

**THE PROJECT OF SYNERGIC ANTHROPOLOGY: SPIRITUAL PRACTICE  
AS THE BASIS FOR A NEW CONCEPTION OF MAN**

**1. “The tiny rescued bit”**

What stands high on the agenda of modern philosophizing is radical anthropological reflection. The “overcoming of metaphysics” has been virtually completed in the last millennium, and together with classical metaphysics classical anthropology has gone that established the European conception of man based on three cornerstones: *subject, essence, substance*. Now all these three fundamental concepts are rejected, which happened, chiefly, due to the work of French thinkers of the last third of the 20<sup>th</sup> c. Evidently, anthropological reflection took place here, and it was intense and radical up to the limit. It presented harsh criticism of the foundations of European anthropological thought and aimed at their total deconstruction, and it accomplished this mission very successfully. Such a result could not be the end of the matter, however. Anthropological reality continues to exist and, what is more, it undergoes cardinal changes which affect all other levels of global reality and need urgent understanding and interpretation. Thus anthropological reflection is needed again, but now it must develop in a constructive rather than deconstructive key. It must outline a new vision of man and provide a proper discourse for expressing this vision.

How to advance to this? After parting with metaphysics we cannot think that the “reflection in a constructive key” should create some new theory or system by means of a syllogistic process using abstract essentialist concepts. Together with classical metaphysics the classical type of philosophizing, the Aristotelian essentialist discourse, goes off as well, and the concept of essence loses its status as a generating principle of the philosophical discourse. As a result, anthropological reflection cannot rely on its former discourse and conceptual fund; in Heideggerian terms, it must put up *another beginning* for itself. In such a situation, there is the only way or strategy for anthropological reflection to be the reflection in a constructive key, with a well-defined content: it is the strategy expressed by the famous motto by Husserl, *Zu den Sachen selbst!* To the things as they are! It means the direct address to reality, to the world which are conceived as experiential reality and the world of the experience; and clearly, in our case this motto prescribes us to address anew to *anthropological experience*. The immediate further question is: how to realize such addressing? The addressing of mind to the experience is the description of this experience, but the description can be very different. Of course, the plain empirical description is possible which restricts itself to the simple fixation of the content of the experience. Evidently, it is not adequate to the task of the comprehension of anthropological reality, and also it is not in accordance with Husserl’s motto which is in no way the declaration of plain empiricism. Phenomenological description follows different logic which is oriented exactly to the comprehension of what is described, and it is this logic that we shall follow.

In the first place, this logic is based on an initial restriction of the field of the description. One must choose such a domain or such a kind of experience which is *epistemologically transparent*, i. e. admitting a comprehensive interpretation. In other words, one can say that a certain *pure experience* is looked for and selected in all the totality of the experience under consideration. With respect to this totality, the pure experience selected should serve as an initial base or a “tiny rescued bit”, to use Husserl’s formula, starting with and advancing from which the comprehensive interpretation should eventually include all the experience considered. Thus its selection is an important stage which determines to the great extent methodology and epistemology of the cognitive process that we are going to develop. Besides the condition of purity, this selection must satisfy one more condition. Clearly, the spreading of the comprehensive interpretation over all the field of total anthropological experience is not possible if we start with any arbitrary “tiny bit”. The initial base might turn out to be too narrow or too specific; for the possibility of a far-going advancement it should be sufficiently representative and full-fledged. As a result, a certain strategy for such advancement can be outlined. The first step of the anthropological reflection must be the selection of an initial complex of anthropological experience, the selection that should obey two conditions or principles, *epistemological transparency* and *anthropological full-bloodedness*. They are of the opposite character: the first principle which demands the purity of anthropological experience prompts one to make the initial base more narrow while the second one which demands that anthropological reality would be represented substantially enough in this base prompts one to make the base larger. In addition, it is impossible to give precise *a priori* formulations to these conditions and it is equally impossible to tell in advance whether a certain selected experiential block satisfies them. It means that the “strategy of the tiny rescued bit” is based on the intuition to the great extent and it includes unavoidable intellectual risk.

History of European thought contains striking examples of this strategy. To start with, the formula “the tiny rescued bit” has been invented by Husserl as a characteristic of the famous cognitive act by Descartes, the act in which the statement *cogito ergo sum* was deduced. According to Husserl, in this act “the tiny rescued bit of the world appears in our apodictic pure *Ego* as the only indisputable thing for the philosophizing Self”<sup>1</sup>. Here the strategy is realized brilliantly: the initial base is extremely narrow, and it is in no way evident that it is sufficiently representative for all the sphere of cognitive experience, but nevertheless advancing from this base Descartes develops with perfect confidence a whole new way of cognition which becomes soon the foundation of all European epistemology. Another success story is provided by Husserl himself. His global phenomenological project follows the strategy of the tiny rescued bit too, and in this case the initial base of pure experience is chosen as the experience of arithmetical and geometrical thinking. However, these examples are distant from our situation. Here the experiential field under consideration is not the totality of anthropological experience and, what is more, anthropological experience is not even singled out as a special kind of experience. As a result, the principle of anthropological full-bloodedness is absent here while the principle of epistemological transparency is treated in Descartes’ case completely and in Husserl’s case considerably in the framework of classical metaphysics (created basically by Descartes himself).

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<sup>1</sup> E. Husserl. Cartesian Meditations. St.Petersburg, 1998. P.82. (In Russian.)

But an example close to us can be found as well. The conception of practices of the Self developed by Michel Foucault in the last period of his work (1980-1984) propounds a large project of nonclassical anthropology, and in our logic we can interpret Foucault's strategy in this project as the strategy of the rescued bit. The subject field of Foucault's conception is exactly the totality of anthropological experience, and Foucault singles out a certain basic kind of this experience, namely, the experience of practices of the Self (anthropological practices in which a human being performs self-transformations involving all the levels of his/her organization and directed to a certain goal fixed in advance). Practices of the Self are a very large class of practices, however, and the role of the initial base of pure experience is given to a certain subclass of them: namely, the practices of the Self cultivated in the late Greco-Roman antiquity and, in the first place, in the late Roman stoicism. It will be seen below that Foucault's unfinished project selecting the practices of the Roman stoics as the "rescued bit" and advancing from anthropological paradigms found in these practices to a general conception of man is close in its logics and methodology to our approach of synergic anthropology<sup>2</sup>.

It is to this approach that we proceed now. In this case the selection of the initial base had to take into account, besides the two main conditions, several additional factors such as historical examples described above, the rejection of classical anthropology and active changes happening to modern man. As a result, our selection is the following one: the basic kind of anthropological experience is the experience of spiritual practices (the experience of man actualizing his relation to being), but, similar to Foucault's case, the initial base of pure experience is taken to be somewhat narrower: it is the experience of a certain concrete practice, the *Eastern-Christian hesychasm*. Epistemological transparency is present here because hesychast practice is remarkable for its rigorous method, it is highly articulated and well reflected-upon. As for anthropological full-bloodedness, there is the fact in its favor that spiritual practice includes ontological and religious experience in which the man strives to the transcending of his mode of being. Nevertheless the fulfillment of this condition is not evident directly. However, it can be established *a posteriori*, at the later stages of the project.

## 2. Hesychasm in the prism of anthropological reflection

Synergic anthropology starts with the complete reconstruction of hesychast anthropology<sup>3</sup>. Let us point out its principal elements and stages.

Hesychasm is ascetical and mystical practice of Eastern-Christian (Orthodox) Christianity which begins to form itself up together with the emergence of Christian monasticism in the 4<sup>th</sup> c. in the practice of the Desert Fathers of Coptic Egypt and Palestine. It achieves its accomplished mature form in a thousand years, in Byzantium in the 14<sup>th</sup> c. Still in the Middle Ages it spreads all over Orthodox *oikumene* and then undergoing many crises and breaks continues its living existence up to our days. As an historical and anthropological phenomenon hesychasm (as well as any spiritual practice) represents a dyad, a combination of individual *practice* and collective

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<sup>2</sup> The detailed comparison of Foucault's project and synergic anthropology is presented in my forthcoming book "Practices of the Self and spiritual practices: Michel Foucault and Eastern Christian discourse". Fordham University Press, USA (in print).

<sup>3</sup> See: S.Horujy. To the Phenomenology of Ascesis. Moscow, 1998. (In Russian.)

*tradition*, i.e. community which elaborates, preserves and translates the refined art of this practice, the canon of the exact and identical reproduction of its experience. Such a combination of the individual and the collective is similar to what we see in biological systems, in populations of living organisms. Each specimen in a population leads its individual existence which has the equally individual goal, the implementation of the genetic program inherent in each of its cells. However, to achieve this goal the specimen should live in a population. The belonging to a community of specimens is a necessary premise of successful existence of any individual specimen; the specimen and the community are two inseparable elements of the phenomenon of population. Then there is the so called biogenetic law according to which the development of the specimen (ontogenesis) and the development of all the population have a structural similarity, they repeat each other passing through the same principal stages. One can see that spiritual tradition, i.e. the ascetical community in its historical existence possesses also these properties of the population. Each adept of the tradition, the hesychast, does his personal way of the practice transforming himself to a certain higher state, but the passing of this way is possible only on the basis of the tradition, in the ascetical community and with its help. Even some analogue of the biogenetic law can be found here.

The way of the practice, the *sui generis* hesychast ontogenesis, has the structure of a ladder ascending from the starting event, the entry to the way (Spiritual Gate), to the completion of the way in which all man's energies achieve ontological transcending which is called the deification (*theosis*) and is inaccessible in its fullness in man's empiric existence. All the way, from Spiritual Gate to Theosis, is structured into three big parts or blocks. In the first block ascetical labors are still directed chiefly to the worldly way of life left behind by the hesychast. Main elements of this block are conversion, repentance and struggle with passions. Conversion and repentance should secure the resolute break with what was left behind, the worldly way of existence and order of consciousness. To this end hesychasm elaborates a rich set of specific practices of repentance which use extreme psychological states and means: sharp self-accusations, self-torture, sorrow, grief, anguish and other negative emotions, crying and tears, and sometimes also hard and painful corporeal ordeals, etc. etc. These very unusual practices were often interpreted by secular science as manifestations of psychological pathologies, but this interpretation is superficial and misleading. "Sufferings of a penitent are neither nervous disorder nor a consequence of unsatisfied passions of lust nor a psychological conflict nor the loss of reasonable control. They also do not have any other pathology. Not at all. In their nature these sufferings belong to a different order of being"<sup>4</sup>. In fact, all these means carry out the *synergetic function* of generating disbalance of man's consciousness due to which the consciousness is brought far away from all its usual stable regimes and becomes capable to profound restructuring and radical change of the dynamics of its processes. As for the struggle with passions called also the "invisible battle" of an ascetic, it should remove the staunchest features of the worldly order of consciousness: the stable cyclic configurations of its energies making it fully concentrated on some worldly goal or emotion and hence incapable to advance to the goal of spiritual practice. Hesychasm analyzes and classifies passions and elaborates sophisticated techniques of their eradication. The corresponding steps of the Hesychast Ladder have some resemblance to practices of antiquity, first of all, stoic

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<sup>4</sup> Archimandrite Sophronius (Sakharov). See God as He is. Stauropegic Monastery of St. John the Baptist. Essex, 1985. P.89. (In Russian.)

practices, and also to modern psychotherapy, but in both these cases considerable difference is present as well.

After the overcoming of passions the practice enters its central, “equatorial” part in which the vector of man’s attention and efforts changes its direction “from below to above”, from the empiric world to the task of achieving the encounter with a different mode of being. Now spiritual practice must perform actual advancement in the ontological dimension. The process of ascending its steps must have a nontrivial ontological content, and all usual anthropological practices do not have such property. For this reason, any spiritual practice includes the key element: the creation of the so called *ontological mover*, an anthropological mechanism which helps to change the ontological situation of the man, man’s relation to the other horizon of being. In hesychast practice this horizon is Divine personal being and the ascension to it is the communion with God, the main way of which is the prayer. As a result, the ontological mover created in this practice represents the combination or union of two different activities, prayer and attention. In this union the attention performs the auxiliary function; in hesychast terms, it is the *guarding of the prayer* which should remove all the obstacles to the prayer and all the intrusions into its process. Due to such guarding the prayer can take a special form of the *incessant prayer* which becomes more and more profound and intense involving all human person entirely and concentrating enormous energy directed wholly to God as the Person, to the encounter, communion and union with Christ. At the peak of this praying and striving in which the man opens and unlocks himself up to the maximum towards God, his praying communion with God becomes the actual encounter of human and Divine energies. (In the secular discourse one can say that the man identifies in himself the action of some energies the source of which is not in him and even, according to some criteria, not in his horizon of being.) Directing the total set of his energies to Christ the man achieves their encounter and their coordination, cooperation and accordance with His energies. This is the central event of spiritual practice called *synergia* in hesychasm. The achievement of synergia, or synergy, is the first and most important fruit of the creation of the ontological mover. That’s how St. Philotheos of Sinai (9<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup> c.) describes this fruit: “Attention and prayer, if they are permanently combined together, perform something similar to Elias’ chariot of fire, lifting to the heavenly heights him, who has them”<sup>5</sup>. After this event the practice enters its last, higher block.

The distinguishing feature of this block is that the formation of its steps is now performed not as much by man’s energies as by *other energies*. These are the energies with which the man achieved the contact and cooperation in synergy and which started then acting in his consciousness and all his person, but nevertheless he perceives them as belonging not to him but to some external source, the source that is “beyond-there” in the strongest, ontological sense. For this reason, in man’s own perception these next steps of his transformation are more and more formed up without his efforts, spontaneously. In these steps the emergence of new forms of prayer takes place and the emergence of new abilities of the human being, and this spontaneous growth of the articulation, differentiation and structuredness in terms of system theory corresponds to the dynamics of self-organization. Since this dynamics is implemented not by man’s own energies, but by energies of the source which is ontologically beyond-there, it can

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<sup>5</sup> St. Philotheos of Sinai. Forty Chapters on Sobriety // The Philokalia. Vol. 3. Sergiev Posad, 1992. P.414. (In Russian.)

achieve what is impossible for man's energies, i.e. the actual ontological change, the change of the fundamental predicates of man's mode of being. It means that due to synergy in the higher steps of the practice fundamental changes of the human being begin which are approaches to the final goal of the practice, the *theosis*. There is a large fund of ascetic testimonies saying that such changes start with the sphere of perceptions: new abilities of perception emerge which are called "intellectual senses" in hesychasm, and they are actual manifestations of a new ontological quality, according to which the man is now unlocked toward Divine being. However, the fullness of the ontological transformation, the *theosis* as such, is, by the very definition of it, not realizable within the limits of man's empiric existence.

This is the structure of the way of hesychast practice in its big parts. As said above, this personal way of the hesychast, or the "ontogenesis", has some structural resemblance to the "philogenesis" or the historical way of the hesychast tradition. Au vol d'oiseau, the complete formation of the tradition and practice takes approximately thousand years, from the 4<sup>th</sup> to the 14<sup>th</sup> c., and one can discern three big stages in this formation which are correlated directly with the three blocks of hesychast practice. In the period of the early hesychasm, the *anachoresis* of Desert Fathers of the 4<sup>th</sup> to the 6<sup>th</sup> cc. the emerging tradition establishes itself, in the first place, as a community which breaks with the life of the worldly society and opposes itself to this life. Thus it concentrates on problems of the rejection of worldly life, of the overcoming of its passions and all its patterns of consciousness; and all this is exactly the problems of the initial block of hesychast practice. Then there follows the stage of the so called Sinai hesychasm in the 7-10<sup>th</sup> cc. when main centers of the tradition are the monastery of St. Catherine at Sinai and other monasteries in the Sinai area. At this stage hesychast practice is formed up and conceived as an integral spiritual process, its first systematic description appears (the famous "Ladder of Paradise" by St. John of Sinai) and the problems of the ascension to the *theosis* are profoundly worked out which includes the discovery of the key role of the union of prayer and attention. Thus the problem of the central block of hesychast practice is solved here, the ontological mover is discovered. And finally, the late-byzantine hesychasm of the 13-14<sup>th</sup> cc. with the Hesychast controversy and theology of St. Gregory Palamas represents the last stage of the formation of the tradition. At this stage the higher steps of hesychast practice are in the focus of main efforts. Hesychasts called the experience of these steps the contemplation of the Light of Tabor, and it was essentially the experience of the formation of intellectual senses, of the approaches to the transfiguration of the human being. As a result, we see the structural similarity and the coincidence of the contents of the historical stages of the development of hesychasm, on the one hand, and stages of the personal practice of an individual hesychast, on the other hand. The general conclusion is that spiritual tradition in its historical existence represents an analogue of the population of living organisms: *sui generis* spiritual organism or else meta-organic system.<sup>1</sup> One can add here that my concept of spiritual tradition resembles rather closely the ancient Greek conception of *Polis* as it is interpreted by Heidegger in his *Parmenides* (1942-1943). According to Heidegger, *Polis* was for Greeks a special and unique place where the man can actualize his relation to being unlocking himself towards being: "*Polis*... is the pole and center of the Greek essence. In this essential center everything is primordially united, which is addressed to the man as the unconcealed (*das Unverborgene*) and as something, to which the man is profoundly related

in his being ... *Polis* gives to the essent (*das Seiende*) the possibility to actualize itself in its being”<sup>6</sup>.

Proceeding from the description to analysis let us point out principal features of the hesychast vision of man which are important for nonclassical anthropology. What is he, who is he, the hesychast man? Of course, the first and main thing is that he is formed-up, he acquires his personality and identity in hesychast practice which performs the actual ontological transformation of the human being. The transformation itself is performed by Divine energies while man’s task is to open or unlock himself toward these energies and achieve synergy with them. In other words, here the man forms up his constitution unlocking himself toward the other mode of being (or, more correctly, toward genuine being), performing his ontological unlocking. In classical anthropology the man forms up his constitution actualizing his essence; but here we have a different principle of constitution which does not rely upon the essence of man and even does not suppose its existence. Thus we conclude that the main anthropological principle inherent in hesychast practice is exactly the principle or paradigm of the constitution of man in the ontological unlocking. In the unlocking of man we find a way to nonclassical anthropology and one of possible lines of its development.

Besides the generating principle, new anthropology needs also a discourse, a framework making it possible to ascribe signifiers to anthropological reality and form up anthropological concepts. In this aspect, classical anthropology was heuristically perfect: one and the same concept of essence determined both the constitution of man and anthropological discourse which was “essentialist discourse”, i.e. based on the logic of essences. But in hesychast anthropology we can also find a certain discourse which is not essentialist and is closely connected with the unlocking of man. The key notions of hesychasm are synergy and *theosis*, and they both are of energetic nature: synergy is the encounter and collaboration of human and Divine energies, and *theosis* is the complete union of these two kinds of energies. And this implies that hesychast practice, being the way to synergy and *theosis*, has human energies as its direct subject field. Ascetic labor of any hesychast is the successive transformation of all the set of his energies, and each step of hesychast practice can be considered as a certain type or configuration of the set of all man’s energies. It means that the hesychast discourse on man is a discourse on man’s energies which does not include abstract essentialist categories; in other words, *hesychast anthropology develops in the discourse of energy which is radically different from the essentialist discourse*.

Here an important proviso should be made, however. It should be taken into account that the notion of “human energies” is not a proper philosophical notion *stricto sensu*, it lacks precise philosophical meaning. This *anthropological* notion is not a derivative notion or a particular case of the *metaphysical* and *ontological* category of energy which is present in the Aristotelian or neoplatonic discourse. In the ascetical discourse “human energies” are not related to metaphysics, but represent a working tool of practical anthropology, a *terminus technicus* with the extremely wide semantic field: it designates any actions and manifestations of man, both in his outer and inner reality; what is more, these manifestations may be not finished and full-fledged acts, they may remain on the “embryonic” level of “germs of acts” or “energies of consciousness” called “thoughts” (*logismoi*) in hesychasm and representing all kinds of inner movements, urges, etc. In

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6. See M.Heidegger. Parmenides. St.-Petersburg, 2009. Pp.196-197 (in Russian).

order to draw the demarcation line with the metaphysical category I use the term “anthropological manifestations”. Thus it can be said that synergic anthropology develops the discourse of anthropological manifestations which represents an alternative to the essentialist discourse and is a variety of the discourse of energy.

One more property of hesychast practice as a pool of pure anthropological experience is important. We found that synergy represents the unlocking of man, but it is necessary to point out some characteristics of this unlocking. The unlocking is one of the most general modalities of the human being. In various forms we perform our unlocking all the time: one has only to remind that the man unlocks himself to surrounding sensual reality in any of his perceptions. The distinguishing feature of the unlocking in synergy is that it is a *constitutive* unlocking: in this unlocking the constitution of man is formed-up, the structures of his personality and identity. This property is closely connected with the fact that in this case the unlocking is realized in *extreme* anthropological experience, i.e. such experience in which the man reaches the boundary of the horizon of his consciousness and his existence meeting something (or Somebody as in the Christian experience) which does not belong to this horizon and hence is the Other with respect to the man as such. Evidently, the experience of the unlocking in synergy which is the unlocking towards the Ontological Other is a kind of extreme experience. Thus hesychast practice is a certain form of extreme anthropological experience, and the paradigm of human constitution that it contains is the constitution in extreme anthropological manifestations actualizing the ontological unlocking. Close connection of man’s constitution with his extreme experience is one of leading ideas in modern nonclassical philosophy as well as in studies aiming to understand new anthropological practices and processes<sup>7</sup>. That’s why the remark that hesychast experience is extreme experience is important for the advancement from the initial experiential base.

### **3. The anthropological unlocking as the universal paradigm of man’s constitution**

Our analysis of hesychast experience demonstrates its epistemological transparency. Now we come to the test of its anthropological full-bloodedness: is it possible to extend or generalize the principles found in hesychast anthropology to other domains of anthropological experience and eventually to the totality of the latter?

First of all, hesychast anthropology opens the way to general anthropology of spiritual practices (its basics are presented in my works<sup>8</sup>). The set of these ancient practices created by world religions is not big, but they are of considerable importance for understanding the phenomenon of man because they can be seen as schools of pure anthropological experience. The reconstruction of their anthropology is difficult since the majority of them belong to Eastern cultures whose spirituality and mentality use specific discourses alien to European conceptual

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<sup>7</sup> Let us point out at least one of the main lines of the connection of modern thought with the idea of extreme experience. This line includes principal figures of modern French philosophy such as Foucault, Deleuze, Nancy and originates in the conception of the extreme experience (l’*expérience-limite*) by Maurice Blanchot who stated that it is in this kind of experience that the man forms-up his constitution and gave the following definition: “The extreme experience is the answer obtained by the man, when he decides to take himself in question radically... Extreme experience is pure lack, shortage, but in spite of this there is the accomplishment of being and all-mightiness in it”. (M.Blanchot. *Extreme experience // Tanatography of Eros*. George Bataille and French thought of the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. St. Petersburg, 1994. Pp.67,69. (In Russian.))

<sup>8</sup> See, e.g.: Sergey S.Horujy. *Spiritual practice as an anthropological paradigm*. Moscow, 2006.

thinking. Nevertheless advancing from the hesychast base, we can discern rather clearly their basic principles and structures. Each spiritual practice includes universal structural elements common to all the ensemble of such practices. Besides this common fund, there are, of course, great many structures and properties specific for a given practice; but it is important to note that the common fund includes the basic paradigm discovered by us in hesychasm, the paradigm of the constitution of man in the ontological unlocking (notwithstanding the fact that ontology as such is treated in Eastern systems in a radically different way). It means that, like hesychasm, all spiritual practices can be described and interpreted on the basis of nonclassical “anthropology of the unlocking”.

Now we turn to the experience of modern man. We said already that this experience makes one to reject classical anthropology; in other words, it is nonclassical experience. But we see now that this is the feature shared also by ancient spiritual practices! and hence it follows that the man described by classical anthropology is not the man as such, but only some particular anthropological formation. With all big merits of classical anthropology, this formation corresponds only to some restricted part of the totality of anthropological experience, the part situated between ancient nonclassical formations and new formations which are also nonclassical. We have shown above that the ancient, “preclassical” formations can be described on the basis of the paradigm of the anthropological unlocking. The logic of the advancement from the hesychast base leads to the working hypothesis: may be, this paradigm is present in modern postclassical anthropological formations as well? Is it possible that the constitution of the Postclassical Man is also formed up in the unlocking of this man, may be, the unlocking of some different kind now?

Anthropological practices dominating in the postclassical period confirm this hypothesis. On the one hand, these practices are very far from spiritual practices and from the goals of the ontological unlocking. But, on the other hand, rejecting ontological experience they do not leave behind extreme experience; on the contrary, they cultivate it intensely inventing new forms of it all the time. It means that anthropology of the Postclassical Man remains anthropology of the unlocking. It should describe the constitution of the man in practices of non-ontological unlocking.

The crisis of classical metaphysics and classical anthropology develops and intensifies in the last decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> c. It is exactly the period when the Western man begins to concentrate on a new kind of anthropological experience, the experience which was called later the *experience of madness*, in some enlarged and loose sense of the term. As a result of long and capital work combining empiric studies with theoretical intuitions and creation of new concepts Freud identified the nature of this experience on the basis of the concept of the unconscious which became one of principal concepts of the 20<sup>th</sup> c. playing the fundamental role both in psychology and anthropology. As happens often to discoverers, Freud attached absolute value to his discovery considering the unconscious as the only and all-embracing principle of the constitution of the consciousness and the man. However, in these global claims of Freud (and later Lacan) psychoanalysis begins to slip into ideology instead of science. For synergic anthropology, the experience of consciousness and behavior of man under the aegis of the unconscious represents a certain new kind of the experience of the unlocking: clearly, in order to act under the aegis of the unconscious the man should open or unlock himself towards its influence. The unconscious is not considered as belonging to some special mode of being

different from the present being (being-there) which means that the unlocking towards the unconscious is not ontological but “ontical”, restricted completely to the horizon of the present being or the essent. At the same time, however, the unconscious is, by its definition, situated beyond the horizon of man’s consciousness which implies that the experience of the unlocking towards the unconscious is extreme experience. Finally, the patterns of consciousness and behavior induced by the unconscious form up the constitution of man (e.g. psychoanalysis identifies and studies neurotic, psychotic, manic and other types of human constitution generated by the unconscious). It means that the unconscious determines the paradigm of man’s constitution in the ontical unlocking.

Besides the constitution generated by the unconscious, the ontical unlocking and ontical constitution can have other representations. For example, according to Heidegger the Nietzschean principle of the will to power also determines some ontical constitution of the man, and hence it follows that in the area (or topic, in terms of synergic anthropology) of the ontical extreme experience there exist at least two different domains, the Freud domain and the Nietzsche domain. As for the Ontical topic as a whole, synergic anthropology describes its basic structure by means of the concept of the “ontical clearance” (*onticheskii zazor*, in Russian). In a certain sense, it is a polar opposition to the Heideggerian concept of the ontological lighting (*die Lichtung*). Ontical clearance is the “place”, the locus of the Ontical Other; it is the zone in the present being inaccessible for man’s experience and arising when the ontological difference (the difference between the being and the essent) is eliminated and hence the ontological lighting is eliminated too. The effect of the ontical clearance can be described in two ways: as the influence of some ontically outer source of energy which forms up man’s constitution or as the change, equally constitutive for the man, of topology of the space of anthropological manifestations. The description of the ontical extreme experience (the Ontical topic) based on the concept of the ontical clearance also follows the strategy of the advancement from the “rescued bit”, but in this case, in addition to the initial hesychast base, we use as the base for the advancement the experience of patterns of the unconscious conceptualized according to Freudian and Lacanian psychoanalysis. It is worth to note that methodologically and epistemologically the topological way of describing ontical constitutions has some resemblance to topological anthropology by Deleuze and Guattari. (Similarly, as said above, in the Ontological topic our description of spiritual practices shares many methodological and epistemological features with the theory of practices of the Self by Foucault.)

The Man of the Unconscious (the Freudian Man) and other formations of the Ontical topic keep their dominance during the most part of the 20<sup>th</sup> c. These formations include also specific kinds of anthropological experience that arise under totalitarianism, both in its Nazi and soviet versions. One of characteristic features of the Freudian Man is the particularly big role of arts and artistic practices in his experience. This anthropological formation has the direct and close connection with culture of modernism. Modernist culture developed under strong influence of both theories and practices of psychoanalysis, and some of its trends such as surrealism even claimed that their main goal is to give expression to hidden influence of the Unconscious. This connection was studied in detail by Jacques Ranciere who came to the conclusion that “The

territory of the works of art and literature can be determined as the estate, in which the unconscious is especially efficient”<sup>9</sup>.

The further way of the Postclassical Man shows that he preserves completely his craving for extreme experience, for testing and transgressing all existing boundaries and bans and barriers. The impression comes that the man after giving up the ontological extreme experience (as the result of the secularization) looks insistently for the substitute of it. He tries all existing kinds of extreme experience and invents many new kinds, but he cannot find anything that would satisfy him. After the ontical extreme experience to the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> c. the dominance goes gradually to a new and large class of extreme practices: the *virtual practices*. The main subclass of them includes the goings-out into the computer virtual reality and the habitation in cyberspaces. However, it is impossible to describe all the variety of them because of the specific nature of virtual phenomena. Such phenomena are usual, i.e. actual phenomena which did not achieve their complete actualization and remained under-actualized. The under-actualization can mean, in principle, the absence of any characteristic of the actual phenomenon; and for this reason an infinite set of virtual correlates or virtualizations is a priori possible for any actual anthropological practice. Synergic anthropology interprets virtual practices as practices in which the constitution of man is formed up by means of one more kind of the anthropological unlocking; the *virtual unlocking*. It is important that this kind of the constitutive anthropological unlocking is the last one: one can prove that the ontological, ontical and virtual unlocking exhaust all the ways for the constitution of the man as such to be formed-up in the anthropological unlocking.

As a result, we have now obtained a sound framework for anthropology of the unlocking. The advancement from the initial hesychast base reaches the desired level: the paradigm of the ontological found in hesychast practice is extended and generalized up to the universal paradigm of human constitution. Having the set of representations which determine various anthropological formations, types of structures of personality and identity, modi of subjectivity, etc. this paradigm serves as the core of radically nonclassical conception of man, subjectless, essenceless and pluralistic. Due to these properties, this conception is valid, generally speaking, for all the totality and variety of anthropological experience.

#### **4. To the science of human sciences**

In the classical paradigm, after the formulation of some “theory” for a certain sphere of reality there follows the development of “practical applications” of this theory to concrete phenomena and processes. Of course, problems of such kind arise in synergic anthropology too. Some of them are quite topical, but nevertheless the main vector of the further development is not related to them. Our nonclassical conception was born in the process of the successive conceptual and methodological generalization, and this process is not finished yet. The conception still has some potential for the further extension and generalization. However, at this stage synergic anthropology begins already to cross the frontier of anthropology as such: it begins a kind of anthropological expansion into other disciplines and discourses in the sphere of the humanities.

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<sup>9</sup> J.Ranciere. The esthetical unconscious. St.Petersburg, 2004. P.11. (In Russian.)

And when it becomes the tool of such an expansion aiming to include eventually all the sphere of the humanities, it acquires a new role and status in the ensemble of humanistic knowledge.

The first step of the expansion is the going-out into the domain where anthropological and social levels of global reality meet each other. It is in this vast domain called the *interface of the anthropological and the social* that the most important changes and processes take place today. Our basic concept for this domain is anthropological trend, the concept of the double anthropo-social nature. Global anthropo-social reality is represented as the ensemble of such trends implementing a synthetic anthropo-social dynamics, the roots of which belong to the anthropological level. Analysis of the principal present-day trends (such as trends of the virtualization, trends oriented to the “posthuman future”, etc.) makes one to draw the conclusion that the prevailing scenario of the development of this global reality is the “scenario of the euthanasia”, according to which the human being leaves the stage voluntarily and (more or less) painlessly. However, the recent postsecular trend which intends to restore the formation of the Ontological Man to some extent may, generally speaking, change such development helping to preserve the existence of the human being. “The postsecular paradigm might perform the mission of the anthropological correction and harmonization”<sup>10</sup>.

After the interface of the anthropological and the social, the anthropological expansion must perform a new conceptualization of all basic discourses of the humanities. This reconceptualization must bring forth the anthropologization of these discourses which makes explicit their implicit anthropological contents; methodologically, it means the “re-melting” (Humboldt’s metaphor) of these discourses, their modulation into different epistemology and hermeneutics. One should note that such anthropologization is not something new and strange in modern human sciences: its elements and tendencies to it were emerging in the 20<sup>th</sup> c. in many human sciences (and, may be, especially in history). As for synergic anthropology, it starts to take a new and special position in the system of humanistic knowledge. Performing the expansion into every humanistic discourse it transforms itself into the general integrating basis of all the ensemble of such discourses. In other words, it serves as a meta-discourse for this ensemble or, in a different aspect, as the core of a new episteme for humanistic knowledge. One concept of Kierkegaard adopted from mathematics is very adequate here: anthropology is *potentiated*, raised to the higher power: it is not just “human science”, but *science of human sciences*.

I believe that such potentiation of anthropology is of pressing necessity for today’s humanistic knowledge. Synergic anthropology is one of its possible strategies, and here it has already achieved some progress.

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<sup>10</sup> Sergey S.Horujy. Postsecularism and anthropology // Chelovek.RU. (Novosibirsk). 2012. No.8. P. 26.