may feel a peculiar quiet delight, and if it then turns to itself, as it were, it may perceive a certain light, which, however, is not yet the Uncreated Light of Divinity but a natural property of the mind created after God’s image. In that it is a crossing of the boundaries of “things seen which are temporal”, such contemplation approaches the mind to knowledge of things which do not “pass away” — to “things which are not seen which are eternal” —

⁸⁶⁸ Свящ. Олег Климов, *Опыт безмолвия: Человек в мирозерцании Византийских исихастов* (Санкт-Петербург: Алетея, 2001), с. 169.

⁸⁶⁹ *Commentary on “The Special Teaching of the Wise and Glorious King,” by the Translator in John Myrdhin Reynolds (trans.), The Golden Letters*, p. 96.

⁸⁷⁰ *Ibid.*

thereby possessing man of new knowledge, which, nevertheless, is still not eternal life through communion in Divine Being.”⁸⁷¹

Archimandrite Sophrony asserts that luminosity of the human mind is really splendid; nevertheless, the Light of God is greater.⁸⁷² Unlike the Tibetan masters of meditation, Archimandrite Sophrony doesn't assert that the light of human mind is the means of Light recognition in the after-death state. Nevertheless, it can't be denied that the human light, being an image of the Divine one, is a result of introversion and is situated at the border of transition from the created to the Divine, from Jungian consciousness to the collective unconscious.

The subjective light as the means of liberation in Tibetan tradition is exhaustibly and in a clear fashion is discussed by Sogyal Rinpoche like this,

“The Mother Luminosity is the name we give to the Ground Luminosity. This is the fundamental, inherent nature of everything, which underlies our whole experience, and which manifests in its full glory at the moment of death. The Child Luminosity, also called the Path Luminosity, is the nature of our mind, which, if introduced by the master, and if recognized by us, we can then be gradually stabilized through meditation, and more and more completely integrate into our actions in life. Even though the Ground Luminosity is our inherent nature and the nature of everything, we do not recognize it, and it remains as if hidden. I like to think of the Child Luminosity as a key the master gives us to help open up the door to the recognition of the Ground Luminosity, whenever the opportunity arises. Imagine that you have to meet a woman arriving by plane. If You have no idea what she looks like, you might go to the airport and she could walk right past you and you would miss her. If you have a photo of her that is a good likeness, and you have a good picture of her in your mind, then you will recognize her as soon as she approaches you. Once the nature of mind has been introduced and you recognize it, you have the key to recognizing it again. [...] Then the recognition becomes so ingrained in you, so much a part of you, that you have no further need of the photograph; when you meet the person, recognition is spontaneous and immediate. So, after sustained practice of the recognition of the nature of mind, when at the moment of death the Ground Luminosity dawns, you will be able then to recognize it and merge with it — as instinctively, say the masters of the past, as a little

⁸⁷¹ Archimandrite Sophrony, *The Monk of Mount Athos Staretz Silouan 1866-1938*, p. 111-112.

⁸⁷² *Старец Силуан: Жизнь и поучения* (Москва, Ново-Казачье, Минск: 1991), с. 165.

child running eagerly into its mother's lap, like old friend meeting, or a river flowing into the sea."⁸⁷³

It is discernible that during prolonged meditations the experienced Light ingrains in man and becomes his part. The means of liberation transforms into the inner content of man. Thus, the border between Light as the means of liberation and man himself is rather subtle. That the Ground Luminosity and the Path Luminosity are the same by nature has been clearly explained by Sogyal Rinpoche. Tibetan Buddhism belongs to the monistic religious system which presupposes the presence of the only nature and the return of a human being to his Ground in the same way as a river flows into the sea⁸⁷⁴.

Although Christianity doesn't share the Buddhist notion of the only nature, the first light of Symeon the New Theologian in the passage from the *Discourses*, quoted above, may be compared to the Path Luminosity of the Tibetan Buddhism rather than to the mental light of Archimandrite Sophrony because the first light, Symeon experiences, appears from above and comes at the moment of prayer. Although the mental light of Sophrony also appears as a result of introversion, its manifestation can be controlled by man. The apparition of the mental light takes place only if the mind "turns to itself". The vision of the Divine Light comes as a result of repentance. The observation made by Archimandrite Sophrony helps to interpret the first Light of Symeon.⁸⁷⁵ As Symeon testifies, his hero was praying with the words of the sinner. It means that the prayer of the zealot was an act of repentance. Besides, according to Sophrony, the Divine Light "comes exclusively as a gift of God's mercy", and "cannot be discovered by ascetic techniques"⁸⁷⁶. The prayer of Symeon before the vision of both Lights is an explicit example of such a call for God's mercy. Hence, the first Light of Symeon is of Divine nature, bearing similarity to the Path Luminosity of Tibetan Buddhism.

Discussing the question of true Light vision, Archimandrite Sophrony also formulates an idea of Light which is rather similar to the Tibetan Light of the Path and to the first Light of Symeon. He writes that the Divine Light as such is invisible in the same way as the physical light is unseen if doesn't find an object which can perceive it. The physical light, in order to be seen, requires the presence of the sensual eyes in the body of a living being. The Divine Light, in turn, needs the spiritual eyes of man to be

⁸⁷³ Sogyal Rinpoche, *The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying*, pp. 267-268.

⁸⁷⁴ The image of a river merging with the waters of a sea, is found in *Upanishads* as well as in Teresa's *Interior Castle*. The similarity of descriptions of the mystical experiences in different religions allows to make one more conclusion about the universal character of this very mystical condition of human psyche.

⁸⁷⁵ *Старец Силуан: Жизнь и поучения*, с. 163.

⁸⁷⁶ Archimandrite Sophrony, *The Monk of Mount Athos Staretz Silouan 1866-1938*, p. 110.

open. If the spiritual sight is active in man then he himself becomes similar to a mirror reflecting the Divine Light. Then the reflected Light transforms man completely, making his soul and body luminous. The Divine Light which reflects in contemplator can be perceived by the physical sight of other people.⁸⁷⁷ Unlike the mental light of Archimandrite Sophrony, the described “subjective” Light of illumined man can’t be separated from the Divine Light. The only thing which reminds us about the theistic model of two natures is the image of a mirror. The concepts, however, lose their meaning in the ecstatic vision.

Although the topic of the Divine Light is ineffable and can’t be grasped completely by the dichotomous mind, we shall make an endeavor to find a Tibetan equivalent of the mental light as well as of the lights of demons described by many Christian ascetics. A usual position of Orthodox theologians concerning the photic phenomena in the beginning of introversion, performed by Indian yogins, is that their equivalent in Orthodox spirituality is a manifestation of demons.⁸⁷⁸ Such a critical position of Christian exclusiveness seems to be rather doubtful. As Tibetan masters of meditation point out, the apparition of luminous visions before the manifestation of Clear Light is a natural sign of the dissolution of gross and subtle elements. Probably, an adequate equivalent of these “minor” photic apparitions is the mental light of Archimandrite Sophrony.

An appropriate equivalent of demonic lights of the Christian ascetic tradition, in turn, is represented by the dull lights of the six samsāric worlds (Skt. *loka*) manifesting in Chonyid Bardo of *The Tibetan Book of the Dead*. These very samsāric lights always manifest along with the bright ones expressing, in turn, the luminosity of the naked mind. Being acquainted with *samsāra* better, an ordinary person is attracted by the dull lights. Making this choice, he/she afterwards has to experience the following stages of the process of *individuation* (not to be identified with the individuation of Jung) or *reincarnation*. It is interesting that Gregory the Theologian describing his visions also mentions two lights. In accord with him, the light is of a twofold nature. The first light takes a man to God whereas the other one, being a direct opposite of the Divine Light, is deceptive. It tries to seem similar to the uncreated Light in order to lure the man. A contemplator should be rather intelligent in order to make the right choice.⁸⁷⁹ Here the two lights become an equivalent of the twofold photic apparitions in Chonyid bardo.

⁸⁷⁷ Архимандрит Софроний (Сахаров), *Видеть Бога как Он есть*, с. 176.

⁸⁷⁸ See, for instance, Митрофан Лодыженский, *Сверхсознание и пути его достижения*, с. 139.

⁸⁷⁹ Григорий Богослов, Сл. 40 (In Игумен Иларион Алфеев, *Жизнь и учение св. Григория Богослова* (Санкт-Петербург: Алетейя, 2001), с. 368.)

The union of the two, i.e. of God and of man during Light vision, is defined by Orthodox theologians as deification (θεοωσις). According to the foundations of the Orthodox doctrine a necessary condition of our deification is Incarnation. Having descended to humanity out of love for humankind, God became man so that, ascending to divinity out of love, man may in turn become God.⁸⁸⁰

Speaking about *theosis* in Christian mysticism, the question of *substance* and *energies* must not be ignored. Archimandrite Sophrony explains these two categories like this,

“Divine Being, absolutely realized, absolutely actualized, excludes the presence in Itself of undeveloped potentialities and, as such, may be defined as *Pure Act*.

Divine Being, as Self-Being, having no cause outside Itself, all-perfect from the beginning, is for the created being *datum* and, as such, may be defined as *Pure Fact*.

As Act (Energy), Divine Being is communicable to the reasoning creature in all Its fullness and infinity. As Fact (Essence), It is absolutely transcendental and incommunicable to the creature, and remains a mystery, for ever unapproachable. [...]

The Saints, fully deified by the gift of grace, are so introduced into the Divine Act that all the attributes of Divinity are imparted to them, even to identity — but identity of Act only, never of Nature. By His nature God eternally and immutably remains God for created beings, even when they arrive at perfect identity.”⁸⁸¹

The question of *theosis* in the context of Light vision is discussed in detail by St. Symeon the New Theologian. He underscores that man shares the Divine Light according to the measure of his purification and capacity to perceive this Light. For Symeon *theosis* is necessary holistic,

“God is Light (I John 1:5), and to those who have entered into union with Him He imparts of His own brightness to the extent that they have been purified. When the lamp of the soul, that is, the mind, has being kindled, then it knows that a divine fire has taken hold of it and inflamed it. How great a marvel! Man is united to God spiritually and physically, since the soul is not separated from the mind, neither the body from the soul. By being united in essence man also has three hypostases by grace. He is a single

⁸⁸⁰ Metropolitan Nicolae Corneanu, “The Jesus Prayer and Deification” in *St. Vladimir’s Theological Quarterly* 39.1 (1995), p. 5.

⁸⁸¹ Archimandrite Sophrony, *The Monk of Mount Athos Staretz Silouan 1866-1938*, p. 112-113.

The terms *substance*, *essence* and *nature* have the same meaning whereas *presence* or *manifestation of God* are the same *Divine energies*.

god by adoption with body and soul and the Divine Spirit, of whom he has become a partaker.”⁸⁸²

In this passage, the limited measure of the Light perception bears affinities to the Tibetan idea of the Clear Light of the Path. The latter is considered to be smaller than the Clear Light of the Ground. At this stage the vision of the Light in both traditions is not yet perfect. Nevertheless, when the perception is good enough, Light reveals to man in all its fullness. The idea of the complete transformation into Light is relevant for the monistic context. Man is this Light by nature, and fullness of enlightenment is thus possible. Although Christianity belongs to theism, it also accepts the notion of a *complete* deification. St. Gregory of Nazianzus, the first theologian discussing *theosis* systematically, admits that man becomes god to the same extent to which God became man, “I too might be made God so far as He is made man”.⁸⁸³ The consideration of Gregory Nazianzen is confirmed by the contemporary master of contemplation, Archimandrite Sophrony, “And just as Christ in His human nature contained “all the fullness of the Godhead bodily” and “sat with the father in his throne”, so every man is called to the “measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ”. If this were not so, Christ could not have bid us “Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect”.”⁸⁸⁴

This full measure of the Divine vision and the perfect deification can be compared to the union with the Mother Clear Light in Tibetan Buddhism. In the same way as Tibetan masters assert that the full measure of spiritual growth can be attained only when the life of a zealot is over, Metropolitan Nicolae Corneanu writes, “This perfect union between the object and the subject, which may occur at the last moment of a lifetime, after a lifelong search, fills the painful gap between the human creature and the Creator.”⁸⁸⁵

In spite of the conceptual differences, the universal experience of union of the two lights transcends the doctrinal barriers. Both traditions mention two lights: the subjective one, presenting a certain individual, and the objective one, representing the impersonal and transcendent reality. These two are supposed to be united. This very union of man and the universal Buddha is explained by rDzogs chen tradition in a

⁸⁸² Symeon the New Theologian, *The Discourses* (XV, 3), p. 195.

⁸⁸³ Gregory Nazianzen, *Select Orations of Saint Gregory Nazianzen, Sometime Archbishop of Constantinople* (XXII, 19), trans. Charles Gordon Browne in *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of Christian Church* (Michigan: Wm.B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, n.d.), p. 308.

⁸⁸⁴ Archimandrite Sophrony, *The Monk of Mount Athos Staretz Silouan 1866-1938*, p.113.

⁸⁸⁵ Metropolitan Nicolae Corneanu, “The Jesus Prayer and Deification”, p. 5.

“parable” about a clay pot. A liberated man is likened by rDzogs chen to an empty pot which is broken in fragments. Then there is no difference between the inner space contained within and the outer space that surrounds the pot.⁸⁸⁶ Hence, in Tibetan tradition the two lights are just two relative parts of the one and the only real whole. A similar idea is expressed explicitly in Hesychasm. That there can never exist two or more independent lights is stressed, for instance, by Gregory Palamas in his Triads (I, 3, 43). God is the only source of any light. For this reason, when *theosis* takes place, man transformed into light and the Divine Light are inseparable.

The idea of the destruction of the border between man and God during deification is found also in the treatises of St. Mark the Ascetic. He writes that any intellection presupposes dichotomy, i.e. the presence of the subject and the object. But God is beyond substance and beyond intellection. He is the undivided unit (ἡ μονάς) without parts; He is completely simple. A man, who transcends the intellection, is beyond dichotomy too, finding himself in God.⁸⁸⁷ The idea of the annihilated dichotomy, suggested by St. Mark, has strong affinities to the monistic perception of reality in Buddhism.

Finally, it would be rather interesting to note that doctrinal accuracy is sometimes not at all important for the masters of prayer in Hesychasm. A great mystic Macarius the Egyptian, for instance, being a true contemplator, goes beyond the doctrinal boundaries. The experience (ἡ πείρα) of God and not theological speculations was the core of his teaching.⁸⁸⁸ He doesn't distinguish between the substance (nature) of God and His energies, suggesting an idea of the substantial “mixture” of man and God.⁸⁸⁹ He teaches that God's implantation into the human soul should be understood literally. Macarius even asserts that the Incarnation in the body of Jesus was not unique; it was just a particular case of the constant incarnation of Christ in angels and souls of the saints.⁸⁹⁰ As a result of the union with the Divinity, God becomes in a sense the soul of man.⁸⁹¹

⁸⁸⁶ *Commentary to “The Last Testament of Garab Dorje,” by the Translator* in John Myrdhin Reynolds (trans.), *The Golden Letters*, p. 158.

⁸⁸⁷ Марк Подвижник, *De temperantia et virtute* c. X, col. 1057; (In Сергей Зарин, *Аскетизм по Православно-Христианскому учению*, сс. 437-438..)

⁸⁸⁸ Macarius writes, “We have partaken God, we have got the experience” (ἐγεύσαμεν καὶ πείραν ἔσχομεν). (Преп. Макарий Египетский, *Homilia* 40, 1, PG 34, 761. (in Владимир Лосский, *Боговидение*, пер. В. Решиковой // Владимир Лосский, *Богословие и боговидение*, с. 215.)

⁸⁸⁹ *Homilia* 8, 2, PG 34, 524-525. (In И. В. Попов, *Святые отцы II-IV вв. // Труды по Патрологии*, т. 1, с. 131)

⁸⁹⁰ *Homilia* 4, 9-10, PG 34, 480. (Ibid., с. 133)

Evagrius of Pontus is another representative of the Eastern Christian tradition teaching the literal union with God. According to him, human mind becomes a reservoir of God in the proper sense of the word.⁸⁹² Seeing God, man then sees himself and vice versa. In the same way as Buddhist masters of meditation deal with *enstasis* (introversion), Evagrius admits that mind is endowed with a natural capacity to perceive the Divine Light and needs not to transcend itself.⁸⁹³

No doubt, Macarius and Evagrius who lived in the fourth century AD were not yet acquainted with the Hesychast concept of the Divine substance and energies. The above mentioned ideas have been formulated by Palamas only in the fourteenth century. The mystical experience of Macarius and Evagrius, however, couldn't be so easily defined and was explained in the notional language of the fourth century. The formulations of the medieval theologians, being free from a strict dogmatic "stratum" of the later ages, are even closer to the essentials of the mystical experience. Therefore, a conclusion can be made that doctrinal truths are just secondary expressions of the primary and universal experience of the Ultimate. Let the words of Metropolitan Nicolae Corneanu sum up the present chapter of the research,

"Even if, given its objective social aspects, religion has at times been incorporated into history, spirituality — because it presents religious absoluteness as the invisible part of religion — will forever break all historical barriers; it will forever be nonhistorical."⁸⁹⁴

⁸⁹¹ *De libertate mentis*, 12, PG 34, 944-945. (Ibid., c. 134.)

⁸⁹² Евагрий Понтийский, *Kephalaia gnostica* III, 1. (In Владимир Лосский, *Боговидение*, пер. В. Решиковой // Владимир Лосский, *Богословие и боговидение*, с. 210.)

⁸⁹³ Владимир Лосский, *Боговидение*, пер. В. Решиковой // Владимир Лосский, *Богословие и боговидение*, с. 211.

⁸⁹⁴ Metropolitan Nicolae Corneanu, "The Jesus Prayer and Deification", p. 5.

The Somatic Consequences of the Light Experience

This chapter will seek to interpret the somatic consequences of the culminating point of mystical experience, i.e., Light vision. The concept is formulated in Tantric Buddhism as the realization of the body of Light (*'od lus*) or the Rainbow body (*'ja' lus*) that may be experienced in this very life. The attainment of Rainbow body is considered to be the final and complete liberation and is not determined by eschatological boundaries of Christianity.

It means that according to the Christian doctrine the complete glorification, i.e. resurrection of the body of a human being, is not possible in this age. Now only the human soul may be deified. The body, in its turn, has to wait for *parousia* (ἡ παρουσία) when the bodies will be resurrected. Therefore, the problem of a complete beatification of man in Christianity can't be discussed apart of *eschatology*. Yet, partial glorification of the body, expressed in the phenomenon of incorruptible relics, is possible in this very age. The mentioned phenomenon is sometimes accompanied by different photic effects.

We shall start with some typical hagiographic episodes using two key terms suggested by Mircea Eliade, i.e., “subjective” and “objective” experiences of Light. The former one deals with the vision of Light perceived exclusively by a visionary. As we shall see the “subjective” lumenophany is not always linked to the somatic context. The latter designation, in turn, means that a photic glorification of the visionary has been experienced also by others. Usually Hesychasts describe their own experience of *lumenophany* in quite an emotional manner, while the Tibetan adepts almost never do so, preferring abstract descriptions included in vast classifications of meditation stages.

Hagiography and autobiographies of the Saints of both religious traditions witness that lumenophany can occur during the life time of the Saint as well as after his death. Tibetan narratives usually describe the “objective” lumenophany taking place a short time before, during and after death of the *yogi*. Often these are disciples of the *yogi* and accidental witnesses who pass the extraordinary story to the others. On rare occasions, when the adept is completely skillful in meditation, the achievement of the body of Light can take place also during life time. It means that the adept's body, being perfect *Rupakāya*, doesn't at all go through the natural process of death. This sort of dematerialization is called *the Great Transference*. According to the tradition, this was accomplished, for instance, by "the patriarch" of Tibet Padmasambhava (8th cent. AD).

Effulgent Body in Christian Hagiography

In order to grasp the difference between the “subjective” Light experience and the “objective” one, it is necessary to turn our attention to examples. Let us read the evidence left by the well-known Russian Saint Seraphim of Sarov (1759-1833) as a good instance of the “subjective” Light experience:

"Once during the Holy Liturgy, when I had to serve together with Father Pokhomiya on the Maundy Thursday, staying near the altar, I uttered: "God, save us, believing in You, for ever and ever. Amen." The moment I said these words, I felt as if some rays of the Sun started illuminating me. Looking at the light, I saw our God Jesus Christ in the image of a human being. He, being in great Glory, was shining brighter than the Sun. Around Him there was an innumerable amount of heavenly creatures, who looked like bees, those were angels, archangels, seraphims and cherubims. From the Western Gate of the *Iconostasis* He, moving by air, stopped near the *ambon*, then raising His arms, blessed those praying and disappeared through the icon by the Royal Gate." ⁸⁹⁵

An author of the biography of the Saint quoting the above story adds that nobody except St. Seraphim saw the apparition of Christ. But everybody understood that something happened, for the face of the Father had changed and he couldn't move. Two Hierodeacons came up to him and took him to the altar area of the church. ⁸⁹⁶

An author of the full biography of the Saint, A. Timofievich mentions one more “subjective” evidence. He writes that when St. Seraphim was rather old, he was rewarded by a vision of St. Mary, Mother of God. Before that, on the 25th of March, 1831 a nun Evpraksia by name visited St. Seraphim in his cell. He told her he had already learned that St. Mary would come that day and become visible not only for him but also for her. As Mother Evpraksia witnesses, the apparition actually took place and was anticipated by noise similar to wind and also by singing and light effulgence. The Mother of God came in a great splendor accompanied by the Saints and virgins. The nun saw and heard everything, St. Mary spoke to St. Seraphim. He, in turn, was greatly comforted by the vision which continued for four hours. ⁸⁹⁷

⁸⁹⁵ *Жизнеописание достопамятных людей земли Русской 10-20 вв* (Москва: Московский рабочий, 1992), с. 260.

⁸⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁹⁷ Др. Анатолий Тимофеевич, *Преподобный Серафим Саровский (к пятидесятилетию прославления*

There is one more frequently quoted episode from the biography of the Saint that actually deals with the “objective” experience of Light. A landowner, Motovilov by name, became a witness to the unusual psycho-somatic condition of the Father. Motvilov was an ordinary visitor of St. Seraphim of Sarov, whose manuscript describing the experience was only accidentally found in the beginning of the 20th century in the Diveevsky Monastery among the other papers of the deceased. Here is a word for word translation of the dialogue between Motovilov and St. Seraphim recorded in the above mentioned manuscript:

"I answered, "I am, nevertheless, not able to realize why I can't be absolutely sure that I am in the Holy Spirit. In what way am I supposed to make out His real manifestation?"

Father Seraphim replied, "I, Reverend, have already told You that it's very simple. I have explained to You in detail how people manage to find themselves in the Holy Spirit and in what way they are supposed to realize His manifestation in us... What else, Father, do You expect me to say?"

"I'd like", I said, "to grasp the idea to the utmost."

Then Father Seraphim took me firmly by my shoulders and said to me, "Now, Father, both of us are in the Holy Spirit! Why aren't You looking at me?"

I answered, "I am not able, Father, to look at You as out of Your eyes there pours out blinding lightning. Your face has become brighter than the sun, and my eyes are aching with sharp pain!"

Father Seraphim said: Don't get scared, Your Reverend, since now You Yourself have become as filled with light as I am. You Yourself are now fully in the Holy Spirit, otherwise You wouldn't have been able to see me the way You did.

And bending his head, he quietly whispered in my ear, "Do thank God for the unuttered (Rus. неизреченный) Grace He has manifested to You. You did see that I even hadn't made the sign of the cross, I only mentally, deep in my heart, prayed to God and inside myself said, "My God! Please honor him to see clearly and with his own fleshly eyes the descending of Your Spirit as You honor Your servants when You are gracious enough to appear in the light of Your magnificent Glory! Well, Father, God has done a great favor to His poor submissive Seraphim at once. And we can't but be extremely thankful to Him for this unuttered gift to us both! It's not that often, Father, that God manifests His Grace even to hermits in deserts. This Grace of God was merciful enough to comfort Your distressed heart as a loving mother would do when

1903-1953)(New York: Spring Valley, 1953), cc. 48-49.

blessed by the Saint Mother of God.⁸⁹⁸ Well, Father, why are You not looking into my eyes? Just look and don't be frightened, God is with us!"

After these words I looked at his face, but all of a sudden an even greater awe seized me. Just imagine the face of a man in the middle of the sun, in the most shining brightness of its afternoon rays, talking to You. You see the movement of his lips, the changing expression of his eyes, you hear his voice, You feel somebody touching Your shoulders with his hands, but it's not only these hands but You Yourself that You can't see. The only thing You see is the blinding light, stretching very far away and yards around, and illuminating with its bright brilliance both the mantle of snow covering the glade and the snow-flakes falling down on me and on the great starets. It is next to impossible to try to imagine the situation in which I found myself then!"⁸⁹⁹

Finally, a modest evidence of the 'objective' vision of Light during death of St. Seraphim is of great interest. A certain Hieromonk Philaret was living as a hermit at Glinskaya wilderness at that time. On the 2nd of January 1833, coming out of the church after Matins, he showed the unusual light in the sky to his disciple and said, "That's how the souls of the Saints ascend into Heavens! The soul of Father Seraphim is ascending."⁹⁰⁰

We should notice that the simple evidence of the Hieromonk gives us a clue to the doctrinal interpretation of the event. It is the soul, and not the body, that is glorified. As to the body, it is supposed to be resurrected in the future age. The important difference between the Christian and the Buddhists interpretation of lumenophany during death is obvious. Tibetans, probably, may say that such a vision is a trustworthy proof of the beginning of the process of reabsorption of the body.

Although the Western Christian Hagiography is not an object of our research, lumenophany is present in it as well. For instance, the alleged glorification of St. Seraphim instantly after death can be likened to the description of the death of St. Francis of Assisi in *Life of St. Francis*:

"At length, when all the mysteries had been fulfilled in him and his most holy spirit was freed from the flesh, and absorbed into the boundless depths of the divine glory, the blessed man fell on sleep in the Lord. One of his Brethren and disciples saw that blessed soul, under the likeness of a star exceeding bright, borne on a dazzling cloudlet over many waters, mounting in a strightcourse unto heaven, as though it were

⁸⁹⁸ In Russian: как делает чадолубивая мать по предстательству Самой Матери Божией.

⁸⁹⁹ Др. Анатолий Тимофеевич, *Преподобный Серафим Саровский*, сс. 101-102. Translated by Ludmila Taivane.

⁹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, с. 55.

radiant with the dazzling whiteness of his exalted sanctity, and filled with the riches of divine wisdom and grace alike, by the which the holy man was found worthy to enter the abode of light and piece, where with Christ he resteth for evermore."⁹⁰¹

In spite of the fact that lumenophany is not too frequent for the Hagiography of the Christian West⁹⁰², there are some curious photic episodes from the life of St. Francis which remain unnoticed by the majority of representatives of the Roman Catholic tradition. We suppose, that the following testimony for simultaneous bilocation and transfiguration of St. Francis, is an excellent instance of the 'objective' photism in Western hagiography. According to *Legenda prima*, written by Thomas of Celano, one night Francis was not together with his brothers. At midnight, when some of the brothers went to bed and the others continued to pray in silence, suddenly a flaming chariot drove into the yard. The chariot made two or three rounds. The brothers saw in it something like the Sun, lightening the night. Those, who were on guard that night, were taken aback, and those, who were sleeping, got very much frightened. It wasn't only their bodily eyesight but their souls too that had perceived that Light. Having gathered together, they started asking each other what it might have been, and thanks to the intensity of the Light and to the Grace, they realized that someone else was present there. Finally, on getting accustomed to the sight, they saw the soul of St. Francis, which was shining so brightly.⁹⁰³

The episode of getting the stigmata, on the contrary, is very well known to the adherents of Western Christian tradition. As it is witnessed in the biography, the event was accompanied by the 'objective' lumenophany, i.e. by a very bright light which encircled the mountain Alverna and was seen by the shepherds at night.⁹⁰⁴

There are several more passages, describing the rapture of the Saint and specifying different aspects of contemplation. Thomas of Celano writes that Francis

⁹⁰¹ *Life of St. Francis* (14,6) in *The Little Flowers & The Life of St. Francis with the Mirrow of Perfection* (London, Toronto, J.M. Dent & Sons, New York, E.P. Dutton & Co, 1917), p. 393.

⁹⁰² Somaticism is extremely important both for the Eastern and the Western Christian traditions. As is noticed by Russian theologian S.S. Horuzhy, the bodily participation of the contemplator in the mystery of Transfiguration is typical for the Christian East and for Hesychasm in particular. Western mystics, in turn, withdraw into Crucifixion of Christ, getting tangible stigmata in their bodies. (See С.С. Хоружий, "Аналитический словарь исихастской антропологии" // *Синергия: Проблемы аскетики и мистики Православия: Научный сборник под общей редакцией С.С. Хоружего*, с. 143-144.)

⁹⁰³ See *Житие первое Святого Франциска Ассизского, составленное Фомой Челанским* (XXVII, 47) // *Источники францисканства. Святой Франциск Ассизский: писания и биографии. Святая Клара Ассизская: писания и биография* (Assisi: Movimento Francescano, 1996), с. 239.

⁹⁰⁴ *Of the Most Holy Stigmata of St. Francis (The Third Consideration on the Holy Stigmata)* in *The Little Flowers of St. Francis of Assisi* (Boston: St. Paul Editions, 1976), pp. 218-223.

easily merged with Light during prayer leaving bodily delusions behind.⁹⁰⁵ After prayer the Father usually did not want to show his shiny face to others in order not to lose the received gift.⁹⁰⁶ Finally, an “objective” evidence about luminous condition of his skin after death is left by the biographer. As the author of the biography thinks, the sign could anticipate the glorification of Francis’ body in the future age.⁹⁰⁷ Harvey D. Egan asserts that in a similar halo of radiant light came forth from the head, face, or body of Sts. Ignatius of Loyola, Francis de Paula, John Vianney, and others during contemplation or ecstasy.⁹⁰⁸

Although the alleged Light phenomenon is at times present in the Western hagiography, it is, however, essential to the spiritual path of Christian East. Moreover, lumenophany is not typical only for Hesychasm, but for the Eastern mysticism and hagiography on the whole. (In a similar manner the manifestation of Rainbow body, that is elaborated theoretically by *rDzogs chen*, is common for the Tibetan spiritual background in general.) Obviously, modern biographies (i.e. beginning approximately with the 19th century) of Greek and Russian Saints are much more reserved in describing the “objective” Light phenomena. In order to demonstrate the Light manifestation (in its “objective” presentation) as a typical feature of the Eastern hagiography, we shall mention several famous Russian Saints of 10th-19th centuries, whose lives and deaths were adorned with Light.

The first two Saints, who were canonized in Russia, are martyrs Boris and Gleb. According to the description, the body of Gleb was found in an empty place not far from Smolensk after unusual light and something similar to burning candles had been seen there.⁹⁰⁹

Anthony of the Caves (of Kiev, † 1073) was buried after his death in his cave. Allegedly it was not possible to look at his body for a very radiant light came forth from it.⁹¹⁰

Theodosius of the Caves (of Kiev, † 1074) was glorified with effulgent shining of his body during life time. The biographer emphasizes that the light was often seen by other people. The abbot of the monastery of St. Michael, Sophrony by name, saw the

⁹⁰⁵ *Legenda secunda* (24, 54).

⁹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, (LXV,99).

⁹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, (CLXIII, 515).

⁹⁰⁸ Harvey D. Egan, S.J., *Christian Mysticism: The Future of Tradition*, pp. 317.

⁹⁰⁹ *Жизнеописания достопамятных людей земли Русской 10-20 вв*, с. 28.

⁹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, с. 34.

unuttered light above the monastery. When the Saint died, Knyaz Svyatoslaw saw a pillar of fire above the building of the mentioned monastery.⁹¹¹

Martyrs Michael and Feodor (†1245), who suffered during the invasion of Tartars headed by Batiy (from 1238), were eaten by dogs. Their bodies were found several days after whole and untouched, with a pillar of fire and light similar to dawn and candle lights above.⁹¹²

One of the most important figures of Russian spirituality is Saint Sergius of Radonezh (the 14th cent.). Once when celebrating the Holy Liturgy, he was seen by his disciple Simon encircled by fire which was also on the credence-table. The fire disappeared in the Communion cup, rolling up as a winding-sheet. The Saint was also adorned with the visit of the Mother of God in a similar manner as it occurred to St. Seraphim of Sarov. St. Sergius was praying to St. Mary together with his disciple Micah. In the same way as Seraphim he was somehow informed about the expected apparition before and told about it to Micah. St. Mary came with the two apostles, Peter and John, encircled by a very bright light. She gave instructions in regard to the destiny of the monastery, and then disappeared. The disciple of St. Sergius was lying on the ground all the time, for he was scared of the effulgent light. He said that he had almost died during the vision because the shining was unbearable. In the book dedicated to Russian hagiography, G. Fedotov writes that the episodes from St. Sergius' life were not borrowed from other ancient biographies of the ascetics. As G. Fedotov considers, the visions confirm the congeniality of the Father with the movement of Hesychasm.⁹¹³

One more Russian Saint is a laywoman Ulania, who was very merciful to the poor and was buried in 1607 near Murom. She had a golden halo around her head after death. At night, after she had been washed by women, people saw light and a burning candle in her room. A fragrant odor exuded from her relics.⁹¹⁴

In 1988 the Russian Orthodox Church canonized Staretz Paisii Velichkovskii, who died in 1794. When he was still alive, his face often became very lucent and fiery.⁹¹⁵ Such examples can be continued.

To prove the cross-cultural character of the alleged Light phenomenon in the Christian world, we shall apply to Armenian hagiography from the 5th century and

⁹¹¹ Ibid., cc. 38-39.

⁹¹² Ibid., c. 49.

⁹¹³ Ibid., c. 80, and: Георгий Федотов, *Святые Древней Руси* (Москва: Московский рабочий, 1990), cc. 150-151.

⁹¹⁴ *Жизнеописания достопамятных людей земли Русской 10-20 вв*, цит. соч., с. 209.

⁹¹⁵ Ibid., c. 255.

following. Armenians belong to the theological tradition of monophysites. The first story, to which we are going to turn our attention, is of St. Mesrop Mashtotz (the 5th century AD), who is likened to Moses because, according to tradition, the Armenian alphabet is revealed to him in a similar way as the Decalogue was given to Moses. *The Life of Mesrop Mashtotz*, written by Koryun in the 5th century, is of tremendous value for the scholars in the field of the history of Armenia. In this document we read that St. Mesrop was glorified after his death, for "a cross-shaped, luminous (lovsawor), radiant (, a tawor) and marvelous apparition emerged above the abode, where the blessed [Father] had died; and every man could see that with his own eyes, and not because the companions [of Mashtotz] witnessed [that]."⁹¹⁶

There are also many biographies of martyrs, which are the best evidence of the tragic history of Armenia. Being often under the rule of other peoples, Armenia is rich of national heroes and martyrs. During the course of centuries Armenian struggle for freedom has been always united with the fight for the preservation of religious identity. The examples of lumenophany are as follows.

In 736, during the time of Arabian dominance, Vaan Gohtnatzi was tortured to death while his face was illuminated by a marvelous light so that people were afraid to come near the martyr.⁹¹⁷

After Seljukes had attacked Armenia, Hosrov Gandzaketzi endured torture and was killed by the Persians in 1167. Two Muslims witnessed that they saw an effulgent light at the grave of the Saint. The first of them was a muezzin who came to the village at night to call the Muslims to the prayer, for this was the time of fasting. Seeing the light, which was brighter than the light of the sun, he was scared to such an extent that he was lying on the ground until people found him there early in the morning. When the judge learned about it, he sent his servant to the grave at night. The servant also saw the unusual light, but couldn't at all look at it for it was very bright. With great fear he returned to the town and told everything to his superior.⁹¹⁸

⁹¹⁶ In Armenian: "... զա[anman, , lovsawor , o. awor 2&ow skan[eli dysil yrywax a3n abaranki wra, ovr waqj anwovm er yranelin7 & amyn mart inku desaw a3t, & o[; y ungyru badmyx l" from Gor3ovn *Յարկ Մա, doxi *l } (*Yr&an, Sowydagan cro. 1979), e]*

⁹¹⁷ Тер-Давтян (пер.), *Памятники Армянской Агиографии* (Ереван: Издательство АН Армянской ССР, 1973), с. 236.

⁹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, сс. 248-249.

In a similar way the effulgent light was noticed by a muezzin at the place of torment of *vardapet* Grigor Baluetzi in 1290 during the invasion of Tartar-Mongols.⁹¹⁹ In 1321, i.e. at the same period of the dominance of Mongols in Armenia, Bishop Grigor Karnetzi was murdered. In three days after the Light came down from heaven to the body and was seen by a crowd of people.⁹²⁰ These are just several episodes of the broad corpus of Armenian hagiography. We shall later return to this source once more.

At the moment it may be underscored, that unlike the Tibetan Light phenomena, which are usually accompanied by body reabsorption, the same luminous effluvia in Christianity coincides with bodily incorruption that is called by Harvey D. Egan as "the final secondary mystical phenomenon"⁹²¹ .

Rainbow Body in Tibetan Hagiography

The Light phenomenon in Tibetan hagiography is usually linked to the process of reabsorption of the body gradually dissolving into Light. This Light is usually colored, manifesting in the hues of the spectrum. That is why the new intangible form of the adept is called '*ja' lus* or *Rainbow body*.

Although "the conception of '*ja' lus* is cultivated mainly by *rDzogs chen* school"⁹²² , the alleged phenomenon of the Rainbow body is common for Tibetan Hagiography on the whole. The evidences of the Light body are present in the biographies of the Saints of different centuries and sects of Tibetan Buddhism. A good illustration of this statement is a biography of Tibet's great *yogi* Milarepa (*Mi la Ras pa*), who lived in the 11th-12th centuries AD and was instrumental in founding the sect called *Kagyupa*. The sect does not elaborate the idea of the *Rainbow body*, preferring the concept of the *illusory body*, closely related to the *Yoga of Illusory Body* of Naropa. *The life of Milarepa (Jetsun-kahbum)* is his autobiography that was written down by his close disciple Rechung. The first and the last chapters, however, are composed by Rechung himself. In the same last chapter called *the Nirvāna*, we can read, that the Light apparitions took place a short time before Milarepa's death when he gave his last instructions:

⁹¹⁹ Ibid., c. 273.

⁹²⁰ Ibid., c. 281.

⁹²¹ Harvey D. Egan, S.J., *Christian Mysticism. The Future of Tradition*, p. 320.

⁹²² Samten Gyaltsen Karmay, *The Great Perfection (rDzogs chen): A Philosophical and Meditative Teaching in Tibetan Buddhism*, p. 194.

"During these days, the more spiritually gifted of the hearers beheld the skies filled with gods listening [to the Master]. Many others felt [intuitively] that in the skies and on the earth there was an innumerable congregation of divine as well as of human beings, all joyfully listening to the preaching of the *Dharma*; and they felt a joyfulness pervading the whole gathering. And, to everyone present, there appeared various phenomenal signs, such as rainbows arching a clear blue sky; [then again] clouds, of different colours, assuming the shapes of [royal] umbrellas, and banners, and different offerings; and showers of variegated blossoms. There was heard by all the most exquisite music from various musical instruments; and the most fragrant odours, such as none had ever before enjoyed, filled the air."⁹²³

There are several aspects in the extract, to which we should devote attention: 1. the "objective" light visions are not always perceived by everybody, but only by "the spiritually gifted" ones. This can be also noticed in Christian hagiography. For example, in the passage of the death of St. Francis, mentioned above, only one brother was adorned with the vision of his luminous soul "mounting in a straight course unto heaven."⁹²⁴ 2. The "objective" lumenophany is decorated with the specific effects (royal umbrellas and different offerings) which can be meaningful and intimate only for Tantric Buddhists. In the same way the biographer of Mesrop Mashtotz emphasizes that the Light above the abode of the Father was "cross-shaped". The image of cross is meaningful only for Christians. Here the archetypal experience is expressed in certain doctrinal and cultural symbols. 3. The mentioned exquisite music is also present in Christian hagiography being a usual companion of the apparitions of St. Mother of God. 4. In the similar way the fragrant odors being typical of Christian hagiography are mentioned by Harvey D. Egan among the other *secondary Christian mystic phenomena*. According to Egan "*fragrant effluvia* may exude from saint's living or dead body. Sensible odors emanated, for example, from the stigmatic body of St. Francis of Assisi and St. Catherine Ricci. The exhumed corpses of Sts. Helen of Hungary and Teresa of Avila likewise emitted a pleasant smell. Moreover, the saints' tombs and relics have often discharged a delightful fragrance."⁹²⁵ Maria Vinovska, in turn, dedicated a

⁹²³ W. Y. Evans-Wentz, ed. *Tibet's Great Yogi Milarepa. A Biography from the Tibetan Being the Jetsun-Kahbum or Biographical History of Jetsun-Milarepa, According to the Late Lāma Kazi Dawa-Samdup's English Rendering*, (chapter XII) (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), p. 250.

⁹²⁴ See ft. 1., p.4.

⁹²⁵ Harvey D. Egan, S.J., *Christian Mystics: The Future of Tradition*, p. 313.

whole chapter of her book about Padre Pio (†1968) to the unusual and fragrant odor coming from the Saint.⁹²⁶

Writing about the uncorrupted relics of the Eastern Christian Saints, D. I. Protopopov stresses that the fragrant effluvia usually emanates from holy chrism of the relics. It is rather curious that the uncorrupted relics are never found in Athos, although the bones of the saints are yellow and have a good smell. Moreover, the bones produce the chrism which is the source of the mentioned odor.⁹²⁷

As to Milarepa's death, the same Light phenomenon with the secondary aspects was certified by his disciple Rechung:

"At his passing, Jetsun⁹²⁸ exhibited the process of merging the physical body with the realm of Eternal Truth [i.e. Dharmakāya], the *Devas* and *Dākinīs* manifested then much greater and more marvelous phenomena than ever before, and very many of the people there assembled beheld the phenomena. The unclouded sky appeared as if it were palpable with prismatic colors, arranged in a background of geometrically chequered designs, in the centre of which were vari-coloured lotuses, some of eight and some of four petals. Upon the petals were marvelously designed *mandalas* [or mystic circular designs] more beautiful than any that could be made by the most skillful artist [among men]. The firmament contained many wondrously tinted clouds, which assumed the form of [royal] umbrellas and banners, curtains, and draperies, and various other objects of worship. There were profuse showers of blossoms. Clouds of varied colours adorned the mountain peaks and assumed the form of *stūpas*, each with its head bending towards Chūbar. Ravishingly melodious music to the accompaniment of heavenly psalms in praise of the departed Saint was heard. And a delicious perfume, more fragrant than any earthly essence, pervaded the air, so that everyone perceived it."⁹²⁹

As is evident, the moment of the death of Milarepa is to a large extent "decorated" by different mythological and cultic aspects. Further on the author describes the conflict among the permanent followers of Milarepa, who could not come to agreement about

⁹²⁶ Мария Виновска, *Падре Пио. Жизнь и бессмертие* (Брюссель: Жизнь с Богом, 1994), с. 116-122.

⁹²⁷ In 1837, for instance, a monk of skhima, Nicodemus by name, died in Athos. In 1840 his bones were exhumed and washed. According to the accepted order they were put in the basket and left in the church for the all-night vigil. The fragrant chrism started to ooze out of the ears of the skull. This phenomenon was interpreted in the following way: the Saint was fond of listening for the Holy Scripture that is why the chrism is coming out of his ears after his death. (See Д. И. Протопопов, *О нетлении святых мощей* (Тверь, 1991), сс. 21, 35-36.

⁹²⁸ The other name of Milarepa.

⁹²⁹ W. Y. Evans-Wentz, ed., *Tibet's Great Yogī Milarepa*, pp. 273-274.

the place of cremation, since they lived in different country sides. At last the *Yogin*, sympathizing with the people, had divided his own dead body into two bodies, so each country side, Nyanam and Chubar, got one body. As to the first one, it was cremated in Nyanam. The cremation was accompanied by rainbows and flowers falling down from the sky. The cremation of the second body was postponed because the people were waiting for the close Milarepa's disciple, Rechung by name and the author of this biography. The disciples in Chubar prayed near the dead body without stop, and on the seventh day they noticed, that the body which was all in Light had diminished by six times in its size and looked like a body of an eight years old child. The disciples made up their mind to burn the body at once, because they were running a risk to remain without the relic, for the dead body after some time could completely disappear and become dematerialized. But the cremation fire wouldn't burn. Only after the arrival of the expected disciple it was possible to start the cremation. Then Milarepa's body seemed to have come to life again and gave the last instructions.

Let us read one more interesting episode of the biography:

"In every anniversary of the funeral, the sky was gloriously clear and there were rainbows and showers of blossoms, heavenly perfume filled the air and celestial melodies resounded everywhere, as on the day of Jetsun's passing away."⁹³⁰

The passage seems to have some resemblance with the annual event at the Mountain Tabor, described nowadays by the nuns of the Russian Convent of the Mountain (Gornensky⁹³¹). According to their words every year early in the morning of the 6th of August, when the Day of Transfiguration is celebrated, unusual bright clouds come down from the above.⁹³² Sister Mary told the author of the article, we are referring to, N.N. Lisovoi the following story, "When we were singing the *Tropar* and the chants of the feast, the cloud was moving in our direction. When we felt tired and became silent, the cloud [of light] moved in the direction of the other chorus which was situated in the other side of the garden." She stressed that the clouds were not similar to ordinary meteorological formations, for they were very bright.⁹³³

To return to Tibetan hagiography, the life story of *yogin* Gyere Lama⁹³⁴ who was a contemporary of Milarepa (the 12th century), has been written down only 30 years ago

⁹³⁰ Ibid., p. 304.

⁹³¹ Горненский Монастырь.

⁹³² Cf. "While he was still speaking, a bright cloud enveloped them, and a voice from the cloud said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!" (Mt. 17, 5)

⁹³³ Н.Н. Лисовой, *Преображение Господне: иконография и смысл праздника*, с. 215-216.

⁹³⁴ *sGye ras gnas mchod blo sgyud* (from bibliography of Glenn Mullin).

by the *terton* Dulzhug Lingpa⁹³⁵. Gyere Lama was murdered by a woman Palden Zangmo, but after the death of the *yogin* she repented her deed. The luminous near effects during and after the decease of Gyere Lama differ from those of the story of Milarepa only in insignificant details. When the time of cremation came, the body of the *yogin* began to burn without fire and very soon it just disappeared. A rainbow ball appeared above the cremation fire and a little child, who was in the ball, gave the last instructions to the killer and the others. Then the ball disappeared in the sky.⁹³⁶ Dulzhug Lingpa heard this story from the unknown golden *dākinī* who merged with the light after that. Later Gyere Lama himself came to him in a vision, enveloped by light, to continue the story.⁹³⁷

Hence, the after death glorification of Gyere Lama is actually accompanied by lumenophany. It is rather curious that after a long period time of several centuries, the *yogin* reincarnated many times for the benefit of all living beings, comes to our *terton* in the same old appearance of Gyere Lama. This element of the biography being in conflict with the idea of reincarnation seems to be a sign of relativity of category of time for a liberated being.

Here are some other examples of Tibetan hagiography. The partial Light body effect was achieved by the first Dalai Lama Sonam Gyatso, the head of the sect of *dGe lugs pa*, in 1588. Both standard biographies⁹³⁸ state that his dead body transformed into the body of a young man and emanated a very bright light. The left relics were placed in the golden corpus. All the other Dalai lamas after him demonstrated a similar way of a conscious control of the process of death.⁹³⁹

As it is already noticed, the biographies of the past are usually satiated by different symbols typical for the Buddhist and Bon mythology. In this connection it is curious to take up a few evidences of Rainbow body that belong to the modern period of rationalism and de-mythologization of traditional Buddhist doctrines. They are usually deprived of the mythological elements typical for ancient and medieval stories. This means that all cultic and mythological decorations of the Light experience are what is called by C.G. Jung ‘symbols’. Archetypes, for instance, this very Light, are permanent whereas symbols just interpret the basic experience.

⁹³⁵ *gTer ston 'dul bzugs gling pa* (from bibliography of Glenn Mullin).

⁹³⁶ See Глен Мулин, *Смерть и умирание в тибетской традиции* (Санкт-Петербург: Евразия, 2001), с. 188, translated from Glenn H. Mullin, *Death and Dying* (London and New York: Arkana, 1995).

⁹³⁷ *Ibid.*, с. 192.

⁹³⁸ *Nor bu 'phreng ba* and *mDzad pa ngo mtshar bcu nyis* (the note by Glenn Mullin).

⁹³⁹ Глен Мулин, *Смерть и умирание в тибетской традиции*, с. 175.

Mystical experience as such doesn't deal only with pure archetypes. There are several levels of this very experience. Its lower level manifests in symbols which are important for a certain cultural and religious environment. The highest level, in turn, is deprived of any symbolic expression. What constantly remains in all the stories, is none other than Jungian archetypes. They are common to all religions and do not depend on the historical context.

The first relatively fresh story is about Shardza Tashi Gyaltzen who achieved the state of Rainbow body in 1935. He was an adherent of *Bon rDzogs chen* tradition and an author of the famous treatise called *Heart Drops of Dharmakaya*⁹⁴⁰. Here is a short version of the event of his decease:

When Shardza was 77 years old, he went to Rabzhi Teng (*Rab zhi steng*) and built a small tent. Many disciples followed him and the Lama gave them his last instructions. Very often his gazes were stright into space.⁹⁴¹ After that he told his disciples to sew up the tent in a very close manner from every side. He asked not to open it for some time. Then he went into the tent and sat down in the posture of meditation. The next day his disciples could see many various rainbows above the abode of the master. They were large and small, in the form of a circle and a line, vertical and horizontal, and all of them were of different colors. At night everybody saw white lights like long white scarves. On the fourth day the earthquake occurred and many unusual sounds were heard there. Between the stitches of the tent many lights with different colors — some with five colors, some with only a single colour — came out like steam.

One of the disciples Cultrim Vangchug (*Chul khrims dbang phyug*) supposed that if left in the tent, the body would disappear very quickly and the disciples would stay without the relics. He opened the tent and saw the body of the master completely wrapped up with light and diminishing to the size of a little boy. It was in the air above the rug and there were nails scattered on the rug. When the disciple touched the body, the heart was still warm. He wrapped the body up; it was still preserved like that for 49 days. The rainbows and blossoms, falling from the sky, were noticed during all that period of time. Many people came to see the body of the master. When they touched it,

⁹⁴⁰ The full name of the treatise in Tibetan is '*Od gsal rdzogs pa chen po'i lam gyi rim pa khrid yig kun tu bzang po'i snying tig shes bya ba bzhugs*.

⁹⁴¹ Obviously, he was practicing the meditation called *thod rgal*, which helps to produce the inward Light and project it afterwards in the outer space.

they had a particular religious feeling. The relics were placed in the memorial golden *stūpa* and even then the lights and sparks came out of the body.⁹⁴²

As is evident, the passage is deprived of the cultic and mythological details. The rainbow light and the blossoms are the only aspects still present in the narrative.

The next story is a little bit younger. It is written down by Sogyal Rinpoche and is about "a *yogīn* in secret", Sonam Namgyal by name who died in 1952 in the East of Tibet. A lot of people witnessed the experience of attaining the state of Rainbow body by Sonam Namgyal. Our hero was a very common and modest man who traveled much, cutting out mantras and sacred texts on stones. In his youth he was a hunter and used to listen to the teaching of some great master. Not long before his death people saw him leaving for the mountains, where he sat doing nothing but looking ahead. Nobody knew what he was and what he was doing. It is rather curious that he liked to compose his own songs and sang them instead of the traditional ones.⁹⁴³ Some time later he fell ill. When his health became very poor, his family decided to send for lamas and doctors. Sonam's son told him then that now it was important to remember all the teachings, but Sonam said smiling, "I have forgotten all of them. There is nothing worth remembering. All around us is a mere illusion. Nevertheless I am convinced that everything will be fine." He died at the age of 79, but before he passed away, he asked not to touch his body after his death during a week. When he died, his family wrapped up his dead body and asked the lamas to start the practice⁹⁴⁴. The body was placed in a small room. Soon the people could not help noticing that the body of Sonam, who used to be a tall man, had become smaller in its size, and around the house they could see some unusual iridescent light. When on the sixth day they peeped in the room, they saw that the body went on diminishing and diminishing. The cremation ceremony was fixed for the eighth day. But when the cemetery people, who came to take the dead body, unwrapped it, they saw nothing but his nails and hair.⁹⁴⁵

⁹⁴² Extracted and translated by Lopon Tenzin Namdak from the biographical account by Sula Kelzang Tenpai Gyaltzen (*su la bskal bzang bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan (1897-1959)*). (In Shardza Tashi Gyaltzen, *Heart Drops of Dharmakaya: Dzogchen Practice of the Bön Tradition*, trans. and com. Lopon Tenzin Namdak, ed. Richard Dixey (Ithaca, New York: Snow Lions Publications, 1993), pp. 27-29.)

⁹⁴³ This fact can destroy a wrong statement about Tantrism as a religion of magic wherein the accuracy of the pronounced formula determines the result of meditation.

⁹⁴⁴ Supposedly, '*pho ba* or the transference of the consciousness-principle is meant here.

⁹⁴⁵ Sogyal Rinpoche, *The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying*, ed. Patrick D. Gaffney and Andrew Harvey (New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 1994), p. 172.

As we can see, the story of Sonam Namgyal is completely deprived of elements of the Buddhist myth and cult. Only the rainbow light remains as something constant for all the Tibetan stories of this sort.

The death of Shardza Tashi Gyaltzen's disciple Tsondru Rinpoche (*brtson 'grus rin po che*) can be also remembered in this connection. He died in 1985 in Dolanji. This description of the modern period is completely free from the mythological layer mentioning only a great number of rainbows. Some were round; some were stright. Rainbows differed also in color: some were white and others were colored. When Tsondru died, they just appeared out of the clear sky. At night the white rainbows were noticed in the space by the great number of people.⁹⁴⁶

The most recent evidence is recorded by Christian scholars. The alleged phenomenon excited the curiosity of David Steindl-Rast, a Benedictine monk, and of Fr. Francis Tiso, the associate pastor at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel in Mill Valley and a Tibetan Buddhist scholar. Steindl-Rast assumes that "if we can establish as an anthropological fact, that what is described in the Resurrection of Jesus has not only happened to others, but is happening today, it would put our view of human potential in a completely different light." Independently of the motivation of his interest, the evidence seems to be helpful also for our research.

Fr. Francis traveled to the province of Kham in Eastern Tibet in 2000 to investigate the death of a *dGe lugs pa* monk Khenpo A-Chos (†1998), who allegedly has attained the Rainbow body state. Here is the story. "Fr. Francis was deeply affected by his meeting with the fierce lama, with whom the disciples had consulted about the Khenpo's death. [...] The lama passed around pictures of himself in meditation that showed his own body emitting light. In one picture his body split into three forms, all radiating light.⁹⁴⁷ [...] As to Khenpo, a week before his death, a flat rainbow appeared over his house. Those present at his death told Fr. Francis that they saw the wrinkles on his skin disappear and the skin become smooth and shiny like that of a young boy's. Another disciple said the skin actually became luminous. Fr. Francis said this meant he was able to change his cellular structure and release light. Everyone present noticed a sweet fragrance, like perfume. Outside the hermitage they saw rainbows in the sky,

⁹⁴⁶ Shardza Tashi Gyaltzen, *Heart Drops of Dharmakaya: Dzogchen Practice of the Bön Tradition*, p. 137.

⁹⁴⁷ It resembles to some extent the story of Milarepa's dead body which was split into two forms. Besides when still alive and getting preparing to death, Milarepa split into three forms. (See the last chapter of *Tibet's Great Yogī Milarepa*.) The phenomenon is called by Christian theologians "bilocations" that means to be at two places simultaneously. See, for example, the life story of St. Padre Pio in Мария Виновска, *Падре Пио: Жизнь и бессмертие*, с. 104.

which was filled with a very fine rain. A few days later they also heard music, as if someone were singing outdoors, but they could not understand the words.

A lama with whom the Khenpo's disciples consulted told them to cover the body with a yellow cloth and not touch it. The disciples could see through the cloth that the body was shrinking but saw no signs of decomposition and no insects, although the weather was warm. On the eighth day they looked in the box and the body had completely disappeared, leaving only the cloth (his clothing had been removed when he died), which had no marks on it.⁹⁴⁸

The typical symbols of the Buddhist mythology and cult are not found in the passage, however, the already known elements, which are termed *the secondary mystic phenomena*, are still present. Those are the sweet fragrance and the unusual music accompanying lumenophany. The most typical detail of the experience is a "flat rainbow" which together with the secondary mystic phenomena seem to be common for both the Christian and the Buddhist hagiographic traditions. Yet these universal archetypes are not completely free of the symbolic "clothing". To be precise, the cross-cultural Light experience appears for a Tibetan in the unique form of a rainbow, while a Christian contemplator perceives it, for instance, in a typical vision of the Transfigured Lord or in the form of the cross.

Lumenophany: From Symbols to Archetypes

The analysis of the hagiographic material, proposed above, lead us to draw some conclusions. In the occasion of the Tibetan evidences the symbol of Rainbow is of tremendous value being a visual explanation of the gradual process of reabsorption or the return to the primordial state. This idea of the transformation of the material elements into their subtle substance is completely extraneous for the Christian doctrine. That is why the rainbow symbolism is not present in Christian hagiography.

What are the aspects of the light described in Christian hagiography? The light as a sign of glorification is usually mentioned to be just very bright and unusual. The form of the Light is rarely discussed by the Christian hagiographic genre. Sometimes the lights similar to candle's flame are mentioned in the narratives. The biographers usually assert that the light was above the body or the abode of the dead Saint, or encircled him (as it is in the event of the Assumption of Mother of God, described below). However,

⁹⁴⁸ "Stirrings — Summer 2001: The Tibetan Rainbow Body and Christian Resurrection" in *IONS Review*, No. 59, March-May 2002 in www.Snowlionpub.com/pages/N59_9.php.

there are some modest hints of the light form in Armenian hagiography. For instance, *The Life of Mesrop Mashtotz*, quoted above, mentions the cross-shaped apparition of light that is a visual and lucent embodiment of the core symbol of Christianity.

The form of light manifestations is also mentioned in the biography of Osep Dvinetzi, the martyr of Armenia († 1170), written by a contemporary of the Saint. The author evidences that after the death of the Saint his brother buried his body together with the head. The earthquake happened at that night and light in the form of an arch came down from heaven. This event took place near Artashat⁹⁴⁹ not far from *the Great Pit*⁹⁵⁰, where St. Gregory the Illuminator had been tortured.⁹⁵¹

The biographer adds that there were many martyrs, particularly among the Armenians. Armenia was glorified by their blood. Many Armenian martyrs were endowed with *the arch-formed light* and glorified by God and human beings.⁹⁵² Therefore, St. Osep was not the only man whose death was marked by the arch-formed light.

The mentioned light bears some resemblance to the white rainbows described above in the life of Tsondru. This commonality, however, seems to be accidental because the arch-form may be interpreted also as the manner in which the light enveloped the dead body of a Saint lying on the ground.

The discussed matter, however, is rather mysterious. Let us refer to one more curious narrative from the Jewish *Zohar*, retold briefly by Belden C. Lane. He writes that “in the great mystical book of the *Zohar*, very little is said of Moses’ profound experience inside the cloud on the mountain’s top. We are told that, as he ascended the peak, the Rainbow took off her garments and gave them to him to wear, but apart from this, we learn only that “he saw what he saw”.”⁹⁵³

It is common knowledge that the image of Rainbow is present in the Old Testament and, without a profound exploration of the symbol in the Jewish tradition any conclusion may remain a mere hypothesis. At the moment it is sufficient to say that the symbol of Rainbow expresses the experience of the Ultimate in completely different religions, such as Judaism and Tibetan Buddhism. A relevant question is if we deal here with the symbol of a Rainbow or with some sort of archetype of a Rainbow. If the

⁹⁴⁹ Artashat is one of the ancient capitals of Armenia.

⁹⁵⁰ In Armenian զօր Վիրաբ.

⁹⁵¹ Тер-Давтян (пер.), *Памятники Армянской Агиографии*, с. 263.

⁹⁵² *Ibid.*, с. 264.

⁹⁵³ Belden C. Lane, “The Sinai Image in the Apophatic Tradition,” *St. Vladimir’s Theological Quarterly* 39.1 (1995), p. 62.

experience of a Rainbow is universal, can it be attributed to the relative and impermanent entity of symbols? Obviously, “archetypes” and “symbols” are speculative constructions which sometimes are not at all able to translate the incomprehensible into the language of logic. Hence, we can assume that the border between Jungian “archetypes” and “symbols” is extremely subtle.

One more phenomenon standing at the border of Jungian “archetype” and “symbol” is the reabsorption of the body. As is evident, the reabsorption is quite in conformity with the Buddhist model of thinking. The aim of every good adherent of the Buddha is to realize that all the forms of the universe are just an illusion, and his own body is not an exception. If the dichotomous vision of reality is abolished, the reabsorption of the body then is none other than a derivative of the right view.

As is already indicated, the Christian soteriological model of glorification of the body only in the future age has a strong influence on piety. The eschatological perspective of the Christian model of thinking is a reason why the process of reabsorption is not fixed in the Christian hagiography. The resurrection of bodies is supposed to take place only during *parousia*; so the relics of the Saints have been beatified only to a limited extent waiting for the completion of this process in the future.

However, the mysterious extract from the Gospel written by Matthew (27:50-53) makes us reconsider the idea of a strict interdependence of the resurrection of the body and the *parousia*, "And when Jesus had cried out again in a loud voice, he gave up his spirit. At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth shook and the rock split. The tombs broke open and the bodies of many holy people who had died were raised to life. They came out of the tombs, and after Jesus resurrection they went into the holy city and appeared to many people."

For the moment we shall leave this extract uncommented, taking further a curious passage from the Greek version of the apocryphal Gospel of the Assumption of the Virgin called *The Discourse of St. John the Divine Concerning the Falling Asleep of the Holy Mother of God*. The extract is understood in the context of the last meeting of the apostles and Mother of God. The disciples "were caught up in the clouds"⁹⁵⁴ and this way came together to participate in the farewell before the Virgin's Assumption. But there were not only the alive apostles who took part in the meeting. "Andrew the brother of Peter, and Philip, Luke and Simon the Canaanite, and Thaddeus, which were

⁹⁵⁴ Montague Rhodes James, trans., *The Discourse of St. John the Divine Concerning the Falling Asleep of the Holy Mother of God* (15) in *The Apocryphal New Testament Being the Apocryphal Gospels, Acts Epistles, and Apocalypses with Other Narratives and Fragments*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1950), p. 203.

fallen asleep, were raised up by the Holy Ghost out of their sepulchers; unto whom said the Holy Ghost: Think not that the resurrection is now; but for this cause are ye risen up out of your graves, that ye may go to salute for a honour and a wonderful sign for the mother of your Lord and Savior Jesus Christ: for the day is come near of her departure and going to abide in heaven."⁹⁵⁵

It seems to be quite unusual that theologians of the Orthodox Church, commenting on the passage of the Canonical Gospel of Matthew, do not contest the alleged event of resurrection of the others and admit that it could actually take place in this age. But the object of their disagreements is the question, if it occurred before or after the Resurrection of Christ. The reason of the discussion is in the words of Matthew "after Jesus resurrection" which are considered by some theologians to be a later insertion.⁹⁵⁶

The author of the apocryphal Gospel also mentions the resurrection of the others. His interpretation of the passage, however, can be called *Orthodox* to a larger extent than the commentary of the mentioned extract from the Canonical New Testament. The author of the apocrypha attempts to submit the explanation of the event to the Christian doctrine of the "postponed" resurrection of the body.

It is rather natural to move on to the narrative of the Assumption of St. Mary, Mother of God according to the Orthodox hagiographic tradition. The event of resurrection of the Virgin's body deals with the idea of her sinfulness. The Assumption is dogmatically assumed by the Roman Catholic Church and is also accepted by the Orthodox Church as a certain aspect of the Tradition. Her case is considered to be an exclusion of the principle of the postponed resurrection of the body. We can only add that the Assumption is the only evidence of a simultaneous lumenophany and reabsorption, we have found in the whole corpus of Russian Orthodox hagiography. Here is an abridged version of the story:

"When it was time for Mother of God to pass on, She went to Jerusalem again. She was praying days and nights and didn't miss the chance of visiting the place of Christ's tomb. Once when she was at Calvary, She suddenly caught a glimpse of Archangel Gabriel, and He told Her that She was to pass away to the Kingdom of God in no time. On learning this news, Mother of God together with Her closest three

⁹⁵⁵ Ibid. (13), p. 203.

⁹⁵⁶ *Толковая Библия или комментарий на все книги Св. Писания Ветхаго и Новаго Завета с иллюстрациями. Издание приемников А. П. Лопухина. т. 3, Новый Завет. Петербург 1911-1913 (Стокгольм, 1987), сс. 462-463.*

virgins returned to Bethlehem. The apostles, whose number was great, had "flown" to Bethlehem like clouds or eagles in order to serve Her. She called each of them, blessed them and prayed together with them, asking for peace all over the world. When the Mother of God prayed, expecting Her own death, out of a blue there appeared an absolutely indescribable Light of God's Glory, and everybody around saw that the light of the candles had completely withered. The roof of the house seemed to have disappeared in the flashing rays of the Great Light, and all saw the descending King of Glory Jesus Christ. Around Him there was an innumerable amount of angels and other heavenly creatures. The Mother of God rose to Her feet and bowed to God. Without any physical sufferings the Saint Virgin passed on Her soul to Her Son and Her God, accompanied by the joyful singing of the angels. The face of Mother of God was beaming, and the air was full of some unusual wonderful fragrance. Weeping, the apostles started the funeral ceremony to Gethsemane. Suddenly they saw a large luminous cloudy circle resembling a wreath. The crowd and the soldiers could hear the song of the angels and apostles perfectly well and tried to approach the funeral ceremony in order to commit an outrage and to burn the Virgin's body, but the cloudy circle descended on the ground and surrounded the procession like a wall. The persecutors, who could hear the steps and the singing, were no longer able to see anything, and many of them became blind [...]. When the procession reached Gethsemane, there started the farewell to the Saint's body, and only by the evening the holy apostles could have put the body of Mary into the coffin and close the cave, rolling to it a large stone. During three days and three nights they stayed near the tomb, praying and singing psalms. It so happened that due to the divine providence, Apostle Thomas was absent from the funeral. He only appeared in Gethsemane on the third day, grieving a lot, as he had missed Mary's blessing. Sympathizing with Thomas, the apostles decided to roll back the stone from the cave and in this way to comfort him. However, on entering the cave, they only found the veil of the Saint Virgin, while Her body was gone. Thus, they had become witnesses to the miraculous Assumption of Mary's body to the Heaven."⁹⁵⁷

Besides the typical Christian symbols, the so called secondary mystic phenomena are present in the description, those are the flashing light, the joyful singing of the angels and the unusual fragrance. All the three effects are mentioned in the Tibetan

⁹⁵⁷ *Сказания о земной жизни Пресвятой Богородицы с изложением пророчеств и прообразований, относящихся к ней, учения Церкви о ней, чудес и чудотворных икон ея, на основании Священного Писания, свидетельств Св. Отцев и Церковных преданий* (Москва, Типо-Литография И. Ефимова, 1904), сс. 184-202.

biographies, differing in some insignificant details. Although the singing of angels, for example, is replaced in Tibetan hagiographic episodes by heavenly psalms of *Devas* and *Dākinīs*, the universal character of "the heavenly phenomena", perceivable by senses, is evident.

As for the Christian doctrine, the idea of the illumination of the senses can be here developed. If the idea of the eternal, resurrected and perfect body is accepted, the senses should also take part in the glorification process, being in this way the features of the ascended creature. While a Buddhist adept tends to return to the subtle essence of the elements of body, a Christian is achieving at the moment of the vision a perfect body with illuminated senses that Adam once possessed. The world of the unconscious, spontaneously perceived by human mortal senses, manifests to the extent which is bearable for the visionary. However we should understand that the essential Constant (or the Unconscious) never moves or manifests. It is a human being who returns to the permanent Center of all that exists.

The above narrative of the Assumption is an obvious borrowing from the mentioned apocryphal Gospel. There are three different versions⁹⁵⁸ of the text. Those are 1. *The Greek Narrative: The Discourse of St. John the Divine Concerning the Falling Asleep of the Holy Mother of God*. 2. *The Assumption: Latin Narrative of Pseudo-Melito*. 3. *Narrative by Jozeph of Arimathaea*. In the present research we shall not deal with the history of the texts and of the borrowings leaving this topic aside. Lumenophany and the other secondary mystical phenomena belong to the subject we shall devote the attention to. The secondary mystical phenomena are present in the texts in different combinations. But not only is the phenomenological part of the topic essential. There are some doctrinal hints, we are going to discuss below.

The Greek version of the apocrypha is rather modest in describing the light phenomena and is the first that is going to be quoted. The verse 38 of the text represents Lord Jesus Christ in the lightening splendor,

"And as we all prayed there appeared innumerable multitudes of angels, and the Lord riding upon the Cherubim in great power. And lo, an appearance of light going before him and lighting upon the holy virgin because of the coming of her only-begotten Son."⁹⁵⁹ The fragment does not discuss the lumenophany in detail, yet it is

⁹⁵⁸ Generally speaking, there are more than three versions. The other accessible texts are: 1. *The Assumption. Coptic Texts*. 2. *The Discourse of Theodosius*. 3. *The Syriac Narratives* in *The Apocryphal New Testament Being the Apocryphal Gospels*, op. cit.

⁹⁵⁹ *The Discourse of St. John the Divine Concerning the Falling Asleep of the Holy Mother of God* (38), p. 207.

clear that the 'objective' light vision took place there. The next two passages deal with the period of time after the Virgin's death. The first one (verse 48) mentions two secondary phenomena, i.e. the fragrance and the heavenly singing, while the second one (verse 49) unites these objects of "purified senses" with the light vision.

(verse 48a) "And after this miracle the apostles bare the bed and laid her precious and holy body in Gethsemane in a new tomb. And lo, an odour of sweet savour came out of the holy sepulchre of our lady the mother of God: and until three days were past the voices of invisible angels were heard glorifying Christ our God which was born of her. And when the third day was fulfilled the voices were no more heard, and thereafter we all perceived that her spotless and precious body was translated into paradise."⁹⁶⁰

According to the other version of the text the quoted passage is substituted by the following one (we shall denote it as (48b), "When the apostles went forth from the city of Jerusalem bearing the bed, suddenly twelve clouds of light caught them up, together with the body of our lady, and translated them into paradise."⁹⁶¹

The second extract follows:

(verse 49) " Now after it was translated, lo, we beheld Elizabeth the mother of the holy John the Baptist, and Anna the mother of *our* lady, and Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, and David singing Alleluia, and all the choirs of the saints worshipping the precious body of the mother of the Lord, and *we saw* a place of light, than which light nothing is brighter, and a great fragrance *came* from that place whereto her precious and holy body was translated in paradise, and a melody of them that praised him that was born of her: and unto virgins only is it given to hear that sweet melody wherewith no man can be sated."⁹⁶²

It is significant that the 48th verse mentions three days which are necessary for the Assumption according to the pattern of resurrection of the body, demonstrated by Jesus Christ. We learn that "when the third day was fulfilled the voices were no more heard". It is a sign that the Virgin was not there any longer.

The 49th verse of the text, representing the three secondary mystical phenomena together, mentions the light at the tomb of the Lady. The appearance of light after Assumption could be interpreted by Tibetans as "the last residue" of the body of light sensually perceived by the others.

The verse 48b is satiated with a typically Christian symbolism. The topic, however, also resembles the stories of the *yogī* who after cremation merge, for instance,

⁹⁶⁰ Ibid. (48), p. 208.

⁹⁶¹ Ibid., pp. 208-209.

⁹⁶² Ibid. (49), p. 209.

with the ball of light, gradually disappearing in heaven. (See the life of Milarepa and Gyere Lama). Besides, one realizes that the twelve apostles were also translated into paradise together with the Virgin. We suppose, the meaning of the alleged fact is strictly symbolic. Hence, the Greek version of the text provokes the researcher to distinguish between the spontaneous expressions of the "Unconscious" (such as objective light, sound and fragrance phenomena) from symbols which, in their turn, represent the doctrinal "decoration" of the narratives.

The second version of the apocrypha, arousing interest, is the Latin one. It seems to be more theologically systematized, referring to the Light topic, than the Greek version. The document tends to distinguish between the resurrection of the Virgin's soul and the Assumption of her body. These two members of the glorification process are disposed in a certain order. In the beginning the soul is beatificated and only when the soul is not any longer with us, the body ascends. This process of temporal separation of the two parts of man can never be found in the Tibetan hagiographic narratives because according to the Tantric doctrine consciousness can't at all be separated from the winds (the body). This idea is linked to the monistic understanding of reality.

The first extract refers to the ascension of the soul, while the second one speaks of lumenophany of the body as a start point of beatification process.

(VIII, verse 3) "And as the Lord thus spake, Mary arose from the pavement and laid herself on her bed, and giving thanks to God she gave up the ghost. But the apostles saw her soul that it was of such whiteness that no tongue of mortal men can worthily express it; for it excelled all whiteness of snow and of all metal and silver that glistereth with great brightness of light."⁹⁶³

The passage concerning the glorification of the body follows,

(X) "Now the three virgins that were there and watched took the body of the blessed Mary to wash it after the custom of burials. And when they had stripped it of its apparel, that holy body shone with such brightness that it could indeed be touched to do the service thereof, but the appearance could not be looked upon for the exceeding flashing of light: and a great splendour appeared in it, and nothing was perceived by the sense when the body was washed, but it was most pure and not stained with any manner of defilement. And the body of the blessed Mary was like the flowers of the lily, and a great sweetness of fragrance issued from it, so that nothing like that sweetness could elsewhere be found."⁹⁶⁴

⁹⁶³ *The Assumption: Latin Narrative of Pseudo-Melito* (VIII, 3) in *The Apocryphal New Testament Being the Apocryphal Gospels*, p. 213.

⁹⁶⁴ *Ibid.* (X), p. 213.

The described gradual process of glorification of Mother of God is in conformity with the Christian doctrine of the certain order of this process, formulated clearly, for instance, by Macarius the Egyptian as "the double resurrection of the souls and the bodies"⁹⁶⁵.

It is discernible that the first extract depicts Mother of God being healthy enough to arise from the pavement a few minutes before death. This detail can be interpreted as a mere hagiographic fabrication. Similar evidences, however, are present in the biographies of Christian Saints and Buddhist realized masters of the modern period; they are interpreted as a sign of the psycho-somatic control completed.

In addition to these two passages, there are several more mentions of the light manifestation and the unusual sound in the Latin version of the apocrypha. For example, the appearances of Christ are accompanied by light flashing with great brightness,⁹⁶⁶ but before the Assumption the angel came to Mary "in a garment of great brightness" and "departed with great light."⁹⁶⁷ The latter event resembles the appearance of the golden *dākinī* to the terton Dulzhug Lingpa, merging with the light after that. The unusual sound is noted in XII, 1, " There appeared a very great cloud over the bier like the great circle that useth to be seen about the splendour of the moon: and an host of angels was in the cloud sending forth a song of sweetness, and the earth resounded with the noise of that great melody."⁹⁶⁸ A similar "consonant" with the glorification process of the body was produced by the earth in the story of death of Shardza Tashi Gyaltzen.

The third version of the apocryphal narrative of the Assumption of the Virgin, in which we are interested, is attributed to Joseph Arimathaea. It is dogmatically arranged in a way similar to the Latin version. In the beginning the glorification of the soul of the Virgin takes places. Afterwards the body is glorified. The first passage, concerning the soul, is essential enough because the lumenophany accompanying the event is likened to the event at Mount Tabor:

(verses 11-12) On the Sunday of the third hour Christ came down with a host of angels and took the soul of his mother. Such was the light and fragrance that all fell on their faces (as at Mount Tabor) and none could rise for an hour and a half. As the light

⁹⁶⁵ *Беседа XXXVI (1) // Творения Преподобного Макария Египетского* (Москва: Паломник, 2002), с. 426.

⁹⁶⁶ *The Assumption: Latin Narrative of Pseudo-Melito* (VII) and (XVI), pp. 212, 215.

⁹⁶⁷ *Ibid.* (III, 1, 2), pp. 210-211.

⁹⁶⁸ *Ibid.* (XII, 1), pp. 213-214.

receded, the soul of Mary was taken up with it, with singing; and as the cloud went up, the earth shook, and all in Jerusalem saw the death of Mary in one instant."⁹⁶⁹

The verse concerning the glorification of the body follows,

(verse 16) "Then the apostles laid the body in the tomb with great honour, weeping and singing for pure love and sweetness. And suddenly a light from heaven shone round about them, and as they fell to the earth, the holy body was taken up by angels into heaven (the apostles not knowing it)."⁹⁷⁰

An idea of the light coming from above in the last passage helps to recognize a doctrinal implication of the substantial dichotomy between God and creature in Christianity. Such a coming of the light "from above" can never be found in Tibetan hagiography for the light is within us, i.e. within our consciousness. Although sometimes we read that after death of Buddhist masters the rainbows appear in the sky, the transference of the coloured light downwards never takes place. Vice versa, such an apparition may mean the projection of the master's inner light in the outer space.

To generalize, the versions of the apocryphal narrative and the narratives from the Tibetan hagiography lead us to disclose a commonality in what we call *the secondary mystic phenomena* (i.e. the lumenophany, the unusual sounds and the fragrance) in Buddhism and Christianity. Still they are never deprived of the doctrinal layer of the Buddhist or Christian symbolism. Therefore the interplay of Jungian symbols and archetypes brings us to the conclusion that it is rather difficult to realize the primary agent of these two religious motifs.

Going back to the mysterious passage from the Gospel, we shall continue it with 6 more events of unexplained disappearance of the bodies of the Christian Saints after death recorded in the Orthodox hagiographic tradition. These are quite unusual evidences which are not much commented upon by the Orthodox theologians. Usually the explanation is reduced to a short formula, "the body was hidden by God". Sometimes it is stated that people were not worthy of burying the Saint, or his (her) disappearance after death means, that the body actually exists somewhere, but is hidden by God because of the humble request of the Saint not to glorify him openly until the *parousia*.

The first Saint whose body has allegedly disappeared, is St. John, the disciple of Jesus. According to the narrative, when it was time for John to pass on, he went away from Ephesus together with seven disciples and asked them to dig a cross-formed grave

⁹⁶⁹ *The Assumption: Narrative by Joseph of Arimathea* (11-12) in *The Apocryphal New Testament Being the Apocryphal Gospels*, p. 217.

⁹⁷⁰ *Ibid.* (16)., p. 217.

for him. He lay down into it and asked the disciples to bury him. The disciples did so with tears for they were afraid to disobey. After that the other disciples unearthed the grave. It was empty. The body had disappeared. Every year, when they celebrated the anniversary of the death of St. John, they found on the grave something similar to subtle ashes. They gathered them for the ashes performed miracles.⁹⁷¹

In the same 1st century St. Irina died in Ephesus. She was the daughter of Litziny, a pagan. He was the governor of Migdony. Irina converted 10 thousand people to Christianity, preaching and healing in Ephesus. She was an ascetic and was tortured many times. When the time of her passing on came, she acted similarly to St. John. Accompanied by a large number of Christians, she went to the mountains near Ephesus. Then she made a sign of the cross, went into the cave and asked to close the entrance of the cave by a large stone. On the forth day the people opened the cave, but didn't find the body of the Saint.⁹⁷²

The next is St. Dula whose dates of birth and death are unknown. He was a monk, belonging to a monastery in Egypt. He was very humble and obedient and suffered much from the jeering of the brothers. He never got angry with them but prayed for the persecutors. At the end of his life he was accused of the theft of the church cups. Dula didn't argue and said, "Forgive me, Saint Fathers, I am guilty". The abbot took back Dula's cassock and gave him the clothes of a layman. Then Dula was cruelly tortured by the brothers till the actual culprit confessed his evil act. Three days later Dula was found dead in the pose of prayer in front of the icon in his cell. The dead body was then locked up in the church till the arrival of the abbot and the brothers of the neighbor monastery. Finally, when the church was unlocked, the body was no longer there. Only the clothes and the shoes remained. The disappearance of the relics is motivated by the biographer in a very simple manner: the brothers were not worthy of burying the Saint.⁹⁷³

The forth is the story of St. Theoktista († 881), who at age of 18 was taken to Poros island by Arabs with the other captives to be sorted there. The island was not inhabited any longer at that time. Theoktista managed to escape and had to live alone in the forgotten church of St. Mary for 35 years, praying all the time. Once hunters visited the island and one of them found naked Theoktista in the church. She told him about her life and asked him to carry her Holy Sacrament. He fulfilled her request a year later. After taking Holy Communion she died and was buried by the hunter who cut her arm

⁹⁷¹ *Настольная книга священнослужителя. Месяцеслов*, т. 2 (Москва, 1978), с. 124.

⁹⁷² *Настольная книга священнослужителя. Месяцеслов*, т. 3 (Москва, 1979), с. 278.

⁹⁷³ *Ibid.*, сс. 441-442.

and took it with him as a relic. The ship was sailing all the night but in the morning the travelers found themselves at the same island. The hunter understood he was guilty of this situation. He hurried to the buried body, opened the grave and put the hand together with the relics. The ship could now sail without difficulties. Then the hunter told everything to his friends and they decided to go back to the island and to take the relics with them. When they unearthed the grave, the body of the Saint was not there.⁹⁷⁴

Anthony of the Caves (of Kiev, † 1073) has already been mentioned above. He was buried after his death in his cave. Allegedly nobody has managed to see or touch his body for the bright light and natural disasters like fire or water have not allowed people to take the body.⁹⁷⁵

The youngest among the Saints is Cosmas of Zograph, the ascetic of Bulgaria († 1323). When he was young, he went to Athos and became a monk, but later was ordained. He prayed much and in a vision learned from the Mother of God that he should accomplish a feat of silence. So he went away from the monastery to the desert and began living in a cave. Before his death Jesus Christ came to him in a vision and said that at the end of his life Satan and his angels would torture him. Three days after the foretold torture the Saint took Holy Communion and died. He was buried in his cave, but during the procession many animals and birds glorified his death with their presence and the last howl. Forty days later the monks opened the cave in order to take the body to the monastery, but the relics disappeared.⁹⁷⁶

The bodies of the Saints, except the unclear case of St. Anthony, seem to be dematerialized if the biographies are believed to be authentic. Although the theft of the relics in the Middle Ages is a commonly known fact, the places where relics were situated (the locked church or the grave, situated in a completely empty place) were safe enough. This fact makes the biographers to ignore the version of the theft of the bodies. Besides, until the certain Saint becomes well known through the process of canonization, his body can't yet be an object of plunder.

In the case of St. Dula his clothes remain as it was after Resurrection of Jesus. St. Irina's dead body, in its turn, disappeared three days later that also resembles the passage from the Gospel. The same three days are mentioned in the story of the assumption of the Mother of God.

⁹⁷⁴ *Настольная книга священнослужителя. Месяцеслов, т. 2., с. 259-260.*

⁹⁷⁵ *Настольная книга священнослужителя. Месяцеслов, т. 3, цит. соч., с. 550; Д. И. Протопопов, О нетлении святых мощей, с. 37.*

⁹⁷⁶ *Настольная книга священнослужителя. Месяцеслов, т. 2, с. 105.*

The Theory of the Rainbow Body as a Return to the Primordial State

The essential difference between God and creatures in Christianity determines the distinction of *natural* and *supernatural*, i.e. of what can be an object of cognition, and what is unknown. The created and now corrupted world is what we call *natural*. But there are also *supernatural* things such as the ineffable substance of God and His Grace which can't and should not be analyzed in detail because they can never be grasped by human intellect. In conformity with this statement St. Gregory Palamas warns us in his Triads not to attempt to understand divine and mysterious things (energies) as something bodily and material.⁹⁷⁷

Christians distinguish between the *natural* and *supernatural* stages of prayer, called *meditation* and *contemplation* in the West. The same stages of prayer are defined by the tradition of Christian East as *προῶξις* and *θεωρία*. The first is accomplished by man himself, using the natural forces of psyche such as intellect, will and imagination, while the second stage is performed by God's Grace or the uncreated divine energies as Hesychasm asserts.

As we have already noticed earlier, the notion of *supernatural* is extraneous for Buddhism. Everything that is considered by Christians to have part in *metaphysics* and thus to be *supernatural*, is just natural for Buddhists. The Buddhist world view is monistic and the three *kāyas* of *Mahāyāna* are just three forms of existence of the same reality. It is helpful here to deepen the term *supernatural*. So if the nature is the only one, there is nothing of *other* or *super* nature. Everything belongs to the same principle of dependent co-arising.

According to the Buddhist *Abhidharmic* doctrine *agnosticism* is prohibited, for everything existing in space and subject to the principle of *pratītya-samutpāda* is accessible for cognition. The only thing, Buddha didn't want to speak of, is the nirvanic form of existence transcending the notional language of logic. Buddha also refused to speak of *Brahman*, *ātman* and *nirvāna*. We can say nothing about them and we need not, for the speculations of this sort can never help us to achieve liberation. So we should not discuss these topics.

⁹⁷⁷ Св. Григорий Палама, *Триады в защиту священно-безмолвствующих* (I, 3, 34), (Москва: Канон, 1995), с. 96.

For Buddhists enlightenment is quite a natural form of existence whereas clinging to samsāra is unnatural. As for the two stages of meditation in classical Buddhism, we can call the first one, i.e. *sammā smṛti* (the 7th stage of the eightfold path) “the unnatural meditation” for it is performed by effort. On the contrary, the second stage of meditation, i.e. *sammā samādhi* (the 8th stage of the eightfold path) can be denoted as the “natural” one for it is accomplished easily and with comfort.

Everything discussed above introduces two different approaches to the problem of the luminous body, the Buddhist and the Christian ones. According to Buddhism the mechanism of reabsorption of the body into light is quite natural and, therefore, is accessible for our understanding, while the latter attribute the question of the lucent body to the incomprehensible sphere of supernatural God's Grace.

The Tibetan idea of a Rainbow body is a classic pattern of the return of a human being to his primordial state. This process can be likened to a decreasing or curtailment that is opposite to cosmic emanation. According to Vijnānavāda doctrine the process of emanation from *ālaya-vijnāna* is quite natural. A good illustration of emanation is *mandala* (*yantra* in Hinduism). Anything that exists has its source in the Ultimate depicted in mandala as its center. The process of emanation looks like the expansion of the center of mandala outwards and constructing the cosmos. A meditator attempts to turn the natural order of things back, achieving the undifferentiated condition of the Basis of all existing. Hence, he has to move from the periphery of mandala to its center in order to achieve this very center.

Emanation or the process of becoming was called by Pythagoreans "the progressive limitation of the unlimited". Lama Anagarika Govinda assumes that "liberation, consequently, consists in the reversal of this process, namely, in the progressive annihilation of limitations."⁹⁷⁸

The "reabsorption of the cosmos through inversion of all the processes of manifestation" by a *sadhaka* was emphasized by Mircea Eliade in his *Yoga: Immortality and Freedom*. Writing about Tantric practices of arresting respiration, suspending thought and immobilizing the semen, he underscores that in this way "the *yogin* brings about inversion of the cosmic process, regression to the undiscriminated state of the original Totality". A yogic practice of immobilizing the semen as a method of this very inversion, described by Mircea Eliade, can be helpful for understanding the principles of Yoga. He writes, that when performing this technique, "there is even supposed to be a "return of semen" — that is, a paradoxical act, impossible to execute in

⁹⁷⁸ Lama Anagarika Govinda, *Foundations of Tibetan Mysticism*, p. 76.

a "normal" physiological context dependent upon a "normal" cosmos; in other words, the "return of semen" stands, on the physiological plane, for a transcendence of the phenomenal world, entrance into freedom. This is but one application of what is termed "going against the current" (*ujāna sādhana*), or of the "regressive" process (*ultā*) of the Nātha Siddhas, implying a complete "inversion" of all psychological processes; it is, basically, the mysterious *parāvṛtti* that is already to be found in Mahāyānic texts, which, in tantrism, also designates the "return of semen". For one who realizes them, this "return", this "regression", imply destruction of the cosmos and hence "emergence of time", entrance into "immortality".⁹⁷⁹

In his other book called *Méhistopélès et l'Androgyne* Mircea Eliade discusses *maithuna* in the cosmological context of the Tibetan myth about the origin of human beings. In the beginning people did not have any sexual features and did not know what the sexual inclination for each other is about. They were bearing Light in themselves that was permanently emanating from them. And there were no Sun and Moon in the sky at that time. When the sexual instincts emerged in human beings, the sexual organs appeared in the bodies of men. Simultaneously the inner Light left their bodies and transformed into the Sun and the Moon emerging at this very moment in the sky.

A Tibetan monk explained this myth in the following way. In the beginning people did not need any sexual intercourse to have children. The light of a man just entered the womb of a woman. It was enough for men just to look at their consorts to express their feelings. Later human beings became degraded and began to touch each other. Finally they discovered sexual contact.⁹⁸⁰

⁹⁷⁹ Mircea Eliade, *Yoga: Immortality and Freedom* (Princeton: New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1969), pp. 270-271.

⁹⁸⁰ Hermanns M., *Schöpfungs — und Abstammungsmythen der Tibeter*. — *Antropos*, 41-44, 1946 — 1949. S. 279 ss; *Mythen und Mysterien, Magie und Religion der Tibeter*. — Cologne, 1956. S. 16. (From Мирча Элиаде, *Азиатская алхимия*. Переводы с румынского, английского и французского языков. Отв. ред. Н. Л. Сухачев (Москва: Янус-К, 1998), с. 348.)

It is rather curious that a similar version of the myth, deprived of the sexual context, in *Agganna-Sutta*, is retold by Lama Anagarika Govinda as follows, "In the past," says the *Agganna-Sutta*, 'we were mind-created spiritual beings, nourished by joy. We soared through space, self-luminous and in imperishable beauty. We thus remained for long periods of time. After the passage of infinite times the sweet-tasting earth rose from the waters. It had colour, scent, and taste. We began to form it into lumps and to eat it. But while we ate from it our luminosity disappeared. And when it had disappeared, sun and moon, stars and constellations, day and night, weeks and months, seasons and years, made their appearance. We enjoyed the sweet tasting earth, relished it, were nourished by it; and thus we lived for a long time.' But with the coarsening of the food the bodies of beings became more and more material and differentiated, and hereupon the division of sexes came into existence, together with sensuality and attachment. 'But when evil, immoral customs

As Mircea Eliade stated in the context of the myth, Light and Sexuality contradict each other as two opposites. When one of them begins dominating, the other one does not any more manifest, and vice versa. And if Sexuality promotes the abolishment of the Light, it means that the Light might be lost with semen. Thus, the quintessence of semen is none other than the Light, and *maithuna*, that deals with the immobilizing of semen, is an attempt to return to the state of the Primal man.⁹⁸¹

In a similar way the attainment of a Rainbow body is the reversal of emanation of all existing from *the Primordial Basis (gzhi)*. The Tibetan concept of light as a source of the phenomenal world (and of the human body) is demonstrated by Samten Gyaltsen Karmay in his summary of the section entitled '*Khor lo bzhi sbrags of Zhang Zhung snyan brgyud of Bon po rDzogs chen*'. The text has already been discussed in the first chapter of the dissertation. The scholar notes that the work deals with the question how man views his relation to his environment and so to the phenomenal world and beyond. The statements are elucidated within the framework of four short sections. Each section has a subtitle ending with the word '*khor lo* (wheel).⁹⁸² The first two sections represent the model of emanation of the universe, and of man particularly, from the "static basis" or the Primal man.

"I. "The wheel of the static basis" (*gnas pa gzhi'i 'khor lo*).

This refers to *kun gzhi*, the genetic state where the notion of *samsāra* and *nirvāna* are undifferentiated, but this state is personified with the name of Rang Shes-rig-gi rgyal-po ("King of Self-knowledge") existing in milieu of three elements: "sound" (*sgra*), "light" (*'od*) and "ray" (*zer*).

arose among us, the sweet-tasting earth disappeared, and when it had lost its pleasant taste, outcroppings appeared on the ground, endowed with scent, colour, and taste.' Due to evil practices and further coarsening of the nature of living beings, even these nourishing outcroppings disappeared, and other self-originated plants deteriorated to such an extent that finely nothing eatable grew by itself and food had to be produced by strenuous work. Thus the earth was divided into fields, and boundaries were made, whereby the idea of 'I' and 'mine', 'own' and 'other' was created, and with it possessions, envy, greed and enslavement to material things." (Lama Anagarika Govinda, *Foundations of Tibetan Mysticism*, p. 76.)

Hence, the undifferentiated luminosity disappears due to the gradual process of becoming and rise of the split entity of different things, qualities, faculties and senses. At the same time the projection of the light outwards, i.e. from micro to macrocosm resembles the idea of manifestation of *ālaya-vijnāna* in Vijnānavāda.

⁹⁸¹ Мирча Элиаде, *Азиатская алхимия*, с. 349.

⁹⁸² Samten Gyaltsen Karmay, *The Great Perfection (rDzogs chen): A Philosophical and Meditative Teaching in Tibetan Buddhism*, p. 203-204.

II. "The wheel of interdependence concerning awakening and error" (*rtogs 'khrul rten 'brel gyi 'khor lo*). The section is about Rang Shes-rig moving away from his milieu. If he comprehends the three elements as being of his own and therefore not originating anywhere, the nirvānic state is realized, but if he makes the error of thinking of these three elements as being from elsewhere, a dichotomous conceptualization is produced. The ensuing result is the samsāric state.

When the nirvānic state is about to be realized the light among the three elements shines forth in five colors: white, green, red, blue and yellow. Each of these creates what are known as sixteen kinds of "manifestations of the enlightened state" (*mya ngan las 'das pa'i rnam sprul*), eighty kinds of them in all ($16 \cdot 5 = 80$). On the other hand, when the error is committed, the samsāric state appears, and each light engenders sixteen kinds of illusory appearance (*'khrul snang*) associated with man's physical body and of his external world, eighty in all in opposition to the eighty "manifestations of the enlightened state". [...]

The lights which shine forth from the Primordial Basis are here presented as the source of the phenomenal world and its transcendental state, illustrating well the *rDzogs chen* philosophical concept of the mind being capable either of creating its own illusory world or releasing itself to its own former state, the Primeval Purity.⁹⁸³

The same scheme is explained by Namkhai Norbu Rinpoche in quite a simple manner. The Primordial state that is beyond time and space, beyond the current and the dissolution, manifests as Light which, in its turn, produces five colors, i.e. the essence of the five elements. These primal elements interact and the gross elements appear constituting the material dimension and the physical body of the human being.⁹⁸⁴ So the attainment of the state of a Rainbow body is just a process of reversed order. Gross elements of the physical body dissolve in their essence, i.e. in the five colored lights. This process is considered rather natural and accessible for the understanding of human intellect. It represents regression as a result of a certain state of consciousness, when the dichotomous conceptualization is abolished and the body is analyzed as a derivative of the Primordial Basis.

The essential capacity of human consciousness to reverse emanation is also discussed by John Myrdhin Reynolds. He asserts that "(one's intrinsic Awareness) has the capacity to bring even the physical elements under its power; [and since one

⁹⁸³ Ibid., 204-205.

⁹⁸⁴ Чогьял Намкхай Норбу Римпоче, *Хрусталь и путь света. Сутра, Тантра и Дзогчен по учениям Намкхай Норбу Римпоче*, сост. Джон Шейн, пер. с англ. Маликова Фариды Х., тиб. написание терминов и сост. глоссария к книге Сидорова С.А. (Новокижингинск: Рандолгар Санти Маха Сангха, 1991), с. 57.

becomes liberated by reason of this condition (of realizing the body of Light), one is no longer dependent upon any other faculty.]”⁹⁸⁵ Reynolds suggests an explanation of reabsorption of material elements which is quite similar to Namkhai Norbu’s one. The idea of “going against the current” is explained like this, “It is like the reflections (or cognitions) recognizing themselves in the mirror. Here cognitions of the elements recognise themselves as they arise and resolve themselves back into their original empty condition. This process is known as Reversal (*ru-log*). One’s gross physical elements (which are actually modes of manifestation of energy, although seemingly solid, liquid, gaseous, and so on) are progressively refined and dissolved back into the subtle essences of the elements which are clear colored lights.”⁹⁸⁶

Samten Gyaltzen Karmay admits that the term of rNying ma pa rDzogs chen, *grol gzhi* ("the basis for releasing oneself") "designates the soteriological aspect of the *gzhi* (Basis): it is to this very basis that one has the chance to return if one must; in other words, one attains Enlightenment only if and when one arrives back where one has been originally and was from the beginning enlightened (*ye grol*). [...] What is realized is nothing else but experiencing the self within the *grol gzhi*. This apperception is symbolically called Ādibuddha. However, if this introversive cognition does not recognize itself and begins to perceive its own state as something apart, it begins to create erroneously a dichotomous appearance (*gnyis 'dzin gyi snang ba*) for itself which then causes it to stray from its own primordial purity. This is the conception of the beginning of the *samsāra*. [...]"⁹⁸⁷

The reabsorption of the body can be also uncompleted. As a result some residue or a fragment of the body remains. The Tibetan text *Heart Drops of Dharmakāya* explains the alleged phenomenon as a result of the certain uncompleted meditation. In *rDzogs chen* this practice is called *thod rgal* and is usually performed by the adepts in order to attain Rainbow body. As Samten Gyaltzen Karmay asserts, the practice raised much criticism.⁹⁸⁸ It involves the techniques for the body, for the speech and for the

⁹⁸⁵ John Myrdhin Reynolds (trans., com.), *Interlinear Commentary to “The Last Testament of Garab Dorje”* (line 39) in John Myrdhin Reynolds (trans., com), *The Golden Letters: The Three Statements of Garab Dorje*, p. 162.

⁹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 163-164.

⁹⁸⁷ Samten Gyaltzen Karmay, *The Great Perfection (rDzogs chen): A Philosophical and Meditative Teaching in Tibetan Buddhism*, pp. 189-190.

⁹⁸⁸ Besides, "the VIII Karma-pa, Mi-bskyod rdo-rje is of the opinion that this practice and the conception of the luminous body itself in rDzogs chen are in fact of Bonpo origin. For the Bonpo however the idea of 'ja' lus is not confined to the rDzogs chen doctrine either." (from Samten Gyaltzen Karmay, *The Great Perfection (rDzogs chen): A Philosophical and Meditative Teaching in Tibetan*

mind; those are the various body positions, silence and certain meditative methods. The latter are 1. watching the empty space, 2. watching the space below the sun, 3. watching the clear sky⁹⁸⁹ in the morning, looking to the West; and watching the clear sky in the evening, looking to the East.

The correctly performed practice is accompanied by four visions which correspond to certain degrees of perfection in meditation. A perception of the last vision is necessary for the achievement of the Rainbow body without any residue. The four visions are as follows:

(1.) The vision, coming from emptiness. In the beginning various rainbows and *thigle* (i.e. drops) emerge. This appearance is extremely changeable. One picture follows the other very quickly. The adept should not turn much attention to the vision, keeping in his mind its illusory nature.

(2.) The second vision corresponds to the generation stage of meditation. It is also changeable, but to a lesser extent, that is a sign of gradual achievement of the static condition of the winds. The four transparent rays of colored light appear to the inner sight of the visionary. The rays are similar to the nets which contain various garlands of blossoms, swastikas, jewels, castles and mandalas.

(3.) The third vision corresponds to the completion stage and is represented by a spontaneous apparition of the peaceful and the wrathful deities. The adepts do not any longer make use of visualizations and mantras. Due to this kind of inner experience the *yogin* overcomes the dependence on the rules of the material world and can perform what we call miracles, leaving, for instance, an imprint in a stone by the force of his mind. Now the Rainbow body is about to be achieved.

(4.) The fourth and the last stage is represented by the vision, dissolving in emptiness. The forms perceived by the inner sight become small in their size and gradually cease. In order to release from the gross material body completely, the fourth vision must be experienced.⁹⁹⁰

The process of appearance and dissolution of the four visions obviously may be likened to the pouring of seeds of karma out of the *ālaya-vijnāna* that is in conformity

Buddhism, p. 195.)

Usually the *thod rgal* ("passing over the crest") is combined with the other practice called *khregs chod* ("cutting off the rigidity").

⁹⁸⁹ In Sanskrit *ākāśa* means *sky* and *space* simultaneously. Therefore there is not any essential difference between the two notion in the context of Tantric meditation.

⁹⁹⁰ Shardza Tashi Gyaltzen, *Heart Drops of Dharmakaya*, pp. 95-106.

with the above extract from *the Golden Letters*. The dissolution of the residue of karmic seeds promotes the stop of the current of dharmas of the gross body.

Curious evidences of the skill of becoming invisible from the sight of others are fixed in Tibetan and Christian hagiographic narratives. For example, it was practiced by Dawa Dragpa (*zla ba grags pa*), who achieved the body of Light in 1932.⁹⁹¹ The same capacity to become transparent has been demonstrated by lama Kusho Chechu.⁹⁹² In a similar manner the famous Catholic Saint Padre Pio could walk around, being completely invisible to others.⁹⁹³ The phenomenon may be interpreted by Tibetans as the anticipation of liberation.

The topic is also discussed by Aleksandra Devi-Neel. She explains that in order to become invisible it is important not to produce any psychic energy. Although the body is present, it lacks energetic manifestation and, therefore, is invisible for the sight of others. Devi-Neel writes that we always see a huge number of objects, but only some are actively cognized by us.⁹⁹⁴

In order to interpret the capacity to become invisible we shall assume a hypothesis based upon the ideas of Vijnānavāda. Probably, the *yogīns* possess an ability to return deliberately to the undifferentiated unmanifested form of ālaya-vijnāna and to stop the manifestation of psychic energy.

The phenomenon can be interpreted, utilizing the notional apparatus of Christian mysticism. St. Teresa of Avila, for example, likens the soul to a castle and the core of the soul to its center room where God himself resides. Ordinary people do not enter the central abode, living in outer rooms. The model of Teresa reminds Hindu yantras and Buddhist mandalas. The central room of Teresa is similar to the center of mandala and to the undifferentiated unmanifested ālaya-vijnāna. The outer rooms bear a resemblance to the samsāric manifestation of the store-house consciousness.

So, in order to become invisible, a skillful contemplator enters the center room of his being, merging with God. While the vision of God occurs, no ordinary psychic activity takes place. In this way psyche of the contemplator breaks his relationship with others. The body which usually is an object of rapture together with the soul also becomes intangible.

⁹⁹¹ Com. Of Lopon Tenzin Namdak (ft. 35) in Shardza Tashi Gyaltzen, *Heart Drops of Dharmakaya*, p. 104.

⁹⁹² Лама Оле Нидал, *Открытие алмазного пути. Тибетский Буддизм встречается с Западом* (СПб: Алмазный путь, 1999), с. 49.

⁹⁹³ Мария Виновска, *Падре Пио: Жизнь и бессмертие*, сс. 106-108.

⁹⁹⁴ А. Давид-Неэль, *Мистики и маги Тибета* (Москва: Дягилев Центр, 1991), сс. 206-207.

The Doctrine of a Salvific Body in Hesychasm and Tantric Buddhism

As Georgy Florovsky formulates, a complete *theosis* belongs to meta-history, i.e. to the future age.⁹⁹⁵ This statement is expressed by Hesychasts in the following manner. Macarius the Egyptian asserts that glorification of the soul takes place in this age. The resurrection of the body, however, will happen only after *parousia*.⁹⁹⁶ For St. Macarius the final glorification of psycho-physic complex will entail photic consequences, namely, the light of man will be united with God's Light.⁹⁹⁷

The same idea of the postponed resurrection of the body was taught by St. Simeon the New Theologian.⁹⁹⁸ He asserts that although the bodies of the Saints become luminous and incorruptible during life, they, however, are not perfect any longer after death. They may go through decaying, or be preserved for many years, or evidence partial dissolution. In any way, the bodies of the Saints have to wait for the final resurrection and glorification because being linked to the bodies of other creatures they can't go the path of beatification alone. Only after *parousia* human beings and their abode will be renewed.⁹⁹⁹

John Chrysostom was even more refined in his arguments for the necessity of decay. Here they are: 1. The decay of the body is necessary in order to abolish our pride. 2. If the bodies were indestructible, we would never believe that we originate from earth. 3. We would love our body even more than now and our defilements would grow. 4. We would not think much about the future age. 5. If the world was eternal, it would be a good argument for some people to assert that the world was not created by God. 6. If the body was indestructible, we would never estimate the soul and understand the link between the body and the soul. 7. If human beings died, leaving

⁹⁹⁵ С.С. Хоружий, "Аналитический словарь исихастской антропологии", с. 128.

⁹⁹⁶ See, for example, Преподобный Макарий Египетский, *Слово* 58,2,5-6; 58,3,3 // Преподобный Макарий Египетский, *Духовные слова и послания, собрание типа Ш (Vatic. graec. 694)*, изд. А.Г. Дунаев (Москва: ИНДРИК, 2002), сс. 807-808.

⁹⁹⁷ Ibid. (*Слово* 44,2,7), с. 712.

⁹⁹⁸ Преподобный Симеон Новый Богослов, *Слово* 79,1 // Преподобный Симеон Новый Богослов, *Творения*, т. 2, *Слова* 53-92 (Москва: Свято-Троицкая Сергиева Лавра, 1993), с. 316.

⁹⁹⁹ Преподобный Симеон Новый Богослов, *Слово* 45,3 // Преподобный Симеон Новый Богослов, *Творения*, т. 1, *Слова* 1-52 (Москва: Свято-Троицкая Сергиева Лавра, 1993), с. 377-378.

indestructible bodies, their relatives, who loved them, would pay homage to the bodies and would make idols of them.¹⁰⁰⁰

All these arguments are valid for Buddhism as well. It is enough to recall the Buddhist meditation on a dead body, one of the methods how the mindfulness (*smṛti*) of *dharma*s is performed. And, although bodies die and decay, almost all of the Fathers try to encourage us, making use of the image of a seed after Jh. 12, 24, "I tell you the truth, unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds."¹⁰⁰¹ Thus, according to the Christian doctrine, glorification of human being is a dichotomous process. Being temporal, this dichotomy is not in a conflict with the non-temporal holism of Hesychast anthropology.¹⁰⁰²

A status of the body in Christianity is rather high. Although Thomas Aquinas is a representative of the Western Christian tradition, his speculations concerning body may also be helpful for this dissertation. He rejects two expanded attitudes to the body, i.e., *somatism* and *spiritualism*. According to the former, only body exists. This notion is accepted by adherents of undisguised materialism. *Spiritualism*, in turn, is a notion of a chance character of the body. In this case the body is considered to be a prison of the soul. The idea is accepted by neo-Platonists. Thomas Aquinas asserts that a man is created by God as a certain soul which determines features of the only and unique body. A correspondence between a certain soul and its body is of permanent character. It means that the soul is a *substantial form* of the *matter*, i.e. of the body. These two agents, the body and the soul, are two necessary constituents of personality. Therefore, a certain soul can never construct other bodies and, consequently, reincarnate. As for the future age, every man will be identical with his old image, he had before death.¹⁰⁰³

As is indicated in the first chapter of the dissertation, St. Gregory Palamas preferred the holism Biblical anthropology to the dualistic doctrine of man in Platonism. John Meyendorff has denoted the high status of the body *Christian materialism*. Human body is a necessary participant of *theosis*.¹⁰⁰⁴

¹⁰⁰⁰ Св. Иоанн Златоуст, *Толкование на св. Матфея евангелиста. Беседа 34*. Ст. 4-5. М. 1993, сс. 381-382. (From Н. Василиадис, *Таинство смерти* (Москва: Свято-Троицкая Сергиева Лавра, 1998), сс. 458-459, translated from Ν. Βασιλειάδης, *Το μυστήριο του θανάτου* (Αθήνα, 1994).)

¹⁰⁰¹ Н. Василиадис, *Таинство смерти*, сс. 462-426.

¹⁰⁰² С.С. Хоружий, *Аналитический словарь исихастской антропологии*, с. 129.

¹⁰⁰³ See С. Свежавски, *Святой Фома, прочитанный заново (лекции в Ласко)* // *Символ*, 33 (Париж, Июль 1995), сс. 90-98.

¹⁰⁰⁴ Протопресвитер Иоанн Мейендорф, *Жизнь и труды святителя Григория Паламы: введение в изучение*, пер. Г.Н. Начинкина под редакцией И.П. Медведева и В.М. Лурье // *Subsidia Byzantinorossica*, Т. 2 (Санкт-Петербург: Византинороссика, 1997), с. 218.

Tantrism, in its turn, also underscores the tremendous value of the body. For the adherents of the tradition the body is a perfect means of liberation. Shashy Bhushan Dasgupta in his *Introduction to Tantric Buddhism* sums up Tantric attitude to the body reality in the following manner:

"On the practical side, which obviously is the fundamental side of the Tantras, the most important thing is the stress laid on the body as the medium through which truth can be realized. The Buddhist Tantrikas, in unison with the other schools of Tantra, hold that the body is the abode of all truth. It is the epitome of the universe or, in other words, it is the microcosm¹⁰⁰⁵, and as such embodies the truth of the whole universe. Attempt has actually been made in many Tantras to identify the universe completely with the body even by locating the seas, rivers, mountains, etc., in the different parts of the body. Whether we are ready to accept them in *toto* or not, the fact remains that the importance of the Tantras, as a science of religious methodology, consists in its analysis of the body and the discovery of all *tattvas*¹⁰⁰⁶ in the nervous system and in the plexus and thus making the body, with the whole physiological and biological process, a perfect medium (*yantra*) for realizing the ultimate truth."¹⁰⁰⁷

The body is called by Dasgupta "a perfect medium" of liberation, while the path based upon "mystical physiology" is denoted by him as "religious methodology". Here the "instrumental" character of Tantric *sādhana* is proclaimed. Anagarika Govinda states that "the body is the stage between heaven and earth, on which the psycho-cosmic drama is enacted. For the knowing one, the initiate, it is the sacred stage of an unfathomably deep mystery play".¹⁰⁰⁸ Chen-Chi Chang, in his turn, asserts that body (*prāna*) and consciousness are two equivalent paths to liberation, and the adept is free

¹⁰⁰⁵ It would be a grave misconception to assume that microcosm is something soteriologically positive in Tantrism. According to the doctrine of Tantric Hinduism microcosm (and macrocosm as well) originates from the split of the united undifferentiated Substance into Existence (Śiva) and Energy (Śakti). In microcosm these two agents (Śiva and *kundalinī*) are apart. Only when Śakti (*kundalinī* in microcosm) and Śiva are united, an adept returns to the primordial Substance, abolishing the attachment to the gross body and destroying the karma which is responsible for the next reincarnation. (See more about the topic: Moti Lal Pandit, *Towards Transcendence: A Historico-Analytical Study of Yoga as a method of Liberation* (New Delhi: Intercultural Publications, 1991), pp. 153-160.)

¹⁰⁰⁶ *Tattvas* are phenomenal elements.

¹⁰⁰⁷ Shashi Bhushan Dasgupta, *An Introduction to Tantric Buddhism* (Berkeley&London: Shambhala, 1974), p. 146.

¹⁰⁰⁸ Lama Anagarika Govinda (Anangavaira Khamsum-Wangchuk), *Foundation of Tibetan Mysticism According to the Esoteric Teachings of the great Mantra OM MANI PADME HŪM*, p. 150.

to choose one of them.¹⁰⁰⁹ In other words, the body becomes here a primary means of liberation.

Unlike Tantric Buddhists, Hesychasts never consider the body practices to be equivalent to the spiritual path. St. Gregory Palamas thinks that the body techniques are suitable only for the beginners and are not necessary for the spiritual growth as such. John Meyendorff specifies that the body techniques help us to concentrate, yet they are not decisive. The Divine Grace and not a body technique is the source of salvation.¹⁰¹⁰

To go deeper, we should return to the question of what is *natural* and *supernatural*. In Hesychasm the body techniques are *natural* being included into the first stage of prayer called $\pi\rho\tilde{\alpha}\xi\iota\varsigma$, i.e. the stage when the contemplator is not yet endowed with the vision of God. The essential break in prayer takes place thanks to Grace rather than to human skill. This short moment when the inner eyes open, is the starting point of the so called $\theta\epsilon\omega\rho\iota\alpha$ or *supernatural* prayer. Hence, the method can never guarantee the result, as it is in the case of Tantric body techniques.

At the same time Tantric Buddhism, depicting the body as a perfect means of liberation, does not locate the body into the soteriological context. The gross body is just a result of karma and is a mere illusion. The purpose of every good Buddhist is to gain release from reincarnation, i.e. from the body, and to merge with *Dharmakāya*. The only reason why perfect ones reincarnate again in the form of *Sambhogakāya* or *Nirmanakāya*, is compassion. A perfect body of *bodhisattva* helps our liberation. Taking the vow not to enter *nirvāna* before the last living being is liberated *bodhisattvas* remain in *samsāra* for ever, manifesting in different forms. These subtle and gross bodies of the perfect ones (who, by the way, are able to incarnate in several bodies simultaneously), are none other than a necessary means, but not the soteriological target of liberation.

To generalize, Christianity and Tantric Buddhism make different accents when estimating the reality of the body. For Christians the body never becomes an independent means of salvation. It is always subordinate the cooperation of the Divine Grace and the soul. At the same time, it is supposed to be deified. For Tantric Buddhists the situation changes vice versa. The body, being an excellent and self-sufficient means of liberation, must be completely abandoned afterwards by the inhabitant of *nirvāna*.

¹⁰⁰⁹ *Tibetan Yoga and Secret doctrines or Seven Books of Wisdom of the Great Path, According to the Late Lāma Kazi Dawa-Samdup's English rendering*, ed. W.Y. Evans-Wentz (London: Oxford: New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), pp. XXVIII-XXIX.

¹⁰¹⁰ Протопресвитер Иоанн Мейендорф, *Жизнь и труды святителя Григория Паламы*, с. 204.

Now, when the approach of Christians and Tantric Buddhists to the reality of the body is elucidated, the question about Christian means of resurrection and glorification of the body should be clarified. As is stated above, the psychosomatic techniques guarantee liberation in Tantric Buddhism, while Christians, during prayer, seem to stay without any such guarantee. Even a transition to the Divine contemplation is fully dependent on the Divine Grace.

However, going deeper into the Christian doctrine of Incarnation and Deification, one can realize that the body of Jesus Christ is this perfect guarantee of salvation. The Christian idea of the salvific body of Jesus Christ does not at all yield to the Tantric notion of the body as the perfect means of liberation. Although a Christian concept of cooperation of the two energies, Divine and human, presuppose an activity of the human being, the fact of the Embodiment and the final Resurrection of the body of Christ is a pledge of our salvation in body and spirit.

According to the doctrine of Christian East, Incarnation (σάρκωσις) and deification (θέωσις) are interdependent and inseparable. God incarnated in order to deify man. Deification is not possible without Incarnation, while Embodiment is just a nonsense concept outside the soteriological context. In Christ the Divine and human natures are united forever. Jesus Christ becomes a bridge between God and creature.

Christ submitted Himself to vicarious suffering for the sake of our souls and bodies, preparing the path of resurrection for any flesh. Now not only the soul, but also the body of each man is supposed to become Christ.¹⁰¹¹ John Chrysostom, inspired by the words of St. Paul in Philippians 3, 21¹⁰¹², asserts that our bodies are supposed to be images of Christ, who sits at the right hand of the Father and is beyond any beginning and power, and is worshipped by angels.¹⁰¹³

The Concept of the Resurrection of the Body in Christianity

Now, acquainted with the role of Incarnation and Resurrection of Christ in the future destiny of our bodies, one can readily understand why Orthodox theologians

¹⁰¹¹ Отец Иустин Попович, "Святые мощи" // *Вестник Русского Христианского движения* 166. III (1992), с. 41.

¹⁰¹² "The Lord Jesus Christ, who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body."

¹⁰¹³ Свт. Иоанн Златоуст, *На Посл. к Флп. беседа* 13, 2 // PG. 62, 278-279. (From Н. Василиадис, *Таинство смерти*, цит. соч., с. 462-426.)

discuss the condition of glorified bodies in the Christological context. The condition of Christ's bodily form after His Resurrection as well as during His Transfiguration on the mountain Tabor is a pattern according to which our bodies will be glorified. There are two main aspects of the exalted body of Christ which are usually mentioned by theologians, those are its lightness or subtlety and its radiance.

According to John Chrysostom, before the Resurrection of Christ took place, human beings had known nothing about the condition of their bodies in the future age. The situation changed to some extent after the Transfiguration on the mountain Tabor. The Lord transfigured in the presence of his disciples, revealing in a mysterious way what our bodies would look like after their resurrection. After the apparitions of Christ in the period of forty days after his Resurrection took place, the truth has been completely revealed to us. Human bodies will have the features of the glorified body of Jesus for they are equal to it in their substance.¹⁰¹⁴

Gregory Palamas expresses the same idea in the context of lumenophany, asserting that on the mountain Tabor the body of Christ was not yet united to our bodies revealing its radiance in outward appearance; it was perceived by the souls of the disciples through the sight. Now, when the body of our Lord is united with us and dwells in us, it illuminates souls from within.¹⁰¹⁵

After the Resurrection took place, the gross body of Jesus Christ changed its qualities to the subtle ones. He could in an unimpeded manner go through the walls (Jn. 20, 19), appear in a different form (Mk. 16, 12), and disappear from the sight of the disciples (Lk. 24, 13-31). This quality of the Resurrected body is denoted as subtlety or lightness. The bodies of men after *parousia* will also be deprived of the gross form which, in its turn, will be transformed or reabsorbed by this very subtlety.

The topic has been discussed in detail by Gregory Palamas. According to the *Triads*, in the future age the bodies will be refined to a large extent losing their grossness completely.¹⁰¹⁶ Gregory agrees with Maximus the Confessor who states that when the soul becomes God it is deprived of any thought and feeling. A similar process will take place in deified body which will be free of all natural activities.¹⁰¹⁷ The gross body will be abolished after *parousia*, being reabsorbed by the spirit.¹⁰¹⁸

¹⁰¹⁴ Свт. Иоанн Златоуст, *О наслаждении будущими (благами)*, гл. 6 // PG. 51, 352-353. (From Н. Василадис, *Таинство смерти*, с. 478.). Св. Григорий Палама, *Триады в защиту священно-безмолвствующих* (I, 3, 36), с. 99.

¹⁰¹⁵ Св. Григорий Палама, *Триады в защиту священно-безмолвствующих* (I, 3, 38), с. 101.

¹⁰¹⁶ Ibid., (I, 3, 36), с. 99.

¹⁰¹⁷ Св. Максим Исповедник, *Главы богословские и икономические* II 88: PG 90, 1168 A. (From Св.

In this context Gregory Palamas suggests to imagine a human being as a holistic organism in which the spirit and the body are inseparable and influence each other. Palamas quotes the 1. Cor. 15, 44, "it is sown a natural (ψυχικόν) body, it is raised a spiritual (πνευματικόν) body", and comments the passage in the following way. In this age the natural body prevails and darkens the soul; in the future age the spirit will prevail and make the body spiritual.¹⁰¹⁹ In other words the spirit will be swallowed or reabsorbed by the flesh and vice versa. This holistic sense of man is perfectly explained in the other extract of Gregory's *Triads*:

"For just as those who abandon themselves to sensual and corruptible pleasures fix all the desires of their soul upon the flesh, and indeed become entirely "flesh", so that (as Scripture says) "the Spirit of God cannot dwell in them",¹⁰²⁰ so too, in the case of those who have elevated their minds to God and exalted their souls with divine longing, their flesh also is being transformed and elevated, participating together with the soul in the divine communion, and becoming itself a dwelling and possession of God; for it is no longer the seat of enmity towards God, and no longer possesses desires contrary to the Spirit."¹⁰²¹

In unison with Gregory Palamas, St. Symeon the New Theologian accepts the same principle of the mutual reabsorption in the context of *parousia*. He asserts that in this age the soul has to participate in the bodily needs and burdens and by this become earthly. In the future age the situation will change completely, i.e. the soul will swallow the body and will be one with it and all the corruptible will be reabsorbed by life.¹⁰²²

N. Vasiliadis, commenting on 1. Cor. 15, 42-44, 51, admits that the dead bodies will be raised imperishable and spiritual in the same manner as ice becomes water and steam depending on circumstances. Ice and water and steam are just different forms of the same substance.¹⁰²³ In a way the gross body will be transformed into spirit.

The same principle concerns the alleged phenomenon of the incorruptible relics. The deified soul influences the body in such a way that it becomes delicate and

Григорий Палама, *Триады в защиту священно-безмолвствующих* (I, 3,37), с. 99.)

¹⁰¹⁸ See Преподобный Макарий Египетский, *Слово* 63, 2, 3, с. 828.

¹⁰¹⁹ Св. Григорий Палама, *Триады в защиту священно-безмолвствующих* (I, 3, 36), с. 99

¹⁰²⁰ Gen 6, 2.

¹⁰²¹ Gregory Palamas, *The Triads* (1, 2, 9), trans. by Nicholas Gendle, p. 47- 48.

¹⁰²² Преподобный Симеон Новый Богослов, *Творения*, т. 1, Слова 1-51 (4, 4) (Москва: Свято-Троицкая Сергиева Лавра, 1993), 55.

¹⁰²³ Н. Василядис, *Таинство смерти*, с. 474.

transforms into spirit.¹⁰²⁴ The body then is swallowed or reabsorbed by life rather than by death.¹⁰²⁵

The idea of Symeon the New Theologian about the reabsorption of the mortal body by life can be found in the 2. Cor. 5, 4, "For while we are in this tent, we groan and are burdened, because we do not wish to be unclothed but to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life (ἵνα καταποθῆ τὸ θνητὸν ὑπὸ τῆς ζωῆς)." "

At the moment we have encountered some sort of chaos in the explanations of reabsorption. In the beginning we discovered that the gross body should be swallowed by the soul or spirit, but then we encountered the notion of reabsorption of the body by life. The problem was perfectly solved by Simeon the New Theologian as follows. The soul is the first and primary deified constituent of man. In the beginning it is reabsorbed by God who is the true life. The body in its turn is swallowed by this vivified soul. In this age the whole man is swallowed by death; in the future age death will be reabsorbed by the Grace.¹⁰²⁶

Now it would be helpful to go back to the Tibetan idea of the gradual reabsorption of the gross body by light and the achievement of the body of light. The question is if it can be compared to the Christian notion of the swallowing by life. In other words, do "light" and "life" have anything in common? The answer is yes. Our statement will be confirmed by the idea of Archimandrite Theofan and other theologians. Theofan wrote that according to the view of Eastern Christian tradition ἡ ζωή (life) and τὸ φῶς (light) are synonymous notions.¹⁰²⁷

¹⁰²⁴ Д. И. Протопопов, *О нетлении святых мощей*, с. 13.

¹⁰²⁵ A curious interpretation of the phenomenon is left by Symeon the New Theologian. He admits that during life the saints are burdened because of the union of the body and the soul. Both the body and the soul suffer much from each other for the body often is an obstacle for the religious practice while the soul of the saint never allows the body to satisfy all its desires. When the soul of the saint leaves the body, it is deified completely for it is deprived of the earthly things. The body is not burdened any longer either for it does not have any need (for instance, it is not thirsty any longer). The body of the saint remains with God so that the Grace acts through the body directly, i.e. without any mediation of the soul, performing miracles of healing the diseases. (See Преподобный Симеон Новый Богослов, Творения, т. 1, Слова 1-51 (4, 4), сс. 54-55.

¹⁰²⁶ Ibid., сс. 55-56.

¹⁰²⁷ Архимандрит Феофан, *Тетраграмма* (СПБ, 1905), с. 113. (From С.М. Зарин, *Аскетизм по православно-христианскому учению. Этико-богословское исследование* (Москва: Православный полемник, 1996), с. 142.)

S. Horuzhy, in his turn, asserts that “to exist” means “to come to light” or “to participate in light”, because every phenomenon (φαινόμενον) is a derivative of φάος, light, — something that is illuminated and realized by light.¹⁰²⁸ Due to the suggested linguistic analysis, one can draw a conclusion that there is an essential relation between the Buddhist reabsorption by light and the Christian swallowing by life. The same idea of the interplay between “life” and “light” is realized by Staretz Silouan at the practical level of the spiritual experience. He claims that the Divine Light is *the eternal life* and Kingdom of God and the uncreated energies of God.¹⁰²⁹

Coming back to the features of glorified bodies after *parousia* we must proceed to their second quality, i.e., radiance. As Gregory Palamas claims, Adam was created perfect. He had a garment of glory¹⁰³⁰ and took part in the Divine Light¹⁰³¹. The purpose of Transfiguration was to show the future splendour of the Kingdom of God and the lost condition of Adam in the past.¹⁰³²

The pattern of glorified and resurrected bodies after *parousia* is the body of Christ at the mountain Tabor. Gregory Palamas emphasizes that although our human nature was disgracefully stripped naked of the Divine radiance because of the sin, yet it has obtained mercy of the Word of God and has been accepted by Him. During the Transfiguration Jesus Christ showed his disciples, who were clothed at the moment of the vision in the Divine radiance even to a larger extent than Adam was, the condition of the perfect ones in the future age.¹⁰³³

To state precisely, every aspect of human being will be glorified in a particular way. The mind will be endowed with the cognition of God in the form of the direct contemplation¹⁰³⁴ and the ability see God's wisdom and providence in creatures¹⁰³⁵. The

¹⁰²⁸ Сергей Хоружий, *К феноменологии аскезы* (Москва: Издательство Гуманитарной литературы, 1998), с. 161.

¹⁰²⁹ *Старец Силуан. Жизнь и поучения* (Москва, Новоказачье, Минск: Православная община, 1991), с. 163.

¹⁰³⁰ *Homilia 35*, — MPGr. t. 151, col. 440 B. (from Архимандрит Киприан (Керн), *Антропология Григория Паламы*, с. 403.)

¹⁰³¹ *Homilia 16*, — col. 220 A. (from Архимандрит Киприан (Керн), *Антропология Григория Паламы*, с. 403.)

¹⁰³² Архимандрит Киприан (Керн), *Антропология Григория Паламы*, с. 403.

¹⁰³³ Григорий Палама, *Беседа 26* // Григорий Палама, *Беседы (Омилии)*, Ч. 2. (Москва, 1993), с. 14. (from Свящ. Олег Климов, *Опыт безмолвия: Человек в мирозерцании Византийских исихастов* (Санкт-Петербург: Алетейя, 2001), с. 195.)

¹⁰³⁴ 1 Cor. 13, 12; cf. Mt. 5, 8; 1 Jn. 3, 2; Rev. 22, 4. (from С.М. Зарин, *Аскетизм по православно-христианскому учению*, с. 140.)

¹⁰³⁵ Бл. Августин, *De civ. Dei*. LXXII, с. XXIX, n. VI, col. 800. (from С.М. Зарин, *Аскетизм по*

emotional part of human being will share God's love together with angels and saints according to 1 Cor. 13, 8. The will of man will serve God (Rev. 22, 3). The body will be radiant as it is said in Mt. 13, 43, "Then the righteous will shine (ἐκλάμψουσιν) like the sun in the kingdom of their Father"¹⁰³⁶, but not because of their own radiance.¹⁰³⁷

The same idea can be found in the *Hymns of Divine Love*. The resurrected bodies of the saints will be radiant like the Divine Light and will become brighter than the sun. The bodies of the sinners, in turn, will be eternal but dark.¹⁰³⁸ According to John Chrysostom all the bodies will be raised from the dead and be incorruptible, however, the resurrection with splendor will belong only to the saints.¹⁰³⁹ The idea of the Divine origin of radiance is underscored by Gregory Palamas. He admits that in the future age God will look through our souls and also through our bodies and will give us an opportunity to perceive the Divine Light in the body.¹⁰⁴⁰

Here the essential difference between the Buddhist doctrine of Light and the Christian one is stated clearly. Although man will be deified, becoming a perfect copy of God, he will never become God by substance. Yet, he will be utterly merged with God in the form of existence that is the most important thing for a contemplator. To motivate the latter statement, it is necessary to make some sort of digression, employing theological categories of Thomas Aquinas.

One of his most important ideas is that of *substance* and *existence* interpreted by Aquinas as *potentiality* and *actuality*. For him the latter is much more important than the former. The idea is presented in the formula "Esse est actualitas omnium actuum et propter hoc est perfectio omnium perfectionum". *Esse* or existence is the actuality of all actualities (*actualitas omnium actuum*).¹⁰⁴¹

It is curious that the intellectual constructions of Thomas Aquinas are quite in accord with the teaching of Archimandrite Sophrony. Accepting the notion of man as an image of God, he asks, which part of man represents His image: is it the body or the

православно-христианскому учению, с. 140.)

¹⁰³⁶ С.М. Зарин, *Аскетизм по православно-христианскому учению*, сс. 140-141.

¹⁰³⁷ Π.Ν. Τρεμπέλα, *Δογματικὴ τῆς Ὀρθοδόξου Καθολικῆς Ἐκκλησίας. Ἀθῆναι*, 1961. Τ. 3. Σ. 477. (from Н. Василядис, *Таинство смерти*, с. 481.)

¹⁰³⁸ Преподобный Симеон Новый Богослов, *Божественные гимны преподобного Симеона Нового Богослова*, пер. преп. Симеона Никиты Стифата, XLVI (Сергиев Посад, 1917), с. 219.

¹⁰³⁹ Свт. Иоанн Златоуст, *Беседы на Посл. к Римлянам. Беседа 5. Ст. 3. М.*, 1994. с. 528. (from Василядис, *Таинство смерти*, с. 483.)

¹⁰⁴⁰ Св. Григорий Палама, *Триады в защиту священно-безмолвствующих* (I, 3, 37), сс. 99-100.

¹⁰⁴¹ С. Свежавски, *Святой Фома, прочитанный заново (лекции в Ласко)*, сс. 40-42.

soul or something else? The answer is following. All these aspects of man are to some extent images of God. The image of being (or existence), however, is that aspect which is endowed with God's image in all its fullness¹⁰⁴².

The participation in eternal life as a certain form of existence of the deified man is that which differs from the mortal mode of being of this very man before deification. For him the question of 'substance' turns into a mere speculative fabrication. In other words, substance doesn't belong to what may be experienced during prayer. The visionary who "can apprehend¹⁰⁴³ nothing"¹⁰⁴⁴ at the moment of the apparition and is at all free of mental activity, can't be aware of theological constructions.

Yet, one should avoid the extremes while making such conclusions. The created "substance" is, probably, experienced by Christian mystics as the preservation of their personality in the deification. This is emphatically indicated, for instance, by St. Teresa of Avila¹⁰⁴⁵ or Staretz Silouan¹⁰⁴⁶ whose testimonies, nevertheless, are often rather contradictory. Obviously, the merging with God and the simultaneous preservation of personality is in conflict with logic, being an actuality of unmediated religious experience. Finally, it is important to remember that God, being without parts and beyond mental constructions, transcends the notions of *substance* and *existence*. Man taking part in God becomes similar to God. It means that the deified man also transcends the mentioned theological categories.

Going back to the features of the resurrected bodies, the idea of different degrees of luminosity should be noted. The idea is confirmed by the extract from the New Testament, "The sun has one kind of splendor, the moon another and the stars another; and star differs from star in splendour. So will it be with the resurrection of the dead" (1 Cor. 15, 41- 42).

St. Macarius the Egyptian writes that the measure of luminosity will depend on faith and prosperity in the Holy Spirit.¹⁰⁴⁷ John Chrysostom also stresses that the

¹⁰⁴² Russian *бытие*.

¹⁰⁴³ Russian *уразуметь*.

¹⁰⁴⁴ *Старец Силуан. Жизнь и поучения*, с. 162.

¹⁰⁴⁵ Teresa described her Mystical Marriage in three different ways. She likened it to the two candles which are put together. The fire is one while the wicks are different. The second image is of a source and the sea. When the former merges with the latter, nothing can separate them. The Mystical Marriage is also similar to the two windows through one light shines. (See Teresa of Avila, *Interior Castle* (7,2,4) (Garden City: Doubleday, 1961.)

¹⁰⁴⁶ According to Staretz Silouan the man, experiencing God's Light, realizes the profundity of his own being and at the same time forgets himself and the world. (See *Старец Силуан*, с. 161.)

¹⁰⁴⁷ Преп. Макарий Египетский, *Духовные беседы. Беседа 36*. Ст. 1. Репринт. ТСЛ, 1994. с. 255. (from Василиадис, *Таинство смерти*, с. 482.)

degrees of the splendour of the saint bodies will differ in the future age.¹⁰⁴⁸ Ephraim of Syria asserts that all saints will abide in the same joy (οἱ δίκαιοι πάντες ἀλλύσσονται ἐν μιᾷ χαρᾷ ἀδιαίρετως), however, everybody will be illuminated to his own degree (κατὰ τὸ ἑαυτοῦ μέτρον) and will rejoice according to the measure of dignity (κατ' ἄξιον).¹⁰⁴⁹ It is pointed out by Ephraim of Syria that the measure of the perceived light is never determined by the sun, yet by our own capacity of the perception.¹⁰⁵⁰

Discussing various forms of preservation of incorruptible relics, Russian theologian D.I. Protopopov thinks that the phenomenon is linked to this very measure of spiritual perfection.¹⁰⁵¹

Different luminosity degrees may be visually portrayed in a mandala as various stages of the journey to the Divine Center. The model of mandala, however, can't help us to depict the doctrinal nuance of the Christian *theosis* by participation.

We have already realized that according to the Tantric soteriological model, man returns to the primordial state of all existing, attaining the last stop of the spiritual journey. In Christianity one deals with the idea of constant spiritual progress. Man is not just intended to return to the condition of the first Adam, rather he is invited to participate in the achievements of the second Adam.¹⁰⁵²

At the same time man participates the Divine Other which at all times remains unlimited and mysterious. It means that the process of cognition of God and, consequently, perfection is without end. The idea may be completely extraneous for Buddhists because the return to one's own core, called Buddha, is the last stop of spiritual return. Man is Buddha "by nature" and, therefore, when liberated, achieves perfection.

Although features of the resurrected bodies are discussed by Christians in detail, the question of how it will happen remains. The absence of discussion concerning the matter is explained in a rather simple way. As N. Vasiliadis states, the mechanism of resurrection and glorification of the body is "sacrament", ineffable to our understanding.¹⁰⁵³

¹⁰⁴⁸ Свт. Иоанн Златоуст. *На 1-е послание к Кор. беседа 41, 2-3* / P.G. 61, 357-358. (from Василядис, *Таинство смерти*, с. 483.)

¹⁰⁴⁹ Ефрем Сирийский, Т. 3, 25Е1—26А. (from С.М. Зарин, *Аскетизм по православно-христианскому учению*, с. 151.)

¹⁰⁵⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵¹ Д. И. Протопопов, *О нетлении святых мощей*, с. 37.

¹⁰⁵² See, for instance, Преподобный Симеон Новый Богослов, Творения, т. 1, Слова 1-51 (45,5), с. 381.

¹⁰⁵³ Василядис, *Таинство смерти*, сс. 474-475.

One cannot help but notice that Orthodox Somaticism is exclusively Christocentric. The Saints *imitate* Christ in death and resurrection. It goes without saying that this very *imitatio Christi* is basic for Christian piety. It means that the adherents of Christian spiritual path are not able to escape death. Hence, the Tibetan model of reabsorption of the body in light during life time as a possibility to avoid the natural process of death can never be found in Christian Hagiography.

Conclusion

Nowadays, in the age of spiritual vacuum, many Christian theologians and scholars in the field of Religious studies insist upon a return to genuine human values. For this reason a shift from theology to anthropology has been suggested by Christian theologians. They hope that anthropology will allow them to create a completely new approach to Christian spirituality. By this new approach old theological truths will no longer be mere speculations, rather they will be analyzed from the experientially soteriological perspective of the human being. Obviously, we live in a period of history when the old religious values must be reinterpreted and revived by means of a return to the essentials of religion which, without doubt, are intimately human.

The task of the return to the sources of spirituality can't be performed by theologians alone. In the beginning of the twenty first century, when different cultures and religious traditions came in encounter, the spiritual awakening is our common human task which can only be executed in the context of a dialogue among religions. Comparative religion, obviously, should become a firm basis of a fruitful inter-religious dialogue.

Our proposal in this dissertation was to introduce anthropology as an effective approach not only in modern Christian theology, but also in the field of Comparative religion. In order to do so, it was important in the beginning to clarify the status of this very anthropology in other religions. Anthropocentricity together with its derivative, anthropology, is a natural fruit of theism which is attributed to Christianity.

In Buddhism, belonging to the class of the non-dualistic religious traditions, there is no space for anthropocentricity and, therefore, for anthropology either. Does it mean that our suggestion to utilize anthropology as a basis for interreligious dialogue and

revival of the common human values fails? Giving a negative answer to the question, we tried to find an equivalent of theistic anthropology in Buddhism. The fact of a completely different notional background of Buddhist religiosity does not mean that the experientially human orientation is absent in Buddhism. Being aware of the necessity to build religion on the experientially soteriological basis, Buddhists of all periods of history underscore that Buddhism is deeply rooted in psychology and soteriology. Buddhism's main interest is the liberation of sentient beings. That is why the subject called psychology envelops as the integral corpus of Buddhist philosophy giving a practical orientation to it. The aim of Buddhist philosophy is to lead sentient beings to liberation. Hence, the positive result of the quest for Buddhist equivalent of Christian anthropology provides a firm basis for anthropological approach in the field of Comparative religion.

In the present dissertation the phenomenological method of Mircea Eliade based upon Jungian approach to religions, has allowed us to perform a search for the common structures in both religious traditions, i.e., in Buddhism, especially in its Tantric form, and in Christian Hesychasm.

In our summa we shall try to mention the main "archetypes" found in both traditions. The research was dedicated to mysticism as the common ground where these different traditions can be reconciled. In order to introduce the theme to the reader, we started the research from the discussion of commonalities and differences in Christian and Buddhist doctrines of man, continued with the discussion of psychic introversion and finished with its culmination in the vision of Uncreated/Clear Light, deification/liberation and their somatic consequences. The conclusions made here, will be arranged in the same order, beginning with the theoretical anthropology/psychology, proceeding with the process of introversion and culminating in the soteriological consequences of this very introversion. The basic notion, which envelops and permeates all our conclusions is the Jungian notion of individuation in its different aspects.

Among the commonalities which are underscored in Christian and Buddhist doctrines, the holism of human being will be the first to be mentioned here. In Hesychasm man is a holistic being which is soteriologically oriented as the integral psycho-physical organism. There is not space for dualism wherein only the spiritual constituent of man is intended to be saved whereas body is annihilated. A similar holism of human being is found in Buddhist doctrine. All *dharmas*, constituting both the spiritual and sensual parts of the sentient being, are supposed to attain tranquility. Buddhist holism is a natural derivative of monism. Christianity is not monistic. The

motif why man searches for the unification of all his energies is what can be called *imitatio Dei*. During the process of deification man becomes similar to God who does not consist of parts and, hence, is boundless and immortal. (Immortality here is an aspect of boundlessness.)

Both holisms can be reconciled by the Jungian idea of individuation. In his *Conscious, Unconscious and Individuation* Jung writes, “I use the term “individuation” to denote the process by which a person becomes a psychological “in-dividual,” that is, a separate, indivisible unity or “whole.”¹⁰⁵⁴ As a psychologist he, of course, deals with the two constituents of human psyche, the unconscious and conscious. We, however, believe that by his warning not to allow the unconscious to swallow consciousness of an individual, he automatically presupposes the role of the body in which man experiences his conscious “self”.

Rather similar classifications of constituents of man can be found in both religions. In the doctrine of early Buddhism as well as in Hesychasm one deals with the common constituent or factor of human being. We shall call it a “gene of spiritual growth” which is present in any man/sentient being, at least potentially. In the symbolic language of Hesychast doctrine¹⁰⁵⁵ it is called *synergia* interpreted by Horuzhy as the ‘fundamental indestructible aspiration’. In Buddhism it is expressed as the ‘roots of the good’ which potentially are always present in a sentient being allowing even an inhabitant of the hell to get out of this place of sufferings and be liberated.

The next common factor, proclaimed by Christianity and Buddhism, is what we can call an “archetype of the free will”. *rDzogs chen* school of *Bon po* suggests a cosmological scheme of emanation from *Rang Shes rig gi rgyal po* (“King of Self-Knowledge”) wherein the “archetype of the free will” is expressed as the second wheel of “interdependence concerning awakening and error”. In classical Vijnānavāda this cosmological agent is substituted by the *manas* of human psyche. The concept of free will in Christianity needs not to be explained to the Western reader.

The next important archetype can be denoted as that of “the return to the center”. Tantric Buddhism and Hesychasm discuss the notion of the heart as the core of human being corresponding to the *axis mundi* and to which a human being should return in order to be saved/liberated. As is obvious, common structures may be found not only in the phenomenology of psychological states of meditation/prayer but always in doctrine.

¹⁰⁵⁴ Carl G. Jung, *Conscious, Unconscious and Individuation* in *The Collected Works of C. G. Jung*, vol. 9, part 1, p. 275.

¹⁰⁵⁵ Doctrinal notions of religion are the same Jungian symbols trying to interpret or formulate certain archetypes.

The search for the corresponding symbols expressing the same archetypes was the main task of the first chapter of the research.

The following conclusions deal with the spiritual path which is expressed by Hesychasm as *prayer* understood as psychic introspection and introversion. The same states of psyche are denoted by Buddhists as *meditation*. The main difference between the designations of the same introversion is, again, a fruit of the two religious models, the agapeic/theistic and the gnostic/monistic ones. For the former the notion of *prayer* is determined by the role of the Divine Grace and the final implantation of God into the soul. In monism prayer is substituted by *meditation* during which man, making use of his own effort, realizes the ultimate entity as his nature. In spite of different symbolic expressions of the introversion, the processes taking place in human psyche during prayer and meditation are analogical. Man annihilates all ordinary psychic functions in order to perceive Light vision.

An important factor dissolving during introversion is what human *will* produces. These obstacles on the path to liberation/deification are passions of Hesychast doctrine and *karma* in Buddhism. The annihilation of the ordinary activities of psyche results in the unification of the two most important agents of human psyche, i.e. the *mind/consciousnesses based upon winds* and the *heart*. According to Hesychasm the mind enters the heart. Only when they are not separated, God can be implanted in the heart. Keeping with Buddhism all layers of consciousness based upon winds must enter the heart. Only then man can experience the Clear Light. Jungian “individuation” will help to reconcile the two suggested schemes. Jung asserts that individuation means “a rather extraordinary task: the psyche consists of two incongruous halves which together should form a whole.” This union of the conscious and unconscious means that what is unknown (unconscious) should be grasped by consciousness. Jung has called the union the “transcendent function.”¹⁰⁵⁶ This very unconscious is the content of the Tantric and Hesychast *heart* which is completely unknown to man and, only when man becomes aware of it descending with his mind/dissolving his minds and winds in the heart, the lucent content of the heart is experienced.

A meaningful role is played in the process of salvation/liberation by the archetype of the “salvific body”. In Christianity it is expressed by the idea of the Body of Christ which being crucified and resurrected, has redeemed our souls and bodies from sin. In Tantric Buddhism the function of the salvific body is fulfilled by the

¹⁰⁵⁶ Carl G. Jung, *Conscious, Unconscious and Individuation* in *The Collected Works of C. G. Jung*, vol. 9, part 1, p. 275.

diamond body whereas in devotional Mahāyāna men believe in the salvific capacities of *bodhisattvas* incarnating for the sake of sentient beings.

Finally, the fruit or the last point of the spiritual path will be briefly discussed. The main archetypes here are those of *darkness* and *Light*. In Buddhism the former is expressed in the symbol of *śūnyatā* being a continuation of the idea of *pratītya-samutpāda* in early Buddhism. Nobody exists of himself, nothing is endowed with self-existence; everything is subject to the principle of dependent co-arising. Although the concept of *śūnyatā* is visually absent in Christianity, we can recognize it in the idea of the creating man *ex nihilo*. The substantiality of an independent soul, proclaimed by Christian doctrine, is experienced by Christian mystics as a mere *nihil*. Nothing exists outside God. Hence, our important suggestion here is to interpret *śūnyatā* and *nihil* as symbolic expressions of a certain mystical experience when the absence of self-existence¹⁰⁵⁷ is clearly grasped by a *yogi*/contemplator. Man perceives knowledge of *śūnyatā/nihil* as the “darkness of divestiture” in Hesychasm and as a manifestation of the “consciousness of black-near-attainment” in Tibetan Buddhism. In this manner a complete dependence of the universal principle of *pratītya-samutpāda* in Buddhism and of God in Christianity are expressed.

The symbolic interpretation of the Light archetype follows. As is evidenced by adherents of both religious traditions, during the culminative vision of Uncreated/Clear Light the dichotomic perception of the reality ceases. Man becomes one with the Light. In the symbolic language of Hesychasm this process is called *theosis* (deification) whereas the representatives of Tibetan Buddhism denote it as liberation from reincarnation. According to Jung this is the same individuation when the archetype of the “Self” is realized by man.

Somaticism, discussed in the last chapter of research, is the field wherein the differences between *theosis* and liberation become obvious. In Christianity the tremendous value of the body as a constituent of true personality is pointed out. The body is intended to resurrect after *parousia*. The bodies of the Saints, whose souls are already deified, are waiting for *parousia*. One part of the bodies of the ascetics is subject to the natural process of decay whereas the other part remains incorruptible. The former as well as the latter submit to the eschatological boundaries. The somatic ideal of Tibetans is determined by its Bon origin. It, however, has been “sharpened” by the

¹⁰⁵⁷ As we have already noted in the main part of the research, difference between Aristotelian and Thomistic “substance” and “existence” appears just speculative in the context of mystical experience.

Buddhist idea of the illusory character of the body as a product of *samsāra*. The bodies of Tibetan Saints dematerialize dissolving into rainbow light.

Somaticism inside certain spiritual traditions, however, transcends the “geographical” and doctrinal boundaries. For instance, although photic phenomena, being a derivative of Eastern Christian mentality, are an illustration of Eastern attitude to Jesus Christ as mainly God, these very photisms are represented also in the hagiographical narratives of the Christian West. In a similar way, the ideal of a rainbow body which is cultivated only by rDzogs chen school and also by Sa skya pa, is, allegedly, experienced all over Tibet among the representatives of all sects of Tibetan Buddhism, even in the midst of *dGe lugs pa*.

Soteriologically somatic phenomena do not transcend only the boundaries of distinct sects or denominations inside one religion. Unexplainable by Christian dogmatic theology, cases of “resurrection” of the bodies of Christian saints before *parousia* in the Christian East, seems to destroy the firm doctrinal constructions. At the same time, in spite of somatic differences in both traditions, the both models are explicitly holistic. In Christianity the body is a constituent of the deified man; in Tibetan Buddhism the body is not annihilated but dissolves into the primordial Light together with the psychic factor.

The so called secondary mystical phenomena are also of significance. Quite analogical effects of glorified bodies in both religions may be interpreted by us in accordance with the respective doctrines. These very secondary mystical phenomena, i.e., odors, divine sounds and light are a sign of the transformation taking place in the whole man. The concept of the transfiguration of the whole psycho-physiological organism of man performed at the supernatural level is formulated by Gregory Palamas. Tantric Buddhists, in turn, suggest an idea of the unity of consciousness and body. They both are perfect paths to the Ultimate. If the former becomes the path, the latter is liberated automatically, and vice versa. Human body as a part of the holistic human constitution can't be annihilated. That is why in the body of the liberated being the signs of “glorification” can't be escaped.

In the present research we have made an attempt to prove that two major religious traditions contact one and the same Ultimate Reality by the same faculties of human consciousness during mystical introversion.

The differences being derivatives of various doctrinal interpretations of the basic experience are relative. Simultaneously, different spiritual paths, suggested by two major religions, are equally valid in their endeavor to reach the Center. The paths, sometimes sharing common frontiers, become undifferentiated when the Ultimate Goal is attained. We hope that the present research will become a small stone in the bridge of understanding, which is nowadays in the process of building, between two completely different spiritual worlds, Christian Hesychasm and Tibetan Buddhism. We also believe that this research will encourage new discoveries in this field.

Bibliography

Augustine, Saint. *The Confessions of Saint Augustine*. Trans. Edward B. Pusey, D.D. New York: Pocket Books, 1951.

Bankart, C. Peter. "Five Manifestations of the Buddha in the West: A Brief History." In *Psychology and Buddhism: From Individual to Global Community*. Ed. Kathleen H. Dockett. G. Rita Dudley-Grant, C. Peter Bankart. New York, Boston, Dordrecht, London, Moscow: Kluwer Academic/Plenum Publishers, 2003.

Barton, David. *Dying and Death: A Clinical Guide for Care Givers*. Baltimore: The Williams and Wikins Company, 1977.

Beer, Robert. *The Encyclopaedia of Tibetan Symbols and Motifs*. Boston: Shambala, 1999.

Beinorius, Audrius. "Experience and Context: Cross-Cultural Approach to the Epistemology of Mysticism." In *Contemporary Philosophical Discourse in Lithuania*. Ed. Jurate Baranova. Gen ed. George F. McLean. USA: The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy, 2005.

Beinorius, Audrius. "The Play of Subconscious: On *samskaras* and *vāsanās* in Classical Yoga Psychology." In *Acta Orientalia Vilnensia* 5 (2004): 168-184.

Bharati, Agehananda. *The Tantric Tradition*. Bombay, Calcutta, Madras, Delhi: B. I. Publications, 1976.

Bhattacharyya, Benoytosh. *An Introduction to Buddhist Esoterism*. Delhi, Varanasi, Patna: Motilal Banarsidass, 1980.

Blofeld, John. *The Way of Power: A Practical Guide to the Tantric Mysticism of Tibet*. London: Allen and Unwin, 1970.

Bowker, John, ed. *The Oxford Dictionary of World Religions*. Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1997.

Breck, John. "Prayer of the Heart: Sacrament of the Presence of God." *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 39.1 (1995): 25-46.

Cave, Sydney, D.D. *Redemption Hindu and Christian*. London, Edinburgh, Glasgow, New York, Toronto, Melbourne, Cape Town, Bombay: Humphrey Milford: Oxford University Press, 1919.

Chandrkaew, Chinda, Dr. *Nibbāna: The Ultimate Truth of Buddhism*. Mahachula Buddhist University, 1979.

Cobb, John B., JR. *Beyond Dialogue: Toward a Mutual Transformation of Christianity and Buddhism*. Eugene: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1998.

Conze, Edward. *Buddhist Texts Through the Ages: Newly Translated from the Original Pali, Sanscrit, Chinese, Tibetan, Japanese and Apabhramsa*. Oxford: Bruno Cassirer, 1954.

Corneanu, Metropolitan Nicolae. "The Jesus Prayer and Deification." *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 39.1 (1995): 3-24.
Courage for Dialogue: Ecumenical Issues in Inter-Religious Relationships. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 1982.

Dalai Lama, His Holiness. *The Good Heart: A Buddhist Perspective on Teachings of Jesus*. Somerville: Wisdom Publications, 1996.

Dasgupta, Shashi Bhushan. *An Introduction to Tantric Buddhism*. Berkeley&London: Shambala, 1974.

David-Neel, Alexandra. *Initiations and Initiates in Tibet*. Trans. Fred Rothwell. New York: Dover Publications, 1993.

Dhirasekera, Jotiya. "God at The Head of Religion: A Search Through Buddhism." In *God: The Contemporary Duscussion*. Ed. Frederick Sontag and M. Darrol Bryant. Barrytown, New York: The Rose of Sharon Press, 1982.

Egan, Harvey D., S.J. *Christian Mysticism: The Future of a Tradition*. New York: Pueblo Publishing Company, 1984.

Eliade, Mircea. *Yoga: Immortality and Freedom*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1969.

Evans-Wentz, W.Y., ed. *Tibet's Great Yogī Milarepa: A Biography from the Tibetan Being Jetsun-Kahdum or Biographical History of Jetsun-Milarepa, According to the Late Lāma Kazi Dawa-Samdub's English Rendering* 2nd ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 1971.

Evans-Wentz, W.Y., ed. *Tibetan Yoga and Secret Doctrines or Seven Books of Wisdom of the Great Path, According to the Late Lāma Kazi Dawa-Samdub's English Rendering*. London, Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1982.

Flogaus, Reinhard. "Palamas and Barlaam Revisted: A Reassessment of East and West in the Hesychast Controversy of 14th Century Byzantium." *St Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 42.1 (1998): 1-32.

Fonner, Michael G. "Transforming Religious Language." In *Areopagus* 1 (Advent 1988): 26-33.

Fremantle, Francesca. *Luminous Emptiness: Understanding the tibetan Book of the Dead*. Boston&London: Shambala, 2001.

Fromms, Ērihs. *Psihoanalīze un dzenbudisms*. Tulk. Andžela Šuvajeva. Rīga: Zvaigzne ABC, 2002.

Fuchs, Stephen. "Interculturation: An Anthropological and Theological Perspective." In *Dialogue in Action: Essays in Honour of Johannes Aagaard*. Ed. Lars Thunberg, Moti Lal Pandit, Carl Vilh. Fogh-Hansen. New Delhi: Prajna Publications, 1988.

Gard, Richard A. *Buddhism*. New York: George Braziller, 1962.

Giacomella Orofino, Giacomella, trans. *Sacred Tibetan Teachings on Death and Liberation: Texts from the Most Ancient Traditions of Tibet*. Great Britain: Prism Press, 1990.

Golitzin, Alexander. "Dionysius the Areopagite in the Works of Gregory Palamas: On the Question of a "Christological Corrective" and Related Matters." *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 46.2-3 (2002): 163-190.

Govinda, Lama Anagarika. *Foundations of Tibetan Mysticism*. New York: Samuel Weiser, 1975.

Gregory of Nyssa. *The Life of Moses*. Trans. Abraham J. Malherbe, and Everett Ferguson. New York, Ramsey, Toronto: Paulist Press, 1978.

Gyatso, Geshe Kelsang. *Clear Light of Bliss: Mahamudra in Vajrayana Buddhism*. Trans. Tenzin Norbu. Ed. Jonathan Landaw and Chris Kolb. London: Wisdom Publications, 1982.

Hummel, Reinhart. "Asian Religions in the West: Their Attitude Towards Dialogue and Pluralism." In *Update & Dialogue* 4 (May 1994): 8-12.

Ivanauskaite, Jurga. *Zaudētā Apsolitā Zeme*. Tulk. Talrids Rullis. Rīga: Jumava, 2000.

James, Montague Rhodes, trans. *The Discourse of St. John the Divine Concerning the Falling Asleep of the Holy Mother of God*. In *The Apocryphal New Testament Being the Apocryphal Gospels, Acts Epistles, and Apocalypses with Other Narratives and Fragments*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1950.

Jayatileke, K. N. *The Buddhist Attitude to Other Religions*. Ed. Dr. Boon Nilakesh. Chiangmai: The Buddhist Publication Foundation Wat Phratatdoisuter, n.d.

John Powers, John. *Introduction to Tibetan Buddhism*. Ithaca, New York: Snow Publications, 1995.

Johnston, William, S.J. "The Experience of God in Christian Apophatic Mysticism." In *God: The Contemporary Discussion*. Ed. Frederick Sontag and M. Darrol Bryant. Barrytown, New York: The Rose of Sharon Press, 1982.

Johnston, William, S.J., ed. *The Cloud of Unknowing and the Book of Privy Counselling*. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1973.

Jung, C. G. *Archetypes of the Collective Unconscious* in *The Collected Works of C. G. Jung*. Ed. †Sir Herbert Read, Michael Fordham, Gerhard Adler, William McGuire. Trans. R.F.C.Hull. Princeton University Press, 1968. Vol. 9. Part 1.

Jung, C. G. *The Concept of the Collective Unconscious*. In *The Collected Works of C. G. Jung*. Ed. †Sir Herbert Read, Michael Fordham, Gerhard Adler, William McGuire. Trans. R.F.C.Hull. Princeton University Press, 1968. Vol. 9. Part 1.

Jung, Carl G. *Conscious, Unconscious and Individuation* In *The Collected Works of C. G. Jung*. Ed. †Sir Herbert Read, Michael Fordham, Gerhard Adler, William McGuire. Trans. R.F.C.Hull. Princeton University Press, 1968. Vol. 9. Part 1.

Jung, C. G., Dr. "Psychological Commentary." In *The Tibetan Book of the Dead or After-Death Experiences on the Bardo Plane, According to Lāma Kazi Dawa-Samdup's English Rendering*. Ed. W. Y. Evans-Wentz. London, Oxford, New Yourk: Oxford University Press, 1960.

Jung, Carl G. *Collected Works of Carl G. Jung*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1953. Vol. 12.

Kadowaki, Kakichi. "God as a Problem in the dialogue Between Zen and Christianity." In *God: The Contemporary Discussion*. Ed. Frederick Sontag and M. Darrol Bryant. Barrytown, New York: The Rose of Sharon Press, 1982.

Karmay, Samten Gyaltzen. *The Great Perfection (rDzogs chen): A Philosophical and Meditative Teaching in Tibetan Buddhism*. Leiden, New York, Kobenhavn, Köln: E.J. Brill, 1988.

Kavanaugh, Kieran, O.C.D. *The Collected Works of St. John of the Cross*. Washington: ICS Publications, 1979.

Khanna, Madhu. *Yantra: The Tantric Symbol of Cosmic Unity*. London: Thames and Hudson, 1997.

Klīve, Visvaldis. *Pa kuru ceļu?* LELBA Apgāds, 1988.

Knitter, Paul F. *No Other Name? A Critical Survey of Christian Attitudes Towards Toward the World Religions*. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1991.

Kraemer, H. *The Christian Message in a Non-Christian World*. London: Edinburgh House Press, 1938.

Lane, Belden C. "The Sinai Image in the Apophatic Tradition." *St. Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 39.1 (1995): 47-70.

Lauf, Detlef Ingo. *Secret Doctrines of the Tibetan Book of the Dead*. Trans. Graham Parkes. Boulder&London: Shambala, 1975.

Lee, Jung Young. *Death and Beyond in the Eastern Perspective: A Study Based on the Bardo Thödol and the I Ching*. New York: An Interface Book, 1874.

Lodö, Venerable Lama. *Bardo Teachings: The Way of Death and Rebirth*. Ithaca, New York: Snow Lion Publications, 1987.

McGinn, Bernard. *The Foundations of Mysticism*. Vol. I. In *The Presence of God: A History of Western Christian Mysticism*. London: SCM PRESS, 1992.

Monier-Williams, Sir Monier. *Buddhism, in Its Connexion with Brāhmanism and Hindūism, and in Its Contrast with Christianity*. London: John Murray, 1889.

Monk of the Eastern Church. *Orthodox Spirituality: An Outline of the Orthodox Ascetical and Mystical Tradition*. 3rd ed. Crestwood, New York: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1987.

Mookejee, Ajit, and Madhu Khanna. *The Tantric Way: Art, Science, Ritual*. London: Thames nad Hudson, 1996.

Moti Lal Pandit, Moti Lal. *Śūnyatā: The Essence of Mahāyāna Spirituality*. New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers, 1998.

Mūks, Roberts. *Ceļā uz Rietumu nirvānu – caur Latviju*. Rīga: Valters un Rapa, 2000.

Mūks, Roberts. *Filozofija: Dvēsele – tilts starp Rietumu un Austrumu reliģijām*. Rīga: Zvaigzne ABC, 2001.

Mūks, Roberts. *Sakrālā un profānā polaritāte Mirčas Eliades darbos un kristietībā*. Rīga: Zinātne, 2002.

Mullin, Glenn H. *Death and Dying: The Tibetan Tradition*. London, New York: Arkana, 1986.

Nazianzen, Gregory. *Select Orations of Saint Gregory Nazianzen, Sometime Archbishop of Constantinople*. Trans. Charles Gordon Browne. In *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of Christian Church*. Michigan: Wm.B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, n.d.

Nelson, Harold R. "The Near Death Experience: Observations and Reflections from a Retired Chaplain." In *The Journal of Pastoral Care* 54.2 (Summer 2000): 159-166.

Norbu, Namkhai. *The Crystal and the Way of Light: Sutra, Tantra and Dzogchen (Tibetan Buddhist Philosophy)*. Ithaca, New York: Snow Lion Publications, 1999.

O'Brien, Justin. *Yoga and Christianity*. Honesdale, Pennsylvania: Himalayan International Institute, 1978.

Of the Most Holy Stigmata of St. Francis (The Third Consideration on the Holy Stigmata). In *The Little Flowers of St. Francis of Assisi*. Boston: St. Paul Editions, 1976.

Ott, Heinrich. "Does the Notion of "Mystery" – As Another Name for God – Provide a Basis for a Dialogical Encounter Between the Religious? In *God: The Contemporary Discussion*. Ed. Frederick Sontag and M. Darrol Bryant. Barrytown, New York: The Rose of Sharon Press, 1982.

Palamas, Gregory. *The Triads*. Trans. Nicholas Gendle. New Jersey: Paulist Press, 1983.

Pallis, Marco. *A Buddhist Spectrum: Contributions to Buddhist-Christian Dialogue*. Bloomington: World Wisdom, 2003.

Pandit, Moti Lal. *A Historico-Analytical Study of Yoga as a Method of Liberation*. New Delhi: Intercultural Publications, 1991.

Pandit, Moti Lal. *Beyond the Word: Buddhist Approach to Knowledge and Reality*. New Delhi: Intercultural Publications, 1997.

Pandit, Moti Lal. *Śūnyatā: The Essence of Mahāyāna Spirituality*. New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers, 1998.

Parrinder, Geoffrey. *Mysticism in the World's Religions*. London: Sheldon Press, 1976.

Pelphrey, Brant. "You are Gods: Deification and Divinization in Christian Tradition and the New Religions." In *Dialogue in Action: Essays in Honour of Johannes Aagaard*. Ed. Lars Thunberg, Moti Lal Pandit. Carl Vih. Fogh-Hansen. New Delhi: Prajna Publications, 1988.

Pennington, M. Basil, OSCO. *The Monks of Mount Athos: A Western Monk's Extraordinary Spiritual Journey on Eastern Holy Ground*. Woodstock, Vermont: Skylight Paths Publishing, 2003.

Pieris, Aloysius, S.J. *Love Meets Wisdom: A Christian Experience of Buddhism*. Mariknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1990.

Powers, John. *Introduction to Tibetan Buddhism*. Ithaca, New York: Snow Publications, 1995.

Pseudo-Dionysius. *The Divine Names*. In Pseudo-Dionysius. *The Complete Works*. Trans. Colm Luibheid. New York, Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1987.

Pseudo-Dionysius. *The Mystical Theology*. In Pseudo-Dionysius. *The Complete Works*. Trans. Colm Luibheid. New York: Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1987.

R. A. Moody, R. A., Jr. *Life After Life*. New York: Batam, 1975.

Rahner, Karl. *Do You Believe in God?* Trans. Richard Strachan. New York, Paramus, Toronto: Paulist Press, 1969.

Rahner, Karl. *Foundations of Christian Faith: An Introduction to the Idea of Christianity*. Trans. William V. Dych. New York: the Seabury Press, 1978.

Rahner, Karl. *Revelation and Tradition*. New York: Herder and Herder, 1966.

Randy Kloetzli, Randy. *Buddhist Cosmology: From Single World System to Pure Land: Science and Theology in the Images of Motion and Light*. Delhi, Varanasi, Patna: Motilal Banarsidass, 1983.

Ray, Reginald A. *Buddhist Saints in India: A Study in Buddhist Values and Orientations*. New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994.

Reynolds, John Myrdhin, trans., com. *The Golden Letters: The Three Statements of Garab Dorje, the First Teacher of Dzogchen, Together with a Commentary by Dza Patrul Rinpoche entitled "The Special Teaching of the Wise and Glorious King."* Ithaca, New York: Snow Lion Publications, 1996.

Rhys, Ernest, ed. *The Little Flowers & the Life of St. Francis with the Mirrow of Perfection*. London, Toronto: J.M. Dent & Sons; New York: E.P. Dutton & Co, 1917.

Rinbochay, Lati, and Jeffrey Hopkins. *Death, Intermediate State and Rebirth in Tibetan Buddhism*. London: Rider and Company, 1979.

Rinpoche, Sogyal. *The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying*. Ed. Patrick Gaffney, and Andrew Harvey. New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 1994.

Samartha, S. J. *Courage for Dialogue: Ecumenical Issues in Inter-Religious Relationships*. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 1982.

Sangharakshita. *Vision and Transformation: An Introduction to the Buddha's Noble Eightfold Path*. Birmingham: Windhorse Publications, 1990.

Slavik, Jan. *Dance of Colours: Basic Patterns of Colour Symbolism in Mahayana Buddhism: Dissertation*. Götteborg, 1994.

Smart, Ninian. "Transcendental Humanism: A Paper about God and Humanity." In *God: The Contemporary Discussion*. Ed. Frederick Sontag and M. Darrol Bryant. Barrytown, New York: The Rose of Sharon Press, 1982.

Sopa, Geshe Lhundub, Roger Jackson, and John Newman. *The Wheel of Time: The Kalachakra in Context*. Ed. Beth Simon. Madison: Wisconsin: Dear Park Books, 1985.

Sophrony, Archimandite. *The Monk of Mount Athos Staretz Silouan 1866-1938*. Crestwood, New York: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2001.

Sophrony, Archimandite. *The Monk of Mount Athos Staretz Silouan 1866-1938*. Trans. Rosemary Edmonds. New York: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1973.

St. Symeon the New Theologian. *Hymns of Divine Love by St. Symeon the New Theologian*. Trans. George A. Maloney, S.J. Denville, New Jersey: Dimension Books, n.d.

Steindl-Rast, David, OSB. "A Shift in Buddhist-Christian Dialogue." *Areopagus* 1 (Advent 1988): 18-20.

Stramara, Daniel B., Jr. "Introspection in the Ancient Mediterranean World: Taking a Closer Look." *St Vladimir's Theological Quarterly* 44.1 (2000):35-60.

- Streng, Frederick. *Emptiness: A Study in Religious Meaning*. Nashville, New York: Abington Press, 1967.
- Suzuki, Daisetz Teitaro. *Mysticism Christian and Buddhist*. London: George Allen and Unwin, 1957.
- Symeon the New Theologian. *The Discourses*. Trans. C.J. deCatanzaro. New Jersey: Paulist Press, 1980.
- Teasdale, Wayne. *The Mystic Heart: Discovering a Universal Spirituality in the World's Religions*. Novato: New World Library, 2001.
- Teresa of Avila. *Interior Castle*. Garden City: Doubleday, 1961.
- Thurman, Robert A. F., trans. *The Tibetan Book of the Dead: The Great Book of Natural Liberation Through Understanding in the Between*. New York: Bantam Book, 1994.
- Thurman, Robert E. A. *Essential Tibetan Buddhism*. New Jersey: Castle Books, 1995.
- Toynbee, Arnold. "Man's Concern with Life after Death." In Arnold Toynbee, Arthur Koestler et al. *Life After Death*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1976.
- Underhill, Evelyn. *Mysticism: A Study in the Nature and Development of Man's Spiritual Consciousness*. New York: The Noonday Press, 1955.
- Waldron, William S. *The Buddhist Unconscious: The Ālaya-vijñāna in the Context of Indian Buddhist Thought*. London, New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003.
- Walshe, Maurice, trans. *The Long Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of Dīgha Nikāya*. Boston: Wisdom Publications, 1995.
- Winkler, Gabriele. *The Jesus Prayer in Eastern Spirituality*. Minneapolis: Light and Life Publishing Company, 1986.

Wison, Joe Bransford. *Translating Buddhism from Tibetan*. Ithaca, New York: Snow Lion Publications, 1992.

Yamamoto, Schuichi. "Environmental Problems and Buddhist Ethics: From the Perspective of the Consciousness-Only Doctrine." In *Psychology and Buddhism: From Individual to Global Community*. Ed. Kathleen H. Dockett. G. Rita Dudley-Grant, C. Peter Bankart. New York, Boston, Dordrecht, London, Moscow: Kluwer Academic/Plenum Publishers, 2003.

Авильская, Святая Тереза. *Внутренний замок*. Пер. Наталья Трауберг. Москва: Истина и жизнь, 2000.

Алфеев, Иларион, Игумен. *Жизнь и учение св. Григория Богослова*. Санкт-Петербург: Алетейя, 2001.

Альбедиль, М. Ф. *Зерцало традиций: Человек в духовных традициях Востока*. Санкт-Петербург: Азбука классика: Петербургское Востоковедение, 2003.

Андросов, В. П. *Будда Шакьямуни и индийский буддизм: современное истолкование древних текстов*. Москва: Восточная литература РАН, 2001.

Барадийн, Б. Б. *Буддийские монастыри: краткий очерк. / Orient: Альманах*. Выпуск 1. *Буддизм и Россия*. С.-Петербург, 1992: 61-115.

Бибихин, В. В. "Материалы к исихастским спорам". // *Синергия: проблемы аскетики и мистики Православия*. Общ. ред. С. С. Хоружий. Москва: Ди-Дик, 1995.

Бычков, С. С. *Жизнеописания достопамятных людей земли Русской 10-20 вв*. Москва: Московский рабочий, 1992.

Вангьял, Тензин. *Чудеса естественного ума: суть учений Дзогчен в тибетской традиции Бон*. Пер. Т. Данилевич. Москва: Либрис, 1997.

Василенко, Л. И. *Краткий религиозно-философский словарь*. Москва: Истина и жизнь, 2000.

Василиадис, Н. *Таинство смерти*. Москва: Свято-Троицкая Сергиева Лавра, 1998.

Величковский, Паисий. *Об умной или внутренней молитве: сочинение блаженного старца схимонаха и архимандрита Паисия Величковского, Настоятеля Нямецкого и других монастырей в Молдавии и основателя Русского Ильинского скита на Афоне*. Пер. со слав. 3 изд. Москва, 1902.

Веревкин, В. С., Игумен Варсонофий. *Учение о молитве по добротолочию*. Ярославль-Рыбинск: Рыбинский дом печати, 2002.

Виновска, Мария. *Падре Пио. Жизнь и бессмертие*. Брюссель: Жизнь с Богом, 1994.

Геронимус, Прот. Александр. *Богословие священнобезмолвия*. // Гл. ред. С. С. Хоружий, Синергия: проблемы аскетики и мистики Православия. Общ. ред. С. С. Хоружий. Москва: Ди-Дик, 1995.

Гольинский-Михайловский, Архиепископ Антоний. *О молитве Иисусовой и божественной благодати*. Красногорск, 2000.

Гуревич, А. Л., сост. *Преподобный Силуан и его ученик архимандрит Софроний: по материалам «Силуановских чтений»*. Клин: Христианская жизнь, 2001.

Гьялцен, Шардза Таши. *Капли сердца Дхармакайи Практика Дзогчен традиции Бон*. Пер. и ком. Лопон Тензин Намдак. Москва: Шунья, 2000.

Давид-Неэль, А. *Мистики и маги Тибета*. Москва: Дягилев Центр, 1991.

Дандарон, Б. Д. "Теория Шуньи у мадхьямиков: по тибетским источникам". // *Тибетский буддизм: теория и практика*. Новосибирск: Наука, 1995.

Добротолочию. Свято-Троицкая Сергиева Лавра, 1992.

Дхармакирти. *Трактат Дхармакирти "Ньяя-бинду" как введение в буддийскую логику и теорию познания*. Пер. и ком. Е. А. Островская. // Сост. Е. П.

Островская. *Категории буддийской культуры*. Санкт-Петербург: Петербургское Востоковедение, 2000.

Египетский, Макарий. *Духовные слова и послания: собрание типа I (Vatic. Graec. 694)*, пер., ком. А. Г. Дунаев. Москва: Индрик, 2002.

Ермакова, Е. П., Е.П. Островская, *Классический буддизм..* СПб.: Петербургское Востоковедение, 1999.

Жития святых, изложенные по руководству Четьих-Миней св. Димитрия Ростовского. Кн. 7. Москва, 1906.

Зарин, С. М. *Аскетизм по Православно-христианскому учению*. Москва: Паломник, 1996.

Катафигиот, Каллист. *Каллиста Катафигиота о Божественном единении и созерцательной жизни*. // Каллиста Катафигиота о Божественном единении и созерцательной жизни, Иоанна Карпафийского Слово подвижническое. Казань, 1898.

Кашменский, Протоиерей Стефан. *Систематический свод св. Отцов о душе человеческой*. Пермь: Панагия, 2002.

Керн, Киприан, Архимандрит. *Антропология Св. Григория Паламы* (Москва: Паломник, 1996).

Клеман, Оливье. *Истоки: Богословие отцов Древней Церкви: Тексты и комментарии*. Пер. Г. В. Вдовина. Москва: Путь, 1994.

Климков, Олег. *Опыт безмолвия: Человек в мирозерцании Византийских исихастов*. Санкт-Петербург: Алетейа, 2001.

Коржевский, Иерей Вадим. *Пропедевтика аскетике: компендиум по православной святоотеческой психологии*. Москва: Центр Информационных Технологий Информатики и Информации, 2004.

Корнфилд, Джек. *Современные буддийские мастера*. Москва: Золотой Век, 1993.

Кривошеин, Архиепископ Василий. *Преподобный Симеон Новый Богослов (949-1022)*. Нижний Новгород: Издательство братства во имя святого князя Александра Невского, 1996.

Кузанский, Николай. "Об искании Бога". // Николай Кузанский. *Сочинения в двух томах*. Москва: Мысль, 1979.

Кузнецов, Б. И. *Дрний Иран и Тибет: история религии Бон*. Санкт-Петербург: Евразия, 1998.

Кунцлер, Михаэль. *Литургия церкви*. Москва: Христианская Россия, 1995.

Леви Строс, Клод. *Структурная антропология: сборник переводов*. Пер. М.К. Рыклин. Москва: ИНИОН, 1980.

Лехаин, Валерий. "Умное делание: О содержании и границах понятия «исихазм». // *Вестник русского христианского движения* 164.1 (1992): 5-32.

Лисовой, Н.Н. *Преображение Господне: иконография и смысл праздника*. // *Синергия: проблемы аскетики и мистики Православия*. Общ. ред. С. С. Хоружий. Москва: Ди-Дик, 1995.

Лодыженский, Митрофан. *Сверхсознание и пути его достижения*. Москва: Эксмо-пресс, 2002.

Лосский, Владимир. "«Мрак» и «свет» в познании Бога". Пер. В. Решикова. // Владимир Лосский. *Богословие и боговидение*. Ред. Владимир Писляков. Москва: издательство Свято-Владимирского Братства, 2000.

Лосский, В. *Кафолическое сознание: Антропологическое приложение догмата Церкви*. В. Решикова, пер. // В. Лосский, *Богословие и боговидение*. А. Писляков, общ. ред. Москва: Издательство Свято-Аладимирского Братства, 2000.

В. Н. Лосский, *Очерк мистического богословия Восточной Церкви. Догматическое богословие*. Москва: СЭИ, 1991.

Лысенко, В. Г. Ранняя буддийская философия. // В. Г. Лысенко, А. А. Терентьев, В. К. Шохин. *Ранняя буддийская философия. Философия Джайнизма*. Москва: Восточная литература РАН, 1994.

Макарий, Д.Б.. *Д.Б. Макария, архиепископа Харьковского Православно-догматическое богословие*. Том 1. Санктпетербург, 1868.

Малявин, В. В. "В поисках традиции". // *Восток - Запад: исследования, переводы, публикации*. Москва: Наука, 1988.

Мартынов, Б. В. "Источники и течения йоги". // Пер. Б. В. Мартынов, *Упанишады Йоги и Тантры*. Москва: Алетея, 1999.

Меркурий, монах. *В горах Кавказа: записки современного пустынножителя*. Москва: Православный паломник, 1996.

Мейендорф, Иоанн, Протопресвитер. *Жизнь и труды Святителя Григория Паламы: Введение в изучение*. Пер. Г. Н. Начинкин. Ред. И. П. Медведев, В. М. Лурье. Санкт-Петербург: Византинороссика, 1997.

Минин, П. *Главные направления древне-церковной мистики. // Мистическое богословие*. Киев: Путь к истине, 1991.

Мулин, Глен *Смерть и умирание в тибетской традиции*. Санкт-Петербург: Евразия, 2001.

Настольная книга священнослужителя. Месяцеслов. Т. 2. Москва, 1978.

Настольная книга священнослужителя. Месяцеслов, т. 3 Москва, 1979.

Невероятное для многих, но истинное происшествие. Тверь: Благовест, 1991.

Нидал,, Лама Оле *Открытие алмазного пути. Тибетский Буддизм встречается с Западом*. СПб: Алмазный путь, 1999.

Нисский, Григорий. *Точное изъяснение Песни Песней. // Творения святых отцов, в русском переводе*. Т. 39. Москва, 1862.

Новиков, Николай (сост.). *Путь умного делания: О молитве Иисусовой и божественной благодати: составлено на основе келейных записей архиепископа Антония (Голынского-Михайловского)*. Красногорск: Успенский храм, 2000.

Норбу, Чогьял Намкхай Римпоче. *Хрусталь и путь света: Сутра, Тантра и Дзогчен по учениям Намкхай Норбу Римпоче*. Пер. Маликова Фариды Х. Сост. глоссария Сидоров С. А. Новокижингинск: Рандолгар Санти Маха Сангха, 1991, самиздат.

Откровенные рассказы духовному своему отцу. Москва: София, 1999.

Палама, Григорий, Св. *Триады в защиту священно-безмолствующих*, пер. В. Вениаминов. Москва: Канон, 1995.

Палладий, епископ Еленопольский. *Палладия, епископа Еленопольского Лавсаик, или повествование о жизни святых и блаженных отцов*. Москва: Крон-Пресс, 1992.

Пападимитриу, Георгий, священник. *Маймонид и Палама о Боге*. Москва: Путь, 2003.

Позднеев, А. М. *Очерки быта буддийских монастырей и буддийского духовенства в Монголии в связи с отношениями сего последнего к народу*. Элиста: Калмыцкое книжное издательство, 1993.

Попов, И. В. *Труды по патрологии*. Т. 1. Сергиев Посад: Свято-Троицкая Лавра, 2004.

Попович, Отец Иустин. "Святые мощи". // *Вестник Русского Христианского движения*. Т 166. 3 (1992): 39-50.

Протопопов, Д. И. *О нетлении святых мощей*. Тверь, 1991.

Рао, Рамачандра. *Тантрические традиции Тибета*. // Рамачандра Рао. Тантра, мантра, янтра. Тантрические традиции Тибета. Москва: Беловодье, 2002.

Рерих, Ю. Н. *Тибетско-русско-английский словарь с санскритскими параллелями*. 10 томов. Москва: Наука, 1983-1987.

Розенберг, О. О. *Труды по буддизму*. Москва: Наука, 1991.

Сахаров, Архимандрит Софроний. *Старец Силуан: Жизнь и поучения*. Москва, Ново-Казачье, Минск: 1991.

Сахаров, Архимандрит Софроний. *Рождение в Царство непоколебимое*. Москва: Паломник, 2000.

Сахаров, Софроний, Архимандрит. *Видеть Бога как Он есть*. Essex: Stavropegic Monastery of St. John the Baptist, 1985.

Свежавски, С. *Святой Фома, прочитанный заново (лекции в Ласко)*. // *Символ*, 33. (Париж, Июль 1995): 7-185.

Семенцов, В. С. "Проблема трансляции традиционной культуры на примере судьбы Бхагавадгиты". // *Восток - Запад: исследования, переводы, публикации*. Москва: Наука, 1988.

Сильницкий, Г. Г. "Исихазм и схоластика". // *Синергия: проблемы аскетики и мистики Православия*. Ред. С. С. Хоружий. Москва: Ди-дик, 1995.

Симеон Новый Богослов, Преподобный. *Божественные гимны*. // *Творения*, т. 3. Свято-Троицкая Сергиева Лавра, 1993.

Симеон Новый Богослов, Преподобный. *Деятельные и богословские главы*. // *Творения*. Том 2. Слова 53-92. Свято-Троицкая Сергиева Лавра, 1993.

Сирин, Авва Исаак. *Аввы Исаака Сирина слова подвижнические*. Москва: Правило веры, 1993.

Сириянин, Авва Исаак. *Иже во святых отца нашего аввы Исаака Сириянина слова подвижническия*. Пер. С. Соболевский. Москва: Правило веры, 1993.

Сказания о земной жизни Пресвятой Богородицы с изложением пророчеств и прообразований, относящихся к ней, учения Церкви о ней, чудес и чудотворных икон ея, на основании Священного Писания, свидетельств Св. Отцев и Церковных преданий. Москва, Типо-Литография И. Ефимова, 1904.

Тер-Давтян, пер. *Памятники Армянской Агиографии*. Ереван: Издательство АН Армянской ССР, 1973.

Тертышников, Георгий, архимандрит. *Святитель Феофан Затворник и его учение о спасении*. Москва: Правило веры, 1999.

Тимофиевич, Анатолий. *Преподобный Серафим Саровский: к пятидесятилетию прославления 1903-1953*. New York: Новое Дивеево, 1953.

Тинлей, Геше Джампа. *Ум и пустота*. Пер. М. Малыгина и Т. Проваторова. Москва: Московский буддийский центр Ламы Цонкапы, 1999.

Толковая Библия или комментарий на все книги Св. Писания Ватхаго и Нового Завета с иллюстрациями. Издание приемников А. П. Лопухина. Т. 3, Новый Завет. Петербург 1911-1913. Стокгольм, 1987.

Торчинов, Е. А.. *Религии мира: опыт запредельного: Трансперсональные состояния и психотехника*. Санкт-Петербург: Петербургское Востоковедение, 1997.

Трунспергер, Татьяна, пер. *Божественный сумасброд: Жизнеописание и песни Друкпы Кюнле*. СПб: Алмазный путь, 2000.

Туччи, Джузеппе. *Религии Тибета*, О. В. Альбедиль, пер. Санкт-Петербург: Евразия, 2005.

Туччи, Джузеппе. *Святые и разбойники неизведанного Тибета: дневник экспедиции в Западный Тибет 1935*. А. А. Малыгин, пер. Санкт-Петербург: Алетея, 2004.

Федотов, Георгий. *Святые Древней Руси*. Москва: Московский рабочий, 1990.

Ферштайн, Георг. *Энциклопедия йоги*. Москва: Гранд, 2002.

Флоровский, Г. В. *Восточные отцы V-VIII веков: из чтений в Православном Богословском Институте в Париже*. Париж: Паломник, 1933.

Фримантл, Франческа. *Сияющая пустота: Интерпретация "Тибетской книги мертвых"*. Москва: София, 2003.

Харитон, игумен Валаамского монастыря (сост.). *Умное делание (о молитве Иисусовой): сборник поучений святых отцов и опытных ее делателей*. Москва: Благо, 1998.

Хоружий, С. С. "Аналитический словарь исихастской антропологии". // *Синергия: проблемы аскетики и мистики Православия*. Общ. ред. С. С. Хоружий. Москва: Ди-Дик, 1995.

Хоружий, С. С. *Диптих безмолвия: Аскетическое учение о человеке в богословском и философском освещении*. Москва: Центр психологии и психотерапии, 1991.

Хоружий, Сергей. *К феноменологии аскезы*. Москва: Издательство гуманитарной литературы, 1998. Элиаде, Мирча. "Мефистофель и Андрогин", пер. А. В. Нестерова // Мирча Элиаде, *Азиатская алхимия*. Москва: Янус-К, 1998.

Хос, Сергей, пер. *Знаменитые йогини: Женщины в Буддизме*. Москва: Путь к себе, 1996.

Цонкапа, Чже. *Большое руководство к этапам Пути Пробуждения (309а; 309б)*. т. 4.. Пер. А. Кугявичус. Гл. ред. А. Терентьев. Санкт-Петербург: Нартанг, 1998.

Челанский, Фома. *Житие первое Святого Франциска Ассизского, составленное Фомой Челанским*. // *Источники францисканства. Святой Франциск Ассизский: писания и биографии. Святая Клара Ассизская: писания и биография*. Assisi: Movimento Francescano, 1996.

Швейцер, Альберт. "Мировоззрение индийских мыслителей: мистика и этика". // *Восток - Запад: исследования, переводы, публикации*, Москва: Наука, 1988.

Шохин, В.К. *Первые философы Индии*. Москва: Ладомир, 1997.

Шрайтер, Роберт Дж. *Формирование локальных богословий*. Пер. О. А. Рыбакова. Санкт-Петербург: Obis Books, 2005.

Яблоков, И. Н. *Религиоведение. Учебный словарь-минимум по религиоведению*. Москва: Гардарика, 1998.

Gorʻovn *Wapk Ma, doxi*: Yr&an, Sowydagan cro. , 1979: