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The numbering between brackets refers to the original numbering on the Spirituality Studies webpage.

EDITORIAL

Martin Dojčár

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am pleased to announce the 1th issue of the Spirituality Studies journal!

In its content you can find extensive lifetime research contributions of Stanislav Grof and Emil Pálež side by side with profound insights into yoga by Květoslav Minařík, the legend of the 20th century mysticism from former Czechoslovakia, and an interview with a contemporary French-Polish Zen master Sandó Kaisen – all published for the first time here.

The mosaic of the first issue is, at the same time, completed with three inspiring studies, one of which is written by Monika Zaviš, Rebekah Ralbovská and Renata Knezović, the other one by Sabína Gáliková Tolnaiová along with Slavomír Gálik, and finally, last but not least, the one by Adrián Slavkovský OP.

We have started the Spirituality Studies journal as an enthusiasts' project. It wouldn't be possible without the generous contribution of the whole team, but in particular Martin Hynek, a graphic designer who has designed our web page, and Milan Špak, an artist and photographer who has kindly provided us with his photographs.

As an international and interspiritual editorial team we stand firm in our commitment to deliver to you the top quality of studies, articles, educational materials and information related to spirituality for free.

On the other hand, we depend on your kind attention as a reader, and, if you will, on your gracious financial support as a benefactor. To help us keep going on with the Spirituality Studies as an open access journal, non-profit project, please, stay with us.

Cordially
Martin Dojčár
editor-in-chief

REVISION AND RE-ENCHANTMENT OF THE LEGACY OF PSYCHOLOGY FROM A HALF CENTURY OF CONSCIOUSNESS RESEARCH

Stanislav Grof

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Abstract

Drawing on observations from more than fifty years of research into an important subgroup of non-ordinary states of consciousness that he calls “*holotropic*”, the author suggests a revision of some basic assumptions of modern psychiatry, psychology, and psychotherapy. The proposed changes involve the nature of consciousness and its relationship to matter, dimensions of the human psyche, the roots of emotional and psychosomatic disorders, and therapeutic strategy. In the light of the new observations, spirituality appears to be an essential attribute of the human psyche and of existence in general. An important and controversial subject that could be only tangentially addressed in the context of this paper is the importance of archetypal psychology and astrology for consciousness research.

Keywords

Transpersonal psychology, archetypal psychology, holotropic states of consciousness, consciousness research, cartography of human psyche

1 Modern consciousness research and the dawning of a new paradigm

In 1962, Thomas Kuhn, one of the most influential philosophers of the twentieth century, published his groundbreaking book *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Kuhn 1962). On the basis of fifteen years of intensive study of the history of science, he demonstrated that the development of knowledge about the universe in various scientific disciplines is not a process of gradual accumulation of data and formulation of ever more accurate theories, as usually assumed. Instead, it shows a clearly cyclical nature with specific stages and characteristic dynamics, which can be understood and even predicted.

The central concept of Kuhn's theory, which makes this possible, is that of a *paradigm*. A paradigm can be defined as a constellation of beliefs, values, and techniques shared by the members of the community at a particular historical period. It governs the thinking and research activities of scientists until some of its basic assumptions are seriously challenged by new observations. This leads to a crisis and emergence of suggestions for radically new ways of viewing and interpreting the phenomena that the old paradigm is unable to explain. Eventually, one of these alternatives satisfies the necessary requirements to become the new paradigm that then dominates the thinking in the next period of the history of science.

The most famous historical examples of paradigm shifts have been the replacement of the Ptolemaic *geocentric system* by the *heliocentric system* of Copernicus,

Kepler, and Galileo; the overthrow of Becher's *phlogiston theory* in chemistry by Lavoisier and Dalton; and the *conceptual cataclysms* in physics in the first three decades of the twentieth century that undermined the hegemony of *Newtonian physics* and gave birth to *theories of relativity* and *quantum physics*. Paradigm shifts tend to come as a major surprise to the mainstream academic community, since its members tend to mistake the leading paradigms for an accurate and definitive description of reality. Thus in 1900 shortly before the advent of quantum-relativistic physics, Lord Kelvin declared: "There is nothing new to be discovered in physics now. All that remains is more and more precise measurements."

In the last five decades, various avenues of modern consciousness research have revealed a rich array of "anomalous" phenomena – experiences and observations that have undermined some of the generally accepted assertions of modern psychiatry, psychology, and psychotherapy concerning the nature and dimensions of the human psyche, the origins of emotional and psychosomatic disorders, and effective therapeutic mechanisms. Many of these observations are so radical that they question the basic metaphysical assumptions of materialistic science concerning the nature of reality and of human beings and the relationship between consciousness and matter.

2 Holotropic states of consciousness

In this paper, I summarize my observations and experiences from more than half a century of research into an important subgroup of non-ordinary states of consciousness for which I coined the name *holotropic*; these findings seriously challenge the existing scientific paradigms. Before I address this topic, I would like to explain the term holotropic that I will be using throughout this article. All these years, my primary interest has been to explore the healing, transformative, and evolutionary potential of non-ordinary states of consciousness and their great value as a source of new revolutionary data about consciousness, the human psyche, and the nature of reality.

From this perspective, the term "*altered states of consciousness*" (Tart 1969) commonly used by mainstream clinicians and theoreticians is not appropriate, because of its one-sided emphasis on the distortion or impairment of the "correct way" of experiencing oneself and the world. (In colloquial English and in veterinary jargon, the term "alter" is used to signify castration of family dogs and cats). Even the somewhat better term "*non-ordinary states of consciousness*" is too general, since it includes a wide range of conditions that are not relevant for the subject of this paper. Here belong trivial deliria caused by infectious diseases, tumors, abuse of alcohol, or circulatory and degenerative diseases of the brain. These alterations of consciousness are associated with disorientation, impairment of intellectual functions, and subsequent amnesia. They are clinically important,

but lack therapeutic and heuristic potential.

The term holotropic refers to a large subgroup of non-ordinary states of consciousness that are of great theoretical and practical importance. These are the states that novice shamans experience during their initiatory crises and later in life induce in their clients for therapeutic purposes. Ancient and native cultures have used these states for millennia in rites of passage and in their healing ceremonies. They were described by mystics of all ages and initiates in the ancient mysteries of death and rebirth. Procedures for inducing them were also developed and used in the context of major world religions – Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Taoism, Islam, Judaism, Zoroastrianism, and Christianity.

The importance of holotropic states for ancient and aboriginal cultures is reflected in the amount of time and energy that the members of these human groups dedicated to developing "*technologies of the sacred*", various procedures capable of inducing such states for ritual and spiritual purposes. These methods combine in various ways drumming and other forms of percussion, music, chanting, rhythmic dancing, changes in breathing, and cultivating special forms of awareness. Extended social and sensory isolation in a cave, desert, arctic ice, or in high mountains is also an important way to induce such non-ordinary states. Extreme physiological interventions used for this purpose include fasting, sleep deprivation, dehydration, use of powerful laxatives and purgatives, and even infliction of severe pain, body mutilation, and massive bloodletting.

The ritual use of psychedelic plants has been by far the most effective tool for inducing healing and transformative non-ordinary states.

When I recognized the unique nature of these states of consciousness, I found it difficult to believe that contemporary psychiatry does not have a specific category and term for such theoretically and practically important experiences. Because I felt strongly that they deserve to be distinguished from “altered states of consciousness” and not be seen as manifestations of serious mental diseases, I started referring to them as “*holotropic*”. This composite word literally means “*oriented toward wholeness*” or “*moving toward wholeness*” (from the Greek *holos*, “whole”, and *trepo/trepein*, “moving toward” or “in the direction of something”). The word holotropic is a neologism, but it is related to the commonly used term *heliotropism* – the property of plants to always move in the direction of the sun.

3 Holotropic states of consciousness and the spiritual history of humanity

The name holotropic suggests something that might come as a surprise to an average Westerner: in our everyday state of consciousness we identify with only a small fraction of who we really are and do not experience the full extent of our being. Holotropic states of consciousness have the potential to help us recognize that we are not “skin-encapsulated egos”, as British philosopher and writer Alan Watts called it (Watts 1961), but that, in

the last analysis, we are commensurate with the cosmic creative principle itself. Or, to use the statement by Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, French paleontologist and philosopher, “we are not human beings having spiritual experiences, we are spiritual beings having human experiences” (Teilhard de Chardin 1975).

This astonishing idea is not new. In the ancient Indian *Upanishads*, the answer to the question: “*Who am I?*” is “*Tat tvam asi*”. This succinct Sanskrit sentence means literally: “*Thou art That*”, where “*That*” refers to the Godhead. It suggests that we are not “*namarupa*” – name and form (body/ego), but that our *deepest identity* is with a divine spark in our innermost being (*Atman*) which is ultimately identical with the supreme universal principle that creates the universe (*Brahman*). This revelation – the identity of the individual with the divine – is the ultimate secret that lies at the mystical core of all great spiritual traditions. The name for this principle could thus be the Tao, Buddha, Shiva (of Kashmir Shaivism), Cosmic Christ, Pleroma, Allah, and many others. Holotropic experiences have the potential to help us discover our true identity and our cosmic status (Grof 1998). Sometimes this happens in small increments, other times in the form of major breakthroughs.

4 Holotropic states of consciousness and modern psychiatry

Psychedelic research and the development of intensive experiential techniques of psychotherapy in the second half of the twentieth century moved holotropic states from the world of healers of ancient and preliterate cultures into modern psychiatry and psychotherapy. Therapists who were open to these techniques and used them in their practice were able to confirm the extraordinary healing potential of holotropic states and discovered their value as goldmines of revolutionary new information about consciousness, the human psyche, and the nature of reality. I became aware of the remarkable properties of holotropic states in 1956 when I volunteered as a beginning psychiatrist for an experiment with LSD-25. During this experiment, in which the pharmacological effect of LSD was combined with exposure to powerful stroboscopic light (referred to as “driving” or “entraining” of the brainwaves), I had an overwhelming experience of *cosmic consciousness* (Grof 2006).

This experience inspired my lifelong interest in holotropic states and research in this area has become my passion, profession, and vocation. Since that time, most of my clinical and research activities have consisted of systematic exploration of the therapeutic, transformative, heuristic, and evolutionary potential of these states. The half century that I have dedicated to consciousness research has been for me an extraordinary adventure of discovery and self-discovery.

I spent the first few decades conducting psychotherapy with psychedelic substances, initially at the Psychiatric Research Institute in Prague, Czechoslovakia, and then at the Maryland Psychiatric Research Center in Baltimore, Maryland, where I participated in the last surviving U.S. psychedelic research program. Since 1975, my wife Christina and I have worked with *Holotropic Breathwork*, a powerful method of therapy and self-exploration that we jointly developed at the Esalen Institute in Big Sur, California. Over the years, we have also supported many people undergoing spontaneous episodes of non-ordinary states of consciousness – *psychospiritual crises* or “*spiritual emergencies*”, as Christina and I call them (Grof and Grof 1989; Grof and Grof 1991).

In psychedelic therapy, holotropic states are brought about by administering mind-altering substances, such as LSD, psilocybin, mescaline, and tryptamine or amphetamine derivatives. In Holotropic Breathwork, consciousness is changed by a combination of faster breathing, evocative music, and energy-releasing bodywork. In spiritual emergencies, holotropic states occur spontaneously, in the middle of everyday life, and their cause is usually unknown. If they are correctly understood and supported, these episodes have an extraordinary healing, transformative, and even evolutionary potential.

I have also been tangentially involved in many disciplines that are more or less directly related to holotropic states of consciousness. I have spent much time exchanging information with anthropologists and have participated in sacred ceremonies of native cultures

in different parts of the world with and without the ingestion of psychedelic plants, such as peyote, ayahuasca, and Psilocybe mushrooms. This has involved contact with various North American, Mexican, South American, and African shamans and healers. I have also had extensive contact with representatives of various spiritual disciplines, including Vipassana, Zen, and Vajrayana Buddhism, Siddha Yoga, Tantra, and the Christian Benedictine order.

I have also closely followed the development of thanatology, the young discipline studying near-death experiences and the psychological and spiritual aspects of death and dying. In the late 1960s and early 1970s I participated in a large research project studying the effects of psychedelic therapy for individuals dying of cancer. I also have been privileged to know personally and experience some of the great psychics and parapsychologists of our era, pioneers of laboratory consciousness research, and therapists who had developed and practiced powerful forms of experiential therapy that induce holotropic states of consciousness.

My initial encounter with holotropic states was very difficult and challenging, both intellectually and emotionally. In the early years of my laboratory and clinical psychedelic research, I was bombarded daily with experiences and observations, that my medical and psychiatric training had not prepared me for. As a matter of fact, I was experiencing and observing things that were considered impossible in the context of the scientific worldview I had obtained during my medical training. And yet, those supposedly impossi-

ble things were happening all the time. I have described these “*anomalous phenomena*” in my articles and books (Grof 2000, 2006).

5 Psychology of the future

In the late 1990s, I received a phone call from Jane Bunker, my editor at State University New York (SUNY) Press, which had published many of my books. She asked me if I would consider writing a book that would summarize the observations from my research in one volume and would serve as an introduction to my already-published books. She also asked if I could specifically focus on all the experiences and observations from my research that current scientific theories could not explain and suggest the revisions in our thinking that would be necessary to account for these revolutionary findings. This was a tall order, but also a great opportunity. My 70th birthday was rapidly approaching and a new generation of facilitators was conducting our Holotropic Breathwork training all over the world. We needed a manual covering the material that was taught in our training modules. And here was an offer to provide it for us.

The result of this exchange was a book with a deliberately provocative title: *Psychology of the Future*. The radical revisions in our understanding of consciousness and the human psyche in health and disease that I suggested in this work fall into the following categories:

1. **The nature of consciousness and its relationship to matter;**
2. **New cartography of the human psyche;**

3. **Architecture of emotional and psychosomatic disorders;**
4. **Effective therapeutic mechanisms;**
5. **Strategy of psychotherapy and self-exploration;**
6. **The role of spirituality in human life;**
7. **The importance of archetypal astrology for psychology.**

Unless we change our thinking in all these areas, our understanding of psychogenic emotional and psychosomatic disorders and their therapy will remain superficial, unsatisfactory, and incomplete. Psychiatry and psychology will be unable to genuinely comprehend the nature and origin of spirituality and appreciate the important role that it plays in the human psyche and in the universal scheme of things. These revisions are therefore essential for understanding the ritual, spiritual, and religious history of humanity – shamanism, rites of passage, the ancient mysteries of death and rebirth, and the great religions of the world. Without these radical changes in our thinking, potentially healing and heuristically invaluable experiences (“spiritual emergencies”) will be misdiagnosed as psychotic and treated by suppressive medication.

A large array of the experiences and observations from the research of holotropic states will remain mystifying “anomalous phenomena”, events that according to the current scientific paradigms should not occur. Mental health professionals will also have difficulty accepting the therapeutic power of psychedelic substances, mediated by profound experiences that are currently seen as psychotic – as demonstrated by the terms that

mainstream clinicians and academicians use to describe them: experimental psychoses, psychotomimetics, or hallucinogens. This view reflects the inability to recognize the true nature of holotropic experiences as germane expressions of the deep dynamics of the psyche.

In view of my own initial resistance to the bewildering experiences and observations from researching holotropic states, as well as phenomena associated with them (such as astonishing synchronicities), I will not be surprised if the changes I am proposing encounter strong resistance in the academic community. This is understandable, considering the scope and radical nature of the necessary conceptual revisions. Professionals in conventional academic and clinical circles tend to confuse “map and territory” and see current theories concerning consciousness and the human psyche in health and disease to be a definitive and accurate description of reality (Korzybski 1931, Bateson 1972). We are not talking here about a minor patchwork, known as *ad hoc hypotheses*, but a major fundamental overhaul. The resulting conceptual cataclysm would be comparable in its nature and scope to the revolution that physicists had to face in the first three decades of the twentieth century when they were forced to move from Newtonian to quantum-relativistic physics. In fact, the conceptual changes I am proposing would represent a logical completion of the radical changes in our understanding of the material world that have already occurred in physics.

The history of science abounds with examples of individuals who challenged the domi-

nant paradigm. Typically, their ideas were initially dismissed as products of ignorance, poor judgment, bad science, fraud, or even insanity. I am now in the ninth decade of my life, a time when researchers often try to review their professional career and outline the conclusions they have reached. More than half a century of research of holotropic states – my own, as well as that of many of my transpersonally-oriented colleagues – has amassed so much supportive evidence for a radically new understanding of consciousness and of the human psyche that I have decided to describe this new vision in its entirety, fully aware of its controversial nature. The fact that the new findings challenge the most fundamental metaphysical assumptions of materialistic science should not be a sufficient reason for rejecting them. Whether this new vision will ultimately be refuted or accepted should be determined by unbiased future research of holotropic states.

5.1 The nature of consciousness and its relationship to matter

According to the current scientific worldview, consciousness is an *epiphenomenon of material processes*; it allegedly emerges out of the complexity of the neurophysiological processes in the brain. This thesis is presented with great authority as an obvious fact that has been proven beyond any reasonable doubt. But on closer inspection, we discover that it is a basic metaphysical assumption that is not supported by facts and actually contradicts the findings of modern consciousness research.

We have ample clinical and experimental

evidence showing deep correlations between the anatomy, physiology, and biochemistry of the brain, on the one hand, and states of consciousness, on the other. However, none of these findings proves unequivocally that consciousness is actually generated by the brain. Even sophisticated theories based on advanced research of the brain – such as Stuart Hameroff's suggestion that the solution of the problem of consciousness might lie in understanding the quantum process in the microtubules of brain cells on the molecular and supramolecular level (Hameroff 1987) – falls painfully short of bridging the formidable gap between matter and consciousness and illuminating how material processes could generate consciousness.

The origin of consciousness from matter is simply taken for granted as an obvious and self-evident fact, based on the metaphysical assumption of the primacy of matter in the universe. In fact, in the entire history of science, nobody has ever offered a plausible explanation for how consciousness could be generated by material processes, or even suggested a viable approach to the problem. Consider, for example, the book by Francis Crick *The Astonishing Hypothesis: The Scientific Search for the Soul* (Crick 1994); the book's jacket carried a very exciting promise: "Nobel Prize-winning Scientist Explains Consciousness".

Crick's "astonishing hypothesis" was succinctly stated at the beginning of his book: "You, your joys and your sorrows, your memories and your ambitions, your sense of personal identity and free will, are in fact no more than the behavior of a vast assembly of nerve

cells and their associated molecules. Who you are is nothing but a pack of neurons." At the beginning of the book, "to simplify the problem of consciousness", Crick narrows it to the problem of optical perception. He presents impressive experimental evidence showing that visual perception is associated with distinct physiological, biochemical, and electrical processes in the optical system from the retina through the optical tract to the suboccipital cortex. And there the discussion ends as if the problem of consciousness had been satisfactorily solved.

In reality this is where the problem begins. What exactly is capable of transforming biochemical and electric processes in the brain into a conscious experience of a reasonable facsimile of the object we are observing, in full color, and project it into three-dimensional space? The formidable problem of the relationship between *phenomena* – things as we perceive them – and *noumena* – things as they truly are in themselves (*Ding an sich*) was clearly articulated by Immanuel Kant (Kant 1999). Scientists focus their efforts on the aspect of the problem where they can find answers: the material processes in the brain. The much more mysterious problem – how physical processes in the brain generate consciousness – does not receive any attention, because it is incomprehensible and cannot be solved.

The attitude that Western science has adopted in regard to this issue resembles the famous Sufi story. On a dark night, Nasruddin, a satirical Sufi figure, is on his knees under a street lamp. His neighbor sees him and asks: "What are you doing? Are you look-

ing for something?" Nasruddin answers that he is searching for a lost key and the neighbor offers to help. After some time of unsuccessful joint effort, the neighbor becomes confused and feels the need for clarification. He asks: "I don't see anything! Are you sure you lost it here?" Nasruddin shakes his head and points his finger to a dark area outside of the circle illuminated by the lamp and replies: "Not here, over there!" The neighbor is puzzled and inquires further: "So why are we looking for it here and not over there?" Nasruddin explains: "Because it is light here and we can see. Over there it's dark and we would not have a chance!"

Similarly materialistic scientists have systematically avoided the problem of the origin of consciousness, because this riddle cannot be solved within the context of their conceptual framework. The idea that consciousness is a product of the brain is naturally not completely arbitrary. Its proponents usually refer to a vast body of very specific clinical observations from neurology, neurosurgery, neurophysiology, and psychiatry, to support their position.

The evidence for close correlations between the anatomy, neurophysiology, and biochemistry of the brain and consciousness is unquestionable and overwhelming. What is problematic is not the nature of the presented evidence but the conclusions that are drawn from these observations. In formal logic, this type of fallacy represents a *non sequitur* – an argument wherein its conclusion does not follow from its premises. While the experimental data clearly show that consciousness is closely connected with the neu-

rophysiological and biochemical processes in the brain, they have very little bearing on the nature and origin of consciousness.

A simple analogy is the relationship between a TV set and the television program. The situation here is much clearer, since it involves a system that is human-made and its operation is well known. The final reception of the television program – the quality of the picture and of the sound – depends in a very critical way on the proper functioning of the TV set and on the integrity of its components. Malfunctions of its various parts cause very distinct and specific changes of the quality of the program. Some of them lead to distortions of form, color, or sound, others to interference between the channels, etc. Like the neurologist who uses changes in consciousness as a diagnostic tool, a television mechanic can infer from the nature of these anomalies which parts of the set and which specific components are malfunctioning. When the problem is identified, repairing or replacing these elements will correct the distortions.

Since we know the basic principles of the television technology, it is obvious to us that the set simply mediates the program and that it does not generate it. We would laugh at somebody who would try to examine and scrutinize all the transistors, relays, and circuits of the TV set and analyze all its wires in an attempt to figure out how it creates the programs. Even if we carried this misguided effort to the molecular, atomic, or subatomic level, we would have absolutely no clue as to why, at a particular time, a Mickey Mouse cartoon, a Star Trek sequence, or

a Hollywood classic appear on the screen. The close correlation between the functioning of the TV set and the quality of the program does not necessarily mean that the entire secret of the program is in the set itself. Yet this is exactly the kind of conclusion that traditional materialistic science draws from comparable data about the brain and its relation to consciousness.

Ample evidence suggests exactly the opposite, namely that under certain circumstances consciousness can operate independently of its material substrate and can perform functions that reach far beyond the capacities of the brain. This is most clearly illustrated by the existence of *out-of-body experiences* (OBEs), which can occur spontaneously, or in various facilitating situations – shamanic trances, psychedelic sessions, spiritual practice, hypnosis, experiential psychotherapy, and particularly *near-death experiences* (NDEs). In all these situations consciousness can separate from the body and maintain its sensory capacity, while moving freely to various close and remote locations. Veridical OBEs are particularly interesting, because independent verification confirms that the perception of the environment is accurate. In near-death situations, veridical OBEs can occur even in people who are congenitally blind for organic reasons (Ring and Valarino 1998; Ring and Cooper 1999). Many other types of transpersonal phenomena can also mediate accurate information about various aspects of the universe that had not been previously received and recorded in the brain (Grof 2000).

Materialistic scientists have not been able

to produce any convincing evidence that consciousness is a product of the neurophysiological processes in the brain. They have been able to maintain this conviction only by ignoring, misinterpreting, and even ridiculing a vast body of observations indicating that consciousness can exist and function independently of the body and of the physical senses. This evidence comes from parapsychology, anthropology, LSD research, experiential psychotherapy, thanatology, and the study of spontaneously occurring holotropic states of consciousness ("spiritual emergencies"). These disciplines have all amassed impressive data demonstrating clearly that human consciousness is capable of functioning in many ways that the brain, as understood by mainstream science, cannot possibly achieve and that consciousness is a primary and further irreducible aspect of existence – an equal partner of matter or possibly superordinated to it.

5.2 New cartography of the human psyche

Traditional academic psychiatry and psychology use a model of the human psyche that is limited to *postnatal biography* and to the *individual unconscious* described by Sigmund Freud. According to Freud, our psychological history begins after we are born; the newborn is a *tabula rasa*, a clean slate. Our psychological functioning is determined by an interplay between biological instincts and influences that have shaped our life since we came into this world – the quality of nursing, the nature of toilet training, various psychosexual traumas, development of

the superego, our reaction to the *Oedipal triangle*, and conflicts and traumatic events in later life. According to this point of view, our postnatal personal and interpersonal history determine who we become and how we psychologically function.

The Freudian individual unconscious is also essentially a derivative of our postnatal history – a repository of what we have forgotten, rejected as unacceptable, and repressed. This underworld of the psyche (the *id* as Freud called it), is a realm dominated by primitive instinctual forces. To describe the relationship between the conscious psyche and the unconscious Freud used his famous image of the submerged iceberg. In this simile what had been assumed to be the totality of the psyche was only a small part of it, like the portion of the iceberg showing above the surface of the water. Psychoanalysis discovered that a much larger part of the psyche, comparable to the submerged part of the iceberg, is unconscious and, unbeknownst to us, governs our thought processes and behavior.

Later contributions to dynamic psychotherapy added to etiological factors problems in the development of object relationships and interpersonal dynamics in the nuclear family, but shared with Freudian psychoanalysis the exclusive emphasis on postnatal life (Blanck and Blanck 1974, 1979; Sullivan 1953; Satir 1983; Bateson et al. 1956). Who we become and how we psychologically function is determined by what happens to us after we were born. But this model proves to be painfully inadequate when we work with holotropic states of consciousness induced by

psychedelics and various non-drug means, as well as those occurring spontaneously. To account for all the phenomena occurring in these states, we must drastically revise our understanding of the dimensions of the human psyche. Besides the *postnatal biographical level* that it shares with traditional psychology, the new expanded cartography includes two additional large domains.

The first of these domains can be referred to as "*perinatal*", because of its close connection with the trauma of biological birth. This region of the unconscious contains the memories of what the fetus experienced in the consecutive stages of the birth process, including all the emotions and physical sensations involved. These memories form four distinct experiential clusters, each of which is related to one of the stages of childbirth. I have coined for them the term "*basic perinatal matrices*" (BPM I-IV).

BPM I consists of memories of the advanced prenatal state just before the onset of the delivery. BPM II is related to the first stage of the birth process when the uterus contracts, but the cervix is not yet open. BPM III reflects the struggle to be born after the uterine cervix dilates. And finally, BPM IV holds the memory of emerging into the world, the birth itself. The content of these matrices is not limited to fetal memories; each of them also represents a selective opening into the domains of the *historical and archetypal collective unconscious*, which contain motifs of similar experiential quality. Detailed description of the phenomenology and dynamics of perinatal matrices can be found in my various publications (Grof 1975, 2000).

The official position of academic psychiatry is that biological birth is not recorded in memory and does not constitute a psychotrauma. The usual reason for denying the possibility of birth memory is that the cerebral cortex of the newborn is not mature enough to mediate experiencing and recording of this event. More specifically, the cortical neurons are not yet "*myelinated*" – completely covered with protective sheaths of a fatty substance called myelin. Surprisingly, this same argument is not used to deny the existence and importance of memories from the time of nursing, a period that immediately follows birth. The psychological significance of the experiences in the oral period and even bonding – the exchange of looks and physical contact between the mother and child immediately after birth – is generally recognized and acknowledged by mainstream obstetricians, pediatricians, and child psychiatrists (Klaus, Kennell, and Klaus 1995; Kennel and Klaus 1998).

The *myelination argument* makes no sense and is in conflict with scientific evidence of various kinds. For instance, it has been established that memory exists in organisms that do not have a cerebral cortex at all. In 2001, an American neuroscientist of Austrian origin, Erik Kandel, received a Nobel Prize in physiology for his research of memory mechanisms of the sea slug *Aplysia*, an organism incomparably more primitive than the newborn child. At Tufts University Tal Shomrat and Michael Levin, conducted fascinating research into the molecular mechanisms in Planarian flatworms that enable these organisms to regenerate their entire body, including the brain. The Planaria may offer unique opportunity

to study brain regeneration and memory in the same animal. To establish a system for the investigation of the dynamics of memory in a regenerating brain, they developed a computerized system to train flatworms in an environmental familiarization protocol. They showed that worms exhibited environmental familiarization, and that this memory persisted for at least 14 days – long enough for the brain to regenerate. They further showed that trained, decapitated Planaria exhibited evidence of memory retrieval after regenerating a new head model system. The authors propose planaria as a key model species for mechanistic investigations of the encoding of specific memories in biological tissues.

The assertion that the newborn is not aware of being born and is not capable of forming memory of this event is also strongly conflicts with extensive fetal research showing that the fetus is extremely sensitive even in the prenatal stage (Tomatis 1991; Whitwell 1999; Moon, Lagercrantz, and Kuhl 2010). The most likely explanation of this striking logical inconsistency occurring in individuals trained in rigorous scientific thinking is psychological repression and resistance in regard to the terrifying memory of biological birth.

The second transbiographical domain of the new cartography is best called “*transpersonal*” because it includes a rich array of experiences in which consciousness transcends the boundaries of the body/ego and the usual limitations of linear time and three-dimensional space. This transcendence leads to experiential identification with other people,

groups of people, other life forms, and even elements of the inorganic world. Transcendence of time provides experiential access to ancestral, racial, collective, phylogenetic, and karmic memories. Yet another category of transpersonal experiences can take us into the realm of the *collective unconscious* that the Swiss psychiatrist C. G. Jung called “*archetypal*”. This region harbors mythological figures, themes, and realms of all the cultures and ages, even those of which we have no previous intellectual knowledge (Jung 1959).

In its farthest reaches, individual consciousness can identify with the *Universal Mind* or *Cosmic Consciousness*, the creative principle of the universe. Probably the most profound experience available in holotropic states is identification with the *Supracosmic* and *Metacosmic Void*, *Primordial Emptiness* and *Nothingness* that is conscious of itself. The Void has a paradoxical nature; it is a vacuum, in the sense that it is devoid of any concrete forms, but it is also a plenum, since it seems to contain all of creation in a potential form.

The existence and nature of transpersonal experiences violate some of the most basic assumptions of materialistic science. They imply such seemingly absurd notions as relativity and arbitrary nature of all physical boundaries, nonlocal connections in the universe, communication through unknown means and channels, memory without a material substrate, the nonlinearity of time, or consciousness associated with all living organisms, and even inorganic matter. Many transpersonal experiences involve events from both the microcosm and the macrocosm, realms that cannot nor-

mally be reached by unaided human senses, or from historical periods that precede the origin of the solar system, formation of planet earth, appearance of living organisms, development of the nervous system, and emergence of *Homo sapiens*.

Mainstream academicians and physicians adhering to the monistic materialistic worldview have no other choice but to deny the existence and authenticity of transpersonal experiences or relegate them to the category of "anomalous phenomena". However, serious attempts have been made to provide for them a scientific conceptual framework and integrate them into a revolutionary new worldview. In an intellectual *tour de force* and a series of books, the world's foremost system theorist, interdisciplinary scientist, and philosopher, Ervin Laszlo, has explored a wide range of disciplines, including astrophysics, quantum-relativistic physics, biology, and transpersonal psychology (Laszlo 1993, 1999, 2003, 2004a, 2004b). He pointed out a wide range of phenomena, paradoxical observations, and paradigmatic challenges, for which these disciplines have no explanations. Drawing on revolutionary advances of twentieth century's science, he has offered a brilliant solution to the anomalies and paradoxes that currently plague many of its fields. Laszlo achieved this by formulating his connectivity hypothesis, which has as its main cornerstone the existence of what he called the "*psi-field*" and, more recently, renamed the "*Akashic field*" (Laszlo 2003, 2004b).

Laszlo describes it as a subquantum field that is the source of all creation and holds a holographic record of all the events that

have happened in the phenomenal world. He equates this field with the concept of "*quantum vacuum*" (or better "*quantum plenum*") that has emerged from modern physics (Laszlo 2003, 2004ab). Laszlo's connectivity hypothesis provides a scientific explanation for otherwise mysterious transpersonal experiences, such as experiential identification with other people and with representatives of other species, group consciousness, possibility of experiencing episodes from other historical periods and countries including past life experiences, telepathy, remote viewing and other psychic abilities, out-of-body experiences, astral projection, the experience of the *Supracosmic* and *Metacosmic Void*, and others.

An alternative conceptual framework that can account for many of the baffling properties of transpersonal experiences is the process philosophy of the English mathematician, logician, and philosopher Alfred North Whitehead (Whitehead 1978). Whitehead's metaphysical system is of particular interest because it does not grant fundamental metaphysical status to matter but places central focus on experience or mind. According to process philosophy, the basic element of which the universe is made is not an enduring substance, but a moment of experience, called in his terminology "*actual occasion*". The universe is composed of countless discontinuous bursts of experiential activity on all levels of reality, from subatomic particles to human souls. The relevance of Whitehead's philosophy for transpersonal psychology and consciousness research has been explored in the writings of John Buchanan, David Ray Griffin, John Quiring, Leonard Gibson,

and Grant Maxwell (Buchanan 1994, 2001, 2002 and 2005; Griffin 1989, 1996; Quiring 1996; Gibson 1998, 2006, 2010; Maxwell 2011).

Having spent more than half a century studying holotropic states of consciousness, I have no doubt that there exist transpersonal experiences, which are *ontologically real* and are not products of metaphysical speculation, human imagination, or pathological processes in the brain. By the term "*ontologically real*", I refer to a category of experiences which not only possess the subjective sense of reality, but whose contents also seem to reveal something of the nature or essential qualities of being or existence. It would be erroneous to dismiss all transpersonal experiences as products of fantasy, primitive superstition, or manifestations of mental disease, as has so frequently been done.

Anyone attempting to do so would have to offer a plausible explanation why these experiences have in the past been described so consistently by people of various races, cultures, and historical periods. He or she would also have to account for the fact that these experiences continue to emerge in modern populations under such diverse circumstances as sessions with various psychedelic substances, during experiential psychotherapy, in meditation of people involved in systematic spiritual practice, in near-death experiences, and in the course of spontaneous episodes of *psychospiritual crisis*. Detailed discussion of the transpersonal domain, including descriptions and examples of various types of transpersonal experiences can be found in my various publications (Grof 1975,

1987, and 2000).

In view of this vastly expanded model of the psyche, we could now paraphrase Freud's simile of the psyche as an iceberg by saying that everything Freudian analysis has discovered about the psyche represents just the tip of the iceberg showing above the water. Research of holotropic states has made it possible to discover and explore the vast submerged portion of the iceberg, which has escaped the attention of Freud and his followers, with the exception of the remarkable renegades Otto Rank and C. G. Jung. Mythologist Joseph Campbell, known for his incisive Irish humor, used a different metaphor: "Freud was fishing while sitting on a whale."

5.3 The nature, function, and architecture of emotional and psychosomatic disorders

To explain various emotional and psychosomatic disorders that do not have an organic basis ("*psychogenic psychopathology*"), traditional psychiatrists use a superficial model of the psyche limited to postnatal biography and the individual unconscious. This model suggests that these conditions originate in infancy and childhood as a result of various emotional traumas and interpersonal dynamics in the family of origin. There seems to be general agreement among schools of dynamic psychotherapy that the depth and seriousness of these disorders depend on the timing of the original traumatization.

Thus, according to classical psychoanalysis, the origin of alcoholism, narcotic drug addiction, and manic-depressive disorders can be found in the oral period of libidinal

development; obsessive-compulsive neurosis has its roots in the anal stage; phobias and conversion hysteria result from traumas incurred in the phallic phase and at the time of the *Oedipus* and *Electra complex*; and so on (Fenichel 1945). Later developments in psychoanalysis have linked some very deep disorders – autistic and symbiotic infantile psychoses, narcissistic personality, and borderline personality disorders – to disturbances in the early development of object relations (Blanck and Blanck 1974 and 1979). As I mentioned earlier, this does not apply to Rankian and Jungian therapists who understand that the roots of emotional disorders reach deeper into the psyche.

These conclusions are based on observations of therapists who use primarily verbal means. The understanding of psychogenic disorders changes radically when we employ methods involving holotropic states of consciousness that engage levels of the unconscious generally inaccessible to verbal therapy. Initial stages of this work typically uncover relevant traumatic material from early infancy and childhood that is meaningfully related to emotional and psychosomatic problems and appears to be their source. However, when the process of uncovering continues, deeper layers of the unconscious unfold and we find additional roots of the same problems on the perinatal and transpersonal levels of the psyche.

Various ways of working with holotropic states – such as psychedelic therapy, Holotropic Breathwork, rebirthing, and primal therapy, or psychotherapy with people experiencing spontaneous psychospiritual crises

– have shown that emotional and psychosomatic problems cannot be adequately explained as originating exclusively in postnatal psychotraumatic events. In my experience, the unconscious material associated with them typically forms multilevel dynamic constellations for which I have coined the term “*systems of condensed experience*” or “*COEX systems*” (Grof 1975, 2000).

A typical COEX system consists of many layers of unconscious material that share similar emotions or physical sensations; the contributions to a COEX system come from different levels of the psyche. The more superficial and accessible layers contain memories of emotional or physical traumas from infancy, childhood, and later life. On a deeper level, each COEX system is typically connected to a certain aspect of the memory of birth – a specific BPM; the choice of this matrix depends on the nature of the emotional and physical feelings involved. For example, if the theme of the COEX system is victimization, this would be BPM II; if it is fight against a powerful adversary or sexual abuse, the connection would be to BPM III. For a positive COEX comprising memories of deeply satisfying and fulfilling situations it would be BPM I or BPM IV, and so on.

The deepest roots of COEX systems underlying emotional and psychosomatic disorders reach into the transpersonal domain of the psyche. They have the form of ancestral, racial, collective, and phylogenetic memories, experiences that seem to be coming from other lifetimes (“*past life memories*”), and various archetypal motifs. Thus, for example, therapeutic work on anger and dispo-

sition to violence can, at a certain point, take the form of experiential identification with a tiger or a black panther. Or the deepest root of serious antisocial behavior can be a demonic archetype, while the final resolution of a phobia can come in the form of reliving and integrating of a past life experience, and so on.

The overall architecture of the COEX systems can best be shown by a clinical example. A person suffering from psychogenic asthma might discover in serial breathwork sessions a powerful COEX system underlying this disorder. The biographical part of this constellation might consist of a memory of near drowning at the age of seven, memories of being repeatedly strangled by an older brother between the ages of three and four, and a memory of severe choking during whooping cough or diphtheria at age two. The perinatal contribution to this COEX might be, for example, suffocation experienced during birth because of strangulation by the umbilical cord twisted around the neck. A typical transpersonal root of this breathing disorder might be an experience of being hanged or strangled in what seems to be a previous lifetime. Detailed discussion of COEX systems and their role in various forms of psychopathology, including additional examples, are available in several earlier of my publications (Grof 1975, 1987, and 2000).

5.4 Effective therapeutic mechanisms

Traditional psychotherapy recognizes only therapeutic mechanisms that operate on the level of the biographical material, such as weakening of the psychological defense

mechanisms, remembering forgotten or repressed traumatic events, reconstructing the past from dreams or neurotic symptoms, attaining intellectual and emotional insights, analyzing of transference, and obtaining corrective experience in interpersonal relations. Psychotherapy involving holotropic states of consciousness offers many additional highly effective mechanisms of healing and personality transformation that become available when experiential regression reaches the perinatal and transpersonal levels. Such mechanisms include actual reliving of traumatic memories from infancy, childhood, biological birth, and prenatal life; past life memories; emergence of archetypal material; experiences of cosmic unity; and others.

This therapeutic dynamics can be illustrated by the story of a participant at one of our workshops at Esalen Institute in Big Sur, California, whom I will call Norbert. At the beginning of the workshop, Norbert complained about severe chronic pain in his left shoulder and pectoral muscle that had caused him great suffering and made his life miserable. Repeated medical examinations, including X-rays, had not detected any organic basis for his problem and all therapeutic attempts had remained unsuccessful. Serial Procaine injections had brought only brief transient relief for the duration of the pharmacological effect of the drug.

Norbert's breathwork session was long and very dramatic. In the sharing group following it, he described that there were three different layers in his experience, all of them related to the pain in his shoulder and associated with choking. On the most superficial

level, he relived a frightening situation from his childhood in which he almost lost his life. When he was about seven years old, he and his friends were digging a tunnel on a sandy ocean beach. When the tunnel was finished, Norbert crawled inside to explore it. As the other children jumped around, the tunnel collapsed and buried him alive. He almost choked to death before he was rescued by the adults who arrived in response to the children's alarming screams.

When the breathwork experience deepened, Norbert relived a violent and terrifying episode that took him back to the memory of his biological birth. His delivery was very difficult, since his shoulder was stuck for an extended period of time behind the pubic bone of his mother. This episode shared with the previous one the combination of choking and severe pain in the left shoulder.

In the last part of the session, the experience changed dramatically. Norbert started seeing military uniforms and horses and recognized that he was involved in a fierce battle. He was even able to identify it as one of the battles in Cromwell's England. At one point, he felt a sharp pain in his left shoulder and realized that it had been pierced by a lance. He fell off the horse and experienced himself as being trampled by the other horses running over his body and crushing his chest. His broken rib cage caused him agonizing pain, and he was choking on blood, which was filling his lungs.

After a period of extreme suffering, Norbert's consciousness separated from his dying body, soared high above the battlefield, and observed the scene from a bird's eye

view. Following the death of the severely wounded soldier, whom he recognized as himself in a previous incarnation, Norbert's consciousness returned to the present time and reconnected with his body, which was now pain-free for the first time after many years of agony. The relief from pain brought about by these experiences turned out to be permanent.

5.5 Strategy of psychotherapy and self-exploration

The most astonishing aspect of modern psychotherapy is the number of competing schools with vast differences of opinion and lack of agreement concerning the most fundamental issues. What are the dimensions of the human psyche and what are its most important motivating forces? Why do symptoms develop and what do they mean? Which issues that the client brings into therapy are central and which are less relevant? What techniques and strategies should be used to correct or improve the emotional, psychosomatic, and interpersonal functioning of the clients? There are as many answers to these questions as there are schools of psychotherapy.

The goal of traditional dynamic psychotherapies is to reach intellectual understanding of the human psyche, in general, and that of a specific client, in particular, and then use this knowledge to develop an effective therapeutic technique and strategy. An important tool in many modern psychotherapies is "*interpretation*", by which the therapist reveals to the client the "true" or "real" meaning of his or her thoughts, emotions, and behav-

ior. This method is widely used in analyzing dreams, neurotic symptoms, behavior, and even seemingly trivial everyday actions, such as slips of the tongue or other small errors, Freud's *Fehlleistungen* (Freud 1960a). Another area in which interpretations are commonly applied is interpersonal dynamics, including transference of various unconscious feelings and attitudes on the therapist.

Therapists spend much effort trying to determine what is the most fitting interpretation in a given situation and what is the appropriate timing of this interpretation. Even an interpretation that is "correct" in terms of its content can allegedly be useless or harmful for the patient if it is offered prematurely, before the client is ready for it. A serious flaw of this approach to psychotherapy is that individual therapists, especially those who belong to diverse schools, attribute very different value to the same psychological content or behavior and offer for it diverse and even contradictory interpretations. I will illustrate this by a humorous example from my own psychoanalytic training.

As a beginning psychiatrist, I was in training analysis that involved three sessions a week for a period of over seven years; my analyst was the Nestor of Czechoslovakian psychoanalysis and president of the Czechoslovakian Psychoanalytic Association, Dr. Theodor Dosužkov. At the time of my analysis, Dr. Dosužkov was in his late sixties and it was known among his analysands – all young psychiatrists – that he had a tendency to occasionally doze-off during analytic hours. Dr. Dosužkov's habit was a favorite target of his students' jokes.

In addition to individual psychoanalytic training sessions, Dr. Dosužkov also conducted seminars where his students shared reviews of books and articles, discussed case histories, and could ask questions about the theory and practice of psychoanalysis. In one of these seminars, a participant asked a "purely theoretical" question: "What happens if during analysis the psychoanalyst falls asleep? If the client continues free-associating, does therapy continue? Is the process interrupted? Should the client get refunded for that time, since money is such an important vehicle in Freudian analysis?"

Dr. Dosužkov could not deny that such a situation could occur in psychoanalytic sessions. He was aware that the analysands knew about his foible and he had to come up with an answer. "This can happen," he said. "Sometimes, you are tired and sleepy – you did not sleep well the night before, you are recovering from a flu, or are physically exhausted. But if you have been in this business a long time, you develop a kind of sixth sense; you fall asleep only when the stuff that is coming up is irrelevant. When the client says something really important, you wake up and you are right there!"

Dr. Dosužkov was also a great admirer of I. P. Pavlov, a Russian Nobel Prize-winning physiologist who derived his knowledge of the brain from his experiments with dogs. Pavlov wrote much about the inhibition of the cerebral cortex that occurs during sleep or hypnosis; he described that occasionally there could be a "waking point" in the inhibited brain cortex. His favorite example was a mother who can sleep through heavy noise.

es, but awakens immediately when her own child is moaning. "It is just like the situation of the mother Pavlov wrote about," explained Dr. Dosužkov, "with enough experience, you will be able to maintain connection with your client even when you fall asleep."

But Dr. Dosužkov's explanation was clearly flawed. What a therapist considers relevant in the client's narrative reflects his or her training and personal bias. An Adlerian, Rankian, or Jungian therapist would have awakened at different times of the session – each at the moment when my narrative would bring something that, according to their training and judgment, was "relevant".

Because of the great conceptual differences between the schools of depth psychology, the question naturally arises as to which ones offer a more correct understanding of the human psyche in health and disease. If it were true that correct and properly timed interpretations are a significant factor in psychotherapy, one would expect to find great differences in the therapeutic success achieved by various schools. Their therapeutic results could be mapped on a Gaussian curve; therapists of the school with the most accurate understanding of the psyche and, therefore, most fitting interpretations would have the best results, while those belonging to orientations with less accurate conceptual frameworks would be distributed on the descending parts of the curve.

I do not know of any scientific studies that show clear superiority of some schools of psychotherapy over others, as measured by outcomes. If anything, the differences are found within the schools rather than between them

– and such differences result from variations in the skills of the therapists within any given school. In each school there are better therapists and worse therapists. And, very likely, the therapeutic results have very little to do with what the therapists think they are doing, such as the accuracy and good timing of interpretations, correct analysis of transference, tactical use of silence, and other specific interventions. Successful therapy probably depends on factors that are unrelated to intellectual brilliance and are difficult to describe in scientific language – the "quality of the human encounter" between therapists and clients, the feeling of the clients that they are unconditionally accepted by another human being, frequently for the first time in their life, because they have not experienced it in their own family of origin. Additional factors could be the amount of time and quality of attention that the clients give to their unconscious processes or the strength of hope and expectations that the client feels during the therapeutic process.

In their remarkable comprehensive books Jerome Frank, Julia Frank, and Renato Alarcón discussed the challenges associated with the attempts to measure the effects of psychotherapy and to contrast schools and related theories with one another (Frank and Frank 1993; Alarcón and Frank 2011). They showed clearly the difficult methodological problems that these endeavors encounter. Meta-analyses have produced some evidence that psychotherapy can have positive effects, but failed to detect significant differences between the therapeutic success of various competing schools of psychotherapy or of experienced therapists and novices.

Frank and Frank concluded that the outcomes of therapy are generally better than being on the waiting list, but outcomes from different schools of psychotherapy are remarkably similar, despite professed differences in the theories and techniques. In their summary of the proceedings of a conference on research in psychotherapy, Rubinstein and Parloff offered the following facetious characterization of the status of the field of psychotherapy: "Psychotherapy is an undefined technique applied to unspecified problems, with unpredictable outcome. For this technique, we recommend rigorous training." (Rubinstein and Parloff 1959)

Given this disconcerting lack of agreement on the theory and practice of psychotherapy, a client with an emotional or psychosomatic disorder might just as well choose a psychotherapeutic school by flipping a coin. With each school comes a different explanation of the problem he or she brought into therapy and a different technique is offered as the method of choice to overcome it. Similarly, when a beginning therapist seeking training chooses a particular therapeutic school, that choice says more about the personality of the applicant than the value of the school.

The problem with many of the psychotherapeutic schools is that they correctly describe the dynamics on a certain level of the psyche but lack the understanding of the phenomena from other levels and try to interpret them in terms of their own limited conceptual framework. For example, Freud's system was limited to postnatal biography and the individual unconscious. He was not aware of the paramount impor-

tance of birth, except for a short period when he thought birth anxiety might be the template for all future anxieties (Freud 1959). Freud also did not accept the existence of the collective unconscious and tried to interpret archetypal/mythological and parapsychological phenomena in terms of his narrow biological/biographical model. Otto Rank, who discovered the psychological importance of the trauma of birth, offered explanations of mythological and spiritual/religious motifs that described them as derivatives of perinatal dynamics. C. G. Jung, who discovered and described the vast domains of the historical and archetypal collective unconscious, was unable to see the psychological importance of the birth trauma. In an interview with Dr. Richard I. Evans, he laughingly dismissed Otto Rank's theory: "Oh, birth is not a trauma, it is a fact; everybody is born." (Jung 1957a)

An effective psychotherapeutic system has to recognize and respect all levels of the psyche. The content that is explored and processed, as it unfolds from session to session, is determined by the client's own psychological process and unconscious dynamics. The therapist must have a broad enough conceptual framework to be able to accompany clients to any level of their unconscious psyche – biographical, perinatal, and/or transpersonal and support their respective experiences (Vaughan 1993).

Therapy using the healing potential of holotropic states of consciousness can help us avoid the problem that plagues verbal techniques of psychotherapy: to determine what in the client's narrative is relevant and choose

the “correct” interpretation. The alternative that this approach offers actually confirms some ideas about the therapeutic process first outlined by C. G. Jung. According to Jung, it is impossible to derive an effective psychotherapeutic technique from a purely intellectual understanding of the psyche. Jung realized in his later years that the psyche is not a product of the brain and is not contained in the skull. He started seeing it as the creative and generative principle of the cosmos (*anima mundi*) that permeates all of existence; the individual psyche of each of us is teased out of this unfathomable cosmic matrix. The boundaries between the *anima mundi* and the individual psyche are not absolute; they are permeable and can be transcended in holotropic states. The intellect is a partial function of the psyche that can help us orient ourselves in everyday situations; however, in and of itself, the intellect cannot fathom the deepest mysteries of existence and comprehend and manipulate the psyche.

Victor Hugo says it beautifully in *Les Misérables*: “There is one spectacle grander than the sea, that is the sky; there is one spectacle grander than the heavens; that is the interior of the soul.” Jung realized that the psyche is a profound mystery and approached it with great respect. He saw it as infinitely creative and knew that it was not possible to describe it by a set of formulas that can then be used to correct the psychological processes of the clients. He suggested an alternative strategy for therapy, one that differed significantly from approaches based on intellectual constructs and external interventions.

What a psychotherapist can do, according

to Jung, is create a supportive environment in which *psychospiritual transformation* can occur. This container can be compared to the hermetic vessel that makes alchemical processes possible. The next step is to offer a method that mediates contact between the conscious ego and a higher aspect of the client, the Self. One of Jung’s tools for this purpose was “*active imagination*”, involving continuation of a dream on the analyst’s couch and its analysis *in statu nascendi* (von Franz 1997), rather than retrospective analysis of the dream from memory. This was different from Freud’s interpretation of dreams from memories, sometimes months or even years old.

In Jung’s own words, “[a]ctive imagination is a process of consciously dialoguing with our unconscious for the production of those contents of the unconscious which lie, as it were, immediately below the threshold of consciousness and, when intensified, are the most likely to erupt spontaneously into the conscious mind.” (Jung 1981) In this kind of work, healing is not the result of brilliant insights and interpretations of the therapist; rather, the therapeutic process is guided from within the client’s psyche. The communication between the ego and the Self occurs primarily by means of symbolic language. In Jung’s understanding, the Self is the *central archetype* in the collective unconscious and its function is to lead the individual toward order, organization, and wholeness. Jung referred to this movement toward highest unity as the “*individuation process*”.

The use of holotropic states for therapy and self-exploration essentially confirms

Jung's perspective and follows the same strategy. The facilitators create a protective and supportive environment and help the clients enter a holotropic state. Once that occurs, the healing process is guided from within by the clients' own inner healing intelligence and the task of the facilitators is to support what is happening. This process automatically activates unconscious material with strong emotional charge that is close enough to consciousness to be available for processing on the day of the session.

In holotropic states, the psyche and the body manifest their capacity to function together as an integral self-organizing and self-healing system. The therapists and facilitators are thus spared the hopeless task of trying to determine what in the client's process is "relevant" and what is merely tangential. They simply support whatever is spontaneously emerging from moment to moment, trusting that the process is guided from within the client by an intelligence surpassing the intellectual understanding, which can be obtained by professional training in any of the schools of psychotherapy. Clients and participants in workshops and training might be using terms like COEX systems, BPMs, archetypes, and so on, but this reflects their direct experience of what has spontaneously emerged and not the interpretations of the facilitators.

5.6 The role of spirituality in human life

The leading philosophy of Western science has been monistic materialism. Various scientific disciplines have described the history of the universe as the history of developing matter and they accept as real only what can

be measured and weighed. Life, consciousness, and intelligence are then seen as more or less accidental side-products of material processes. Physicists, biologists, and chemists recognize the existence of dimensions of reality that are not accessible to our senses – but only those that are physical in nature and can be revealed and explored by using various extensions of our senses, such as microscopes, telescopes, and specially designed recording devices, or laboratory experiments.

This kind of universe has no place for any kind of spirituality. The existence of God, the concept of invisible dimensions of reality inhabited by nonmaterial beings, the possibility of survival of consciousness after death, and the concept of *reincarnation* and *karma* are relegated to fairy tale books and handbooks of psychopathology. From a psychiatric perspective taking such phenomena seriously implies ignorance, unfamiliarity with the discoveries of materialistic science, superstition, and primitive magical thinking. If intelligent persons believe in God or Goddess, they simply have not freed themselves from the infantile images of their parents as omnipotent beings and project them into Heaven or the Beyond. And direct experiences of spiritual realities, including encounters with mythological beings and visits to archetypal realms, are considered manifestations of serious mental diseases – *psychoses*.

The study of holotropic states has thrown new light on the problem of spirituality and religion. Key to this understanding is the discovery that in these states it is pos-

sible to encounter a rich array of experiences very similar to those that inspired the great religions of the world – visions of God and various divine and demonic beings, encounters with discarnate entities, episodes of *psychospiritual death and rebirth*, visits to Heaven and Hell, past life experiences, and many others. Modern research has shown beyond any doubt that these experiences are not products of fantasy or pathological processes afflicting the brain, but manifestations of archetypal material from the collective unconscious, and thus germane and essential constituents of the human psyche. Although these mythic elements are accessed intrapsychically in a process of experiential self-exploration and introspection, they are ontologically real, have objective existence. To distinguish transpersonal experiences from imaginary products of individual human fantasy or psychopathology, Jungians refer to this domain as “*imaginal*”.

French scholar, philosopher, and mystic Henri Corbin, who first used the term *mundus imaginalis*, was inspired for this concept by his study of Islamic mystical literature (Corbin 2000). Islamic theologians call the imaginal world – where everything existing in the sensory world has its analogue – *alam a mithal*, or the “*eighth climate*”, to distinguish it from the “*seven climates*”, or regions of traditional Islamic geography. The imaginal world possesses spatial and temporal dimensions, forms and colors, but these are not perceptible to our senses as properties of physical objects. Yet this realm is in every respect as fully ontologically real as the material world perceived by our sensory organs and experi-

ences of it can be verified by consensual validation by other people. The ontological reality of transpersonal experiences and events is also supported by theories that recognize and emphasize their participatory nature (Ferrer 2002; Tarnas 1991 and 2006).

In view of these observations, the fierce battle that religion and science have fought over the last several centuries now appears ludicrous and completely unnecessary. Genuine science and authentic religion do not compete for the same territory; they represent two approaches to existence, which are complementary, not competitive. Science studies phenomena in the material world, the realm of the measurable and weighable, whereas genuine spirituality and true religion draw their inspiration from experiential knowledge of the imaginal world as it manifests in holotropic states of consciousness.

The conflict that seems to exist between religion and science reflects fundamental misunderstanding of both. As Ken Wilber has pointed out, there cannot possibly be a conflict between science and religion, if both of these fields are properly understood and practiced. When conflict seems to occur, we are likely dealing with “*bogus science*” and “*bogus religion*” (Wilber 1982). The apparent incompatibility is due to the fact that either side seriously misunderstands the other’s position and very likely represents also a dubious version of its own discipline.

The only scientific endeavor capable of making any relevant and valid judgments about spiritual matters is consciousness research studying holotropic states, since truly informed opinion in this regard requires inti-

mate knowledge of the imaginal realm. In his ground-breaking essay, *Heaven and Hell*, Aldous Huxley suggested that such concepts as Hell and Heaven represent intrapsychic realities experienced in a very convincing way during non-ordinary states of consciousness induced by psychedelic substances, such as LSD and mescaline, or various powerful non-drug techniques (Huxley 1959). The seeming conflict between science and religion is based on the erroneous belief that these abodes of the Beyond are located in the physical universe – Heaven in the interstellar space, Paradise somewhere in a hidden area on the surface of our planet, and Hell in the interior of the earth.

Astronomers have developed and used extremely sophisticated devices, such as the Hubble Space Telescope, to carefully explore and map the entire vault of heaven. Results of these efforts, which have of course failed to find God and heaven replete with harp-playing angels and saints, have been taken as proof that such spiritual realities do not exist. Similarly, in cataloguing and mapping every acre of the planetary surface, explorers and geographers have found many areas of extraordinary natural beauty, but none of them matched the descriptions of Paradises found in the spiritual scriptures of various religions. Geologists have discovered that the core of our planet consists of layers of solid and molten nickel and iron and that its temperature exceeds that of the sun's surface – hardly a very plausible location for the caves of Satan.

Meanwhile, modern studies of holotropic states have brought strong supportive evi-

dence for Huxley's insights. They have shown that Heaven, Paradise, and Hell are ontologically real and represent distinct and important states of consciousness that all human beings can experience under certain circumstances. Celestial, paradisaean, and infernal visions are inherent aspects of the experiential spectrum of psychedelic inner journeys, near-death states, mystical experiences, as well as shamanic initiatory crises and other types of spiritual emergencies. Patients often tell their psychiatrists about experiences of God, Heaven, Hell, archetypal divine and demonic beings, and about psychospiritual death and rebirth. However, because of their inadequate superficial model of the psyche, psychiatrists dismiss these experiences as manifestations of mental disease caused by pathological processes of unknown etiology. They do not realize that matrices for these experiences exist in deep recesses of the collective unconscious.

An astonishing aspect of transpersonal experiences occurring in holotropic states of various kinds is that their content can be drawn from the mythologies of any culture of the world, including those of which the individual has no intellectual knowledge. C. G. Jung discovered this extraordinary fact when he studied the mythological motifs occurring in the dreams and psychotic experiences of his patients. On the basis of his observations, he realized that the human psyche has access not only to the Freudian individual unconscious, but also to the collective unconscious, which is a repository of the entire cultural heritage of humanity (Jung 1956, 1959). Knowledge of comparative mythology is thus more than a matter of personal interest or

an academic exercise. It is a very important and useful guide for individuals involved in experiential therapy and self-exploration and an indispensable tool for those who support and accompany them on their journeys (Grof 2006).

The experiences originating on deeper levels of the psyche, in the collective unconscious, have a certain quality that Jung referred to as "*numinosity*". The word "*numinous*" – first used by Rudolf Otto – is relatively new and neutral and thus preferable to other similar expressions, such as *religious*, *mystical*, *magical*, *holy*, or *sacred*, which have often been used in problematic contexts and are easily misleading. The term *numinosity* applied to transpersonal experiences describes direct perception of their extraordinary nature which Otto described with the terms *mysterium tremendum et fascinans* and *wholly other* – something that cannot usually be experienced in everyday states of consciousness. They convey a very convincing sense that they belong to a higher order of reality, to a realm, which is sacred.

In view of the ontological reality of the imaginal realm, spirituality is a very important and natural dimension of the human psyche and spiritual quest is a legitimate and fully justified human endeavor. It must be emphasized that this applies to genuine spirituality based on personal experience and does not provide support for ideologies and dogmas of organized religions. To prevent the misunderstanding and confusion that have compromised many similar discussions in the past, a clear distinction must be made between spirituality and religion.

Spirituality involves a special kind of relationship between the individual and the cosmos and is essentially a personal affair. By comparison, organized religion is institutionalized group activity that takes place in a designated location, a temple or a church, and involves a system of appointed officials who may or may not have had personal experiences of spiritual realities themselves. Once a religion becomes organized, it often loses the connection with its spiritual source and devolves into a secular institution that exploits human spiritual needs without satisfying them.

Organized religions tend to create hierarchical systems focusing on the pursuit of power, control, politics, money, possessions, and other worldly concerns. Under these circumstances, religious hierarchy tends to dislike and discourage direct spiritual experiences in its members, because they foster independence and cannot be effectively controlled. In such cases, genuine spiritual life continues only in the mystical branches, monastic orders, and ecstatic sects of the religions involved.

People who have experiences of the immanent or transcendent divine open up to the spirituality found in the mystical branches of the great religions of the world or in their monastic orders, not necessarily in their mainstream organizations. A profound mystical experience tends to dissolve the boundaries between religions and reveals deep connections between them, while the dogmatism of organized religions tends to emphasize differences between various creeds and engender antagonism and hostility.

There is no doubt that the dogmas of orga-

nized religions – when interpreted literally – are generally in fundamental conflict with science, whether this science uses the mechanistic-materialistic model or is anchored in the emerging paradigm. However, the situation changes considerably when we examine authentic mysticism based on genuine spiritual experiences. The great mystical traditions have amassed extensive knowledge about human consciousness and about the spiritual realms in a manner that is similar to the critical approach used by scientists in acquiring knowledge about the material world. This includes methodologies for inducing transpersonal experiences, systematic collection of data, and intersubjective validation.

Like any other aspect of reality, spiritual experiences can be subjected to careful open-minded scientific research. Only such unbiased and rigorous study of transpersonal phenomena and of the challenges they present to materialistic understanding of the world can answer the critical question about the ontological status of mystical experiences: Can they reveal deep truth about some basic aspects of existence, as maintained by various systems of perennial philosophy and transpersonal psychology, or are they products of superstition, fantasy, or mental disease, as Western materialistic science sees them?

Mainstream psychiatry does not distinguish between a mystical experience and a psychotic experience and sees both as manifestations of mental disease. In its sweeping rejection of religion, psychiatry also does not differentiate primitive folk beliefs and

the fundamentalist literal interpretations of religious scriptures from sophisticated mystical traditions or the great Eastern spiritual philosophies based on centuries of systematic introspective exploration of the psyche. Modern consciousness research has brought convincing evidence for the objective existence of the imaginal realm and has thus validated the main metaphysical assumptions of the mystical world view, the Eastern spiritual philosophies, and even certain beliefs of indigenous cultures.

5.7 The importance of archetypal astrology for psychology

The greatest surprise I experienced during more than 50 years of consciousness research has been to discover the extraordinary predictive power of archetypal astrology. Because of my extensive scientific training, I was initially extremely skeptical about astrology. The idea that planets and stars could have anything to do with states of consciousness, let alone events in the world, seemed too absurd and preposterous to even consider. It took years and thousands of convincing observations for me to accept this possibility – a shift that required nothing less than a radical revision of my basic metaphysical assumptions about the nature of reality. Given the controversy that surrounds this issue, I would not have even discussed astrology in this presentation, had Richard Tarnas not published three remarkable books based on his meticulous ground-breaking research: *The Passion of the Western Mind*, *Prometheus the Awakener*, and *Cosmos and Psyche* (Tarnas 1991, 1995,

and 2006).

Over the last 30 years, Rick and I have jointly explored astrological correlations of holotropic states. My main task has been to collect interesting clinical observations from psychedelic sessions, Holotropic Breathwork workshops and training, mystical experiences, spiritual emergencies, and psychotic breaks. Rick's main focus has been on astrological aspects of holotropic states of consciousness. This cooperation has yielded convincing evidence for systematic correlations between the nature, timing, and content of holotropic states of consciousness and planetary transits of the individuals involved.

The first indication that some extraordinary connections might exist between astrology and my research of holotropic states was Rick's realization that my description of the phenomenology of the four basic perinatal matrices (BPMs), experiential patterns associated with the stages of biological birth, showed astonishing similarity to the four archetypes that astrologers link to the four outer planets of the solar system: BPM I to Neptune, BPM II to Saturn, BPM III to Pluto, and BPM IV to Uranus. I must emphasize that my description of the phenomenology of the BPMs was based on clinical observations made quite independently many years before I knew anything about astrology.

Even more astonishing was the discovery that in holotropic states the experiential confrontation with these matrices regularly occurs when the individuals involved have important transits of the corresponding planets. Over the years, we have been able to confirm this fact by thousands of specific observa-

tions and discover further astrological correlations for many other aspects of holotropic states. Because of these surprisingly precise correlations, astrology – particularly transit astrology – has turned out to be an invaluable instrument for consciousness research.

This is a vast and extremely important topic and I cannot do it justice in the context of this paper. Interested readers will find more information in my two articles on holotropic states and archetypal astrology (Grof 2009, 2012), but adequate discussion of these remarkable findings will require a separate volume to be written by a professional astrologer. But I have seen enough evidence in the last 30 years to say at this point a few words concerning my present understanding of the relationship between the timing and nature of holotropic states, spontaneous or induced, and transit astrology.

We have repeatedly seen that the experiences of individuals who enter holotropic states of consciousness seem to be attuned to and informed by the archetypal fields of the planets forming significant transits to their natal charts at this particular time. This selectively activates the COEX system having content with the corresponding archetypal qualities. This COEX then governs the inner experiences, as well as the perception of the external environment. The emerging unconscious material consists of biographical, perinatal, and transpersonal elements carrying these archetypal characteristics, often combined in very creative ways. The depth and intensity of this process depend on the power of the archetypal energies involved and on the number of previous experiences with holotropic

states.

While I understand that this brief summary will not have much impact on readers with no previous knowledge of astrology, I hope that it might inspire experienced astrologers to conduct their own research to verify or disprove these observations. We are currently experiencing an extraordinary renaissance of psychedelic research, with several major US universities conducting new studies. Holotropic Breathwork workshops are available in many countries of the world, and spontaneous episodes of holotropic states abound. Those readers interested in verifying or disproving the conclusions made in this paper would thus have ample research material available.

In my opinion, archetypal astrology is the long-sought Rosetta stone of consciousness research. It provides a key for understanding the nature and content of present, past, and future holotropic states, both spontaneous and induced. However, it is important to emphasize that the astrological predictions, while extraordinarily accurate, are archetypally predictive and not concretely predictive. One of the striking properties of the archetypes exemplified by Richard Tarnas' pioneering research is their complex multivalence. Each archetype and archetypal combination has a rich spectrum of meanings, while at the same time remaining true to its own specific nature. For example, although Saturn and Neptune each have a wide array of meanings, an experienced astrologer would never confuse any essential elements associated with one of these archetypes with those of the other.

The conceptual revisions outlined in this paper – based on my conclusions from more than 50 years of research – bring theoretical clarity to the world of depth psychology and help integrate the diverse positions of its competing schools. They also offer a radically different alternative to the confusing multiplicity of psychotherapeutic techniques employed by these schools, namely the self-healing and self-organizing intelligence of the client's psyche. When the paradigm shift currently occurring in Western science is successfully completed, responsible work with holotropic states incorporating archetypal astrology as a guide might emerge as one of the most promising trends in psychiatry, psychology, and psychotherapy.

When academic circles finally accept the basic tenets of transpersonal psychology, there will be no need for transpersonal psychology as a separate discipline. Since extrasensory access to new information can happen in connection with any category of transpersonal experiences, there will also be no need for parapsychology – a special discipline focusing on a small selection of phenomena where ESP occurs, such as telepathy, clairvoyance, precognition, psychometry, or remote viewing. The psychology of the future would study the human psyche in its totality and with all its dimensions, infinitely larger than previously assumed and with more extraordinary capacities.

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About the author

Stanislav Grof M.D., Ph.D. (1931) is a psychiatrist and a pioneering researcher into the use of non-ordinary states of consciousness for purposes of exploring, healing, and obtaining insights into the human psyche. He is one of the founders of transpersonal psychology. In 2007 Stanislav Grof received the VISION 97 award granted by the Foundation of Dagmar and Václav Havel in Prague.

SOPHIOLOGY AS AN EXAMPLE OF INTEGRAL SCIENCE AND EDUCATION IN THE SLAVONIC TRADITION

Emil Páleš

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ABSTRACT

Several thinkers among the Slavs and in the Orthodox East have been led by the vision of Sophia – integral wisdom. Sophiology is an effort to integrate different sources of knowledge: revelation, reason and sensory experience. Its intention is to overcome the split among the psychic components of the human personality, which is echoed in the split among social processes and institutions. Such effort is of importance for the education of independent and morally responsible (wo)men and for the renewal of society's weakened fundamental values.

Sophiology's basic intuition is the unity of creation; nature and society are shaped by the same beings or principles that are manifested and also operate within the human soul. Thanks to this, one can understand the external world by drawing on one's inner experience and vice versa, and give meaning to things by means of all-pervading analogies. This epistemological presupposition has been all but abandoned recently as a relic of a romantic or even older medieval way of thinking. In Slovakia, this has been reflected in the argument within the Štúrovci group concerning the principle of *spiritual vision*, which played a vital role in its *Slavonic science* project.

We shall demonstrate that knowledge of this kind is still possible. It is possible, for example, to understand and effectively predict cultural epochs in history from the sequence and contents of psychic configurations during the biographical development of an individual. Introspective observation of archetypes sheds light on the evolution of new species, which appear to be a somatization of these archetypes. Architecture can be derived

from the shapes of the human body, specifically those organs associated with the qualities of the soul that prevail in a given historical period. The inwardly perceived effects of some metals correspond to their outward qualities. Therefore, developmental psychology and history, history and paleontology, architecture and anatomy, psychology and chemistry can be at least partly integrated.

The metaphysical basis of these connections and thus also the limits of the applicability of this approach are still controversial. It does provide, however, a number of advantages from a pedagogical point of view. Awareness of the links between nature, history and the intimate processes of the human psyche restores lost meaning to things, consolidates the consciousness of objective values and encourages responsibility by following the causation of things into the free core of the human personality. Synthetic knowledge also correlates significantly with creativity and independent judgment. By embedding knowledge in interconnections and ridding it of emotional neutrality it works in accordance with the natural functioning of memory and relieves it of the tiresome cramming of knowledge.

1 Ethics within the edifice of knowledge

Knowledge once resembled a cathedral; every piece of knowledge was a stone hewn into a single great edifice, attuned to a coherent style and crowned by a common purpose. Contemporary knowledge resembles a temple devoid of the keystone of the central vault. It disintegrated into a number of diverse and incoherent shelters. They are weakly interconnected and sometimes even obstruct one another.

The lost keystone is – man. The Renaissance still understood man as a focal point where all the forces and elements of the cosmos converge (*microcosm*). The human physical body is composed of the elements of the mineral kingdom. The forces of growth and reproduction are interweaved in man's vital body (*anima vegetativa*), which in the outside world shape various kinds of vegetation. Passions

flow within his sentient soul (*anima sensitiva*), which are manifested within the surrounding nature in animals. Within man himself there was a complete circle of animals, a circle of plants, and a circle of crystals, planets, stars as well as angels; he was the sum total of nature, and nature was man disassembled into individual aspects. Finally, within his spiritual soul (*anima intellectiva*) man is aware of himself, creates freely and harmonizes all forces into an equilibrium. This spiritual essence makes him the crown of creation exceeding all other realms of nature.

Thus man was inwardly akin to the spiritual sources of things; by mastering himself he mastered the causes of the world's formation, of coming into being and passing away. That is why nothing in the world was alien to him, he could understand everything directly from within his soul, he was linked to all, responsible for all and could affect all. All events

possessed meaning and purpose wherein he himself participated and was touched personally by it.

Such a synthetic worldview was methodologically possible because man found the terms by which he could understand the world within himself. Astrology and angelology provided a universal terminology integrating all disciplines. Since angels and deities were the spiritual intelligences of celestial bodies, both angelology and astrology more or less conflate into one another. In fact, they capture real knowledge about the archetypes and laws of human psychology. Through them, our forefathers attempted to elucidate everything in the surrounding nature, including the minerals and the constellations. Everything was explained through spiritual signatures. For example, every animal represented one virtue or vice, and even metals were classified by means of the same spiritual qualities in alchemy.

The modern era has developed an extroverted science, shifting the emphasis from inner intuitions to outer senses. This kind of sensualistic science achieved extraordinary progress in exploring the material world, but has lost sight of spiritual wisdom. It disintegrated into specializations, none of which can grasp the whole. In the eyes of modern science, man is no longer the pivot of the universe. He is but a random product of evolution on the fringe of the dead and cold distances of interstellar dust. He is no longer a dignified lord of himself, but a puppet driven by the tricks of genes and hormones. His conscience and moral concepts are no longer rooted in the exalted depths of the supreme

intelligence of the Creator anymore – they are but transient and fallible schemes inculcated in the young by society.

The self-understanding of modern man has already brought about a lot of destructive consequences. In the 20th century it caused two political disasters with 150 million victims. Genetic determinism steered mankind towards eugenics and Nazism. As proclaimed by Hitler's deputy, Rudolf Hess, Nazism was "nothing but [the] applied biology" of its time (Black 2003, 270). On the other hand, social determinism led to communism. Both were based on the assumption that there is no spiritual individuality in man, no innate dignity, no eternal spark from heaven; rather, man results merely from the forces of heredity and environment. Therefore, man can be bred or moulded by re-education into an arbitrary form useful to the state.

Primitive nations understood nature as animated and sacred, and themselves as the mesh in an invisible web of connexions, where the spirits of nature punished every sin and separation from the whole by misfortune. The separation of mental processes and linearity of utilitarian thinking in the modern era have made for the destruction of the environment by the economic activity of man. The perception of man as a machine, begun by Descartes, implied on the one hand the feeling of powerlessness in regard to our own body seemingly not related to our psyche. On the other hand, it went so far as to grow human embryos for industrial purposes and disassemble and sell living humans for organs (components).

Absence of a higher goal and ideals in

the consumerist society entails psychological decay, an instinctive and thoughtless life for the broad masses of the population, their easy manipulation and the ruin of democracy. A vision of common values beyond individual personae – be it in an image of some deity or some heroic tradition – has always enabled cooperation and cohesion of communities, golden ages and the blooming of cultures. The contemporary world has material means as never before, but it does not have enough moral and psychic energy to distribute and utilize them wisely. Individualism, egoism, and atomization of interests have arrived at a stage where we are not able to act together even when obviously marching toward a catastrophe. We are living in a civilization which is not a culture anymore; it is making use of the achievements of the spirit in the form of technology, but it does not revere anything higher anymore and hence loses the possibility to evolve into something higher in the future.

The paramount global problem of today is the absence of any vision of values. Our edifice of knowledge is built up in such way that ethics have dropped out. Knowledge once had a form from which moral incentives naturally resulted. Today it is possible to be a top expert and a bad or morally indifferent person at the same time. It is considered to be an illusion that there are some archetypes of virtues and laws of life objectively inscribed somewhere in the nature of things, or that there is some kind of purpose (a sense of being) and facts about the world that would have some spiritual significance for man.

We have knowledge but no wisdom. The sci-

ences surround man with material comfort, but not one of them can advise him existentially on his life decisions. They are silent about virtue, good and bad, justice, love, beauty, and the purpose of life. If they are not silent, like sociobiology, they try to reduce ethical and aesthetical notions darwinistically to mere utility and survival, whereby they are stripped of their intrinsic nature. We continue to improve new generations of machines, yet we have nothing more to say about ennobling ourselves. Knowledge has been narrowed down to the material domain only, and spiritual truth has been pushed aside into the sphere of pure faith. The social sciences and the science of the soul are stuck somewhere halfway. Only psychophysical relations are discussed (e.g. the dependence of mental processes on the physical organs; the climatic, geographic, economic conditions of historical events), while the psychospiritual ones no longer are (e.g. the transformation of the soul through spiritual exercise; the inspiration of spiritual powers in history).

Cognitive method distorted by one-sided sensualism renders the world as if no spiritual realities existed or were unknowable. This holds true for science as well as the church, which – though encouraging the belief in the existence of the spiritual world alone – agrees that it is inaccessible to our cognitive faculties. Without conclusive, reliable knowledge there is no responsibility either. If a surgeon cuts a patient's aorta, he will go straight to prison for total ignorance of anatomy. Yet when politicians and bankers make cuts through legislation, which would bleed national economies to death financially – nobody is convicted. And when delete-

rious philosophical ideas are disseminated that subvert a whole culture and bring about its decline, we are mostly unaware that something bad is going on.

2 Three sources of knowledge

Man is endowed with several faculties that are the gates of knowledge. He has sense organs that mediate data about the outer world for him. Further, he has reason, which is but a knowledge source of a different kind. One cannot observe or measure mathematical and logical truths empirically anywhere – they can be inferred by correct reasoning only. And he has intuition as well; moral, aesthetic and other intuitions, feelings, images, ideas and ideals that emerge from within and are perceived introspectively. These experiences come neither from the outer world, nor do they result from a rational process of reasoning, but possess a character of inner revelation.

These three sources of knowledge can also contradict each other. Which one of them is more important? Reason can tell of senses that deceive us. One's heart can desire something unreasonable. And the senses can refute inspirations as false. Every epoch tends to admire and place one or more of these three ways of knowledge to the forefront. However, the negative consequences of a one-sided worldview always provoked a reaction and the need to place an emphasis on another type of knowledge and society. There have been periods when revelation was considered the only serious source of

knowledge and the senses treated as an unreliable delusion. But all one-sidedness is bad. A medieval prophet seeking to confine the human spirit within the letter of the Holy Writ is as equally dangerous and obstructive to progress as the modern scientist who wants to restrict all knowledge to the senses alone, or an ancient philosopher who believes in inferring all truth about the world from pure reason. Eras of sensualism, rationalism and mysticism in history have alternated periodically. Whoever deems the currently preferred sources of knowledge to be absolutely essential should remember that this shall change in the future again.

Every day we make decisions and act according to facts, reason and intuition. Can any of these sources be neglected? Can somebody ignore his inner feelings for example? He will grow unhappy and soon fall ill. In the most important questions of life – such as the choice of a partner, religion, aesthetic and value orientation – intuition prevails. A great deal of cultural achievements and institutions, temples and concert halls would disappear if we dismissed irrational intuitions from our lives.

Thanks to the works of scholars such as Gaston Bachelard, Pitirim Sorokin, Thomas Kuhn, Michel Foucault or Luc Ciompi, we are beginning to understand that the intuitive dimension is present in *all* knowledge, including scientific knowledge. In the beginning of each new science, irrational processes are employed of the same kind as in the arts and religion. Discoveries begin with an inspiration, and only then comes work with facts, while a final rational resolution comes in the final

stage (although another sequence is possible as well). A number of prominent scientists acquired crucial intuitions for their discoveries in dreams or altered states of consciousness, or typically, these emerged in moments of rest just when rational activity had stopped.

Feeling plays a much more significant role in relation to thinking than had been admitted until recently (Ciompi 1997). Feelings act as a cognitive operator. Feelings determine what we pay attention to and what we disregard. Furthermore, they determine what we remember and what we delete from our memory. Feelings function as a glue that binds individual rational facts into an overall image. Affects lie behind several different kinds of logic; over time they recede into the unconscious and leave behind mental habits and whole patterns of a world-view structure constructed of rational facts, albeit personally colored. For individuals, this mental undertone or mood manifests itself as a *mode* of thinking. Yet whole cultural epochs are colored by something – what was once called *Zeitgeist* and nowadays we call *paradigm*, *episteme* or *system of truth*. It is a collection of subconsciously accepted intuitions and creeds about the nature of the world that are not a subject of discussion in a given time period because they are taken for granted or are wholly unconscious. All subsequent thought and action, however, is derived from this as from self-evident assumptions.

For example, in the era when Calvin and other religious leaders preached predestination, i.e. the inevitability of the course of events and the bureaucratic mechanisms of absolutist states were being built everywhere,

Galileo founded mechanics and Descartes developed his conviction about the mechanical determinism of material processes. And yet the new scientific discoveries were not the *cause*, but the *result* of an altered religious and political frame of mind. Mechanics as a science was born in a new spiritual atmosphere, which had been at work for one or two generations already. By contrast, in revolutionary eras when the requirement for human freedom has been promoted, philosophical indeterminism regularly prevailed and the same value has been introduced into the concept of the physical nature of matter.

Similarly, the wave and particle explanation of the nature of light has alternated in history. When clothes were composed of mere circles and spheres (Spanish fashion), men imagined light to be a stream of particles, tiny balls of atoms flying across space. And when clothes were covered by rhythmic elements (in rococo), the wave theory of light gained momentum. In reality, light has both wave and corpuscular properties. We cannot describe its nature unequivocally – that is why we speak about wave-particle duality today. Aesthetic sense also plays a role when designing equations in modern physics – fully consciously in the case of Poincaré or Pauli.

Another well-known example is how the political-economic situation of England in the first half of the 19th century is reflected in Darwin's theory – that is why he laid an emphasis on competition as the driving force of evolution. Kropotkin, on the other hand, saw progress in nature through cooperation in which Russian values are reflected. In fact, both com-

petition and cooperation do play a significant role in nature.

Therefore, not even the most rigorous knowledge is a result of pure rationality and facts, but has its mystical, irrational dimension running through the personality of the researcher. Descartes' mechanicism is, *inter alia*, the offspring of the obsessive-compulsive nature of his personality, just as Bacon with his hysterical-hedonistic disposition fathered a utilitarian empirism, and since they fit into the overall structure of their era, they became famous. Herein we have a tangible connection between morality and cognition because the quality of knowledge depends on the harmonious growth of personality, and every mental deviation manifests itself in some distortion of the result. True knowledge is impossible without self-knowledge. A researcher must also improve and inquire into himself so as not to be a lopsided mirror distorting reality.

It is necessary to realize that all knowledge is complex by any means, even if some of its dimensions remain unspoken. The question of true knowledge shall then no longer consist in pretending it is the result of impersonal reason and machine data alone, but in asking whether all dimensions of cognition are properly articulated within it. That means we should realize that knowledge has several dimensions, each one of which has its own requirements and all must be brought into harmony. Disintegration of these dimensions made us understand science, arts and religion as completely isolated, unrelated worlds. Contemporary man thinks one thing, his feelings tell him something else

and what he then carries out is yet another thing. Universities have their intellectual theories; churches preach an altogether different truth; and finally, economic life compels us to do something a third way, unrelated to the former two. We have three social spheres with three types of authorities contradicting each other. According to what should man orientate himself? How can he make responsible decisions?

3 Pansophia of Comenius

The apostle of the Slavs and the creator of the Slavonic script, St. Cyril (827–869), dreamt the following when he was seven years old: the strategos assembled all the maidens of the city and he had to choose one of them for his life mate. He chose Sophia, Wisdom. He became a priest and librarian in the basilica of St. Sophia in Constantinople. In the Christian east, Sophia is perceived as a personified, beautiful being and temples have been dedicated to her. Wisdom that is personal, is integral: light of reason is interconnected within her with warmth of heart and the beneficence of hands. To develop one dimension in isolation, as happened later in the west – namely brilliant intellect, which is cold and morally indifferent – would mean separating the head from the chest and limbs and thus striking the living Sophia dead.

The effort to overcome fragmentation among the sciences and different approaches has emerged recently in the west under the name *integral studies*. For instance, Ken Wilber (1949) developed a comprehensive view where the inner is always intercon-

nected with the outer and the individual with the collective. Individual subjectivity (stages of mental development) corresponds with individual objectivity (stages of biological organization), collective subjectivity (types of culture) and collective objectivity (forms of civilization) (Wilber 2000).

The Slavs have in this regard their own long tradition in the form of *sophiology*. The quest for integral wisdom, in which Truth, Beauty and Goodness become one, is a dream, a longing of Slavic peoples and their future mission. A line of eminent personalities starts with Cyril among the Slavs, who were led by the intuition of Sophia and who try to put this intuition into practice. They include John Amos Comenius (1592–1670) in Bohemia, Bronisław Trentowski (1808–1869) in Poland, Vladimir Solovyov (1853–1900) in Russia, and the group around Ludovít Štúr (1815–1856) in Slovakia, especially Jozef Miloslav Hurban (1817–1888) and Peter Kellner-Hostinský (1823–1873). They shared a quest for such knowledge, which integrates all components of the human personality as well as all spheres of life, and yields primarily the moral enrichment and elevation of the people, rather than technological and material gain.

Comenius' *opus magnum* is his *General Consultation on an Improvement of All Things Human*. He earned the titles "teacher of nations" and "the father of modern education" for his lifelong efforts in pedagogy and the improvement of humankind. Education has three goals according to Comenius: 1. to know the world; 2. to know and master oneself; 3. to raise oneself up to God. In comparison, the goal of scholarship for Bacon is little more

than to know nature, subjugate her and exploit her for the fulfillment of one's own wishes. The second and third points are missing.

Pansophia, i.e. universal wisdom or All-Wisdom, was the very means of general improvement on which Comenius laid a lot of hope. Central to his work is the emphasis on the inclusiveness of knowledge. According to Comenius, everything should be viewed in terms of the "triple eye" or the "three books", or the "three open sources of divine wisdom" – namely the senses, reason and revelation: "If something is not sufficiently inferred from the senses, reason and the Holy Writ, if it does not connect harmoniously with the rest, it must not be uttered" (Komenský 1988, 92). Whoever wants to abide by one of the afore-said principles alone shall fall into the abyss of errors, Comenius warned. Whoever wants to rely exclusively on sensory knowledge shall not rise above the naiveté of a simple man; he cannot conceive of the sun being 400-times bigger than the Moon, for example. Whoever wants to abide by reason only and omit the senses shall succumb to delusions and build castles in the air, as happened to some philosophers in the past. And whoever wants to neglect both the senses and reason, and draw knowledge solely from the Holy Writ shall succumb to blind faith and stipulate all kinds of nonsense and superstition as dogma. "Only he who learns to master things through his own senses, his own reason and his own immediate testimony of God – only he can know that he is not deceiving himself" (Komenský 1992, 328).

It is necessary to feed all sources of light (knowledge) into one stream – "all luminaries from

which light flows, i.e. nature, common innate concepts and God". These "three streams of knowledge shall bear the whole three-founded light of God within a full watercourse". Then we shall have "the greatest blaze of light one can have" (Komenský 1961, 75). Comenius is convinced that all three streams of illumination come from one source: God is one and the same spiritual power which reveals itself internally to the prophets and mystics; which endows us with the faculty of reasoning and which created the outer nature as well. This is the underlying intuition (or presupposition) of sophiology. Therefore, harmony between the senses, reason and faith constituted a *criterion* of the veracity of knowledge for Comenius. If they are not in concert, it implies that something is not working well: one or more of them must be revised. That is why Comenius regarded the rupture between theology and philosophy, and their separation from the sciences as a symptom of regrettable particularism and losing one's way.

The beginning of the 17th century was an important crossroads. The renaissance ideal of universal knowledge had just fallen apart in the time of Comenius. In France, René Descartes (1596–1650) developed a one-sided rationalism distrusting of the senses. In England, Francis Bacon (1561–1626) developed a one-sided empiricism that underrated reason and rejected even mathematics. Accepting an invitation from the English parliament to London in 1641, Comenius introduced his project of a pansophic academy, which was to unite all material and spiritual knowledge on a common ground. However, unsettled political circumstances prevented its realization. In the Netherlands in 1642 he met

Descartes but did not succeed in persuading him. Whereas for Comenius "philosophy without divine revelation is incomplete", Descartes replied: "I will not step beyond philosophy, hence a piece of what is a whole with thee shall remain with me" (Komenský 1924, 47–8). In the end, only a synthesis of French rationalism with English empiricism occurred on which contemporary academies and universities are based. The Slavonic requirement of integrality and the inclusion of revelation fell short.

As induction is characteristic for Bacon and deduction for Descartes, what is characteristic for Comenius is his syncretic method. *Synkrisis* is a comparison and unification; a kind of synthesis. It is an integral approach, a method of pansophy. It assumes the world has been created harmoniously according to a uniform idea and it possesses a fractal-like structure. Everything testifies to everything, and any part permits assumptions about the whole and the whole about its parts; by comparison, one can penetrate to the essence of things thanks to universal analogy. The syncretic method grasps the meaning of things as a whole, consummating knowledge and leading to insights of a moral kind. By applying it, we enter into a relationship of intimacy with reality instead of a reserved distance. Comenius could point at a rose and thus instruct a child: just as the flower appeared at the end of a thorny stem, so you too can attain virtue only by way of renunciation in your life. Comenius' *ars docendi* (art of teaching) relies in particular on this method of analogy, which interprets reality "with love and grace" (Palouš 1992, 32).

4 Solovyov and sophiology

In the same spirit as Comenius, Solovyov defines *sophiology* as an effort to synthesize the three sources or domains of knowledge about God, man and nature. True wisdom can consist only in the synthesis of empiricism, rationalism and mysticism (Solovyov 2008).

Western currents of thought have attempted to unify knowledge by reducing all other cognitive principles to one of the three. Solovyov wittily demonstrates how each of these attempts have ended up by undermining their own foundations. Empiricists who tried to reduce everything to matter and perception at last came to contest the very existence of matter. Rationalists intended to reduce everything to mind and spirit and came to deny the existence of a thinking entity. Likewise the mystics – relying solely on revelation and God, underestimating reason and regarding the world as a delusion – shall lose God and divine revelation in the end, too, because they have no means to get out from the labyrinth of subjective feeling in which they wander.

Solovyov calls the three one-sided types of philosophy *abnormal* because they attempt to deny some part of human nature and natural experience. They usually result from the pathologically one-sided constitution of an individual or a culture or from power seeking. A traditional example is the church thesis that philosophy should not be an equal sibling, but the maidservant of theology. Although thinking has its own procedures and own criteria of truth, and when they have to be twisted in order to come to

some prescribed dogma, it means chopping at the vital roots of rationality. Obscurantism, so closely tied to the history of the church, resulted from attempts to curtail free thinking dogmatically. Another more recent example is sociobiology. It attempts to explain away the whole sphere of human moral and aesthetic intuitions by reducing them to natural selection and recombination of genes. Moral concepts, it is said, are genetically fixated patterns of behavior that maximize survival and the propagation of one's own genes when living within ape-like troops. Likewise the experience of beauty. Beauty and dignity as an independent dimension of human existence thus vanishes like an empty gimmick, which is but a function of physical survival. Such opinion then indeed contributes to the brutalisation of man and the application of the rule of the jungle in human society (social darwinism).

Each of the three domains has its own criteria of correctness to fulfill. Empirical science for correct observation and classification of data (reproducibility, falsifiability, predictive and explanatory power); rational philosophy for creating concepts and theories (systematicity, consistency, parsimony); and praxis of mysticism, too, has its requirements (moral purification, unselfishness, sacrifice) and criteria that have been applied for millennia to tell genuine spiritual inspiration apart from self-deceit. Among them are signs pertaining to the actual form and circumstances of the revelation, as well as intersubjectivity, and last but not least, it can be distinguished by its beneficial fruits that bring peace, concord and the ennoblement of life.

In every piece of knowledge, those three dimensions of cognition must be organically interconnected so that one does not miss or distort another by trespassing on their competences. One cannot replace or supersede either of the other two. Exceeding the competences of any domain results in deformation of the whole. For instance, the existence of a new empirical phenomenon cannot be reasonably refuted by rational-theoretical argumentation alone (as clerics did when they refused to look into Galileo's telescope, for as much as Aristotle's writings did not allow for anything new to appear in the sky). Nor one can argue against inner perceptions, which represent direct experience.

On the other hand, by neglecting any of the three dimensions ambiguities arise that open the way to arbitrariness. Reason is able to devise a lot of theoretical frameworks that have no sensory correlates. The same empirical data can be interpreted according to several rational conceptions. And not every conception is noble-minded and consistent with the moral intuitions of one's conscience. Further, among many religious inspirations and prophecies, too, only some shall pass through the prism of reason and be confirmed by material events. Neither a heap of disordered data, nor an abstract conception, nor an inner perception alone can be called knowledge – they are but *fragments* of knowledge. Among, say a hundred conceivable rational concepts, only a dozen can be reconciled with measurements, and not more than one or two with our conscience.

If scientists pretend a theory comes from sheer data, it implies only that they are un-

aware of their own intuitive assumptions. Every theory contains metaphysics, and attempts to eliminate the metaphysical dimension usually require faith in some metaphysics of a kind that is implicitly involved in argumentation or in the choice of terms. This can be dealt with only by consciously entering one's own deep psychical processes and correcting any aberrations. For comparison, the Hubble space telescope has a skewed mirror because of a manufacturing defect; however, by virtue of knowing how exactly the mirror is skewed, we can deduct the ensuing distortion and obtain a true and sharp picture. The most important instrument, the mirror of knowledge for man, is his own soul; in order to cognize without distortion, he would have to overcome all the one-sidedness of his character (to become a saint) or to at least be aware of them.

Unfortunately, scientists refuse to do spiritual exercises for moral purification or meditation for the sake of self-knowledge because they regard it as a religious activity that falls beyond the scope of their specialization. Consequently, each one of them creates a theory according to his personal constitution or according to contemporary fashion. All of the theories are scientific, yet they vary as quickly as artistic fashion. Thus, neglect of the religious dimension brings about arbitrariness in science. Inclination to different schools seems to be random and provides free space for the authorities to exercise power.

For the same reason, neglect of the scientific dimension causes arbitrariness in religion. There are thousands of sects. There are hun-

dreds of Christian churches alone in spite of appealing to a single book – the Bible. Each church expounds it in a different way and wants us to believe that such is the will of God. This number would be considerably lower if revelations were confronted with reason and reality, and genuine revelations were discerned from delusion and fiction. Regrettably, theologians avoid the requirement of integrality or they apply it too laxly and dishonestly. They invented a view of science and religion as two skewed lines, bypassing one another with no intersection whatsoever. According to this thesis, only this world can be perceived and subjected to critical thinking – the other (spiritual) world should be only a subject of blind belief. But is it a different world altogether? Or is there only one world with an inner, spiritual dimension? Are those two worlds isolated causally and wholly unrelated? If yes, it suits the powers that be. The church then does not need to resolve any conflict with science; no observation and no reasoning can disturb the dogma and the authorities can infallibly determine anything. Such a faith, which is completely out of touch with reality, is trouble free; but it is also worthless for the same reason. Disconnected from life, it becomes abstract, barren and stagnant. After all, it does not matter what is believed in because it has no consequences.

Abandoning the requirement of integrality opens the way to ambiguity, fragmentation and arbitrariness. Philosophers who stopped concerning themselves about the moral imperatives of the spirit, as well as the special results of the sciences, are fabricating brilliantly constructed castles in the air. But they

have lost the ability to discern the valuable from the rubbish and have become stuck in relativism. Anything shocking or affecting the emotions began to be regarded as art, even though it has no moral or truth value. Art, too, has to be truthful – it should convey the subtle, yet significant truths of life and educate morally, otherwise it is useless. Art must involve something generally valid – instead of being a mere diagnosis of the mental state of its author. To this purpose, the artist must take an interest in knowledge on the one hand and enter the service of higher ideals on the other, not indulge in the personal sphere of feelings only.

Integration of the sciences, arts and religion leads to their purification and enhancement. Disintegration leads to the decadence of all three. Disjoined, each of them acquires hidden degrees of freedom that are not filled with anything random, but become a purposeful field of activity covered by demons (concealed evil tendencies). Scientific knowledge, supposedly value neutral, is massively distorted on behalf of private profit. Artistic creativity serves to incite the lower passions. And religious preaching, which supposedly does not care about this world, only the next one, accommodates all the more flexible political expectations.

Knowledge and also free, independent and responsible individuality with it, come into being only through integration of the three mental components. Only integral knowledge gives man the inner certainty of autonomous judgment. We can stand firm only in such a thing as this, which is objectively examined *and* subjectively experi-

enced. It has to be clarified in the mind, felt in the heart and tried out in practice by hand. Somebody with disconnected thinking, feeling and will is open to manipulation and vulnerable. He may divorce theory from practice, practice from morality, morality from reason. He is not able to discern right from wrong in the multitude of alternatives and shall succumb to the pressures and temptations surrounding him: to experts, prophets, and celebrities. If one of the three faculties takes precedence within him, he will try to navigate his way according to that. Alas, because of a lack of integrity, he will be duped by false intellectualism instead of true wisdom; religious sentiment will cast a spell over him instead of true faith; and he will become immersed in a destructive economic sphere, instead of constructive creativity.

Democracy is a social order that presupposes the freedom of individualities – and individuation comes through the integration of personality. This ideal of integral humanity has been embodied in old pictorial wisdom as solar heroes or sun deities. Their opposing power then was called the solar or midday demon. This demon acts through another three demons (evil inclinations), who are seemingly quarrelling but in fact contribute to a single goal: to prevent the birth and liberation of spiritual man. The first of them is the brilliant, but cold-hearted and morally indifferent intellect. The second is represented by pleasurable sensations that do not involve any idea and contain no deeds. The third is the temptation of power, unbound by human compassion and judgment. These three dark currents within the soul act within the three

spheres of society and institutions by isolating and misusing them.

Similarly, the human body is threefold. Sensory and nervous system activity is concentrated in the head; the rhythmic system of breathing and blood circulation is centered in the chest; and the motor-metabolic system is located chiefly in the belly and limbs. These three parts of the body support the three aspects of the soul: thinking, feeling and will. They correspond roughly with three groups of organs evolving from three embryonic layers (ecto-, meso- and endoderm). Three constitutional types (asthenic, athletic, pyknic) accrue from a slight predominance of one or another system. All three are interwoven into one organism, but each one acts in his place through his own proper way. Health is a correct balance of all three. Disease arises from disturbing this balance. The organic integration of scientific, artistic and religious elements denotes mental health. And the organic threefoldness of the cultural, political and economic sphere denotes a healthy society.

5 The Slavonic science of the Štúr group

It is little known that Slovak revivalists led by Ľudovít Štúr also intended to develop a distinctive Slavonic science. The first issue of the journal *Slovenské pohľady* begins with a programmatic article about Slavonic science written by Jozef Miloslav Hurban. In the first sentence, he characterizes it as follows: "Science is a clear and lucid awareness of what is in us and around us, in spirit and in

nature, in heaven and on earth; this is made understandable to the higher aspirations of the human spirit; in this way I am saying science is the purest education of man and humankind" (Hurban 1846, 1–14). Obviously, he means a different concept of science than the one current today. It explores the spirit as well as matter, inner worlds as well as outer nature; and it aims above all at education, and the enrichment and moral improvement of man, and less at material affluence. Cultivating the shoots of Slavonic science should actually have been the primary goal of *Slovenské pohľady*, since it should serve as the "purgatory" of Slovaks and raise them from their misery and unify the Slovak intelligentsia. The coming of the age of the Slavs will only come with Slavonic science, and not before.

The constitutive feature of Slavonic science is its integrality: "The foremost move of Slavonic science shall and must be the spiritual vision of the whole truth" (Hurban 1846, 9). "The defining characteristic of Slavonic science is its wholeness, its roundedness. Slavonic science must draw all particulars together into one whole and unify all ruptures and fragmentariness, for if it would not do this, it would cease to be Slavonic. Our science is a sea into which all streams of science merge. The science of the Slavs must be an absolute unity of all epistemological moments of true cognition" (Hostinský 1851, 123). The Štúr group followed up the ideas of their Polish contemporary, Bronisław Trentowski, a philosopher, pedagogue and patriot. The chief subject of his philosophy was universality, an emergence from one-sided solutions, a synthesis of objective with subjective

knowledge, and sensualism with idealism.

They expected the development of integral knowledge from the Slavs. Along with Hegel and Herder, they looked at history as a story wherein individual cultures come forward in a sequence. Each one of them contributes to the temple of mankind with something unique whereby the World Spirit brings history one step closer to its final goal. Ancient Indian, Persian, Graeco-Roman, and Romanic cultures reached their zenith in the past and nowadays Germanic culture is experiencing its peak. The Slavs are the last branch of Indo-Europeans whose cultural peak is still under preparation and lies ahead of them – they are "the youngest son in the tale of mankind" (Hostinský 1851, 125). After Germanic culture, the Slavonic one shall follow: "Every nation has its time under God's sun, and linden blossoms only once the oak blossom has passed" (Štúr 1993, 59).

According to the Štúr group, the Romanic peoples manifested a talent for empirical observation, but they developed it one-sidedly and got stuck in mindless materialism. The Germanic peoples tended to a one-sided idealism and ended up in speculations about total abstractions. The Slavs are supposed to merge both moments harmoniously: "what both of them meant for their world, all of that must be fused into a single moment by the Slavonic seer, who shall see, recount and 'sing' the truth as observed originally with his Slavonic eye" (Hurban 1846, 9). The Slavic vision should at last be the fullness of all the partial moments of knowledge developed by preceding cultures – "the temple of all moments of knowledge", "the pantheon of all gods of truth",

“the amen of truth” (Hostinský 1847, 469).

Solovyov, too, understands the birth of sophiology as a logical developmental moment in the context of a progressive sequence of cultures and corresponding shifts in the centre of creativity from the East towards the West and back again. In the oriental cultures of the past, science, the arts and religion originally formed an undifferentiated unity. The beginnings of science were included in the wisdom of the priests, and the arts were closely linked to religion, too. This initial unity, however, was instinctive, unconscious, and unfree. Later on in the West, all three components became independent, which boosted their conscious development, but also caused them to lose their mutual interconnection. The Slavic East is supposed to reunite them again, but into an organic whole while consciously maintaining their inherent differences.

The West has a greater aptitude for analysis, the East for synthesis. However, analysis must precede a correct synthesis, so the Slavs are building the next floor of culture upon Germanic foundations: “The Germans learned step by step and we shall cognize entirely, if God wills it so; but if the latter should be, the former would also have to be” (Zoch 1847, 412). “A good teacher is not one who discerns well, but who unites well” (Hostinský 1847, 476).

Thus, on the one hand, Slavic knowledge differs from oriental knowledge and resembles western knowledge with its analytical concreteness. On the other hand, with its integrality it reminds one of the Indian concept of knowledge (*jñāna*) or Byzantine wisdom

(*sophia*). Such knowledge results not only in a theoretical system of thought, but affects and transforms all components of personality, including feelings and will. True wisdom unites clarity of thought within itself with a sense of beauty and moral conduct. To emphasize this, the followers of Štúr invent composite neologisms like *faith-knowledge*, *science-feat*, *intention-deed*, *truth-song*. The West detached thinking from moral will and went astray within the wasteland of a dead intellect. Selflessness and sacrifice vanished among westerners, their education went commercial and “is not able to lend strength and vigour to nations” (Hurban 1846, 10). Slavic man seeks to bring his knowledge and moral intuitions into harmony; true science leads to God and not away from Him: “In our midst, science is not trampled by faith, but invokes feats of life, celebrated and transformed into a vision of certitude and truth; we need faith for science, and science is needed for faith... The power which shall compel the world to believe in the kingdoms of heaven rests in science alone; science creates the heroes who shall conquer the world by faith”. With us “Christianity shall be the spirit of the castle of Slavonic science” (Hurban 1846, 4, 9).

The Slavic sage is a scientist, priest and poet in one. Kellner-Hostinský therefore sought to write in a poetic language. Both he and Trentowski were sure that science and philosophy must be “expressed in a fine style”, even “sung out” because the unity of truth, beauty and goodness is embedded in the very nature of creation, which is the speech of God (Hostinský, manuscript M45E9). For the Slavs, a sense of beauty – the eye of the heart –

is a cognitive organ that senses the truth. The oldest Russian chronicle, *The Tale of Bygone Years*, thus speaks about the acceptance of Christianity in Rus: in the year 987 the Kievan prince Vladimir the Great sent envoys to neighboring peoples to inquire and report on different religions. They disapproved of Islam and Judaism, as well as western Christianity. As they did not find beauty, purity and joyfulness there, they reasoned that those laws were not good. They chose Greek Christianity as the most beautiful and therefore the most truthful in their judgment. Thus they reported to the prince about the ceremony in the temple of St. Sophia in Constantinople: "We knew not whether we were in heaven or on earth. For on earth there is no such splendor or beauty, and we are at a loss how to describe it. We know only that God dwells there among men, and their service is fairer than the ceremonies of other nations. For we cannot forget that beauty" (Cross and Sherbowitz-Wetzor 1953, 10).

St. Cyril perceived Sophia as his spiritual fiancée. Thrice she appeared to Solovyov, who recorded his mystical experience in the poem, *Three Meetings*. During his journey to Egypt he woke up once in the desert and the air smelled of roses. He saw all that has been, that is or shall be in her radiant countenance – the unity of all things where the ugly and bad were also given meaning by the whole and become a part of the beautiful and good. Thus, Comenius beheld his *All-Wisdom* just as Kellner-Hostinský did when he speaks of "the Minerva of the Tatra Mountains", "the Slovak Athena" or "the golden shining queen of the castle of Slavonic science" (Hostinský 1851, 122, 125; Hos-

tinský 1847, 483). He addresses her and she replies. This personification is no superfluous metaphor, but a methodological necessity. A personal relationship is a requirement of inner knowledge, just as outer knowledge requires a certain impersonal distance. It concentrates the emotional and volitional powers of man into intuition, which when purified enables him to see archetypes. "Blissful is the one who might have beheld this star with his own spiritual eye, for he saw the celestial maiden – the truth" (Hostinský 1851, 162).

Each branch of nations is endowed with a particular gift, and yields flowers and fruits by the time it discovers its own abilities and begins to draw from them. The Slavs shall contribute their "spiritual eye" along with Romanic empiricism and Germanic rationalism: "The Slavonic people shall give spiritual vision to the world... The most special moment in Slavonic science must be vision". So Slavonic science has its own epistemological principle that is going to enable a new worldview, from which a unique Slav culture shall grow. This dormant gift manifests itself latently in Slavic devoutness: "The Slavic people believe because there is a spiritual eye in them which no nation before them had" (Hurban 1846, 10–11).

From the beginning, the first generation of the Štúr group was already in dispute over the noetic principle of Slavonic science, distinguishing it from the western one. Ctiboh Zoch opined that Hurban does not know exactly what he wants to say when speaking about the *spiritual eye* and *integral vision*: "He wants to see the Slavonic science of the fu-

ture – but it is still like in a cloud and that is why he is not able to express exactly what it is he wants” (Zoch 1847, 411). Under the notion of spiritual vision, he could not imagine anything other than arbitrary subjective visions. Kellner-Hostinský made a fervent stand for Hurban. Explaining that genuine intuition or inspiration is something other than fantasy, somnambulism, soothsaying or visions conditioned by the stomach (bodily organs). The history of Slovak philosophy in fact begins with this controversy about the “eye of the heart”.

Štúr, Hurban and others assumed the real existence of a spiritual world from which the human soul draws knowledge and content by means of a *real* process of inspiration. This was implicit and self-evident in the romantic worldview, whereas the Enlightenment and modern Western views (on behalf of whom Zoch is also speaking) regarded such communication with the world of spiritual beings as fictitious and non-existent. For them, it is a flagrant contravention of correct thinking to mix religion and poetic inspiration with science because feelings do not contain any objectiveness. But the Štúr group believed that truth is revealed to man in poetic or prophetic inspiration; that one can gaze at the principles and ideas according to which the world has been formed and thus observe the objective world from within through one’s spiritual eye. Therefore, references to fairy tales, legends and myths, for instance, counted as a valid argument when looking for truth since the genius of a nation is manifested as a real being in them.

“The Kellner-Hostinský method consists in the parallelization of semantic associations between natural phenomena and the world of man” (Čečan 1989, 98). That is to say, he presumes the same as Comenius, and not Kant’s thesis about unknowable things-in-themselves by which the definitive subject-object split occurred in the West and in which all metaphysics has been buried. For instance, one can know a rose-in-itself very well because the metaphysical power standing beyond the phenomenon of the rose, the idea of the rose, is a being that we can know intimately and see inwardly as the power of love. The spiritual rose reveals itself and also pervades our own soul. The same powers that shape external nature are also moving and working inside the human soul. That is why nature can speak to us in the *figurative language of symbols* innate to man. Images in dreams have the same meaning.

Unfortunately, as a consequence of the fall of man, the forces of our inner world are in chaotic disarray and distorted by personal bias. Only an artist with moral aspirations, forging and ennobling his own inner being in the hearth of ardent love and sacrifice will purify his imagination and transform it into an organ able to correctly perceive the inspirations of a higher power. His inner images gradually become equal to the archetypes: “The enthused artist simply follows his inner inspirations and at the moment an idea conceived through fervent love is brought forth... into outward reality – all else must vanish in the soul of the artist, and where he submits to a higher power, his imagination becomes equal to the archetype” (Hostinský, manuscript M45D8). The innermost es-

sence of nature is freed from a spell, becomes self-conscious inside the human spirit, and the artist becomes a sage. What is otherwise regarded as a *lyric metaphor* only is refined to become objective imagination. This is what Plotinus (205–270) taught – that the inner eye is schooled by beauty and having been cleansed from its vices it beholds archetypes that embody the truth.

Looking inside oneself, one can see the archetype, the “inner form or figure” that fits together with outer forms and events like a key and lock; it integrates them in a certain way and gives them meaning. It might become clearer and develop into a mental concept. Such an “organic unity of all moments of knowledge” – an agreement of theory, senses and intuition – is called *seeing* by the Štúr group. This is the noetic-aesthetic principle that is the “fount of integral science” (Sošková 2005, 133). Compared with western gnoseology, something more is being required here: the outer as well as the inner experience acquired introspectively must fit together to create a theory.

But does any introspective knowledge exist at all? As late as the end of the Middle Ages it was still regarded as a matter of course that ideas can be directly observed by the mind, and the inspirations of gods, angels, muses or ancestors constitute one source of knowledge. Later, incredible achievements and the power of modern science seemed to confirm the accuracy of the Western concept of knowledge and contributed to its promotion. Introspective practice stopped being cultivated and its former status as knowledge

began to be denied. The verb *to speculate* changed its meaning *to fabelize*. Yet the Latin *speculator* originally meant *to inspect* oneself inwardly, which is not to construct something – but rather to wait for what is going to appear.

Needless to say, in such light the Štúr science project must appear hopelessly illusory and utopian, methodologically naive and flawed, outdated and backward, irrational and unscientific – causing embarrassment. This is also how it has been evaluated over the past 150 years. Despite the fact that the Slovak constitution obliges us to base our values on the tradition of Sts. Cyril and Methodius, as well as on the Štúr tradition, and the largest Slovak university is named after Comenius – the epistemological project that constitutes the core of their efforts has been abandoned as a “relic of romanticism” or an obsolete medieval way of thought. The main protagonist of Slavonic science, Peter Kellner-Hostinský already seemed to many of his contemporaries and even more to following generations as an “outsider” at the very margins of Slovak philosophical thought (Čepan 1989, 94). A characteristic feature of his is thinking in “overlaps” – from philosophy to arts, from knowledge to action, from mythology to science, from objective cognition to a personal stance – insofar as he could not be classified within any one genre. He sought to defend Slavonic science philosophically, yet it does not sound anymore convincing to contemporary man. A person bred by 20th century culture is unable to conceive of anything specific out of all that. Was the intuition of the Štúr group wrong – or was it, after all, in some way true? Where are the specific results of Slavic science?

6 Does introspective knowledge exist?

Let us take a number of examples that can serve as particular working material. All of them are examples of objectively valid knowledge acquired by looking inwards into one's self. They demonstrate firstly that introspective knowledge is possible. Secondly, that the origin of this knowledge is largely unknown. And thirdly, that such knowledge is necessary because the results of extrovert science are often distorted without it.

Indian yogis were masters of introspection. Their observations of inner states and processes have been captured in a scholarly and meticulous terminology of a kind for which there are no equivalents in Western languages. They elaborated a subtle physiology that is at least 900 years old (if not more). According to yoga, there are streams (*nādi*) of life force (*prāna*) of diverse qualities flowing through the human body. These qualities are expressed by astral symbolism. Lunar energy (*ida*) flows through the left side of the body, and solar energy (*pingala*) through the right side. Both streams cross over in the head and change sides. Less than every two hours, they alternately flow stronger. The times when vital breath flows predominantly through the left side is favourable for different kinds of activities than the times when it flows through the right. There are techniques by which these streams can be regulated. Whoever succeeds in bringing both to an equilibrium attains spiritual enlightenment (Weinfurter 1947, 190–193).

The modern West alone did not know anything about this until the second half of

the 20th century when it was otherwise discovered by Roger Sperry, Nathaniel Kleitmann and Milton Erickson. Sperry was awarded the Nobel Prize in 1981 for the discovery of cerebral asymmetry and the lateralized function of the brain (Sperry 1974, 5–19). Each hemisphere specializes in different processes; but because the nerve strands cross over in the head, the right side of the body is innervated by the left hemisphere, and the left one by the right hemisphere. Kleitmann discovered that hemispheres are activated alternately less than every two hours (80–120 minutes) and called it the “Basic Rest Activity Cycle”. Their findings correspond entirely with the contents of Indian treatises (*śāstra*) and with the astrological meaning of the Sun and Moon. The Sun represents self-awareness, reason, activity, and the future; the Moon represents the unconscious, imagination, receptiveness, and the past. Indeed, only the hemisphere innervating the right side is self-aware, while the other one is unconscious. During the phase when activity on the right side predominates, we are better able to solve verbal, rational tasks, and we are ready for assertive activity (even aggressiveness in the case of an extreme imbalance). Conversely, the hemisphere connected with the left side is more receptive, musical, and recognizant of images, shapes, faces and emotions. That is exactly what the ancient Indians said: if the breath flows through the right side, one should engage in writing, calculation, combat, etc. If it flows through the left side, the time is favorable for singing, decorating, and family meetings, etc. On our left, we experience the past, on our right, the future. Erickson

observed that eye movements to the left and right are indicative of cognitive processes like recall and planning. The tradition spoke of two kinds of spiritual beings approaching us from the left and right; the former bear our past, the latter lead us into the future.

Sperry discovered anatomical correlations of mental processes that were discovered introspectively by yogis and tantrists. The Indians discovered it through attentive perception of their inner being – the Americans by using a scalpel and cutting away various structures of the brain, like the optical nerve or the bridge between the hemispheres and watching the altered behavior of their experimental subjects. The Westerner went blind inwardly – he is not even able to say what is going on in the present moment within his own soul. The German physician Richard Kayser noticed in 1889 that the breath flows alternately through the left and right nostrils, which alternately become freer (the nasal cycle) (Kayser 1889, 96–109). Again, he noticed only what was physical and overlooked the fact that two types of mental processes are also alternating rhythmically along with the nasal cycle. Experts from the West looked upon Indian scriptures as religious literature based on fantasy. They ignored the possibility that this could be based on accurate introspective observation. The hemispheres of the brain and the whole nervous system are apparently anatomically symmetrical and equal. A one-sided angle of vision relying on external senses only suggested the idea that both hemispheres carry out the selfsame mental tasks. Thus, the discovery of the lateralized functions of the brain came as a surprise to scientists.

They were wrong because they grossly ignored an entire important branch of knowledge – self-perception.

However, the pre-modern West also had the same knowledge. The motif of an androgyne with a masculine right side and a feminine left side of the body, with the Sun to the right and the Moon to the left, was handed down from generation to generation from the ancient Egyptians or Jews until the alchemists of the late Middle Ages. It has been said that the archangels of the Sun and Moon, Michael and Gabriel, stand to our right and left (as they also stand at the iconostasis of an orthodox temple). Moreover, the same archangels act as spirits of time and alternately inspire the world over a cycle of 500 years.

In fact, there is a statistically significant 500-year cycle in the history of culture, obviously related to the alternate dominance of the brain hemispheres. This rhythm is mirrored in the cyclical blooming of philosophy and logic at certain times, and the visual arts at other times; in the alternation of rationalism and sensualism; in the transfiguration of social values. This alternation was discovered independently by the American sociologist of Russian origin, Pitirim Sorokin, in the first half of the 20th century. He discovered two types of culture based on opposing intuitive assumptions that he called an *ideational* and *sensate* system of truth. These two types alternate periodically through history. He did not realize that the time pattern as well as the contents of what he found coincide with angelology, a doctrine several millennia old. He could not recognize the connection with

the brain hemispheres at that time because their functional specialization was still unknown (Sorokin 1962).

Sorokin also learned that cultures informed one-sidedly by either one of the systems of truth cease to be prolific and stagnate. The most creative and wonderful periods in time came about during transitions from one system of truth to the other when both systems were respected as equipollent and mankind attempted to synthesize them. That was the most significant conclusion made by Sorokin. Sperry came to the same conclusion as a result of his own research: individuals who rely predominantly on one of the two hemispheres are not successful because they founder in situations requiring the skills of the opposite hemisphere. The most successful individuals can develop and employ both hemispheres simultaneously and flexibly. Sorokin as well as Sperry spoke about one and the same thing as the Indian sage Goraknath in the 11th century or the Dominican saint Albert the Great in the 13th century did. Whoever succeeds

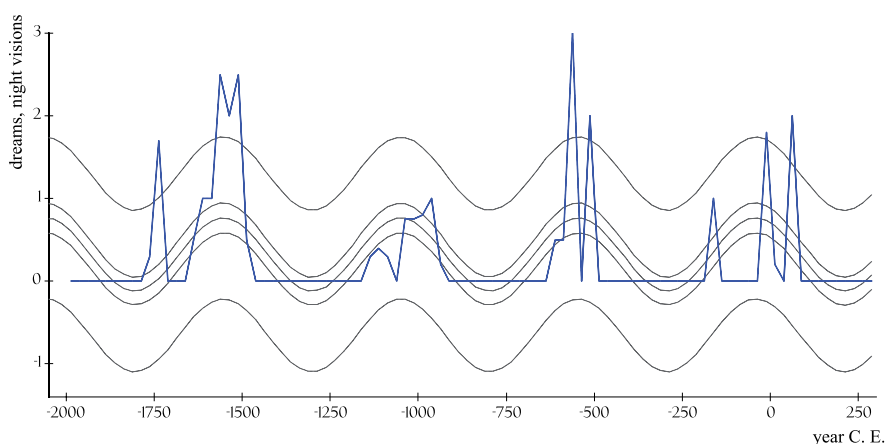


Figure 1.

Chronogram of dreams and night visions mentioned in the Bible (blue line). There are 27 dreams and night visions mentioned in the Bible (according to Catholic Encyclopedia and Jewish Encyclopedia). Nocturnal apparitions to the patriarchs returned every 500 years. There is a statistically significant periodicity of slightly more than 500 years (grey line) culminating around the years 1550, 1050, 550 and 50 B. C. E. The odds of pure chance are less than 1 to 100 000. The angel of dreams, Gabriel appeared once every 500 years.

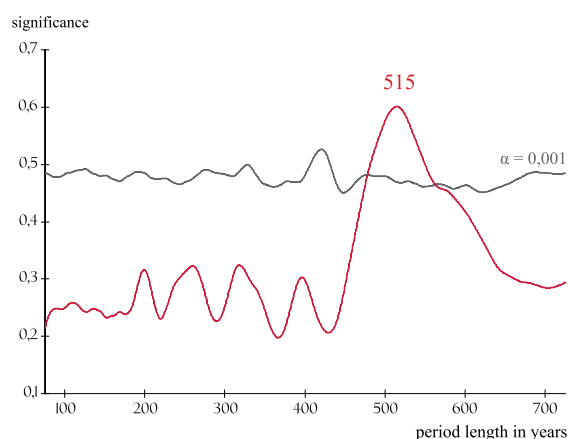


Figure 2.

Periodogram of dreams and night visions mentioned in the Bible. There are 27 dreams and night visions mentioned in the Bible (according to Catholic Encyclopedia and Jewish Encyclopedia). Nocturnal apparitions to the patriarchs returned every 500 years. Significant period lengths between 500 and 530 years (red line) surpass the threshold of statistical significance (grey line). The angel of dreams, Gabriel appeared once every 500 years.

in bringing *ida* and *pingala* into equilibrium shall experience enlightenment. Whoever accomplishes the alchemical wedding of Sol and Luna obtains the philosophers' stone.

Dreaming is an introspective experience experienced by everyone. Do dreams mean something? Neither humans nor animals can live without the dreaming phase (REM) of sleep. Yet the purpose of dreams is

a great unknown in science. We take them as a mere echo of diurnal experience. Freud believed dreams expressed unfulfilled desires. Ancient peoples took dreams so seriously that kings had their dreams explained to them and took decisions in accordance with them. They regarded dreams as a harbinger of the future. There are 27 night visions mentioned in the Bible (Singer and Adler 1906, 654; Habermann 1909, 154). Plotting them against a time axis we get a 500-year rhythm (see Fig. 1 and 2). For the Jews it was Gabriel, the angel of dreams, God's messenger, who took over the reins of the ruling spirit of time every 500 years. Is the imaginative, right hemisphere activated collectively in a 500-year cycle? Can dreams contain some useful information inaccessible to the waking consciousness?

The temples of Asclepius served as ancient medical institutions. After a preliminary purification, the patients slept at the altar of the god who appeared to them in their dreams and revealed the therapy prescribed by the priest. Long before the patient begins to feel ill, various color forms can be observed in the dream consciousness affecting the organ that will become sick (a black serpent bites into the kidney, say). Not only the location, but also the character of the impending illness could be deduced from these colors and forms. It can be diagnosed at the level of the soul before the corresponding organic changes detectable by instruments take place. We have positron tomography worth millions, but we make no use of dreams, which are free.

It sounds quite reasonable that deeper layers of our consciousness might tell us some-

thing about the state of our own body. But could they also inform us about the nature of reality around us? Could a required herb simply appear to the patient in a dream? In a similar manner, animals are able to discern and find medicaments, which can help them (zoopharmacognosy). In doing so, they do not use rational thinking – they are constantly in a state akin to a dream.

What is the true meaning of the word *symbol*? The rose is the symbol of love. A true symbol contains real knowledge. Phenylethyl alcohol is the major and characteristic constituent of rose scent. It is a chemical compound closely related to phenylethylamine, the molecule of love, which is synthesized by the limbic system when one falls in love.

Let us take a Greek myth. Endymion, for example, is the lover of the moon goddess; he is forever young and always asleep. Experts in religious studies find it to be no more than pure fantasy. In fact, there is biochemical knowledge encrypted there. Silver is a metal sacred to lunar deities. Silver rejuvenates and accelerates regeneration. It is used for the revivification of tissues. However, it also induces vivid imagination and sleepiness (Selawry 1966).

Or the myth about Aphrodite, born of sea foam on the shores of Cyprus. The metal sacred to Aphrodite is copper, which was mined in Cyprus in antiquity. Again, experts in religious studies do not see anything more than an accidental association here. As a matter of fact, copper cannot be described in a word any better than by describing it as the metal of love. The functions of copper in the body are very closely associated with emotional

experience and the hormones of pleasure. The copper level in blood goes up and down along with the female sex hormone estrogen; there is more copper in the blood of women than men; and during pregnancy copper levels even rise threefold (Pelikan 1981).

How can old myths contain knowledge that is being discovered today only by virtue of advanced analytical chemistry and molecular biology? Could our ancestors have discovered it by means of some simple experiment or accidental experience? Yet until now it has been said that priests and alchemists assigned metals to spiritual archetypes on the basis of their manifest qualities. Iron is hard and firm, it is suitable for the production of weapons and tools. So let it be the metal of men, the metal of the god Mars. Copper is beautiful and amenable (malleable), has an interesting color and appeals to the emotions. Apart from gold, all the other metals are greyish. Copper makes for beautiful minerals as well. So let it be the metal of women, the metal of the goddess of love and beauty. Silver can mirror objects better than any other metal. So let it be the metal of the goddess of imagination – Luna – with her silvery shine.

Suppose our ancestors reasoned in this (erroneous) way based on magical analogies. How then is it possible that it resulted in correct conclusions about the inner effects of these metals? Suppose they experimented with the inner effects. How then is it possible that these effects have external analogies? Why should a metal that is beautiful from a physical and mineralogical point of view be the one that has a psychophysiological part to play in the experience of beauty and falling

in love? How can the physical attribute of silver to mirror and create images be related to the fact that when applied internally it arouses the imagination? How come physically strong iron strengthens the will and makes it in fact more active? The iron level of blood is characteristically higher in men than in women. But the ancient Greeks could not have known anything about the structure of haemoglobin, whose core consists of an atom of iron. Is this mere coincidence?

These are facts that lie completely beyond the way modern science thinks. But in the logic of the ancient doctrine of signatures, they appear as self-evident. According to this doctrine, the Maker gave us one herb for every illness and marked it with indicators for man to recognize what he could use them for. A renaissance medicineman could have contemplated herbs in the following way: a herb is like myself. It is threefold like man, only turned upside-down. The root is like the head; the rhythmically formed stem with leaves resembles the human chest; and flower is the sex organ. These three parts of the plant will cure the corresponding parts of the body. For example, if the nervous system or the metabolic system interferes too much with the rhythmic system, they disturb its regular pulse and so it needs to be strengthened. The rhythmic system dominates the other systems in some herbs. Not even the flower can stop the ongoing growth of the stem in these herbs – on the contrary, growth draws the flower into a neat rhythm. Such a herb teaches one's heart to beat regularly. The Lily of the Valley, Foxglove, Motherwort really do contain the cardioactive glycosides convallatoxin, digitoxin and leonurin

used as cardiotonics. Many such herbs can be recognized at a glance.

Today, the doctrine of signatures is regarded as utter superstition. The similarity between the temporal rhythm (of the heartbeat) and the spatial rhythm (the leaves on the stem) is an analogy that does not involve any causal connection. There is no reason to associate them. However, man unburdened by science saw that they are related. His chest is the only part of the body where everything constantly pulsates in a temporal rhythm of heartbeat and breath. At the same time, it is the part of the body that is spatially organized into a rhythm of ribs and vertebrae. Here before his very eyes was a palpable transition of the temporal to a spatial rhythm. It was enough simply to look at one's own self!

The herbal stem evolved along the same geological timeline as the spine; the rib cage along with the branching out of the stem into leaves; the heart and the cardiovascular system evolved at the same time as vascular plants with their circulatory system. This parallel evolution took place in the older Paleozoic era. Are they really not interrelated? Not only their form and function is analogical, but they also came about at the same time. According to science, they cannot be interrelated: after all, a stem is not a spine and they have no common genes inherited from any ancestor. There is an abyss in terms of evolution between man and plant so that they cannot be homological in structure. And yet they are similar. The rhythmical green of the leaves with the stem constitute a respiratory and circulatory system much like the human chest with the heart – and they

also contain many similar compounds (porphyrins, glycosides). The flower is the reproductive organ of the plant and contains many compounds associated with sex in humans (phytoestrogens, essential oils and pigments). Thus, herbs with a rich flowerage can serve in this way. Finally, many compounds similar to those in the human head can be found in the root. These include alkaloids that serve as neurotransmitters in humans, and that is why they affect the nervous system. What are they doing in the plant's root? Only in the last decade have scientists gathered evidence that the vegetal root is an organ comparable to the brain of lower animals. Root cells are very active sensorially and electrically; information about the environment is processed, computations and decisions about the plant's further behavior take place there. A new sub-branch has come into existence: plant neurobiology. Thus, the science of the 21st century arrived at something anew that has been known intuitively to others for centuries. Of course, the old intuitive wisdom did not provide us with the amount of detailed and precise information that modern science does. But would not cooperation with intuition (instead of its suppression) make science more advanced? Anthroposophic pharmacy has built upon the threefold analogy of man and plant for a century already – why can it not be debated at universities?

Let us reflect upon this statement: "The butterfly is a flower that took wings" (Skácel 2005, 78).

Or this one: "Behold the plant: it is a butterfly fettered by the earth. Behold the butterfly: it is a plant freed by the cosmos" (Steiner 1993,

73).

These are the words of a poet and a prophet. It is an aesthetically perceived truth. This poetic image, nevertheless, is not arbitrary, but has a deeper justification. A kind of exact metaphor. The prophet, poet and scientist come to a rare agreement here. Especially since we know that butterflies and flowering plants evolved together via co-evolution at the turn of the Jurassic and Cretaceous periods.

How did it happen? Allegedly, plants developed conspicuous flowers to lure insects. Insects pollinate them and get nectar in exchange. It is nothing more than trading that involves those two parties and nobody else. Besides, the butterfly mimics the flower in order to avoid being spotted and devoured by a predator. This is the perspective of the Darwinian biologist. Does anybody have a better explanation?

The sophiologist thinks as follows. When I entered puberty, an entirely new mental reality or entity took me over. That entity or being was once known as the archangel of Venus, Anael. Strong feelings arose in me similar to inner colors. My skin darkened with a stronger pigmentation. And my body began to differ visibly from the other sex. The same creative power ruled nature during a certain period in Earth's evolution (in the Mesozoic). Therefore, all nature burst forth with colors and feelings at that time. The emotional brain of birds and mammals came into being. Sexual dimorphism was accentuated. A flamboyant beauty of crests, frill-necks, tails, feathers and flowers was produced by a multitude of animals and plants, including those pollinated by the wind and fungi that needed no

pollination by insects. I grew until I reached adulthood. Sexual maturity terminated my growth in height and caused moderate bone growth in width. Likewise, the flower (reproductive organ) terminated the longitudinal growth of the stem and spread its petals outwards. A long, green and segmented caterpillar lived at the stem, fed on leaves and grew. It metamorphosed upon sexual maturity: it stopped growing, acquired colours and spread its wings like flower petals, around which it flies in the form of a butterfly.

When I fell in love, I felt a lightness and wished to soar and fly. I began to sing and play a musical instrument. When I saw my beloved, my pupils dilated, my heart began to beat, and heat flowed through my chest. I ate little. That is why birds sing and fly. They are the offspring of Venus. Avian physiology is permanently accommodated to the state that humans experience only in moments of amour. They possess hot blood, an accelerated heartbeat, large eyes, enlarged sex glands, a short digestive tract, colorful feathers, developed vocal cords. Birds live in couples and take care of their young. They are always in love and enthused in beauty (Páleš 2012, 894–933).

In this way the sophiologist covers a lot of facts with one intuitive glance. By means of an archetype derived from one's own being he can link them together and at the same time relate to them in an intimate way. The Darwinist needs a lot of cumbersome *ad hoc* explanations to explain all those facts one by one, as if they were not inter-related. Thereupon he is silent about their

synchronicity and the meaningful coherence within one archetype. Why did vocal cords, warm-bloodedness, and an emotional brain evolve simultaneously in birds and mammals if they represent two evolutionary branches separated long ago? Why would birds grow beautiful together with flowers if they do not pollinate them? Why would the larch join in and bloom with red cones if it does not need pollinators? Why would plants begin to generate heat just when animals became warm-blooded? A long line of facts that fit together as pieces in a meaningful mosaic as soon as we admit that all nature was permeated by one creative spiritual impulse which is in us, too. And they break down into a number of barely comprehensible coincidences if we want to explain them by reductionist bottom-up causation.

It was only at the threshold of the 21st century that evolutionary biology ploddingly came to realize that the wing came about as a result of love, and warmth is related to emotional attachments. A hundred years long, discussion took place over whether the wing could evolve gradually, since tiny wings do not enable flight and constitute no evolutionary advantage. The wing was the fan of love that allowed birds to charm one another during mating rituals. It grew with enamouredness until birds were able to free themselves from the ground and take off.

Language itself expresses the connection between heat and devoted, warm relationships with such words as *ardour* and *fervecy*. Every young girl can tell me where heat originates. Only the evolutionary biologist is the last to find out. Through tedious work

with facts he learned that warm-bloodedness evolved in connection with emotional bonds and parental care. Warm-blooded animals are good parents. In these and many more cases, sound intuition could have guided the researcher without straying straight towards the end.

Similarly, everybody knows that one's voice is an expression of the soul. When rejoicing, we start to sing; but we also cry out when we get a fright. A person unencumbered by education understands that a frog seeing a stork cries out because it is scared. And when the frog finds itself in the stork's beak, it sends out a dramatic shrill that every soul immediately understands to be an expression of panic. For the Darwinist mind, a great puzzle starts here: why does the frog cry? Perhaps it will attract a secondary predator who will scare away the stork – that is why frogs that do not send out distress calls are no longer here. And why does it draw attention to itself when it is not otherwise taken any notice of? The frog is not such a social animal that it would gain some genetic advantage by dying while warning its fellow frogs. It is simply a mystery. This soulless view of nature is something appalling. The nightingale does not sing for his mate because he loves her – he is simply genetically programmed like a mechanical gadget issuing a sound. Ecology will acquire a deeper dimension only when we start protecting nature for more than its economic merit alone. Not until we tell our children that nature has an inwardness, too; and it is the soul of man and his own feelings and desires that flow through nature and reside there in the form of animals.

Let us consider Comenius' thesis that a part resembles its whole. The renaissance mind believed the world to have a fractal structure: wholes are mirrored and scaled down in their parts, and parts reflect the wholes. Take the human body, for example. It is a microcosm, a condensed image of the whole cosmos. The twelve signs of the Zodiac beginning with the Ram and ending with Pisces shape the human body from the head down to the heels. A drawing by Girolamo Cardano from 1658 depicts the twelve signs also assigned to the head alone. The head is a complete man folded up into a sphere. All the principles shaping the body repeat themselves once more in the head. Is this a productive way of thinking? (Cardano 1658)

The upper part of the skull is the very head of the head where the mental faculties are centered. The middle part of the face corresponds to the chest (for instance, the nose facilitates breathing). And the lower part is connected with the belly (the mouth with digestion). The jaws are the limbs of the head: the upper jaw represents the hands, the lower one the legs. They are the executive organs with big muscles enabling the head to grasp objects. The number of fingers on the limbs corresponds approximately to the teeth. The joint of the jaws is actually the hip joint. The eyes are the kidneys; the mouth matches the sexual organs. The azygous thyroid gland is mirrored by the pituitary gland, the didymous adrenals by the lacrimal glands, and the sex glands by the salivary glands.

The Chinese developed acupuncture and also pondered the human body as a fractal. The whole body scaled down is mirrored

in acupuncture microsystems – on the head, on the ear, on the soles of the feet. Indeed, the acupuncture microsystem of the head corresponds with all that mentioned above: the reflex points of the head are on the forehead, the points of the torso are around the nose, and the limb points are on the jaws. The hands are on the cheek bones, the legs on the lower jaw. Chinese culture and western astrology arrived at the same result independent of each other (Růžička 1999, 35).

Is this speculation only? Today we are learning that these organs are also often akin histologically or linked functionally. The pituitary controls the thyroid gland; kidney diseases are correlated to eye diseases. The lacrimal glands not only adjoin the eyes like the adrenal glands adjoin the kidneys as regards their position, but they also communicate with each other and secrete the same stress hormones. The salivary glands not only end in the mouth in a similar manner to the sex glands in the genitals, but they also produce sex hormones and manifest sexual dimorphism in animals.

The concept that the head is a miniaturized man breaks the contemporary theoretical framework about the origin of man. Modern theory refuses to look at the body plan as a platonic idea that should repeat itself elsewhere on a smaller scale. It regards the body as a mosaic of organs – each one of them arose for a different specific purpose. Such theory must therefore close its eyes to the aforementioned affinities as if they did not exist. Why do the lacrimal glands concern themselves with the kidneys if their purpose is nothing more than to moisten the eyes?

What do the salivary glands produce sex hormones for if they are to help in the digestion of food only? After all, we do not reproduce by mouth! Nevertheless, every layman intuitively perceives these affinities between the trunk and the head. Everybody knows what kissing on the lips means – it represents the thought of sexual intercourse. Everybody knows that eyes are a “window to the soul”, much like the kidneys are closely associated with the psyche. Everybody has experienced emotion that makes not only the adrenal glands secrete their substances, but also the eyes shed tears. Everybody can guess that the heart of the head is on the forehead between the eyebrows where Indian women wear a red dot.

All thoughts become deeds and the distorted theories of man are always being transferred to distorted social practice, too. For instance, genetic determinism steered us toward eugenics and concentration camps. It went on to be taught at universities until the end of the 20th century in spite of the fact that it logically leads ultimately to Nazism, which we have already condemned. It has been strongly suggested that DNA is a program containing unambiguous instructions according to which the human body is built and operates. Everything up to the psyche begins from a sequence of amino acids in the DNA chain. All of us, however, get a randomly shuffled sequence at conception.

Scientists have observed a simultaneity of psychological states with levels of certain substances in the blood. Hence they have come to the conclusion that psychological states are *caused* by these substances.

The same states can be induced by the administering of these substances, too. In reality, they had a second choice though: that on the contrary, the psyche *effects* the synthesis of these substances. And spiritual experimentation could prove that man can control their levels by a decision of the will. Further, scientists have observed connections between certain genes and diseases. Hence they concluded that disease was *caused* by a gene, and so it is incurable since nobody can change their genome. Causation was directed only from the genome to everything else, not vice versa. A killer presumably had a gene that decreases the level of serotonin in his brain and causes aggression. If we had to be consistent, the court would have to admit that the killer is not to be blamed because it is a mere chemical chain reaction triggered by the killer gene. He should be absolved of guilt as not being *sui juris*.

Why has that not been followed by anybody? Because this scientific concept deeply contradicts moral intuition and first-hand experience when making free decisions. Scientists have entirely omitted the dimension of moral will from the whole of reality. Had they experimented with this dimension – as various saints and ascetics have – they would have discovered that man can resist and overcome his instincts and the urge of his hormones, and no drug can impel man to act against his moral convictions. Thanks to self-mastery, even bad genes do not manifest themselves.

Only at the end of the 20th century did this view begin to change at last. A new sub-branch of science emerged – epigenetics. We are now beginning to understand that DNA

is not a controlling program and that causation is bi-directional. The body as a whole makes decisions and chooses which genes are expressed or put to sleep. Sleeping genes are marked by methyl groups or otherwise. It is not only the genome that causes man, but man also regulates his own genome. He can pass a modified genome on to his descendants. But all of us who drew attention to this fact were persecuted as Lamarckists up until recently. Departure from the official version was sufficient proof that we were wrong. However, what we were saying derived from experience and science committed a methodological mistake: it departed from the whole and completely ignored the one dimension of reality (moral intuition and religious experience). Thereby, two seemingly equipollent alternatives arose in regard to how to interpret sensory observations. Scientists chose the materially aligned alternative. This choice *was not* scientific – it followed neither from observations nor from rational reasoning. It was a subconscious suggestion.

However, there is an intelligent intent manifested within these and other suggestions, in spite of their subconscious nature. Apparently, our moral weaknesses are intertwined with what we are used to assuming is the truth. It was after all very pleasant to Aryanize and seize the assets of the Jew (whose genes can no longer be improved). To inform a patient that his disease is rooted in his unalterable genetics means acquiring a life-long customer in need of medicaments who will no longer search for a path to recovery. In short, our science is godless, non-Christian and often co-inspired by demons; in this

case, by the demons of mechanicism and reductionism.

The same situation holds sway in the historical and social sciences. If we were to delve into ourselves and discover our inner worlds, the layers of the collective sub- and supra-conscious with their laws and archetypes – we would grasp and understand the motive forces of history from within. Self-knowledge would give us the key to the hidden causes of history.

If I delve into the adolescent frame of mind, I will soon make sense of mesozoic nature as well as the whole spirit of the 13th century. Why cathedrals were strewn with stained glass rosettes reminiscent of peacock tails, etherealized and hovering above the ground. Why Europe was crisscrossed by troubadours extolling love in their poems. Why one's outer appearance started to be so important, and why male and female fashion diversified so conspicuously. Why people dressed like birds – wearing high headdresses, long trains, winged sleeves, colored tassels and bells. The culmination of revolutionary events can be naturally understood from an adolescent frame of mind revolting against the authorities. I can also guess why during periods charged by such erotic intensity people regularly took an interest in the sciences based on polarity – electromagnetism and chemistry. Knowing that passion and sex hormones terminate growth and weaken the immune system, I can see why people at that time were short and stricken by epidemics. The golden age of mysticism and heraldry – all that begins to make sense in this light. The Gothic Age was the puberty

of the West (Páleš 2012, 708–873).

Extrovert historical science rather does not reckon with human inwardness or considers it to be essentially the same in every era. The origin of these waves of mentality and whole cultural epochs then remains abstruse and elusive. Since historical science was methodologically blind to the perception of the spirit unifying the entire character of an era, it tries to break it down and explain it in pieces via external causes: geographic, climatic, economic, demographic. In doing so, space is created for a great number of conflicting assumptions that are difficult to verify. This is comparable to somebody ignorant of Kepler's laws and believing that a specific explanation must be found for the movement of every planet.

Backward inferences are made from concealed assumptions: if people were in revolt, presumably a climatic change and crop failure had taken place. Shorter stature hints at a food shortage. In hard times, mysticism also flourishes because people escape into dream worlds. The troubadour sang and composed poems apparently to win over the wealthy heiress of the manor. Heraldry arose from the prosaic reason that kings were illiterate and used pictures as their signature. Electricity and magnetic poles were discovered by chance. Birdlike fashion was a mere irrational fancy. The pandemics of plague were caused simply by bacteria and unsanitary conditions. A logical component of the value system in such an era was the cult of the woman. This cult was manifested, *inter alia*, in the fact that queens sat upon thrones three times more often than in other times. But historians have

lost sight of the overall picture and look for causes in local and temporary factors only. Such explanations are often casual, sometimes quite mistaken, other times partially justifiable, but always incomplete. Women allegedly seized power because men left for the Crusades and somebody had to govern domestic affairs. But a closer look reveals that by far the most queens were exactly where all the men went – the Levant. Contrary to what historians espouse, the feminine antipole dynamised and motivated men in combat. They put a crown on the head of their *anima*, the feminine being that appears inwardly to the adolescent male and points him toward his higher self and which was extolled by the troubadours as their spiritual mistress and lover. The incompleteness of this explanation is quite evident from the fact that women simultaneously sat upon the thrones across all of Asia, which did not take part in the Crusades. The proportion of women on a throne doubled or tripled every 500 years before and after, from ancient Egypt up to today (see Fig. 3). Neither can this be caused by the Crusades.

Romanticisms resembling a worldwide puberty recur roughly every half a millennium. The old doctrine about angels saw a connection between human biography and history: the same seven archangels that guide us during particular developmental stages inspire history in the same sequence and over a 500-year cycle. Developmental psychology and history can be unified. Surprisingly many things can be understood about the Baroque from the traits of children's psyche. The psychology of the school age is further able to explain why the Enlightenment followed

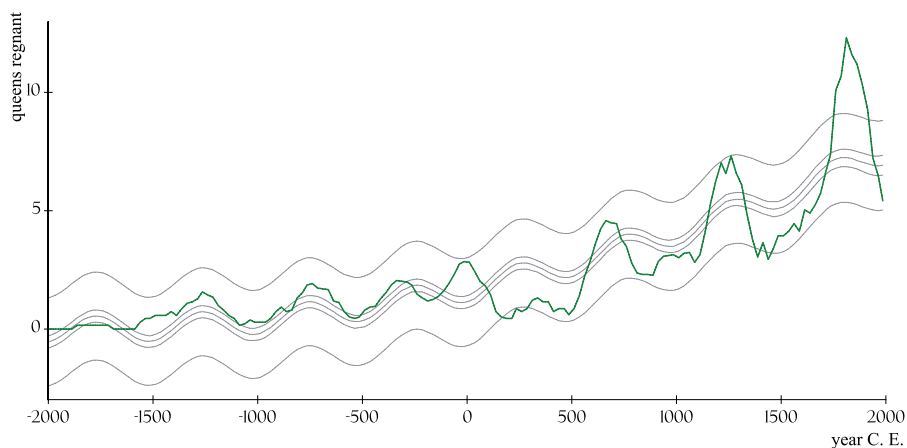


Figure 3.

The number of queens regnant in every quarter century since 2000 B. C. E. until today (green line). There lived 390 queens regnant known to world history (Gordon 2005). Apparent is a significant periodicity of 500 or more years (grey line) culminating around the years 1250, 750, 250 B. C. E. and 250, 750, 1250, 1750 C. E. The odds of pure chance are less than 1 to 3000. The number of women ascending royal thrones doubled or tripled every 500 years together with recurrent eras of romanticism.

with its emphasis on reason. Romanticism occurred like puberty with its awakening of the feelings. Adulthood brought the imperative of sovereignty of the individual and the whole world went over to democracies. The timing of the world wars coincided with a midlife crisis, and at present we are heading towards a conservative age with the traits of a senescent psyche.

This sounds ridiculously simple and improbable at first to an expert. But the plain fact is that angelology is the oldest and best philosophy of history, and in accordance with the modern standards of science, too. It can clearly not explain everything, but it captures some deep layer of history from where periodic fluctuations of mentality emerge. It has the explanatory power to elucidate a great many phenomena via a few principles. It successfully makes long-term predictions that nobody has been able to do until now. This is even though contemporary sociology, anthropology and religious studies do not know and likewise never learn about it. Their

blindness is paradigmatic. It is a vicious circle, a self-hypnosis of thought within one framework that is continually confirmed because it examines itself – what is beyond this framework is not examined and therefore neither is it confirmed because it is unthinkable in advance. Despite mathematically evident cycles in history, universities everywhere teach that they do not exist. They do not exist because they have not been found because nobody is looking for them.

Johannes Trithemius (1462–1516), the abbot of the Sponheim monastery, was one of the last to be acquainted with this doctrine of time spirits and who wrote about it. He writes, for example, that along with Oriphiel, the archangel of Saturn, there have been recurring tendencies that unify the world into one single monarchy and build giant monuments like the Tower of Babel. This cycle is a matter of fact. Over corresponding time periods, political centralization takes place and states merge into bigger units under the leadership of absolute monarchs stand-

ing atop a bureaucratic pyramid. All this takes place within the spirit of conservatisms, traditionalism, hierarchical respect and obedience. Besides this, giant monuments of stone are built as symbols of enduring values that should outlast eternity. It is the rhythm of pyramids and megaliths (Trithemius 1508).

Only Trithemius had no information about the history of non-European countries, nor about the long past cultures of Europe, let alone any notion of their dates that were only obtained in the 20th century by radiocarbon method. So how could he know? He knew the seasons of the spirit. A Benedictine monk knows nothing about radiocarbon, but meditating in his monastic cell he discovers the laws of the inner worlds. I wrote on the basis of Trithemius' cycle in 1998 that stone circles like Stonehenge were most likely built in the 26th century B. C. That differed from the then recognized dating by 400 to 600 years. Only in 2007 did British universities thoroughly inspect Stonehenge again and announce that a mistake had been made. The most impressive phase of construction took place in the 26th century B. C. Both dating and the social context of the structure have been confirmed – it had to do with the unification and centralization of prehistoric Britain. Previous samples for radiocarbon analysis had been taken from an incorrect layer. The material and the spiritual dimension of knowledge must interlock like a crossword puzzle. If archeologists had worked with both dimensions, the disharmony of the two would have warned them of having found something unlikely (Pearson 2012).

The construction of great walls also fits into the same rhythm. Namely, it concerns an introverted, obsessive-compulsive psychological structure that craves constancy, security, certainty, order and structure, and which comes to the fore at the end of life in an individual biography. Civilizations of this kind used to isolate themselves, fortifying themselves against chaotic foreign elements (barbarians) with a wall. Inside, they built a highly organized, perfectly ordered and rigid, slowed-down civilization. Throughout the history of nature such eras have occurred for instance in the Permian and in the Oligocene, when everything grew bone-like structures en masse; animals like the tortoise originate in these periods. We are dealing here with civilizations that became tortoise-like.

A historian finds it easy to explain the origins of the Great Wall of China: its construction was provoked by nomadic raids. He can conclusively attest to this with a primary source where the emperor orders the wall's construction with the express words "in order to avert further incursions of the nomads". Nevertheless, an integral view reveals something else. Let us take all the constructions of great walls and all the raids known to history. Yes, they do correlate, but there is an even stronger correlation with something else. The coefficient of determination between raids and walls is 14%. But it is 33% with such phenomena as monasticism, the blooming of historiography and centralization of power. A compulsive psychological structure (introversion, the urge to order and control) is involved in wall construction twice as much when compared to a violent psychological structure (aggression, asociality, conflict).

The residual 53% are unknown factors.

Great walls arise when external events (raids) meet an inner reality (a compulsive psychological structure). By no means does the construction of a wall logically follow from raids alone. Heroic people like the Aztecs, who respected bravery in hand-to-hand combat as the highest value, would deem it appropriate to attack, while skulking cowardly behind a wall would not occur to them even in a dream. The emperor mentions raids explicitly because that was the immediate, new, external stimulus. He did not speak about the disposition of the Chinese character because that is unconscious and automatic. It can, however, be inferred from the Chinese way of life, but it does not need to be expressed explicitly. The deep, implicit structural cause thus drops out of the written document. Every historical event has both of these two dimensions – the outer and the inner. As the historian is not able to systematically grasp this inner dimension and work with it, he focuses chiefly on the outward aspect of events – and the inner halves of world events are therefore assumed more or less subliminally and arbitrarily. In light of integral sophiology, such historiography is not a science, but rather a half-science.

Let us take the *menhir* as a final example. The menhir is a prehistoric, erected stone about which virtually nothing is known. It is more difficult to date than anything else. We have no information about the faith and social structure of the people who erected them. Outer information is completely lacking and menhirs stand here like a Rorschach figure subject to the projection of manifold

concepts. It has been said that menhirs were funerary steles and part of ancestor worship. But there are no graves beneath menhirs, so this was only a projection of known burial customs that came much later. Any Freudian has an explanation at hand – it is a phallic symbol (along with all other elongated objects in the world). It is a fertility cult. Other conjectures say that a menhir indicated ritual sacrificial sites; that it was a territorial boundary-stone; a prestigious symbol of the mighty and wealthy; it could serve as a calendar or for orientation purposes as a beacon. But there is no evidence for any of these hypotheses that would enable us to judge between them. So what to do about it?

Myths around the globe speak of the creation of man by solar powers. They endowed us with a spiritual spark that made us erect and capable of thinking, self-reflection and moral judgment. The solar gods personify truth, wisdom, and the light of knowledge. According to angelology, Michael, the leader of the solar powers, becomes the major spirit of time every 2500 years. This is intersubjective knowledge because Indians discovered it independently. Buddha, the Awakened or Enlightened One, is identified with the Sun by the Indians. And Gautama Buddha himself says that he is neither the first nor the last Buddha, but Buddhas appear every 25 centuries in those very periods known in Christianity as the time of the Sun archangel, Michael.

By an inner law, rectilinear, upright, radial forms pertain to the Michaelic state of the soul. First, we experience knowledge as an inner light. Second, we know by intuition that the power that makes us erect has to

do with straightness of character. The same power that straightened our backbone inspired us with a moral essence and dignity. The column in various forms has in fact been regularly associated with sun cults, periods of a blooming in philosophy and democratic constitutions that placed the dignity and self-determination of every individual above all else. The obelisk stood in the solar temples of Egypt symbolizing a petrified sun-beam or the sun god Ra himself. The column dominated the architecture of the Greeks during their era of flourishing philosophy and democracy. The Rayonnant Gothic of the Middle Ages was contemporaneous to High Scholasticism and the formation of aristocratic parliaments. Finally, in the last Michaelic age from the end of the 19th century, the obelisk returned in the form of the modern skyscraper. Was it not also that the menhir reminded prehistoric man of his human nature and the dignity that has advanced him beyond the animals?

In this way, the menhir can be understood from what we ourselves are doing here and now. Even this hypothesis is not complete until it matches the outer evidence, which is still missing. But it is preferable to all others because it is not based on sheer arbitrariness. It requires agreement with the inwardly observed shapes of the spirit and formulates an empirical thesis that is falsifiable (it predicts flourishing epochs of this architectural element). So it relies at least on something more than nothing. The menhir, obelisk, and column are actually the spine; or more precisely, they represent that power of the soul, which encourages us to stand erect.

Many things from the history of architecture can be understood in this way from within. The rationalist Enlightenment created neo-classic architecture where everything is strictly bilaterally symmetric – because it is a projection of the nervous system that reflects the bilateral symmetry of the body. The consumerist Baroque appeared together with philosophical materialism and ethical hedonism, and it takes its inspiration from nothing but asymmetric ovals similar to the forms of the abdominal organs. Romanticisms love bright colors that are best represented by gothic rose windows – in the same way as pigments are coupled with sexuality in the body. Spherical, circular shapes can be found where the most intense ossification process in the body takes place – and so rigid bureaucratic absolutisms also enjoy arches and domes. In other words, the history of architecture can be integrated with anatomy.

7 Incentives for pedagogy

Human memory functions by associating things, making connections between them, and engraves them on the mind in proportion to their emotional importance. Things in context and those that are personally meaningful can be easily remembered. You may forget the name *Archibald*, but not if you associate it with the image of a bow and remember that you practiced archery on the day you made the acquaintance of a person with this name. It requires an effort to remember a series of numbers and yet one week later it will be forgotten. But a day spent with your first love will remain etched on your mind forever. It is totally against the nature of memory to

memorize, say, a telephone directory.

Accordingly, memorization drops off whenever things are interconnected by meaningful relationships. This is exactly what sophiology does to the greatest extent. Not only is it unnecessary to remember, but more than that, it is impossible to forget. For I understand the world by means of what takes place here and now and always within my own soul. Understanding replaces memory. One can learn mathematics by memorizing lots of formulae. But a good mathematician does not need memory at all. He remembers no formula, but he can derive it any time he needs. He can deduce it from a kind of inner necessity that is inside him and cannot be forgotten. Imagine that we would be able to understand history or natural science in the same way.

When giving lectures, I find that the audience remembers virtually nothing from their school history, chemistry or biology lessons. In as much as they perceive the issues as a disconnected list of information that means nothing to them personally.

In literature and music appreciation, a pupil may learn that there were great poets and composers around the year 1800; in art education he may see some landscape painting from the same era; in history he may hear about the lives of some national revivalists who rebelled at that time because of something; in psychology he learns about the psychological lability of teenagers; in zoology, that animals signal their readiness to mate by coloration and thus propagate their genes; and finally in chemistry, he troubles himself with the fact that copper is a metal belonging

to the first group in the periodic table, having the atomic number 29. Or in physics that Fraunhofer invented the spectroscope at that time. So much stuff to learn! He may have no idea that he is learning something eight times in eight subjects that is overlapping in content and can be subsumed under a single idea. Neither can he see why this should be of interest to him.

Until he comes to realize that the soul of that era was fuelled by the same ideals, desires and visions from which he is right then experiencing his own personal conflict with his parents and surrounding society. He understands from within of his own soul why they rebelled, what they felt, what motives stirred them. He understands what their poems and songs were about. Through the mirror of history he can get to know his own soul more objectively and learn about other people struggling for the same goals long before him and how it turned out. Without memorization, he can recognize the then style of painting by knowing that strong feelings transpose themselves into deep colors in arts, along with an increased interest in the color spectrum and discoveries in the physics of light. Animals in love also adorn themselves with colors and all the while copper is activated within their physiology.

By combining external facts with inner realities, three things take place. Firstly, facts rearrange themselves and interrelate in a way that can be easily remembered. Secondly, the student is motivated by relating more intimately to facts that cease to be boring. And thirdly, knowledge gains a vertical, moral dimension and becomes a vocation. The student can see

how all social institutions and events stem from the inner world of man, while every era prefers a different type of thought and sentiment. He knows from his own inner life that every power of the soul can be cultivated or can deteriorate through the decision of one's own will. Love can evolve into a just, selfless feeling and artistic creativity, but it can also degenerate into a mean, self-seeking carnal instinct. It will induce accord in the former case and corruption in the latter. It is a moral challenge. Romanticism, as an era borne by the power of love, faced this challenge: some managed to constructively transform it into a rare creativity, while with others it degenerated into mere erotic dreaming and devastating revolutions. As the personality is born in puberty by adopting certain ideals and defining oneself against the authorities, so Europe struggled for personal freedom and respect for the human personality as such. Napoleon came to be a great commander because he allied himself with the mission to spread this achievement of the great French Revolution across the world. The Napoleonic civil code became a lasting component of our law.

The student can see that every era – including the present one – has a mission for which he is co-responsible. A young man or woman cannot complete his or her individuation, cannot healthily develop mentally unless he or she finds a meaningful task to struggle for. If the world operates automatically on the basis of demographic, economic and other external causes, and man is only to slot somewhere into the cycle of production and consumption, so one may simply commit suicide immediately.

The same is true in relation to nature. If it operates automatically as a chemical chain reaction or a genetic machine, I can only worry and pay. Yet I establish an entirely different relationship with my kidney when I understand that it is not a mere excretory organ, but an organ carrying and mirroring my feelings and interpersonal relationships. It starts me wondering about the mysterious process taking place in my renal calyces. Therefore, the health condition of my kidneys passes into my own hands, into the sphere of my own personal freedom but also responsibility. My damaged kidney is not only the job of my physician who has to repair it or replace it like a radiator in an automobile service station.

A graduate in such education acquires awareness about how ethics is embedded within the nature of things. Moral powers literally hold together every atom of our body, as well as every community. He starts to regard total ethical relativists as mentally disturbed, dissociated personalities who have lost connection to the realities of life. Allegedly, opinions differ and we cannot find out which one is better. But the inevitable consequences of these opinions are such that all of us agree whether or not they are good or bad. Every opinion, attitude or state of the soul materializes. Everybody expects the right to have opinions, but some opinions inevitably lead to war and nobody wants to die. Everybody mentally experiences whatever he likes – but some mental states lead to illness and nobody wants to be ill. Say, for example, I will give up mentally, I will stop setting myself future goals that create an inner warmth in me by sacrificing to them – then my immunity

will weaken, tumors will appear and I will die. If I take away the vision from a community, it will decay morally and disintegrate; eventually every member will lose every advantage that was provided through cooperation.

The integrality of education goes hand in hand with the birth of independent individuality and creativity. We have entered a knowledge-based society where the main asset guaranteeing the future is the creative potential of man. The fact that the creativity of great individuals strongly correlates to their versatility is part of the fundamental knowledge of historiometry (Kaufman and Sternberg 2010, 176). Versatile people retain their freshness, interest and developmental capability longer. The promotion of child prodigies and their specialization from an early age is a quite mistaken practice because these children will collapse mentally once they become adults. Versatility has a fertile future, while specialization is the final terminus of evolution. This law applies to the individual and society, as well as nature. Highly specialized animal species succeed in a certain environment, but they are incapable of further development and will soon become extinct. Less specialized species that have retained a more versatile physique are the bearers of future evolution. The same thing applies to nations at the level of the soul. Some nations have achieved extraordinary success by dint of pronounced special faculties, but have therefore also grown old and petrified. Younger, more docile nations outpace them.

We are talking about education for independent judgment, but which is slowly ceasing to be possible in our system of truth.

Namely, we believe that the specialist holds the truth. Small groups of experts understand ever smaller parts of the world. In the end, it holds that no particular thing can be judged by the overwhelming majority of people and the whole can not be judged by anyone at all. Moreover, these experts constantly make mistakes, contradict each other and succumb to corruption. It is necessary to take a different view of the truth. A specialist does not bear the truth, but merely some partial information torn from the whole. The truth is something entirely different – it is a viable synthesis. The truth must be won and earned by every layman in his own effort to arrive at a responsible and meaningful synthesis of particulars. Only through this effort is an independent ability to orientate oneself born, as well as an intuition that indicates when the recommendations of experts are biased and there is therefore no need to follow them. Let us not steer our children away from intuition, but rather let us cultivate and strengthen it, for a man who acts upon external information only and sets himself no goals from within is a vane in the winds of advertisements and propaganda.

To this day, the word *university* resounds with the ideal of universality that the founders of universities in the High Middle Ages believed in. Our education is being Americanized and is distancing itself from this goal. We are educating a single-purpose Fordian man whose task is merely to take over and carry out instructions, not to understand or discover something independently. He becomes spiritually non-self-governing, manipulable and dependent. He cannot be morally responsible for anything. Along with universal-

ity, we are losing our humanity. It is necessary to say frankly: either universal education and democracy – or neither of the two.

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About the author

RNDr. Emil Páleš, CSc. (1966) is the founding member and head of the Sophia foundation for integral studies in Slovakia, School of sophiology and former editor-in-chief of the Sophia journal. He is researching the timepatterns of creativity and paradigm-changes in individual psychology, world history and evolution of nature. His work bridges over ancient religious traditions with modern science. It is a continuation of the Slavic tradition of sophiology – which is an effort to synthesize different sources of knowledge (senses, reason and intuition).

His email contact is info@sophia.sk.

ON YOGA IN GENERAL

Květoslav Minařík

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ABSTRACT

The problem of a happy or unhappy life is an emotional problem. As, from the point of view of yoga, this problem has to be resolved as the first, Yama is prescribed as the first step towards the yogic training. Yama means the discipline of emotion. By the help of it, happiness is literally “produced”. We wish the readers of this article to find in it clues which will help them to solve questions and problems on their path to perfect themselves.

Key words

Yoga, yama, niyama, pranayama, pratyahara

1 Yoga

Yoga is generally understood either as a spiritual effort, or as a certain kind of physical exercise. In both cases, people are searching within it for something that will help them to solve the fundamental problems of life, but, at the same time, they are usually unaware what these problems in fact are. However, even though they aren't able to clearly define these problems, they are still directing all of their life's efforts towards being able to live happily. The desire for a happy life is oftentimes covered by a seeming desire for knowledge. Usually, people are not interested in the true knowledge, i.e. in an analytical knowledge of the qualities of the world and all its processes, which determine our emotional experience. They want to know how to achieve a happy sensory life.

Those, who are prompted by their desire to live happily or to obtain knowledge to seek by the means of yoga, often use inappropriate yogic means. Almost always, they let themselves be lured into the last one of the three parts of yogic training – into concentration, regardless of its

levels. Yet the first part of yogic training is the moral self-training, which in fact solves the problem of an unhappy emotional life in its full extent. Concentration either doesn't solve it at all, or does so only in some more or less abstract outline of this problem. You can concentrate with a clear and pure mind, as well as with a dull, furious and biased mind, and the results then look accordingly.

The problem of a happy or unhappy life is an emotional problem. As, from the point of view of yoga, this problem has to be resolved as the first, **Yama** is prescribed as the first step towards the yogic training. Yama means the discipline of emotion. By the help of it, happiness is literally "produced". An angry, obstinate, bothersome, limited person who is interested in many things would like to leave all this aside and simply sit in some yogic position and concentrate until they are happy. However, in the same way it is impossible to fly with a horse carriage and to ride through the town on an aeroplane, it isn't possible to arrive at feelings of happiness by concentration in a yogic position. In the same way, it is neither possible, by means of a simple moral discipline, to attain to the differentiation prescribed by yoga for the consciousness to rid itself of the last remains of ignorance.

Therefore, it is necessary to start with yama. Let's say immediately: in order not to describe stereotypical commandments of morality, how they are described by yama, let us begin simply in another way, without any slightest divergence from these commandments.

Yama prescribes that a person shall not hurt, lie, steal, live a non-chaste life, etc. What does it mean? A person should live in such a way that their mind will not narrow down, darken with malice, be aroused by hatred, ill will, etc. and will not sink into the world of sexual lust. However, to achieve that, it isn't enough that a person holds on to the prescribed moral commandments, which anyway, they immediately forget, even when they want to keep to them. Despite all of the commandments, they get angry, do not wish well, and are desirous and biased etc. Therefore they have to leave the comedy or theory of prescribed morality. For, if they want to be happy, they must implement the moral commandments through the development of a peaceful mind, happy mood, trustfulness and optimism. If they behave like this, they will not provoke anyone either by actions, or by their inner states – and their happiness will be developing. The more they hold on to these states of mind, the more they also eradicate the possible opposite mood states and when they do reach the very end of this moral purification, their happiness will be complete.

Happiness, as well as failure, are thus a matter of inner and mental states. However, while a person is corrupted by pessimism, an unkind mind and bad moods, as well as suspiciousness, the feeling of happiness does not want to appear. To those who constantly strive for good emotional as well as mental states, only time will bring the desirable result, i.e. happiness. When this happens, a person will attain success in the most important part of the yogic discipline, in yama.

The second step is **niyama**. It is concerned with physical, as well as inner, hygiene. A person should be particular about their personal appearance, attentive in contact with people, to not appear

extravagant, should educate themselves, train themselves in conscious thinking (as opposed to reflexive thinking), follow the social etiquette as well as the religious one (or, alternatively, lay morality), keep restraint in judgments, i.e. not to react to any behaviour or events spontaneously, occupy their mind by reading of religious books and seek the company of those engaged in noble actions and teachings.

Those who constantly strictly adhere to the commandments of yama and niyama, will achieve a transformation of the qualities of the natural emotional states. They will qualitatively advance in the order of creation, rise above the sphere of beings who are suffering and unhappy into the sphere of beings living harmoniously. Then they will even cross the boundary of the physically limited beings and reach the sphere of the supersensory existence. By that, they will prove for themselves, that they can and have to solve the problem of an unhappy life only by putting the transformation, or change of thought and feeling, into practice. They will realise that, by the constant moral purification and hygiene understood in the sense of niyama, they are raising themselves among gods, into the sphere of pure and blissful experiencing, to the place where their intuition itself suggests to them an idea of the highest happiness.

As a rule, most of those interested in yoga aren't longing for anything higher and if they take up further instructions of the yogic system anyway, they hurt themselves. As, they are mixing up disparate things and this has the same consequences as an excessive consumption of disharmoniously combined foods. However, if it turns out that a harmonious and blissful life doesn't attract a person at all, but they only desire to know, only then is a person sufficiently mature for a gradual realisation of the further instructions of the yogic teaching. Then yoga develops in the following way.

Niyama is followed by **asana**. However, asanas also belong to hygiene. Although the system of asanas as yogic exercises is also supposed to vitalise the body, still, they are supposed to culminate in the achievement of physical non-excitability or, in other words, in the elimination of nervousness. A yogi, who is, as a result of yama and niyama, happy, lively and optimistic, must, by means of asanas, stabilise themselves, in order to prevent the successes in yama and niyama making them again worldly. This means that, by means of the positions, they must attain serenity, i.e. absence of cravings and (presence of) equanimity. Only then should they supplement their exercise by pranayama.

Pranayama begins with rhythmical breathing. To this rhythmical breathing, observation of the rhythm of breathing is added. In this way, a person takes hold of prana, the physical content of breath or breathing. Thus, the rhythmical breathing achieves its purpose, that is – the rhythm and observation of breathing creates a harmony between a human and the nature. A feeling of freshness will appear, a negative aspect of which – the regrasping of the world – has to be suppressed by asanas. Then a person is ready for further steps of the yogic training. These are only significant for those who need knowledge to accomplish their happiness. Through this knowledge, the questions of the place of an individual in the world and its destiny are clarified, and the prob-

blems of relationships of individuals to the world are solved, which cause absence of inner freedom or (the existence of) differentiating moments.

When a person is potentially happy and their bliss is only disturbed by a desire for knowledge, they can enter the path of the discipline of mind. This is because in such a case the mind is well prepared for it as the person doesn't desire sensory pleasures. Under these circumstances, the mind is supposed to be gradually fastened on one object and stabilised. This fastening and gradual stabilization is called **pratyahara**.

A yogi should eliminate the distraction of mind by constantly reminding themselves of their own body. Sitting in a position, they are supposed to dwell with their mind on their body, on its base, on the sitting part, whilst avoiding the trunk. However, until the mind is used to dwelling on one object, an entirely concrete object, it wanders again and again and becomes restless. Keeping the mind from this wandering is actually pratyahara. It can be characterized by tension, which originates in the struggle for the mind's stabilisation. This tension then manifests itself by various mystical effects and accompanying phenomena, which have to be refused altogether, for otherwise the mind would not stabilise.

When the mind stabilises, it passes to another phase, into concentration, which is called dharana. **Dharana** can be characterized as a state of mind, which no longer hinders the inner freeing coming to the fore. When this freeing is connected with an awareness of emptiness, limitless space and emotional freeing, it is dharana. When this concentration of mind becomes prolonged and the awareness of emptiness, limitless space and freeing does no longer disintegrate or disappear, it is the second level of concentration, dhyana and when this state becomes continuous and self-sustained (i.e. without the efforts to concentrate), it is the third level of concentration, **samadhi**.

Samadhi thus means realisation of the state of mind, which arose in concentration: that is awareness of emptiness, limitless space and inner relaxation. When these qualities develop in such a way that they become the dominant states for consciousness, when they control the whole psyche of a person and present to them the emptiness of the universe as a living reality, as the absolute, which, although it isn't the direct originator of creation, is still in contact with it, then the person has reached the **nirvikalpasamadhi**. This state crushes the phenomena of the universe into nothingness and by this the mind is redeemed from the samsaric state, from the state of being a slave to the nature. The mind can then realise the state of absolute and, by this, eliminate every predisposition of an individual to be entangled – in the form of a self-aware unit – into overwhelming impulses. At death this kind of person extinguishes themselves without the desire to continue to live or to be.

By this, a tragedy of the ceasing of the conscious being is erased. What has been said here about yoga until now, is, however, only a general description. If the highest goal of yogic education is not to be lost from view, it is necessary to start with the yogic education in the following way:

One has to start with yama. In the western understanding of the social education it means such a way of behaviour, in which an individual stands in the way of their fellows as little as possible and, as far as it is possible, he or she does not emotionally touch them at all; he or she shall take their opinion as a criterion of his or her correct or incorrect social behaviour. This is the external part of yama, which they have to complement by a direct self-restraint in the expressions of personal inclinations, especially taste. This applies to all actions by which a person caters for their whims. Then there are direct restrictions which are related to sex, for, a person shouldn't serve it "unlawfully". For example, it is not allowed for a man to invest a lot of efforts to win a woman, because this very energy must be used for more serious efforts. The question of a partner has to be left up to the guru to decide to prevent possible mixing of disparate qualities of humankind. In addition to that, a joyful and optimistic mood is required, and the kind of behavior which prevents a person from having to struggle with inclinations which he or she attacks and removes by yogic efforts.

Then there is niyama. It means purification of the body by water as well as by a pure mind. A person is supposed to have high standards of cleanliness and should not neglect their personal appearance. In the same way they have regard for their exterior, when they, so-called, 'fall in love', they should have regard for it with respect to their ideal, which can be God as well as an all-embracing, i.e. spiritual, intellectual and mental perfection. A requirement to dress and behave in a way which doesn't raise aversion in others, or as a person who belongs to a higher social class, is associated with this.

Because these commandments may be exhausting for a person and even lead them to distraction or nervousness, it is allowed to complement this effort with concentration. However, in this case, concentration is understood by meaning that a person is supposed to find a time in which their privacy will not be disturbed and in this relative solitude they should sit in one of the yogic positions and force the mind, as well as the whole inner being, into calmness.

When they eliminate all impressions of the everyday life, they should rest for a while in this pleasant mental and inner state, in order to be able to develop a better ability of observation of their own being. The inner equilibrium, disturbed by the efforts for moral and social self-training, should be renewed by enclosing oneself in one's own peace and by a mental effort to directly destroy these influences.

However, to the usual yogis – gurus – it is usually unknown what their disciple is supposed to do when they attain the so-called realisation, i.e. when they fully anchor in the states which they desired, not only on the level of awareness, but also in the subconsciousness. This is a result of the above described preparatory yogic self-discipline and a possible enlightenment, which is an accomplishment of the self-discipline in the so called 'direct yoga'. Therefore, these lines follow:

Enlightenment and a perfect self-knowledge raise a person to the level of a sage, whilst the preparatory yogic self-discipline rises them to the level of a *totally* happy person. That is, however, one

thing. Another is the fact that a yogi who attained perfection cannot be *absolutely* happy, because this depends on a continuous influence of the environment in which they are living, on their being. Therefore they still have to break the shell of the subtle selfishness and begin to base their perfection and happiness on the actions of virtue which belong to their level and their perfected state. These actions are described by an esoteric teaching, known in the exoteric conception as Mahayana, as well as magic. Also in *Buddhism*, we can encounter teachings on these actions, even though they are incorporated in another level. We can define them as follows:

Recognising myself in everything, I want to be happy in a supersensory sense. Recognising myself in everything, I want to have knowledge. Recognising myself in everything, I want only goodness to be performed. Recognising myself in everything, I want goodness to be absolutely powerful in the face of evil. Recognising myself in everything, I want to be (as the humankind) led only by God and never by his opposite. Recognising myself in everything, I want only the goodness to win.

These few formulae are perhaps sufficient. Magic is contained in them in the words "I want", Buddhism then in the words "recognizing myself in everything". This is modified, because, as I sense, this "recognising myself in everything" is related to breathing in and breathing out. Finally, Mahayana is in the system of this whole work.

He or she, who, after the accomplishment of the personal perfection, will further work in this way, will overcome the hostile influence of the environment by the path of virtue. Their perfection will then be high, wide, deep and unsurpassable. They will not be able to complain about anything anymore and will be exempt even from the destiny of some sages, as for example, Jesus, even though they, for example, continue to adhere to the very path of Jesus. But this last stage of yoga cannot be realised early. It may not be realised in this human body at all. However, time is no object, because here a person is no longer walking the path of people, but the path of Brahmas.

An opposite of this path is the path of Hinayana; it is a path of an absolute renunciation. However, here renunciation means also the loss of interest in attaining the personal perfection. But, abandonment of the idea of personal perfection must not lead to the abandonment of the path of renunciation. For, a person here, so to say, "hits the target" directly. Besides that I can add to it: what kind of sense does a personal or spiritual perfection have for the one who has renounced everything and absolutely? Thus: values have no meaning on this path. Therefore, a person usually doesn't want to walk this path and decides on the previous one, which, on its high levels, becomes the path of Brahmas. This path has its rules and these are described by all that was said above.

2 Yogic practice

Yoga is a two-stage discipline. Its first stage is a preparatory yogic moral self-training, which is, firstly, supposed to turn the student of yoga into a happy and socially flawlessly behaved person.

Only then is it possible to start with yoga as a system leading to the knowledge of forces moving the human being, as well as the human society as a whole, the forces controlling their whole life.

After fulfilling the moral prerequisites, which I describe else-where, the actual yogic practice is based on concentration of mind. This concentration is its main tool. However, concentration is a psychological issue. A person, who has never attempted to direct his or her mind and focus it in a disciplined fashion, cannot successfully concentrate it. If they attempt it, the mental indiscipline ambushes them and causes that their mind, instead of adhering to the chosen aid for concentration, on the contrary stiffens, and their consciousness narrows down. This is no longer the path to the development of the sense of obtaining knowledge, but it is a way for the mind to get stuck, a way to developing a fixed idea and, by that also, towards delusions, sometimes perhaps innocent, at other times in the form of a pathological fixed idea.

This difficulty is avoided in yoga by mental training. The mental training begins with a systematic exclusion of impressions originating in the daily life and continues with a gradual relaxation of the mind for so long until the mind finally becomes able to stay focused on one object.

Thus, those who want to be yogis must, after they have completed the tasks required by the preparatory yogic self-discipline, exclude impressions, which they have gathered in their daily life, until they pacify and calm the mind down and, by that, make it capable of the so-called extensive concentration, i.e. able to concentrate on the chosen object, in a similar way to a person who views with fondness something which they like. Thanks to that, the mind calms down even more and gradually, it becomes able to fasten on the chosen object of concentration with higher and higher intensity, because concentration is supposed to peak in the ability to hold in the mind one single object with the entire willpower, without the concentration turning into staring at this object, or into dullness which no longer allows a person to tell if they are thinking of the chosen object, or whether their stupefied and dulled mind unconsciously wanders from one thing to another.

As far as the object on which the mind is supposed to concentrate is concerned, the psychological reasons do not allow it to be some mental image, or anything abstract. The best object is the yogi's own body – and again taking into account psychological factors – that part of their body which is the most neutral: ideally feet and legs. The yogi is thus supposed to focus only on their feet and legs. The feet and legs are supposed to be, to a yogi, both a part of his or her person, as well as an outer object – that which they can feel, as well as that which they can think of as an object totally separate to their person. This way, their own feet and legs can serve them as an object for the training in concentration, until they reach such a level of concentration that their mind will no longer feel capable of movement without the order of the yogi's will.

Then the yogi changes their concentration into the so-called 'analytical concentration'. The mind is able to become analytical, if it is controlled and set to a total standstill. However, for that, both, its perfect focusing as well as its relaxation which prevents its spontaneous and unrestrained focusing,

are necessary. For such a mind, the yogi's being is no longer a fortress built from inner petrifications, but an entire scale of states and processes which give meaning to the personal living, because they are interdependent.

A concentration, in whose background there is a perfect self-observation and self-control, leads to the development of the abilities of discernment. With their help, a person learns the meaning of the driving forces of nature, which are always the cause of the arising of circumstances which can be controlled by a person only to a limited extent.

However, knowledge is not only a passive standpoint of the person obtaining knowledge. A yogi, who has attained high levels of the yogic training, may learn from that which they are discerning, what needs to be done in order to break the power of circumstances. Thus an absolute freedom dawns on them, and they know about it, that it will be realised in that moment when they overcome the personal considerations, when they overcome the personality which does not acknowledge the organic interconnectedness of all phenomena of the creation, and which wants to project itself as a phenomenon superior to, and surpassing, everything that exists.

A common person is a being who cannot disentangle themselves from the creation, whether we think of creation in the cosmic dimensions or only as of a human society. Besides that, a human being does not want to disentangle themselves from this society anyway. They constantly have some desires, sometimes completely earthly, another times superworldly ones, but these desires always form them into someone in the middle of something. This is a factor, or a law, which always limits the person. If the redemption according to the Buddhist conception really exists, it always relates to the realization of a state of eradication of selfness – every trace of differentiation in the yogi themselves. However, this is an infinitely distant prospect for everyone who is just beginning with yoga. Therefore they have to think in a human way and have only goals which are understandable from the human perspective. They have to make do with a promise that if they control themselves well, observe and concentrate, they will become a knowing person, a person who will understand the meaning of destinies of the human world and later also the path which leads above the level of these destinies.

However, let us return to the concentrating yogi again. Concentration becomes, to a yogi, means of disentangling from the net of innumerable moments of differentiation, i.e. individualisation and differentiation, which are the moments of inner slavery. However, here we are already on the borderline of the possibility to understand states which can be reached by a yogi, because, as soon as these moments of differentiation are overcome, the yogi finds himself or herself in the undifferentiated world, a world not differentiated in the amount of particularities. On the first levels of this world, the yogi's ability of understanding is developed to such an extent, that they understand not only the meaning of coarse 'stiffenings' or inner 'rigidifyings' which determine the process of the differentiated living with all its difficulties, limitations and irresistible drives and pressures of the circumstances, but also the fine 'stiffenings' and 'rigidifyings'. The latter means that the mind, because it understands and perceives in certain con-

cepts, is already becoming dull and becomes the bridle of a slave – the bearer of this mind. The yogis' plan is to overcome every manifestation of imperfection. Their ideal is freedom, which is being realised only above the state of the differentiated thinking. Over there, where the truths of individuals are no longer valid, the only valid thing is the stream of cognition which is a permanent factor, constantly breaking down the moments of differentiation and in this way protecting the state known as nirvana, redemption from delusions, ill will and hatred.

What do these prospects mean for a modern person? They mean the person's strength, the person's knowledge, their overcoming of every smallness of spirit and development of their abilities to learn and understand. Moreover, later they mean the reaching of a state in which they evidently detect that they have stopped the process of living as a factor creating causes of further and further urgencies of destiny, and, finally, the realisation of such a good state that it is not possible to describe it in words which would be understood.

Up to here, yoga is, for a modern person, a benefit for their life. However, it becomes the very opposite, if, of yoga as a whole, some parts are torn out – some parts evoking images of success in the society or in enjoyments in people who haven't disciplined their cravings beforehand. For, these people are never able to systematically progress in the realisation of the yogic teaching and therefore they start with hope and end with – disappointment.

In a concise summary, yogic practice carried out in this way is thus a systematic method of the gradual absorption of being into an undifferentiated essence of the universe, into the absolute. Concentration of mind is the tool for this method. The analytical concentration can be considered to be a classical concentration. By means of it, it is possible to discern the elements of our being to such an extent that the consciousness is able to identify all qualities of the universe, out of which it is the absolute which is the highest one. By its identification, a prerequisite is created for its realisation. Our 'I' can this way unify with the absolute.

3 Yoga and intellect

There is a lot written about how yoga benefits health. However, in fact it also has a positive influence on the intellect, while this influence of yoga is determined by psychological factors and not by occult or divine ones.

In this sense, I want to talk mainly about myself, but this will perhaps not be of harm if we take into account that, in few words, I want to say a lot.

I already accepted the full inventory of yoga as life directions as an adolescent boy. This was after I realised my inner and physical poverty as well as their consequences for my future life, because I have been through, in total four years of school education, malnutrition and work exertion of over ninety working hours per week. During that period, my only friend brought me a paperback about yoga.

Because I believed that only yoga could help me in my situation, I devoted myself to it. I carried out breathing practices, as well as concentrations of mind. However, because I could not follow the yogic instructions about the place where yoga should be practised, about the workload and other things, I overstrained my adolescent organism by incorporating into my schedule two, four, six and later eight hours of practice daily.

However, these hours of practice didn't include only breathing, but they also included concentration, particularly out of which I intellectually obtained a lot. The work-related overstrain caused permanent damage to my health. However, let this be an uninteresting detail, as I wanted to say something about the intellectual significance of yoga which is contained in concentration.

The yogic concentration, as I have learned from my practice, must be based on the extensity of awareness on the one hand, and, on the other hand, on the intensity of thinking. The extensity of awareness is more or less given by the interest of a person in everything that constitutes their environment. The intensity of thinking is, in the yogic training, based on an effort to focus on an imaginary point as if it was a concrete thing or object which must be created by the person who is concentrating by means of the use of their own thinking.

Thus, when the imaginary point or object is so stable that the mind no longer tends to wander and the perception of the world is vivid enough not to allow a dulling immersion, the intellect improves. The psychological conditions for its improvement are simply in the fact that the thinking is to be not only stable, but also with a sufficient volume.

And now perhaps just one question is left: why is yoga connected to mysticism, or, sometimes, the delusory mysticism?

If a person attempts to fulfil the requirement of concentration in the sense that they 'hook' on an imaginary object, and, at the same time, they do not perceive the phenomena of the outer world with sufficient vividness, then their attention presents them with a not entirely conscious or totally unconscious perception of their own inner processes. This appears to a person as a peculiar, or mystical, world. In fact, it is an opposite pole of an extremely strong interest in the outer world, and it adds to the development of inner imbalance.

The degree of intelligence of an individual depends, on the one hand, on the intensity of thinking which follows from the mental stabilisation resting on an imaginary object, and, on the other hand, on the volume of awareness which depends on a vivid perception of the outer world. So far it seems that the education towards a methodical development in both directions is only contained in yoga, and due to this reason, even this aspect of yoga should not be forgotten.

I believe that yoga understood in this way is not idealistic, even in those of its practices which do not relate to the physical positions, and that pedagogy should devote attention to it.

4 Yoga for everyone

We all are, and have to be, interested primarily in a way which yoga can benefit us in an improvement of our inner state. For, the problems of psyche, the soul and its condition are the very thing which nobody is protected against. The rich as well as the poor, the healthy as well as the ill, those competent as well as those incompetent, old as well as young, simply all of those who went wrong in what they expected from life, suffer. Therefore, they hope to escape personal suffering if they obtain riches, power, good health, or if they develop their mental abilities better. Not even those who are able to assume the most awkward positions of the hatha yoga teaching, are spared from that.

Then, what is the point? No matter which good book about yoga we take in our hand we will always find there instruction about “yama” and “niyama” in the fore. It is yoga of its own kind, yoga, by which everyone should begin. “Yama” and “niyama” are simply yoga for everyone; moreover, all people can have even a fantastic success in it.

When the Indian writings on yoga refer to “yama” and “niyama”, they tell what a person must not do and what they must do. That is because the Indian yoga is understood there as a training system, which doesn't take into account the so-called individuality of a person. On the contrary, a person, who wants to do yoga according to the Indian sources, has to submit to the whole educational system that has a precise plan and a specific target. That target requires a deep depersonalisation, an ability to submit oneself, without allowing a person to slide into slavery, a slavish subordination.

In relation to yoga according to Indian views, we can only sigh that we are Europeans, brought up to awareness that each person decides for themselves what they want or don't want to do; we are people brought up to consider a lack of discipline to be a manifestation of personal freedom, a manifestation of a well developed individuality. Because of this, we cannot successfully do other yoga than the yoga adapted to the European mentality. It cannot be based on “you must” and “you must not”, but on one's own responsibility on the way to mental and inner recovery: a halt on the way of steep decline, which leads to the deepest demoralisation.

Yoga for everyone therefore, seemingly begins from the end: we will not sit in a position to become happy and to outshine our social environment. We are going to learn how to be happy, in order to be able to sit still and thus create conditions to be able to, of our own will, enter the transcendental world, which however has to be understood in a different way than until now.

Thus, we are supposed to learn to be happy! Is it important at all and does it really belong to yoga? In the esoteric part of the teaching about yoga, we may learn that a horrific danger of the mystical heights can be neutralised by an appropriate level of optimism and joyfulness. Some writer of the so-called occult novels has written that if people laughed more, there would be fewer wars. Through this quote, we are already finding ourselves on our ground, on the earth, in the everyday life, the problems of which we will solve aptly by this “small” yoga, too.

Its principle is very simple. We can feel happy or unhappy without an external reason, only by the power of our own will. The possibility of this is indirectly confirmed, for example by a well known fact that, when someone has some sorrow, they forget about it, if their attention is caught by something else. Based on this very piece of knowledge, a system can be created. By the power of our will, we can turn our attention away from the situations which brought us to suffering, and simply change the whole situation by fastening our attention upon things that evoke good feelings in us.

According to the yogic teaching, emotional experience is the most powerful factor in the life of creatures. It is sustained by a momentum which doesn't only steer the being, it also categorises it. This usual emotional experience can only be counteracted by repeated actions aiming to change its quality. This means to learn to rejoice and feel happy, even without any reason, over and over again, repeating this effort for so long, till joy and happiness become the only inner states which will keep on seizing us, as soon as we stop trying to create such moods.

When we reach that far, we have in fact already changed our inner condition or, in other words, we have moved from the sphere of unhappy people into the one of people constantly being made happy via the effect of spiritual factors. This is already considered as the beginning of the path of a higher type towards the goals of the practical yoga. For, only a happy person, an optimist, obtains from concentration an increasing clarity of the consciousness, an ability of a fine and deep discernment, a possibility of better perception and therefore also better understanding of everything; in short, all that which we may expect from yoga.

Then, it is really sufficient only to concentrate. Only a happy person is able to concentrate in the way yoga instructs, i.e. to think of objects and to observe them without sinking into a mental lethargy and without the clarity of their consciousness been decreased.

5 Conclusion

Would you like to try it, too? If the answer is yes, then stick to the following principles, which are in fact the whole of yoga in a nutshell:

1. You have to raise yourself from the state of passivity toward reflexive, i.e. automatic, unconscious reactions to the external world by a constant producing of an allsurpassing joyfulness in you.
2. You have to develop and intensify self-control, and you have to do that by a persistent awareness of everything that you do, i.e. that you stand, walk, eat, act in this or that way.
3. You have to attempt concentration in such a way that you think of (concentrate on) a chosen object (your feet and legs), but only in so far as you do not dim your awareness – only in so far as you would return again and again to the normal registering of things of the surrounding world, because only in this way you will ensure the control over vigilance. This type of concentra-

tion is called by the Buddhists 'the threshold concentration'.

4. When you will, through this sequence of steps, achieve such a high level of vigilance, that its dimming doesn't occur – not even when you are paying attention only to a single, especially imaginary, i.e. unreal object of concentration, you may change the threshold concentration into the total one. This concentration will help you to transfer the daily consciousness, i.e. the consciousness based on experience into the sphere of inner phenomena, without losing awareness whether you are dreaming or correctly discerning everything that is happening in this sphere. By this you have realised in yourself the state of wisdom.

Acknowledgement

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* A *Small Mystical Encyclopaedia*, which was originally meant to be a glossary for his own books about mysticism, grew in the hands of Květoslav Minařík until it became a book of popular science, accessible to every person interested in the spiritual teachings. It explains the basic terms of the spiritual teachings and their relationships to other scientific fields.

About the author

Květoslav Minařík, a Czech mystic (1908–1974), who, in his youth, learned in the deepest detail and in himself realised, the highest spiritual and mystic ideals of the East, without losing contact with the social and the working life. Later, he has formulated his experience into an original, authentic experience based spiritual teaching, based on the ways of thinking and psychology of a contemporary European. The teaching leads him or her through life, and perfects their being as a whole; it does not only deal with the physical, moral or mental component, it develops all three in harmony. Out of the great spiritual teachings of the world, his teaching is closest to the Mahayana Buddhism.

THERE IS NOTHING TO LIMIT OUR FREEDOM

An interview given to Pavol Remiáš and Daniel Cvečko by Sandó Kaisen

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Zen is a Japanese expression for object-free meditation. In China it is *Chan*, in India *dhyāna*, in Korea *Seon*. This originally eastern philosophy, or a way of recognition of the self and the laws of the universe, came to existence through a fusion of traditional Taoism and Buddhism, which was brought to China from India by a legendary first ever Zen patriarch Bodhidharma in the 6th century. Then, from China, Zen came to Japan, where it took roots and very intensely soaked into the local culture. Within the past 50 years, Zen, like other branches of Buddhism, penetrated into Europe and the USA. Today, you can find numerous books on Zen in bookshops – from catalogues of Zen gardens with typical economising aesthetics to sageness of the Zen masters.

As for meditation, which is to bring insight into reality, in almost every book the cognizants emphasise that Zen is not about knowledge, but practice. Despite hundreds of sympathisers, there are only a few dozens of people who practice Zen in Slovakia, and even less of those who do it regularly.

What is practice? For example, in Zen, an important part of the practice is to sit with one's legs crossed for approximately half an hour several times per week, sitting on a cushion opposite a white wall, so that the person is not distracted by anything. Sitting in this position is called Zazen.

Hundreds, maybe thousands of hours spent in such meditation one of the few European carriers of the highest knowledge, Master Sandó Kaisen, née Alain Krystaszek. He was born in 1952 in Noyon, France. He spent eight years living in a communist Poland, raised by his strict grandmother. For several years he assisted in a church. Later he moved to France. At the age of 20 he set off on an adventurous and dangerous journey to the communist China, where he trained the martial arts Wu Shu with a local master. After returning to France he came across Zen. In 1979, he was ordained a Zen monk. At present, he leads Zen adepts Europe-wide.

We met on the occasion of his visit of Bratislava. A modestly looking, pleasant older man with spontaneous and natural demeanor welcomed us. During the interview he switched between French and Polish and his behaviour was rich in kind-hearted laughter, although the topics were not cheerful only.

Q How do you explain that the intellectual, reading interest in Zen prevails over willingness to truly practice it?

A K: It has always been like that. Zen is not a religion, nor a philosophy or ethics. It is practice, as you said. One has to first experience many things in life, only then can he/she get to Zazen. Not everybody can practice it. But, if someone wants to be responsible for oneself and see what is like, and not to deal with what others say about him or her, he or she will then dedicate himself or herself to Zazen. Or, they will join another order, e.g. a Christian one, and devote themselves to contemplations. But, contemplation and meditation is not for all.

Q Why is it important to sit and meditate in Zazen?

A K: It is important that a person, their body and spirit, forget themselves in their nature. That means we concentrate on breathing, totally and fully, until we stop to notice there is any observer and the observed. We do not realise that somebody would be judging us. Once an odour of a person vanishes, what remains is only brightness, light.

Q What practical gain does this have to a person from the Western civilisation?

A K: They begin to live their life naturally. Practising Zazen leaves an imprint of naturalness on our entire behaviour.

Q That means that the person can better cope with problematic situations which life brings? For example with partner separations, death of the close ones, and so on?

K: We learn to relativize life. We discover the non-permanent character of the world. That is because we also have a spirit that changes constantly. And, moreover, there appears silence, peace that transcends emotions and feelings. But, if somebody close dies, we have the right to be sad; we have the right to cry. For, in this divine there is also part of a human, therefore we must live a life of a human, too. Fully.

Q Exactly. For the Western lifestyle it is typical to try to see position, power, and relationships as if they were changeless and stable. This brings along lots of psychological problems, from which we try to set free in some way. What would you recommend to people who are trying to search for their self?

A K: We carry many illusions, numerous traps in our minds, and therefore I would recommend them to come back to reality. Sitting in Zazen helps in this, too. Then we are seated in the presence. We always have to take care to be in the presence and not to wander somewhere else. For example, when we walk, we should do only that. It is necessary to be firmly rooted in the presence, which means, for example, in our work at the computer, too.

Q We can suppose that it is the people who want to come to terms with their own personal problems who are interested in various spiritual movements. They want to get rid of them. But, when they start to practice Zen, it can happen that their problems, anxieties and depressions, nervousness, weakness, cowardness, sexual deviations, aggression, desires, which

they wish to get rid of reveal to them in their full power, in their real form. But most of the people obviously do not want to confront their dark sides. How to deal with it?

A K: In Zen it is good to meet and practice together with others, on so-called sesshins [Ed. note: longer, usually several-day meditation sessions]. On these meetings, which generally last three days, we don't speak about ourselves, we do not talk about our problems. We concentrate only on Zazen, work, meals, on the way we sleep, and on how we relax. We do not think about other things. So, slowly we get to the presence. But, on the other hand, it is important that people live through their problems and their suffering. Each existence is unique. Every person has to walk his or her way till the end. One cannot fear suffering, nor illnesses, or complications in life. We need to live them through without fear and unnecessary concerns. Zen is not a recipe on how to put an end to suffering, nor is it a recipe on how to live a better life. Because there is no better life than the one we are living "now". But we always want something else. We always try to search for other realities, and then we cannot find them. This results in our suffering, hardship. However, it is not necessary to come up with some new reality.

Q **You say that sesshin is a several-day practice. After that, one returns to an ordinary life and is buried in advertisements, stress, and is exposed to various pressures. He or she finds himself in a world of marketing based on the fact that everybody wants to get money from**

him or her. Does the performed practice not get lost in the everyday reality?

A K: The fruit is eternal, because you are eternal already. You are already enlightened [Ed. note: ridden of clinging to anything]. The entire universe is actually enlightenment. You yourself are that enlightenment. If we are truly present also in such complications, somewhere deep inside we are motionless. I know it is not easy. Mind cannot understand this.

Q **Where is then the motivation in people to sit in Zazen? For the most part, we are not able to do things for the things themselves, without reaching goals. This is perhaps an ability of some artists, but how can be motivated to Zazen, for example, a finance person, who needs to give and get back? For such people Zazen has probably no sense.**

A K: One must have a goal in their life. We have to try to achieve something in life, but when we accompany it with Zazen, we are more concentrated, more attentive. Also emotions are calmed at practising Zazen. We do not experience anger, jealousy, or similar feelings. Everything is more real. But we mustn't lie or steal at doing it.

Q **How do you evaluate situation with Zen in Japan? A traditional country turned into a modern one in the second half of the last century. The young generation of Japanese is already detached from the tradition, which has always been represented by Zen as well.**

A K: I have recently been to Japan. That tradition of Zen is deeply rooted there, even if people do not practice Zazen. But it shows in

their gestures, behaviour, in their everyday life. This is true for the young generation, too, although on the outside it shows signs of Americanism and globalisation. On the inside they are all very Japanese.

Q Does it mean natural, Zen?

A K: Yes. Profound reverence and respect to others. Consideration of the others. A lot of goodness. Numerous natural characteristics. To be in Japan was a great pleasure for me.

Q We have had also different experience. It is said that the Japanese divide people into the Japanese and the Gaijins, that means the White. According to this, a Gaijin is a person of lower value. There is allegedly a certain form of such xenophobia up to date.

A K: With travelling they now know Europe much better and the division into the Gaijins and the Japanese has been put an end to. However, it was still so 20 years ago.

Q People who travelled to Japan had an experience that abbots of Zen monasteries, who are often holders of high degrees of martial arts, remain in this style of thinking.

A K: Then it's mostly those who haven't travelled much (laughing). Part of such an old Japan still exists. But, it is the part of Japan that suffers from the wounds and conflicts of the past.

Q In Europe, but also in Slovakia, Zen is quite young, practiced by few people, and so it is live. In Japan, it is strongly institutionalised, which is given historically. Similar to how is institutionalised Chris-

tianity in our country. The Japanese Zen temples are said to collect huge amounts of money as gifts in the first two days of a new year. Does this not block the very Zen way that you are talking about?

A K: Yes, this was a bit of a problem at my last journey to Japan. I had to separate myself from this. But, there are still old masters in the mountains, who teach Zen in small temples and they are basically those who transmit the true teaching. Now, Zen in Japan is very politicized. The Japanese try to control the European Zen, too. They want all the Europeans who would want to be ordained and teach others to have to come to Japan and pay for the ordination there. I belong to the branch Soto [Ed. note: the second main branch of Zen Buddhism is the branch Rinzai]. There, one has to pay to Eihei-ji, the main temple of the Soto branch. But, we want to practice our own ordinary European Zen. There are some problems with it. In Zen, there shouldn't be any organisation. Zen is free.

Q The Soto sect is said to be organised as strictly as the Japanese imperial court.

A K: Yes, but on the other hand, thanks to that Zen has survived for more than seven centuries. The question of organising will, however, always be a problem. The question is how to find balance between organising and freedom. That is a problem we cannot solve on the Earth. I want to pass down my knowledge to my disciples, and then they can do whatever they want with it. I will die. Then it will not be my business; it will be up to them.

Q The penetration of eastern philosophies into Europe has been going on for several

years already. Why is it exactly the eastern philosophies that are popular when we have our own tradition, the Christianity here.

A K: Zen is not a religion. We can have our own religion and dedicate ourselves to Zazen, too. In Zen we have no specific ideas of religious character. We do not believe for example in Buddha. Zen is mainly about forgetting ourselves in order to really live. But this doesn't prevent from studying Christianity, reading the gospels. Everyone should be given chance to gain knowledge. Religion is for all laymen. People should stay in their religion because it is a protection for them. The very fact that they believe in God. It is important that all believe in the same god. I am not saying that God does not exist. We only teach people a different way of how to perceive God.

Q **How do you see ability of Christianity to tolerate other religions? The church has quite a strong background in Slovakia. For example, with yoga, which was to be an optional subject at grammar schools, there were objections that it could bring a certain undesirable psychological influence. It is as if there were concerns that when any system brings along a different philosophical viewpoint it could happen that those children stopped going to Christian temples and started working on their development in another way. There are many diverse ways, equally good as Christianity. Somebody can mind that.**

A K: People should be left to decide about their own lives, nothing should be banned. Religion should never forbid. Religion is

not here to shut someone up but to help the person to open up. Religion should develop the concept of universal freedom. But, they fear that their religion would decline and that is why various restrictions arise. It is exactly the same in Japan in Zen.

Q **How do you get along with churches and authorities in France? The French are more liberal, it is a social country. What is the co-existence like?**

A K: There are no pressures. The government respects Zen. It considers it a true practice which is useful to people. But the French are not so focused on the heart, but rather on the intellect. Then they have a problem with Zen. They always want to talk about Buddhism, but those who would practice it are a few. There are more Slovaks, and Czechs, Russians, Ukrainians.

Q **Is it really given by the Slavonic character, which is more intuitive, emotional?**

A K: Yes, the Slavs are closer to Zen by their naturalness. They are more authentic.

Q **Is there then good ground for Zen to settle in Slovakia?**

A K: Certainly, absolutely. Not so much in France.

Q **But we have a less liberal cultural background.**

A K: That will change for sure (laughing).

Q **How can a Zen monastery be started up for example in Slovakia? It is certainly not easy. How is Zen financed in Europe?**

A K: I don't know about the others. I have my own small temple in France. Each temple has its disciples who secure its operation. There

is a particular self-steering. As for the Slovak disciples, you have to ask them, I never ask how they finance the monastery.

Q Your temple lies in France in a municipality Cubjac. What do you live on?

A K: We all work and then give part of the money for the operation of the temple.

Q It would probably be difficult to find sponsors for a Zen temple since it is not a profitable business.

A K: My master [Ed. note: Taisen Deshimaru] had a sponsor. It was a big Italian financier. He gave him donations every year. But he was not a practising person, but a sympathizer. He once met my master and told him he would help him.

Q Do you also have your sponsors, sympathizers?

A K: I do, but they are poor (laughing).

Q Is the combination of Zen and martial arts a suitable one, as it used to be in Japan? You yourself devoted yourself to various martial styles.

A K: Let each person do what he or she wants. Music, calligraphy, karate. From Zazen, from ourselves, from that depth we can then do anything. Everyone is his or her own creation.

Q However, the system we live in – marketing, advertising, globalisation, church – all of that is focused to suppress the individuality of people.

A K: Yes.

Q What then constrains an ordinary person of the western civilisation from true re-

alisation of the freedom you are speaking about?

A K: Nothing (laughing).

About the author

Sandó Kaisen (1952) is one of the main representatives of the Soto Zen Buddhist schools in Europe. This school was founded in 13th century in Japan by Master Eihei Dogen. It was spread through Europe in the 1960s thanks to the efforts of Master Deshimaru. The main practice of this school is the sitting meditation – Zazen, during which the position of the body, the respiration and attention are important.

Master Sandó Kaisen introduced himself to the East of Europe (also to Slovakia) in 1990. Since then, his books have been published here and people could have come to see him on several lectures and introductions to Zazen he has given here, and learn about him from various press articles and programs on the radio and TV.

Master Sandó Kaisen transmits only one thing “from my soul to yours”: to break through the shell of habits and securities that imprisoned the being, to touch the Way and make it real in pure consciousness of the body, so that we can understand the Spirit of Unity.

A COMPARISON OF SPIRITUAL TRADITIONS IN THE CONTEXT OF THE UNIVERSALITY OF MYSTICISM

Slavomír Gálik - Sabína Gáliková Tolnaiová

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ABSTRACT

In this article, the authors study similarities in mysticism of Western Christian tradition and selected Eastern spiritual traditions based on comparative analysis of prayer degrees (“mansions” in *The Interior Castle*) in Teresa of Avila and Yogic psychical centres (the so-called “chakras”) that are known also in other Eastern spiritual traditions (Taoism and Buddhism). The authors note that especially higher degrees – from the fourth to the seventh – show formal similarities, while the seventh degree also reveals similarities in contents. They speak of importance of revealing these similarities in the perspective of understanding of human being, his further spiritual development, and also interreligious dialogue.

Key words

Mysticism, symbol, mansions in Teresa’s *Interior Castle*, kundalini, chakra

spiritual traditions can be taken as subjects of comparative analysis through which we can study universality of the phenomenon of mysticism.

1 Introduction

Religion is primarily a spiritual, not institutional phenomenon. Each and every religion is based on certain spiritual and mystical tradition that is the source of its spiritual vitality. If we then want to understand a given religion, we have to know especially its spiritual tradition, the very core of this religion. These

In this paper we would like to compare Western Christian tradition, represented by saint Teresa of Avila, with the selected Eastern traditions. We would like to pay special attention to morphological similarities in mystical journey in Teresa’s work *The Interior Castle* with spiritual traditions such as Yoga, Buddhism and Taoism. Speaking more concretely, we want to investigate and see if Teresa’s

seven “mansions” of *The Interior Castle* show structural similarity with the so-called energy centres that are in Indian (Yoga) spiritual traditions known as “chakras”.

If we could prove the existence of similarities between mystical journeys in various mystical traditions or formal conformity in contents, then we could say that mysticism is a universal phenomenon. We believe that declaration of universality of mysticism in the sense of formal and structural level or content level, has a consequence for example in understanding of human being and potential spiritual evolution. It can also be a foundation for reasoning for the possibility and validity of interreligious dialogue that occurs also through participation in spiritual experience in individual traditions.

2 Several methodological ideas on comparing mysticism

Comparison is one of the basic tools of process of learning in humans. When we learn something new, we compare it with our older knowledge and experience. If the object of our study starts to intersect with the old knowledge just a little, we start to understand. We usually do not fully understand everything, but it is the beginning of the journey that leads us to further understanding. If there is no footing, then we at least realise that we do not know the given object and start to be aware of those barriers and differences. Through comparison we are presented with a field of meanings, some of them identical to the contents that we already know,

some of them different. Experts on linguistics and semiotics agree that this learning process is also the basic characteristics of language. Hypothetically speaking, if there were just one term to describe the whole colour spectrum, for example “blue” then we would not even know that blue is in fact blue. The term “blue” must be in correlation with terms describing violet, green or red, for example. Meaning of the words is formed in a grid of position and opposition of symbols. These relations define meaning that is further refined by incorporating more symbols into relations between them. As Umberto Eco (2009, 91) says, understanding thus becomes a never ending process, unlimited *semiosis*. This is the principle that is similar to the *hermeneutic circle* in which knowledge is constantly corrected by permanent approaching to the subject of study. Understanding in the sense of complete comprehension is not reached in just one round. For example, the meaning of a historical written document can constantly be amended by new information about the content of the text, but also information about its author and time period in which he or she lived. We can therefore constantly improve our knowledge of an event or important writing.

When we compare simple symbols that we use every day, we soon find some differences and agreements. However, we encounter a problem with symbols that originate in diverse cultural and religious areas. A symbol, unlike a sign, has a number of meanings and is based deeper in culture and religion. This base also relates to deeper levels of human psyche, otherwise the sym-

bol could not exist. Carl Gustav Jung (1997) spoke of “*collective unconscious*” that symbols penetrate when they are used over a long period of time, these then appear in our dreams, visions and so on. We approach a symbol as a sign, yet this symbol also exceeds the sign. Let’s take for example the Christian symbol of a cross. We can identify a cross as two arms set across each other, but we do not necessarily have to understand it as a symbol, because in Christianity, cross represents Passion, salvation and something sacred. It is though much more difficult to understand the symbols found in other cultures, for example Buddhist dharma wheel.

When dealing with symbols, we need to open our mind to a deeper experience that is off the abstract rationality and that we have no control of. Paul Ricoeur (1993) claims that unlike in the case of sign, we need to face a symbol with open mind and wait until we are approached by it. Ricoeur (1993, 161) uses the word *symbol* for “whatever meaning structure whose primary, literal meaning leads to a different meaning, indirect, secondary, transferred meaning that can only be reached through the first meaning”. The primary meaning is expressed by the sign, but this sign leads to other, secondary signs that we cannot understand directly, although we can open ourselves to them.

René Alleau speaks similarly. According to him, the world of signs belongs to the world of society, while the world of symbols belongs to the world of sanctity. Alleau (2008, 23) says: “We cannot describe a symbol, we can only approach it and start walking to experience the meaning of this walk. A sign,

on contrary, is something we can describe logically, something available for our intellect and logical analysis.” Alleau (2008, 21) continues that we need to be reborn into a symbol. To be reborn for a symbol, we need to die to this world. Such a rebirth changes the profane structure into a sacred structure. Profane changes into sacred when something exceptional, some kind of *metanoia* happens. In the Old Testament, for example, we can read about a dream patriarch Jacob had when we fell asleep on his way to Laban. He dreamt of a ladder that angles used. In the end God spoke to Jacob and promises his blessings (Genesis 28: 10–22). This dream had a tremendous effect on Jacob, so he marked this “horrible” place. A common place became sacred and the stone he was sleeping on was made into a sacred pillar. We can say that with this dream patriarch Jacob entered the field of sanctity and symbols.

Religious symbols carrying sacred character show structural similarity in mysticism. For example, mysticism is defined also as consciousness of being (spirit) that can only be reached by personal transformation, which includes understanding of symbols and sanctity. Marie-Madeleine Davy (2000, 8) also links mysticism to personal transformation when says: “a mystic is a person who has reached the spirit. Spirit is a revolutionist; every advanced spirit mightily outgrows the old bounds (...) in which the majority of people find shelter and safety.”

The language that mystics use is full of symbols too. It is, for example, very frequent when in various spiritual and mystical traditions fire, light or air is meant to represent

the spirit. As the opposite, water is used as a symbol for something lower, physical, bodily. By coincidence of water and fire in consecration, baptising, a new being is initiated. Fire can also represent the masculine principle, while water can represent the feminine principle, and their integration in *unio mystica*. If we can understand the symbolic language of mysticism, then we also can understand mysticism. Consequently, comparison of various symbols would mean comparison of various sorts of mystical traditions.

It is however questionable whether we can compare varying symbols in different religious and mystical traditions. Without comparison, as Dalibor Antalík (2005, 101) says, there is no knowledge. "Comparison is not purely classification, it is especially a tool for understanding (...) The process of comparison does not end when the formula that expresses similarity and differences is constructed. The aim of comparative frame is to understand better whatever religious practice, when we understand the formula that is behind." A man simply wants to learn, since learning is one of the natural desires of man as an intelligent being. He also wants to know things outside his culture and religion. Max Müller expressed that "the one who knows only one religion, does not know any" (Antalík 2005, 15). Yet comparison needs to be done with great care, because we know what troubles rise even when we translate languages, which express profane things. The more so, if they express also religious symbols. We need to imagine meaning of the written text, and we only can imagine something we know, something we have already experienced. It is more complicated to imagine, for example,

what fire or water symbolise in various religions. Our imagination and knowledge can be helped significantly with descriptions of images. Such images have a translinguistic nature and are easier to understand among languages.

There are plenty image expressions of symbols, but many of them would be very difficult to understand without a thorough study. Despite this, there are also many symbols that are quite clear, because they are directly linked to human body. In our case, it is the system of energy centres, the so-called *chakras*. Although we find descriptions of the *chakra system* mainly in Hinduism, especially in Yoga, it can be recognized in other religious and spiritual traditions as well. All of the image-based representations of chakras are linked to a certain location in the body along with descriptions of spiritual experience. We presuppose that the so-called chakra system is an important starting point for a study, in particular a comparison of various mystical or spiritual traditions.

3 Comparison of the chakra system

Etymology of the word *chakra* comes from Sanskrit and means a *circle* or a *wheel*. In the full sense of the word, chakra represents an energy centre that connects body with the *astral world*. The classic Yoga recognizes the seven main chakras or six that link to the body and the seventh, which is above the crown of the head (Eliade 1999, 185–187):

1. *The Muladhara chakra* is situated at the base of the coccyx between the anus

and genitals. Around lingam (penis) there is *kundalini energy*, which is coiled up eight times.

2. *The Svadhithana chakra* is placed at the root of the penis.
3. *The Manipura chakra* is located in the middle of the body, above the navel.
4. *The Anahata chakra* is situated in the region of the heart.
5. *The Vishuddhi chakra* is located in throat area.
6. *The Ajna chakra* is between the eyebrows.
7. *The Sahasrara chakra* is above the crown of the head.

According to Yoga teaching, if the kundalini energy is arisen, then this energy activates all the chakra centres gradually, one by one, up to the Sahasrara. However, it is the Manipura chakra that is activated as the first. Each of the energy centres represents individual type of experience. Higher degrees of spiritual experiences start in the fourth hearth chakra, mystical death in the sixth chakra, and liberation in the seventh chakra. *Kundalini* is symbolically expressed in the form of a snake, dragon, aura of the saints and so on.

The most detailed teaching about the chakras and kundalini can be found in Yoga, specifically in Hatha Yoga. It can, however, be found also in other religions, for example in Tibetan Buddhism and Taoism, but we can also recognize depiction of something very close to the chakras in Kabala, Sufism, and Christian mysticism. For example, the Taoist text *The Secret of the Golden Flower* (Jung and Wilhelm 2004, 57, 65) mentions two

centres of energy: one of them corresponds to the Manipura chakra, the other one correlates to the Sahasrara chakra in Yoga. The first representation is explained in the Taoist text by the comment that it is a “rebirth in the space of energy”. The second representation is explained as “awakening of the spiritual body to start independent existence”. There is also a different name of this representation – *Golden Flower*. Looking at depicting of the Golden Flower, we can certainly assume that it is beyond the body – transcendent form of existence.

In Christian art we find Sahasrara or Taoist Golden Flower depicted in pictures of aura of the saints. When expressed in words, we speak about a cloud, which is a symbol that dates back between the time of Moses and the work *The Cloud of Unknowing* written in the Middle Ages. In its Czech translation a picture of a Luttrell psalm is applied showing the cloud along with “flowers”, similar to the chakras (lotus flowers) in Hinduism.

Zen Buddhist roshi Houn Jiyu-Kennett (1997) also uses very impressive pictures of the chakras along with their descriptions. The first opened chakra is, again, Manipura (Jiyu-Kennett 1997, 70), and then there are other chakras that are activated up the spine. For a moment, Jiyu-Kennett experiences “death” when the sixth Ajna chakra is opened (1997, 74–75) and the seventh chakra, similar to the picture of “Golden Flower” from the Taoist book, gets gradually opened as well.

In the Jewish mysticism of Kabbalah, the seven-candle holder Menorah symbolises something similar to the chakras in Yoga.

Seven lights of the candles represent contact with higher spiritual degrees or Jacob's mystical ladder to heaven. However, according to Brian Lancaster (2000, 64–65) the connection between Menorah and the human body, specifically the lungs, is important: "The analogy of the lungs might seem a little weird now. Yet for Malbim lungs had a very important role in our intellectual life. People believed that by purifying the air and forcing this spiritual steam up for the brain (...) the relation to lungs is about mystical identification of breathing and intellectual soul of the man." In Yoga, breathing is very important, as it is through breathing that the kundalini and the chakras are stimulated, so that liberation – *samadhi* – can be reached.

Also the Islam mysticism of Sufism, especially its great spiritual leader Inayat Khan, speaks about the importance of breathing. Breathing is a physiological process, but as the text explains, it also has an effect on the more subtle levels of the body (chakras) and intellect. Khan (Witteveen 1998, 116) claims: "Those, who have some intuition or whatever miraculous power, got possession of it through breath. The first and basic condition though is the clear channel for breath, this channel is meant to be human body itself. If this channel is blocked, then air cannot pass freely." The text indicates that they are *nadi channels* that prevent "breathing" in a subtle level. Kundalini energy is released with the help of breathing, and then it flows through the energy channels, which need to be cleared from all obstacles, so that the chakras may be activated.

We can see illustrations of the chakras even in

the New World, which also supports the thesis of universality of this phenomenon. Ravindra Kumar (2006, 70–71), citing R. Sheer, says: "[i]n Peru, we find in the ancient stone-built temples engravings that depict a puma, condor and snake – symbols of the three empires: our Earth, a world above it and a world below it. Between the engravings, there are seven holes, placed one on the top of each other. (...) According to the early Kichwa mythology, each of these seven hollows was filled up with gold and diamonds (...) energy that the Incas called Kori Machakway is the same transformation that the Indian people describe as kundalini. Activation or awakening of the chakras is bound to the kundalini energy, which is showed even more frequently than the chakras themselves." Again, Ravindra Kumar (2006, 70) – with the help of J. White – offers examples of such symbolic expressions: "It (kundalini) was described in historical writings from the ancient Egypt, Tibet, Sumer, China, Greek, and other cultures and religious traditions, including the early Judaism and Christianity. Crown of the pharaoh, Mexican feathered dragon, dragon in Oriental mythology or the snake in the Garden of Eden – these all are hints of kundalini. Also Aesculapian staff, two snakes twisted around the staff – the modern symbol of medical practice. It is said that this staff came from god Hermes, the founder of Hermetic tradition of higher knowledge."

Symbolic illustrations of the chakras are more or less seen in various spiritual traditions. The precision of positioning of the chakras on the body is remarkable, as well as depiction of kundalini and experiences in individual chakras. Kundalini represents

energy that activates chakras, one by one, along the spine and therefore is an important instrument of reaching liberation. The Manipura chakra is usually the first to be awakened and means the beginning of transcendent experience. The fifth and sixth chakra then bring the so-called “*mystical death*”, intense feeling of the death of myself. In the seventh chakra we see the end of duality and liberation.

4 Theresa’s mansions as a system of chakras?

A German theologian and religious scholar Hans Küng notices connections between the mysticism of Teresa of Avila and Hinduism, especially Yoga. So does a Czech mystic Eduard Tomáš. Küng (1997, 68) claims, for example, that there are surprising similarities between “degrees of mystical submerging in *Yoga Sūtras* of Patanjali and grades of prayer of Teresa of Avila”. Küng though does not define where exactly these similarities are. Tomáš (2000, 119), on the other hand, identifies precisely mansions of Teresa of Avila and the Yoga system of the chakras when says: “There are seven grades of a mystical ladder, seven large mansions or Teresa’s sacred castle, seven great centres of our subtle psychic.” Similarly to Küng, he does not go any further in this – for us an important – remark. Are then mansions (prayer grades) in the Teresa of Avila’s *Interior Castle* something similar to the Yoga chakras or is this similarity purely incidental?

Ordered by the Inquisition, Teresa of Avila wrote her mystical work *The Interior Castle* in 1577, five years before her death, when

she was already a great mystic. When contemplating the concept of the book, Teresa of Avila (1921, 17) got an inspiration about how to methodologically process the grades of prayer: “While I was begging our Lord today to speak for me, since I knew not what to say nor how to commence this work which obedience has laid upon me, an idea occurred to me which I will explain, and which will serve as a foundation for that I am about to write. I thought of the soul as resembling a castle, formed of a single diamond or a very transparent crystal, and containing many rooms, just as in heaven there are many mansions.”

This Teresa’s vision seems to be an indirect and concentrated digest of her mystical journey, rather than its direct copy. The symbolic crystal, castle with many mansions, is really interesting. In the centre of the diamond, or castle, there is a light that does not reach to the mansions at the side of the diamond. We can cite Teresa’s various speeches (1921, 18, 22, 23–24) on this topic: “Let us imagine, as I said, that there are many rooms in this castle, of which some are above, some below, others at the side; in the centre, in the very midst of them all, is the principal chamber in which God and the soul hold their most secret intercourse. (...) Now let us turn at last to our castle with its many mansions. You must not think of a suite of rooms placed in succession, but fix your eyes on the keep, the court inhabited by the King. Like the kernel of the palmito, from which several rinds must be removed before coming to the eatable part, this principal chamber is surrounded by many others. However large, magnificent, and spacious

you imagine this castle to be, you cannot exaggerate it; the capacity of the soul is beyond all our understanding, and the Sun within this palace enlightens every part of it. (...) You must notice that the light which comes from the King's palace hardly shines at all in these first mansions; although not as gloomy and black as the soul in mortal sin, yet they are in semi-darkness, and their inhabitants see scarcely anything."

It is however important to realise that the symbol of a diamond or a castle depicts human soul and borders of the castle, the "outer walls" represent human body. It means that this symbolism describes a human, his body and soul. Teresa (1921, 18) for example says: "All our care is concentrated on our bodies, which are but the coarse setting of the diamond or the outer walls of the castle."

Teresa's structure of the text is progressive; it describes the mystical rise of the soul to God from the first chamber to the seventh chamber. This mystical ascent was known in Christian mysticism from the Middle Ages and its roots are found in the *mystical ladder of patriarch Jacob*. Many mystical authors spoke about a journey or ascend to God among them Bonaventure in his work *Journey of the Soul into God*. Ascend, or gradation can also be found in the classic three-phase or triadic understanding of mystical journey by Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite – *purification, illumination, unification* (*purificatio, illuminatio, unio* in Latin).

The first three mansions of the castle, as Teresa writes, are a kind of pre-stage of deeper mystical experiences. According to her, these

are easily penetrated by the human's negative characters, symbolised by frogs, lizards and venomous snakes. Basing on Teresa's explanations, these first three mansions cannot be reliably identified with the first three grades of the Yoga chakra system (Muladhara, Svadhisthana and Manipura). The first three mansions are more likely to be part of the first stage of mysticism, which is purification (*purificatio* in Latin). However, if we consider also Patanjali's first stages of ethical preparation in Yoga, then we would find something similar also here.

The fourth mansion represents mystical stage of illumination and this is the place where spiritual turnover starts. Teresa (1921, 39) says: "Henceforth they begin to be supernatural and it will be most difficult to speak clearly about them". And really, the fourth degree is in all religions supposed to be the centre, heart of spiritual existence. Teresa of Avila (1921, 44) surprisingly adds this: "This joy does not appear to me to originate in the heart, but in some more interior part and, as it were, in the depths of our being. I think this must be the centre of the soul, as I have since learnt and will explain later on." In this centre of the soul, Teresa says, it is very difficult to distinguish where the soul ends and God starts. She speaks (1921, 44) of this poetically: „[t]he dilation begun by the celestial waters in the depths of our being. They appear to dilate and enlarge us internally". Teresa speaks here about expanding the heart, which resembles spiritual techniques to expand consciousness. It is not important if we speak about expanding the heart or expanding consciousness, it is the expanding itself that is required for open-

ing of the self for the spiritual and transcendent. Remarkable with Teresa is also her frequently mentioned element of water (inner light in consciousness in Teresa's approach can be seen as *celestial waters*), which symbolises the life-giving flow of subtle forms of energy coming from the very depth, beyond borders of the body. In the seventh mansion she approves this in her words (1921, 121): "For from the bosom of the Divinity, where God seems ever to hold this soul fast clasped, issue streams of milk, which solace the servants of the castle".

Can we then take Teresa's fourth mansion as development of the fourth Anahata chakra? Taoist and Zen literature understand the beginning of awakening of spiritual potential to lay in the Manipura chakra (see above). Despite this difference, Teresa places the fourth mansion in the area of the heart, when she speaks about expanding the heart, but she believes its very source has even deeper spiritual origin. This interpretation resembles the symbol of Jewish candleholder (Menorah), whose primary line reaches the fourth light (Sephiret) or Ramana Maharshi's "*spiritual Heart*".

Ramana Maharshi, who continues with the Vedanta tradition, speaks of the Heart or the true Self (*Atman*) as the universal life-principle of human. This principle is at the same time god being and is different from the idea of the self or ego. Maharshi (Mudaliar 1996, 54, 61) characterises the true Self in this way: "[t]here is the one and only Reality, the greatest truth, and it is not only your Self, but the Self of the whole world you see now, as well as of all other beings. This

Self, *Paraatman* is immortal and unalterable as opposed to ego, *jiva*, which is temporary. You must not mistake ego for *Atman*." He further explains: "Heart is the greatest centre of the Self. You do not need to doubt it. The real Self shines constantly in the Heart, behind the *jiva* or ego." Maharshi (Mudaliar 1996, 61) even places this *spiritual Heart* to the right side of heart, but, of course, under the physical and also the fine layer, referring to the old Vedantic texts.

Based on comparison between Teresa of Avila and Ramana Maharshi, we could find an agreement in the placement of the spiritual centre and in the case of the fourth mansion in Teresa of Avila we could also speak about awakening of the fourth chakra. This is supported by Teresa's experiences (1921, 42), which describes in the first chapter of the fourth mansions: "Whilst writing this I am thinking of the loud noise in my head which I mentioned in the Introduction, and which has made it almost impossible to obey the command given me to write this. It sounds as if there were a number of rushing waterfalls within my brain, while in other parts, drowned by the sound of the waters, are the voices of birds singing and whistling. This tumult is not in my ears, but in the upper part of my head, where, they say, is placed the superior part of the soul. I have long thought that this must be so because the flight of the spirit seems to take place from this part with great velocity." She further continues (1921, 125): "However large a fire may be, the flame never burns downwards, but upwards, and so this movement is seen to come from the centre of the soul whose powers it excites."

Having this description, it is quite apparent that ascending soul in Teresa will in Yoga mean ascending kundalini from the heart towards the crown of the head, including the physiologic effects such as sensation of internal noise at the top of the head. Transformation or deeper spiritual experiences start in the fourth mansion, but the actual transcendence, which we may call *mystical death* only takes place in the fifth mansion. Teresa writes about this death (1921, 54): "This is a delicious death, for the soul is deprived of the faculties it exercised while in the body: delicious because, (although not really the case), it seems to have left its mortal covering to abide more entirely in God. So completely does this take place, that I know not whether the body retains sufficient life to continue breathing." When Teresa (1921, 58) describes this spiritual experience (*mystical death*, she uses the example of archaic change from a worm into a white butterfly. Teresa interprets this change as follows: "Now let us see what becomes of the 'silkworm', for all I have been saying leads to this. As soon as, by means of this prayer, the soul has become entirely dead to the world, it comes forth like a lovely little white butterfly!" In the old cultures, a butterfly represents soul and a scene of internal transformation. This transformation is, according to Teresa, quite fast. During the process the worm dies and is reborn in the form of butterfly, which we can compare to the Paul's idea of the death of the old man and birth of the new one (Romans 6: 4–6). The fifth mansion of *The Interior Castle*, as described by Teresa of Avila, can be supposed a transforming one, where we witness

the phenomenon of *mystical death*.

There is, however, a disagreement about "placement" of the mystical death, because as we can see above, Jiyu-Kennett places it into the level of the sixth chakra – the Ajna chakra. According to Teresa, the mystical death starts in the fifth mansion, which she calls simple joining God, continues in the sixth mansion with a kind of engagement to God and finally finishes up in the seventh mansion, with mystical union with God. R. Kumar (2006, 243) also notices that something changes significantly in the fifth chakra, when he says: "Enabling the chakra leads to freeing from the bonds of secular passion (...) Energy that was up to now used to reach the earthly aims is free now, it changes its direction up and opens the gate of freedom." Now we need to say that although Jiyu-Kennett describes her mystical death in the level of the sixth chakra, the so-called third eye, she does not speak about the two previous chakras. For her, it is a continual process – from arousing the Manipura chakra to liberation. Despite the disagreement in the chakra localisation of mystical death, it is important that it stays in one line of rising kundalini.

The mystical engagement happens, according to Teresa of Avila, in the sixth mansion. Teresa says that this sixth mansion is a place with frequent ecstasy states, accompanied by visions, inner voices, visions of unknown countries and so on. Teresa (1921, 89) speaks on this: "To return to this sudden rapture of the spirit. The soul really appears to have quitted the body, which however is not lifeless, and though, on the other hand, the person is certainly not dead, yet she her-

self cannot, for a few seconds, tell whether her spirit remains within her body or not. She feels that she has been wholly transported into another and a very different region from that in which we live, where a light so unearthly is shown that, if during her whole lifetime she had been trying to picture it and the wonders seen, she could not possibly have succeeded."

Teresa's experiences indicate that even in this mansion we may speak about mystical death (freeing the soul from the body), which brings further agreement with other traditions. However, in this mansion, the ecstatic journeys of the soul are important, formally comparable with other traditions, for example Taoist and Zen Buddhist. In the Taoist book *The Secret of the Golden Flower* it is mentioned the fourth grade of meditation – the "centre in the middle of conditions" (Jung and Wilhelm 2004, 71); similar descriptions offers Jiyu-Kennet as well (1997, 93–138).

In the seventh mansion, however, Teresa (1921, 121) says these ecstatic states cease and are exchanged by tranquillity, spiritual stabilisation and total unification of the soul with God, when she writes: "But spiritual marriage is like rain falling from heaven into a river or stream, becoming one and the same liquid, so that the river and rain water cannot be divided; or it resembles a streamlet flowing into the ocean, which cannot afterwards be disunited from it. This marriage may also be likened to a room into which a bright light enters through two windows – though divided when it enters, the light becomes one and the same." This union is full and perfect, according to Teresa we may

only speak about differences during engagement, when the soul is still separated from the Groom.

We speak about experience that is very similar to mystical experience in Hinduism, especially in Advaita Vedanta and Yoga, but also in Buddhism, Taoism and Islam. The old Vedanta text *Katha Upanishad* (*Lead us from darkness to light* 1997, 50) says: "A wise man, capable to distinguish spiritually, has to contemplate hard and utilise his tongue and other organs, merge his mind with intellect, intellect will join the Great Soul and the Great Soul will submerge the tranquil Self – the Essence." The continuator or Advaita Vedanta (philosophy of oneness) Shankara (1999, 58) explains the realisation of the Self in this way: "Similarly the adept fully realises naturalness of Himself when he is separated from his body, intellect and the Spirit in Himself and sees the Witness, Self, Knowledge of the Absolute, the cause of everything."

Similarly, a new continuator of Vedanta tradition, Ramana Maharshi, (Mudaliar 1996, 63) speaks about self-realisation: "You will finally become the pure knowing, in which there are no more thoughts or worries because they are left behind in the beginning. It is a flood and you are just a glade of grass, you are engulfed, but it is very blissful because you combine into a single entity with the flood that covers you. This is fusion of *jiva* and Brahman, when ego melts in the real Self, this is the fade of hallucination or illusion and achievement of the Truth."

The *Bhagavad Gita* (1999, 69), which is based on the tradition of Vedanta and Yoga, also mentions the fusion of Atman and Brahma:

"The heart will melt in Brahma, the eyes see the all-present Brahma everywhere, his atman is in all the creations and all the creations are spread in his Atman."

Mircea Eliade (1997, 85) explains this state in Buddhism: "Buddha does not define *nirvana*, but constantly speaks about some of its attributes. He says that Arhats reached the state of bliss, that nirvana is bliss, that he, Blessed, achieved Immortality, and monks can also reach it (...) Vision, in the canon called 'the eye of the arhats' (*Arija Cakhu*) enables contact with the unconditional, unfabricated, with *nirvana*."

In Taoism, especially in the elementary Taoist work the *Tao Te Ching* (Laozi, 63), we can also find many references to fulfilment in the Tao: "If you submit yourself to the Tao, you will become a part of it and the emptiness inside you can be filled with anything."

It is similar in Sufism. Although there is an emphasis on experience of unity with God, it is about transcending I-Thou duality. H. Inayat Khan (Witteveen 1998, 110–111) explains that in this state a Sufi hears God with his ears, sees God with his eyes, and uses God's hands, God's legs. His idea becomes God's idea; his sensation becomes God's sensation. For him, there is no more difference that a God's follower sees between him and God. He refers to the Persian poet Khusraua, who says: "When I became You and you became Me, when I became the body and You became the soul, then, Loved, there is no difference between us."

The above-mentioned examples show us that the *mystical union* (*unio mystica*), as the final stage of mystical journey, is well

demonstrable in all of the great spiritual traditions. Teresa of Avila may speak of the symbolic drop in the sea or light inside light, but this expresses precisely unity without distinction. Other traditions, especially Eastern ones, speak about nothingness, emptiness, unconditioned state, but this all can be expressed also by Teresa's symbolic way, namely that it is about unity without distinction and without a possibility to positively distinguish the nature of me or consciousness. All of these cases describe the state of consciousness (because we realise it) that goes beyond all the limits. In the present discussions influenced by postmodern period, there are some disputes about whether this consciousness is pure, unconditioned or defined by language. The claim that the "pure consciousness" is constructed is not in accordance with statements of the mystics, philosophers in various spiritual tradition, who claim it is the last and unconditioned reality. Martin Dojčár (2011, 34) notices that we have to distinguish between the *per se consciousness* and the *relational processes of awareness*. Pure consciousness is continual and must ontologically precede all concepts of consciousness as well as relational processes of awareness.

There are also significant similarities between Teresa's descriptions of subtle energies (see for example her description of the so-called milk-like beams; 1921, 121) and the kundalini energy and the chakras in the Eastern approaches. We have found certain differences in awakening of the chakras, in the Eastern traditions it is usually the Manipura chakra that opens as the first, while in Teresa's case it is the fourth mansion that is related to spir-

itual heart and the physical heart. This difference might have been based on Teresa's relation to God, loving and friendly, coming from the "heart" rather than the intellect. By borrowing *Bhagavad Gita's* expressions we may say that Teresa showed bhakti-like love respect to God. This might be the reason why the heart chakra is opened as the first. We can also see and prove that there is a flow of delicate energies to the crown of the head, which also supports the opinion that, also in her case, it was the kundalini energy. There is a hint of disproportion in placement of the mystical death. Teresa of Avila speaks about the fifth mansion, while in the Eastern traditions it is usually placed in the sixth mansion. Perhaps this puzzle is not entirely compact in neither of these cases, because Jiyu-Kennett does not, for example, describe the previous two grades (Anahata and Vishuddhi) and Teresa of Avila does not set a precise placement for the fifth mansion. We believe these inconsistencies shall not be overestimated because the phenomenon of mystical death is very well described and this is important. There is a full agreement in description of the rest of the ecstatic journeys in the level of the sixth mansion and the sixth Ajna chakra. This all leads us to an assumption that also in the case of Teresa of Avila we may speak about her mansions as about the system of Yogic chakras. Teresa of Avila, being a 16th century Spanish mystic, did not have a slightest idea about other spiritual traditions, maybe except Judaism and Islam, which she might have know about a little, therefore these similarities really support the idea of a universal character of mysticism.

5 Conclusion

We studied the question of universality of mysticism on the bases of comparison of Christian mysticism and several Eastern spiritual traditions such as Yoga, Buddhism, and Taoism. Christian mysticism was represented by one of the greatest mystics, doctor of the Church and a saint, Teresa of Avila. The comparison was focused on the chakra system, their localisations and effects as described in individual traditions. The advantage of such a comparison is in the fact that each chakra is linked to a specific location in a human body, which makes the process of comparison more precise.

The very first impulse for the comparison came from the claims of Hans Küng and Eduard Tomáš, who hinted some significant similarities between the Teresa's mansions and the chakras. However, these authors did not go any further. That is why we had been facing a fundamental question from the very beginning – does Teresa of Avila really speak about the same "system" – "the system of chakras", which is recognized and described in Yoga?

A more detailed study of Teresa's *Interior Castle* showed us surprising similarities, but also some differences. Surely, Teresa does not speak about the chakras, because she is not familiar with Hinduism or Yoga, but she is metaphorically speaking about the seven mansions. We suppose that her descriptions of the fourth, fifth, sixth and the seventh mansion are similar to the descriptions of the chakras in Yoga. She places the fourth mansion in the region of the heart (the Anahata chakra). In the fifth mansion, which

is not precisely localised, Teresa describes the mystical death, with even stronger effects in the sixth mansion. We can suppose that it was, analogically, the rising energy of kundalini, because Teresa speaks metaphorically about “milk-like beams”, “water”, “light”, even noise that is rising up to the crown of the head. It is the seventh chakra that is, in Yoga, placed over the crown of the head. Based on Teresa’s descriptions, it seems quite apparent that she might have been speaking about the awakening of kundalini and opening of the so-called centres of delicate energy – the chakras.

Along with these similarities, we can also see some differences. The first one is in the description of the first three mansions: they do not correspond to the first three chakras in Yoga. Teresa’s description of the mansions matches more likely the phase of purification (*purificatio* in Latin) on her mystical journey.

The second difference is in the order of opening of the chakras. Teresa’s mystical experience started in the fourth mansion, while in Taoism and Zen Buddhism it is the third Manipura chakra.

We found the third difference in placement of the mystical death. Teresa of Avila mentions the fifth mansion with the remark that the process of separating the soul from the body continues in the sixth mansion, while Zen Buddhist Jiyu-Kennett localises this into the sixth Ajna chakra.

Beside these structural differences there surely are some differences in the content. Teresa of Avila lived in the 16th century Spain. Her Roman Catholic belief had an influence on her spiritual experience, which was theist

and interpersonal. We however have to say that in her last, seventh chamber, the spiritual images that Teresa of Avila describes are very similar to the Eastern ones, which are not based on content but on the state of pure, contentless consciousness. Also the course of the mystical death itself, accompanied with the feeling of dying, is very similar to other mystical traditions. Mysticism of Teresa of Avila thus offers compelling similarities with the Eastern spiritual traditions, especially when speaking about formal and structural features (kundalini and the system of chakras), but also two content-based similarities (mystical death and contentless consciousness).

As a result of our comparison we can claim that despite some more or less content-based differences, there are some important formal and structural similarities between various mystical traditions. Thus we believe that it is possible to speak about universality of mysticism. This universal-like understanding of mysticism offers some important consequences for philosophical understanding of man and his spiritual evolution. We also believe that it offers a great starting point for interfaith dialogue.

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About the authors

Prof. PhDr. Slavomír Gálik, PhD. (1965) is a philosopher who specializes in philosophy of mysticism, philosophy of media, and history of philosophy. He published extensively on these issues. Among his most important publications are books *Philosophy and Mysticism* and *The Spiritual Dimension of Crisis of Contemporary Man*. As a head researcher he lead a research project on phenomenon of "mystical death" in European and extra-European

spiritual traditions. He currently serves as the head of the Department of Mass Media Communications at the Faculty of Mass Media Communications, University of Ss. Cyril and Methodius in Trnava, Slovakia. His electronic contact is s_galik@yahoo.com.

PhDr. Sabína Gáliková Tolnaiová, PhD.

(1973) is a philosopher with special interests in systematic philosophy, philosophical anthropology, philosophy of education, and ethics of media. Some of these issues she discusses in her last book *The Idea of Psychagogy in the Holistic Perspective*. She is affiliated to the Department of General and Applied Ethics of the Faculty of Arts, University of Constantine the Philosopher in Nitra, Slovakia. Her email contact is sgalikovatolnaiova@ukf.sk.

THE HOLY AND DIRTY MONEY OF FAITH SHAPES OF RELIGION IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY

Adrián Slavkovský

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ABSTRACT

A phenomenon, which is generally referred to as religion, has been present in various shapes throughout the whole history of humankind. Only the last centuries have brought a mass expansion of atheism. When many assumed that religion would successively expire, something else happened.

At the end of the second millennium a new bloom of religion happened in many forms. But this is not a simple comeback of the good old times of religion, especially not of traditional religious communities and institutions.

Key words

Secularization, institutionalization, freedom, responsibility, otherness

1 Globalization and secularization

Politics, economics, science and entertainment have been shaping the life of society much more than religion, which remains on the margin of society. This process of the loss of impact of religion on development is described as *secularization*.

Further, another process – *globalization* – is

connected with secular elements of the culture – mainly with the development of science and technology, with the improvement of mass media and means of transport, and with the increasing influence of the world market.

As a result of this process, various religions meet and influence each other, mix together and there emerge new forms of religion. Especially people of the Western civilization live in a multireligious environment.

Many thinkers agree with facts related to the concepts of secularization and globalization. But the question is how to explain these

facts and the processes that led to them. Which are the motive forces of secularization? Does religiousness in a society weaken or strengthen?

Does religion have an impact on the political life of a given society or not? How should we Christians respond to these developments? Such questions represent a challenge for us. We constantly have to seek answers, to discuss, to engage in dialogue, even if our opinions may differ.

While contemplating the changes and ambiguities of contemporary religion, a comparison with money can come to our mind. As money has changed its form from coins to the “invisible” money behind credit cards, likewise religion changes to the more “invisible” form of private religion, as described by sociologists.

And just like the value of money continuously provokes abuse (counterfeit banknotes, false cheques, laundering of dirty money), the value of religion also tends to be abused (indignity and instigation to hatred in the name of religion, religious wars). Money and religion endure, although they undergo transformations. What is behind all these changes?

2 Institutionalization of faith

Religion has a social dimension as well. It is not only the private affair of an individual. Religious people have always formed communities, worshipped together, established various social structures with different roles within them.

In religious communions similar sociological regularities recur as in other human groupings. One of them is the process of institutionalization. Ideas, works or movements, which are not institutionalized fade away and vanish with their bearers. But when they survive, they give rise to institutions; and the field of religion is not an exception to the rule.

An interesting interpretation of *institutionalization* is described by Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann in their book *Social Construction of Reality* (Berger and Luckmann 1966, 52–54): “Social order is not part of the ‘nature of things’, and it cannot be derived from the ‘laws of nature’. Social order exists only as a product of human activity. All human activity is subject to *habitualization*. *Institutionalization* occurs whenever there is a reciprocal typification of habitualized actions by types of actors. Put differently, any such typification is an institution. Institutions always have a history, of which they are the products.”

Religions have their roots in the deep *experiences of the Holy – mysterium tremendum et fascinans* (Otto 1950) – which have visited some individuals: experiences of something noble that transcended them.

3 Consequences of social control

“Institutions, by the very fact of their existence, *control* human conduct by setting up *patterns of conduct*, which channel it in one direction as against the many other directions that would theoretically be possible.” (Berger and Luckmann 1966, 55)

Institutions also produce *mechanisms of sanctions*, but they are of a secondary or supplementary kind. The primary social control is given in the existence of an institution as such. Social control leads to some limitations, which always evoke tensions between individual and group interests.

An institutional world is experienced as an objective persistent reality, external to the individual. However massive the objectivity of the institutional world may appear to the individual, yet it is a humanly produced, constructed objectivity.

As Berger and Luckmann note (1966, 89), “[r]eification is the apprehension of human phenomena as if they were things, that is, in non-human or possibly suprahuman terms. The reified world is, by definition, a dehumanized world. It is experienced by one as a strange facticity, an *opus alienum* over which one has no control.”

The possibility of reification is never far away and also threatens religious communities. Words, gestures, art, feasts, customs, all of which used to refer to noble transcendence, beauty and truth, can become empty and misunderstood and can return to a set of rules restricting the people.

Another important subprocess of the social construction of reality is *legitimation*. “It is a second-order objectivation of meaning” (Berger and Luckmann 1966, 92). It has some interesting implications – for example, every society produces a *symbolic universe*.

Legitimation leads to the division between *official* and *heretical* symbolic universes, which are joined with repressive procedures. On

the occasion of confrontation between two societies with conflicting universes, the result will depend more on the power than on the theoretical ingenuity of the respective legitimators. Inquisition and religious wars confirm these theses.

4 Reasons and consequences of secularization

The *complexification* of society is joined with *specialization*. In early modern Western societies, religion had noticeably separated from other social institutions. Development in such a society has a paradoxical character.

On the one hand, there is a tendency to extend individual freedom more and more, but on the other hand members of the contemporary society are more dependent in a new and sophisticated way.

In many spheres of life they have options to choose between rival institutions, services and products: in politics, economics, education, and also in the religious area. It seems that the pressure of such a lifestyle on an individual is finally greater than in less technically advanced societies, as the increased measure of stress on people shows.

This tension between freedom and dependency is visible also in the religious life of people as a tension between individual religiousness and official religion. This is described as a *privatization of religion*.

There emerge new religious groups and movements and together with globalization, spreading and mixing of older religious traditions, this establishes the situation of

the “*demonopolization of the religious market*” (Lužný 1999, 79). With the increasing number of religious entities, the credibility and self-evidence of all of them sharply decrease.

Individual identity, including its religious dimension, is understood as a private affair. This demand for autonomy is connected with consumer orientation. Religions have also turned into goods on a great market of ideas, worldviews, *reference systems of transcendence* and rituals.

Thomas Luckmann in his book *The Invisible Religion* says that the dimension of the Holy is mostly constituted in the “*invisible*” sphere of privacy, where the deepest and most moving discussions about that sphere occur (Luckmann 1967, 106).

5 Freedom and responsibility

It is challenging how to react to all these developments. There are two simplified, but – in my opinion – incorrect answers. One of them is the boundless *relativization* and the other is *fundamentalism*.

Both of these are an expression of fear: one represents the fear of *responsibility*, the other the fear of *freedom*. They comprise an escape from reality and an unwillingness to accept facts as they are.

Bryan Wilson describes secularization as a transition from a smaller community (*Gemeinschaft*) lifestyle to a big society (*Gesellschaft*) lifestyle. The first is characterized by face-to-face relations, an emphasis on emotionality and a symbolic universe, which re-

fers to transcendence.

The second represents a vast rationally coordinated group of people with complicated structures, impersonal relationships and an emphasis on rationality. Secularized society does not need references to transcendence, because there a strong belief dominates that it is fully and coherently explained only by means of rationality (Wilson 1992, 149–160).

The Christian Church should take such analyses seriously. Christianity is also threatened by too much rationality and cold institutional relations. This can lead to dissatisfied people leaving the Church and converting to a competitor in the religious market. The personal approach is very important also in the case that the other is neither a present nor a prospective member of the Church.

6 Contrasting expressions of faith

In archaic societies an individual was too much bound to her or his community and depended on it, so she or he had to accept all aspects of the community life willy-nilly. Only later, when individual freedom became greater, was it possible to realize that religion can have its dark side just as all other human activities.

The *meme theory* says that every valuable and successful cultural meme provokes the emergence of many false imitations of this *meme*: they are similar to the good meme, but they are harmful. False banknotes are good example of this phenomenon (Blackmore 1999).

If we look at history, since the *axial age* every period and every place somehow confirm the ambiguity of religion. Significant personalities, in various cultures, have evaluated religion with contradicting judgments.

Some linked it to the best within human beings, saying that it is precisely religion, which helps to complete the development of an individual as well as the development of humankind by discovering the spiritual dimensions of life. Thus, religion should be the treasure of human culture, the best within it.

Others, on the other hand, asserted that religion led people to infatuation, dependence and in the end to violence and murder in religious conflicts and wars. Thus, religion was a sign of immaturity, the worst and therefore most useless element of a culture.

Probably no other sphere of life, perhaps with the exception of politics, is perceived in such a radically contradicting way as religion. Why is this so? Does religion contribute to *peace* or to *violence*?

Does it help to build bridges between cultures and hostile groups and thus contribute to the extension of a *dialogical* approach to otherness? Or does it support *exclusivist* language and thought, prejudices and barriers, and so exacerbate existing tensions?

People need a spiritual dimension in life. The spiritual development of individuals and of humankind, however, is a very fragile process as well. Mistakes in it have taken a heavy toll. Persecuting "bad religious teachings" or "heresies" in the name of the right one does not seem to be a good solution.

Problems with sects, esoteric and new religious movements represent one example connected with the ambiguity of religion. Some expressive events like the collective suicide of members of a California group, the drama of the Order of the Solar Temple, and the carnage caused by the Aoum Sect in Japan gave rise to great anxiety or intolerance as reactions to the world of sects.

How can we protect society from such groups, but at the same time not restrict religious freedom? This question is so important that the Council of Europe dealt with it twice and issued some recommendations (Council of Europe 1992, 1999). The freedom of conscience and religion is guaranteed by *Article 9* of the *European Convention on Human Rights*, but there is no accepted legal definition of religion.

7 The ambiguity of own and alien

Religion is a multidimensional phenomenon, a complex reality; and therefore it is not possible to find precise borders between the religious aspect and other aspects of the life of an individual or of a society. They influence each other and so it is difficult to come to genuine reasons for some observable facts.

The psychic structure of people influences their religious behaviour. There are many aspects, which can be analysed: the difference between witnessing and manipulation; the role of the subconscious in religious experience; religious behaviour as a defensive mechanism on occasions of unmanaged troubles.

Let us focus now on the problem of how religious people reconcile themselves to the experience of the alien or the strange. The phenomenon of *own* or *proper* on one hand and of *alien* or *strange* on the other hand is familiar to all people.

If something is radically alien, it appears to us mostly as threatening and dangerous, because it threatens our certainty, although sometimes we meet it as an attraction and a challenge. Nevertheless, the radically alien often causes disquiet.

Therefore, people want to release themselves from a storm of the alien so that they try to get it under control. And they often succeed in this; unfortunately, sometimes at the price of a violent subjugation of the alien.

8 Sensitivity towards the strangeness of the strange

In spite of the fact that *horror alieni* is deeply rooted in us, it is possible not to surrender to it and take alien as alien. In Buddhism this is taught by means of *koans* – short puzzle-stories that contain contradictions.

They have no logical solution, but teach the necessity of bearing the tension of mystery in pursuit of enlightenment. From this point of view enlightenment can be characterized as sensitivity for the *strangeness of the strange*.

The strange or alien points to the fact that my world is not complete, and that there is something that transcends me, and my perception of the order of universe. Those who bear up the strangeness of the strange can

experience a peculiar *paradox* that the alien one after some time will emit the warmth of home.

Such an *experience of alien as the Holy* can deeply touch an individual. Probably religions are sediments of various ways to understand, express, and hand over these experiences. This is done in their sacred texts, rituals, and social structures. But it again creates a new paradox.

Tradition offers the warmth of home and so within it all references to transcendence are something familiar, proper and possessed. Then also the absolute, if it is God, gods, Tao, Brahma or Nirvana, is only some pattern in good accustomed *Logos*. Yet religions are the best soil in which first of all seeds of sensitivity for the strangeness of the strange, seeds of genuine transcendence bud.

9 Experience of the Holy

Remaining alien as alien is the essence of religious experience. Radically expressed, it means the *wishing of otherness*. Yet as historical phenomena religions brought only sediments of such experiences.

The importance of religious experience shows that membership in a religious community, the use of religious language and symbols, and participation in worship are only external expressions of something more essential which is, however, inner. These expressions do not form the essence of religion. They rather build conditions in which the process of spiritual maturing can be – but not necessarily is – successful.

History shows people as seekers of God, of absolute, and of transcendence, but much more it shows them as people who long for home, for certainty; people who fear the alien and want to dispose of it, even at the price of violence. But the more one tries to escape that which is alien, the more radically the alien manifests itself.

In this time of globalization, religions suddenly stand face to face with each other, without the possibility of escaping the challenge of the alien, as it used to be in the past. *Interreligious dialogue* is a difficult test for us. If we stand the proof, surely a new spiritual culture, a culture of the wishing of otherness, a culture of love will arise.

10 Distinguishing positive and negative aspect of religion

Is ambiguity intrinsic to the nature of religion? Or in other words: Do the religions in which many people find supreme spiritual truth at the same time necessarily encourage violence? Is there no way to avoid this fate?

In order to try to solve this question, we must distinguish a twofold understanding of religion: as a *real phenomenon*, a set of cultural facts, and as an *ideal reality* that is expressed by facts only insufficiently.

In the first understanding, facts confirm the ambiguity. But in the second understanding religion is not necessarily connected to violence. Edward Schillebeeckx explains it on the basis of the mediational character of a religious relationship.

"The difficulty is that this relationship to the Absolute is never given in a 'detached' way," it is always 'wordly' intermediated. And these intermediaries can be elevated above their own status and promoted to the status of the will of God. "In that case false alliances can spur on religious people to religious violence in the name of their relationship to the Absolute." (Schillebeeckx 1997, 132)

There are also other spheres of life in which we have some ideal notions, yet it is very difficult to draw the bounds between the ideal reality and its *false imitations*. This is true, for example, for art.

Another example is Plato's dialogue, the *Sophist*, which deals with the problem of how to distinguish between a wise philosopher and a selfish sophist who only appears to be wise. This dialogue is considered as one of Plato's deepest.

11 New way of life

Is it possible to avoid these dangers? An already increasing *awareness* of them can help. We can confine the social control in religions to the lowest, most necessary measure. Religious people should try to revive religious experiences and to bring spirit into religious institutions. Also a balance between keeping tradition and facing new challenges is needed.

In relationships to others we should *avoid generalization*. Large communities often have a complicated inner structure. Official attitudes or the attitudes of majorities do not represent automatically the attitudes of all individuals or groups.

We can perceive the whole range of relationships to others: indifference, mutual misunderstanding, rivalry, attempts to command or control others, hatred, taking others as a necessary evil, tolerance, dialogue, cooperation, respect, love. A bad experience with people of another faith does not warrant us to judge all who belong to the same tradition.

The decline of the Church in Western societies in the last centuries used to be interpreted also as a decrease of spirituality. But the need for a spiritual dimension somehow belongs to human life; it is only the ways of satisfying this need, which has changed.

There, some questions arise for the Church. Which is more important: the salvation of all traditional institutional aspects of the Church, or the salvation of concrete contemporary people as they are?

But on the other hand there is another dilemma. Is it good for the Church to conform too easily to the new sociological situation and give up the treasures of its tradition, or is it better to struggle very sensitively for new ways of handing down the Christian tradition to new generations?

Such questions are primarily *practical*, and therefore, only a certain *way of life* can be a proper answer to them. But, first, they need a theoretical analysis and understanding. This paper with some considerations and proposals is one among the efforts aimed at this goal.

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About the author

Doc. RNDr. Adrián Slavkovský OP, PhD.

(1963) is a philosopher from Slovakia. He completed mathematical studies at the Faculty of Mathematics and Physics of the Comenius University in Bratislava, and he also graduated at the Theological Faculty of the Palacký University in Olomouc. He is a graduate of Ecumenical Studies at the WCC Bossey Ecumenical Institute. He received his PhD degree and attained habilitation at the University of Trnava, where he teaches Philosophy, Religious Studies, and Cognitive Studies. He is a member of the Order of Preachers, a Roman Catholic priest, and engaged in interreligious dialogue. His email address is adrian.slavkovsky@truni.sk.

MULTICULTURALISM IN HEALTH CARE CONCERNING JUDAISM AND HOLOCAUST ISSUES

Rebeka Ralbovská - Monika Zaviš - Renata Knezović

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Abstract

The influence of Holocaust on bio-psycho-social well-being of an individual is discussed in the paper, in particular the changes of life as a consequence of transgenerational trauma in surviving victims of the first and particularly the second generation. The aim of the paper is to present the results of a research that was related to the issues regarding providing a medical care to Jewish patients. We can see the results here, obtained by a non-standardized questionnaire research that was carried out in Slovakia in 2013 and in the Czech Republic in 2014, including 1273 respondents, both non-medical health care employees and students from non-medical study branch (secondary schools and universities). Obtained results are clearly summarized in attached tables. The research has proved that 995 (78,2%) respondents are interested in including the issues of the specific care of patients with Jewish faith into the education. 932 (73,2%) respondents knew about the issue of holocaust and 757 (59,5%) recognized the impact of holocaust trauma. In conclusion, results have been summarized and recommendations for practice are given. The authors join others in the call to improve evaluation, treatment and support of trauma victims and their children to prevent the transmission of problems from one generation to the next.

Keywords

Nursing education, transgenerational trauma, Holocaust, psychiatric disorders

1 Introduction

Throughout history, Jews have been permanently restricted in many fundamental rights (isolation in ghettos, prohibition from pursuing some handicrafts, and so on) and periodically harassed through “ideologically justified” genocide. It is almost incomprehensible why some individuals, as well as entire nations, at certain times in history turned against the Jews again and again, and why specifically this faith incites predominantly strong negative emotions.

The 20th century had brought a new form of anti-Semitism – the Nazi Holocaust, which revealed an extreme nationalism, racism, and for the most part the fanaticism of the Nazi ideology. The word holocaust can be understood as an absolute disaster and destruction. The term holocaust, which can be understood as a sacrificial burnt offering, has become accepted as a synonym for the Nazi mass murder of Jews in order to completely exterminate European Jewry. The scientific literature sometimes replaces the word Holocaust with *Shoah*, which describes the final solution of the Jewish question (i.e., extermination of the Jewish nation).

There are two basic questions for our research:

What is known?

Holocaust has impact on Jewish life. Transgenerational transmission of trauma occurs in surviving victims.

What the study adds?

It provides information about health care employees’ knowledge of the Holocaust

and transgenerational transmission of trauma in victims. It detects an interest in integrating these issues into the education of health care providers.

2 Present state of a subject and analysis of interest

The partition of Czechoslovakia in 1938–1939 determined the fate of its Jews during the war. According to the 1930 census, 356 830 people in the Czechoslovak Republic identified themselves as Jews by religion: 117 551 in Bohemia and Moravia, and 136 737 in Slovakia. After the partition of Czechoslovakia, approximately 118 310 people defined as Jews lived in the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia.

The Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia (today the Czech Republic) was established on March 15 1939 by proclamation of Adolf Hitler from Prague Castle following the declaration of establishment of the independent Slovak Republic on March 14 1939. Bohemia and Moravia were autonomous Nazi-administered territories which the German government considered part of the *Greater German Reich* (Lemkin 2005).

In November 1941 Reinhard Heydrich ordered the creation of a camp-ghetto at Theresienstadt. Between 1941 and late 1944 the German authorities assisted by local Czech security forces killed 73 603 deported Jews. The occupation authorities and their Czech collaborators also killed another 7 000 Protectorate Jews in Bohemia and Moravia.

The government of the Slovak Republic

restricted the civil rights of the Jews with the Government regulation no. 39/1939. The term "Jew" was defined on a religious basis. The said regulation, among other things, regulated the number of Jews in certain free professions. Another Government regulation no. 230/1939, modified the military duty of Jews and the Jews were transferred to the special labor camps. On April 25 1940, the Slovak Parliament passed Act no. 113/1940, known as the *Aryanization Act*. The act on the deportation of Jews was adopted on March 24 1942, and the first transportation unit was dispatched the next day, based on the regulation of the Prime Minister, Vojtech Tuka (Mlynárik 2005).

Trauma develops as a result of shock from the sudden succession of negative events for which an individual was not prepared, and from the consequences of these events. As a result, there is a distortion or degradation of individual and collective histories and their value and normative foundations.

Experiencing a trauma can be understood as a sociological process, defined by a painful injury to the collectivity, which creates a victim, creates an attribute of responsibility and spreads the spiritual and material consequences. If trauma is "experienced, thought, and externally manifested in a certain way", it will be defined in the collective identity of the respective group, and its presence will cause the necessary revision of the collective identity forms (Alexander et al. 2004).

The trauma of the Holocaust as a result of group hatred and violence undermined the very instinctive basis. *Thanatos*, represented in the consciousness by the guilt cat-

egory, dominated in the areas that should be ruled by *Eros*, self-acceptance and acceptance of others. At the level of the individual psyche, the Holocaust trauma causes a loss of sense, hope and love. This leads to the emergence of depressive disorders and various manifestations of traumatophilia when an individual repeatedly and consistently develops a tendency to self-destruction.

Transmission of intergenerational trauma occurred as a result of Jewish children living with severely traumatized parents. Some of them had vivid and terrifying nightmares about the concentration camps, cattle wagons, torture, living skeletons and gas chambers, even though they were born years after these events occurred. Children from the second generation were often named after dead family members who became the victims of the Holocaust. In addition to their own lives, they lived the lives of the dead family members and were often reminded of it. In fear of losing another child, in a mood of hypercompensation, the children were overwhelmed with love and care from their parents in the safety of their homes, often in isolation to be protected from being hurt by society. This developed an environment in which a child lost her or his identity.

Intergenerational communication patterns between parents who experienced various traumas and their offspring have been described in families of Holocaust survivors (Felsen 1998; Auerhahn and Laub 1998). An intergenerational communication pattern referred to as the "conspiracy of silence" has been found to be prevalent in families of

survivors (Danieli 1998). Studying trauma – related communication patterns in offspring of Holocaust survivors (Barber et al. 2002) identified a pattern characterized by offspring's nonverbal knowledge of their parent's Holocaust experiences coupled with little or no verbal knowledge of it. This familial communication pattern called "*knowing and not knowing*" (Jucovy 1992), was found to be related to distinct interpersonal patterns in close relationships in adulthood (Wiseman et al. 2002).

Acute feelings of loneliness among trauma survivors both in the midst and the aftermath of the traumatic experiences are well documented in the clinical literature (Dasberg 1976; Herman 1997).

Very often, due to a fear of diseases, cold and hunger, the children were dressed excessively and provided with excess food, and as a result, they later created a special relationship to food intake and sometimes developed eating disorders. They experienced all of this as a result of the horrors survived by their parents in the concentration camps.

A majority of the studies that investigated the mental health of Nazi "*Holocaust survivors*" (HS) revealed that emotional disorders and significant coping difficulties were prevalent in this population both at the time of release from the camps and many years later. In the clinical setting these are the defining characteristics of the survivors syndrome. This syndrome is a constellation of symptoms, including chronic anxiety and depression, nightmares of wartime experiences, guilt about having survived while other perished, psychosomatic disorders and a lonely,

isolated life devoid of any genuine pleasure (Keinan et al. 1988).

Given this disheartening reality, many researchers have turned to the "*holocaust survivors' offspring*" (HSO) to determine if and to what extent the children also suffer from emotional hardships.

The second generation has suffered from the absence of family dialogue, mostly lived through the wounded souls and the bodies of their parents in a non-verbal matter. Trauma, with its roots lying in a large society, and in the previous generation, is processed by the second generation primarily as a consequence of family dynamics. The second generation is accompanied by psychosomatic disorders, sometimes significant eating disorders and the concept of a wounded man, the feeling of guilt associated with depression after the loss of a sense of their own lives (Goffman 2003).

It seems reasonable to suggest that the offspring of Holocaust survivors might be as vulnerable as their parents and, similar to their parents, may function adequately in their daily activities but be unable to cope with the emotion of extreme stress or severe life-threatening situations. Second-generation Holocaust survivors are vulnerable to psychological distress and, when confronted with a life-threatening illness such as cancer, will manifest more distress than patients who are not second-generation Holocaust survivors (Baider et al. 2000).

3 Methodology

Aim

This study seeks to identify and describe the knowledge of health care providers about Holocaust and Judaism.

Research methods

Literature in this area was retrieved from the electronic databases: Medline, PsycInfo, using the following keywords in various combinations: Jew, Holocaust, *shoah*, second generation, PTSD, victim, transgeneration transport of trauma, transcultural nursing.

Based on this review of the literature, this paper addresses two research questions:

1. What is the knowledge about Holocaust in health care providers, nursing and social care for Jewish patients?
2. What is the interest of the education of health care providers in health and social care for Jewish patients?

Inclusion criteria

The inclusion criteria were as follows: student in middle or high school in the medical field or health care worker providing nursing care.

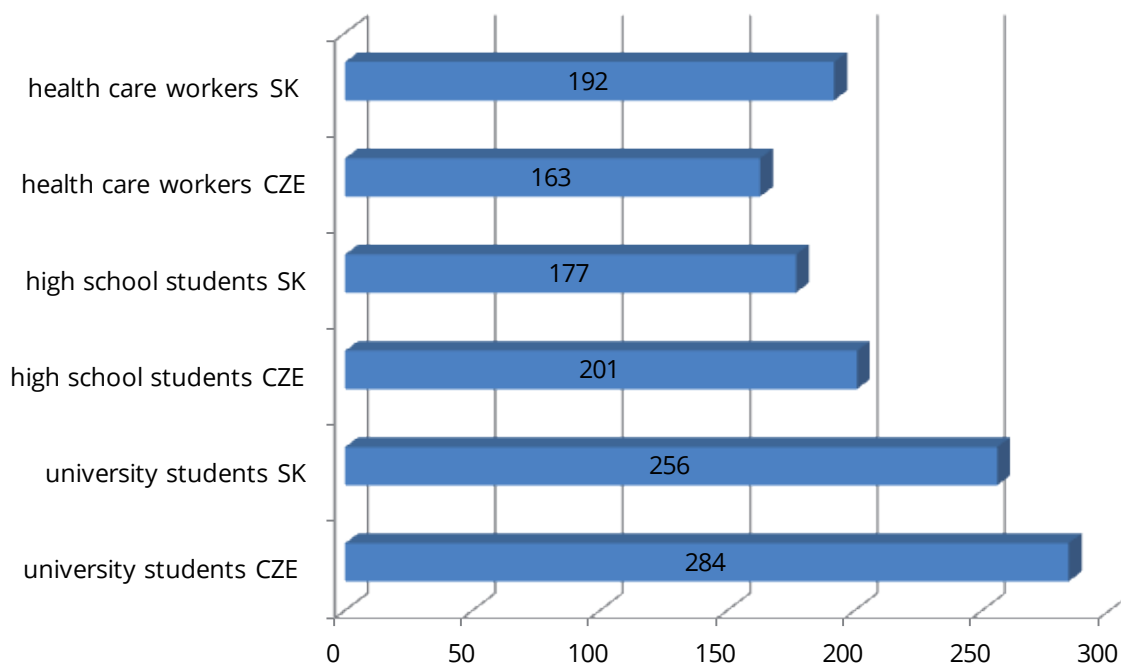
4 Research outcomes

The subjects of the research were students of secondary schools (medical assistant), university students (study program Nursing), health workers practice living in the Czech Republic (abbrev. CZE) and Slovak Republic (abbrev. SK). Further information is given in the Table 1.

Table 1. Characteristics of respondents

students	total
university students CZE	284
university students SK	256
high school students CZE	201
high school students SK	177
health care providers CZE	192
health care providers SK	163

Figure 1. Characteristics of respondents



The results of the questionnaire answers are stated as following: correct answers in the Table 2 and Figure 2, incorrect answers in the Table 3 and Figure 3.

Table 2. Correct answers

	university students CZE	university students SK	high school students CZE	high school students SK	health care providers CZE	health care providers SK	total
question 1	213	207	154	98	158	102	932
question 2	121	87	146	55	86	57	552
question 3	240	165	169	109	136	125	944
question 4	256	125	183	51	87	99	801
question 5	158	143	149	79	121	107	757
question 6	203	149	164	97	115	113	841
question 7	135	69	36	29	59	66	394
question 8	238	99	119	49	79	99	683

Figure 2. Correct answers

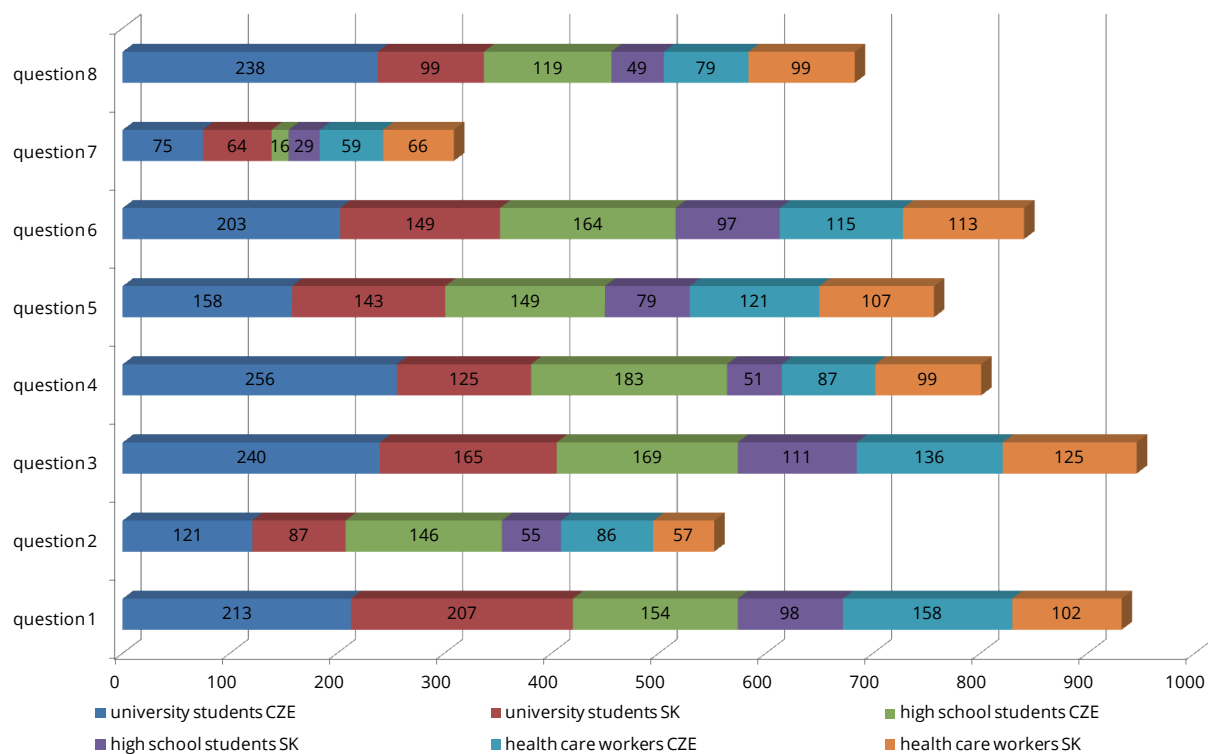


Table 3. Incorrect answers

	university students CZE	university students SK	high school students CZE	high school students SK	health care providers CZE	health care providers SK	total
question 1	71	49	47	79	34	61	341
question 2	163	169	55	122	106	106	721
question 3	44	91	32	68	56	38	329
question 4	28	131	18	126	105	64	472
question 5	126	113	52	98	71	56	516
question 6	81	107	37	80	77	50	432
question 7	149	187	165	148	133	97	879
question 8	46	157	82	128	113	64	590

Figure 3. Incorrect answers

The results of respondents' answers regarding the completion of teaching processed the issue are presented in the Table 4 and Figure 4.

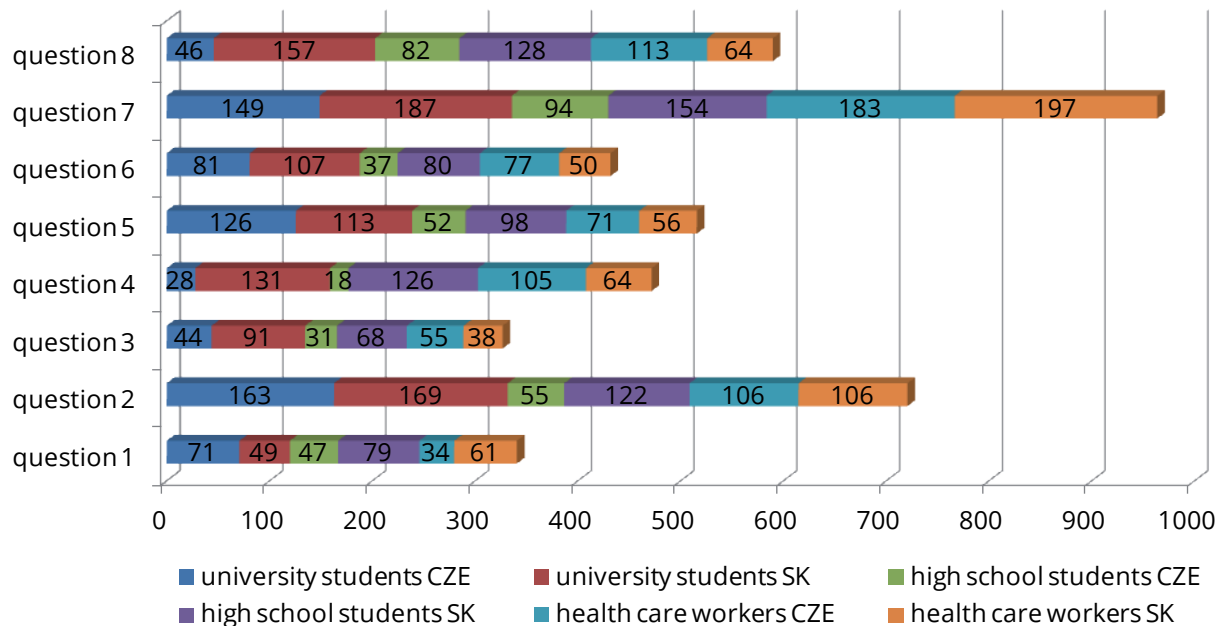
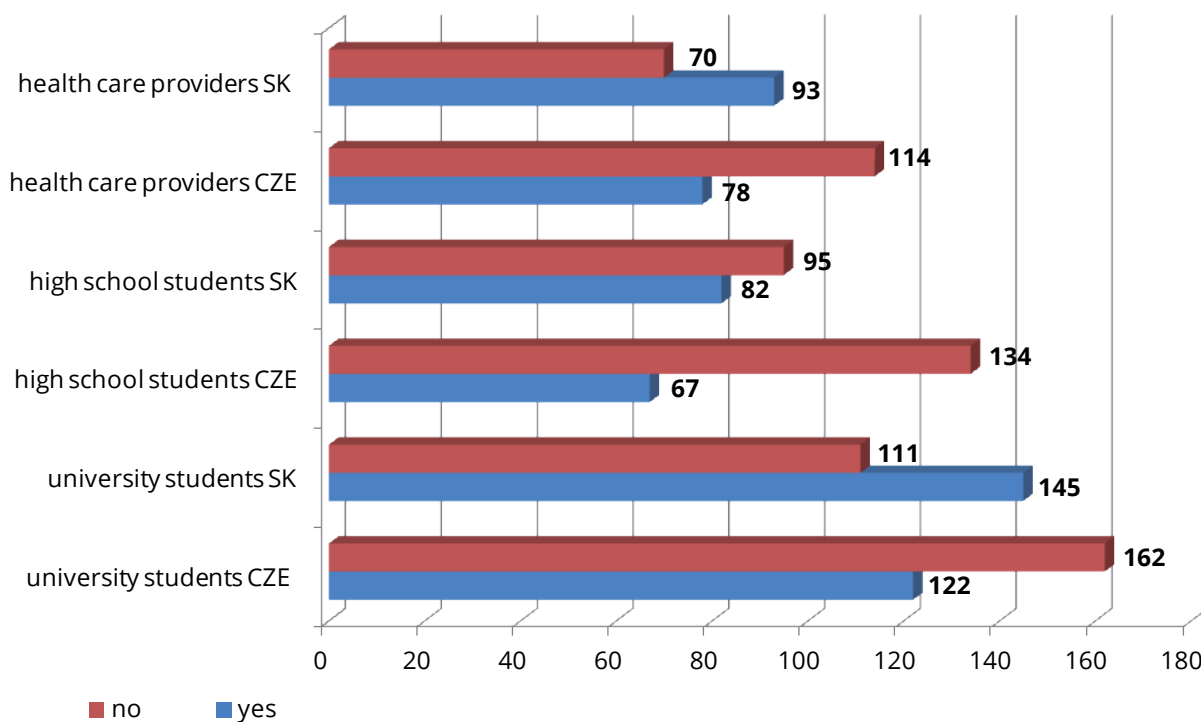


Table 4. Completing the education on the issues of holocaust and transgenerational transmission of trauma

	university students CZE	university students SK	high school students CZE	high school students SK	health care providers CZE	health care providers SK	total
yes	122	145	67	82	78	93	587
no	162	111	134	95	114	70	686

Figure 4. Completing the education on the issues of holocaust and transgenerational transmission of trauma

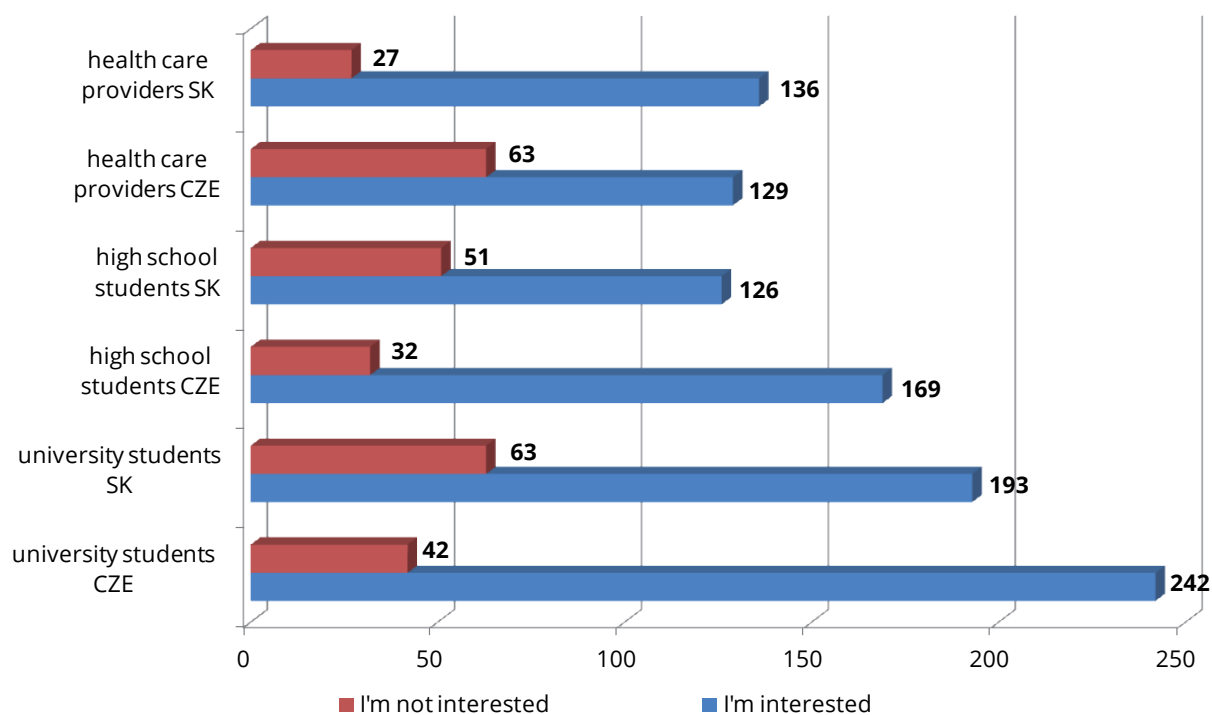


The results of respondents' answers regarding interest/disinterest in the issue are described in the Table 5 and Figure 5.

Table 5. Interest of the education about health care providers in health and social care for Jewish patients

	university students CZE	university students SK	high school students CZE	high school students SK	health care providers CZE	health care providers SK	total
I'm interested	242	193	169	126	129	136	995
I'm not interested	42	63	32	51	63	27	278

Figure 5. Interest of the education about health care providers in health and social care for Jewish patients



Completed questionnaires were checked, edited, entered and cleaned to produce as SPSS data file.

Version of the audit questions

1. Define the meaning of the word Holocaust.
2. Describe *Kristallnacht* – Crystal Night year, on which began anti-Jewish pogroms.
3. What sign were Jews identified with during the Holocaust?
4. Indicate the number of Holocaust Jewish victims.
5. Describe the signs of the impact of Holocaust trauma on “second generation”, transgeneration Holocaust.
6. Describe the principles of *kosher* foods.
7. What is *tahara*?
8. List five Jewish holidays.

The correct answers

1. The term holocaust, which can be understood as a burnt sacrificial offering, has become accepted as a synonym for the Nazi mass murder of Jews in order to completely exterminate European Jewry. Holocaust – *Shoah* describes the final solution of the Jewish question (i.e., extermination of the Jewish nation).
2. Crystal Night is the name that’s been given to the night of November 9–10 1938. In almost all large German cities and some smaller ones that night, store windows of Jewish shops were broken, Jewish houses and apartments were destroyed, and synagogues were demolished

and set on fire.

3. A Star of David, often yellow-colored, was used by the Nazis during the Holocaust as a method of identifying Jews.
4. During the Holocaust were killed about 6 million Jews.
5. The second generation (in terms of the Holocaust) is characterized by the following symptoms: anxiety, depressive and psychosomatic disorders, loneliness, nightmares, sleep disturbances, a tendency to experience feelings of guilt, overestimation of the importance of food, which they consider a major value; a food is a central cause of various disorders they suffer from, etc.
6. *Kosher* foods are those that comply to the regulations of *kashrut* (Jewish dietary law). Reasons for food not being *kosher* include the presence of ingredients derived from *non-kosher* animals (pork, rabbit, eagle, owl, catfish, sturgeon, and any shellfish, insect or reptile are *non-kosher*) or from *kosher* animals that were not slaughtered in the ritually proper manner, a mixture of meat and milk, wine, or grape juice (or their derivatives) produced without supervision, the use of produce from Israel that has not been tithed, or the use of non-kosher cooking utensils and machinery. Jewish patients often request special kosher food in accordance with religious laws that govern the methods of preparation.
7. *Tahara* is ritual cleansing of the deceased.
8. Jewish holidays are usually highly significant for patients. Passover in the spring

and *Rosh Hashannah* and *Yom Kippur* in the fall (*Rosh Chodesh* – The New Month, *Rosh Hashanah* – The Jewish New Year, *Yom Kippur* – Day of Atonement, *Sukkot* – Feast of Booths, *Hanukkah* – Festival of Lights, *Purim* – Festival of Lots, *Tu Bishvat* – New Year of the Trees, *Pesach* – Passover, *Shavout* – Feast of Weeks, etc.). These holidays may affect the scheduling of medical procedures and may involve dietary changes (related to a need for special food or to a desire to fast). All Jewish holidays run sundown-to-sundown.

We were interested in knowledge on trans-generational transmission of trauma. Respondents answered the question if they have ever encountered this issue in their time of study (Table 4, Figure 4) and if they are interested in including the issue of transgenerational transmission trauma to health care providers' education (Table 5, Figure 5).

5 Discussion and developing policy context

The feelings of loneliness that sons and daughters of Holocaust survivors recalled from childhood and adolescence have been studied by means of their narratives about interpersonal experiences with their patients. Research on childhood and adolescent loneliness was focused on relationships with peers (Asher et al. 1984; Parkhurst and Hopmeyer 1999) and relationships with parents (Goossens and Marcoen 1999).

Based on their research, Wiseman (2008) assumed that growing up with parents who had endured massive trauma would be mani-

festated in the offspring's recalled relational experiences in the context of the survivor family. The four major categories that emerged from the narrative analysis of the loneliness accounts appear to represent varying tones and salient echoes of the parental trauma as expressed in the narrator's account.

Providing culturally sensitive nursing care for the Jewish patient is a challenge for the non-Jewish nurse. Understanding the major values, ethics, and practices of Judaism that have relevance to nursing and social care will give practice nurse the ability to provide care that is individualized to the patient and family.

New perspectives are needed in creating adequate practices for both the victims of the first and the second generation, those providing health and social care as well as health professionals who have to work with patients with this problem. Creating practices with strong support at the organizational level and establishing practices throughout the fields of health and social care are the key elements in building a responsible approach to this issue.

6 Conclusion

Victims originating from the first to the second generation due to personal experience with the cruelty of the Holocaust or the trans-generational transmission of trauma suffer from health problems requiring specialized medical care. Employees of hospitals and social care institutions should be aware that the personal history of every human significantly determines his/her behavior

and attitudes to the surrounding environment. Therefore such staff members should not only be familiarized with inter-generational transmission of trauma in Holocaust victims, but should also expect the occurrence of its manifestations, accept these facts, and provide these people help with highly professional and humanitarian assistance.

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About the authors

PhDr. Mgr. Rebeka Ralbovská, Ph.D. (1970) specializes in psychology of crisis situations. She is a lecturer at the Department of Health Care Disciplines and Population Protection of the Faculty of Biomedical Engineering, Czech Technical University in Prague, the Czech Republic. Her email address is rebeka.ralbovska@seznam.cz.

Doc. PaedDr. ThDr. Monika Zaviš, Ph.D. (1978) professionally focuses on the relationship between medicine and religion in ancient times, current bioethical issues of reproduc-

tive health in world religions, and spirituality in the context of psychology of religion and neuroscience. She is a faculty member of the Evangelical Lutheran Theological Faculty of Comenius University in Bratislava, Slovakia. Her contact is zavis@fevth.uniba.sk.

PhDr. Renata Knezović, PhD. (1965) is specialized in biosocial aspects of human reality as well as juridical aspects of health care, and effective physician–client communication. She is a member of the Department of Social Medicine and Medical Ethics, Faculty of Medicine, Comenius University in Bratislava, Slovakia. Her email address is rena.knezovic@gmail.com.

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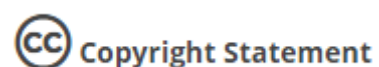
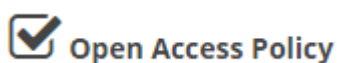
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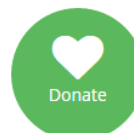
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