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The Soul-Body Compound in Didymus the Blind's *Commentary on Genesis* and its Neoplatonic Background

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Abstract

This article concentrates on the view of the soul-body compound as presented by Didymus the Blind in his *Commentary on Genesis*, and also on some characteristic traits of Neoplatonic psychology which can be found in this text. A closer inspection of *Commentary on Genesis* reveals that what Didymus presents as the soul-body compound can be understood equally well as the compound of the superior intellectual soul conceived as a transcendent essence of the soul, and the ensouled body which is already a compound of the material body and the inferior irrational soul acting similarly to the body's immanent form. Therefore, it seems plausible to surmise that it is this kind of solution to the soul-body problem which Henry Blumenthal called the marriage of dualism and hylomorphism, and which left its mark not only on later Platonic tradition, but presumably also on Didymus.

Key words: Didymus the Blind, *Commentary on Genesis*, soul-body compound, Neoplatonic psychology
Słowa kluczowe: Dydym Ślepy, *Komentarz do Księgi Rodzaju*, złożenie duszy i ciała, psychologia neoplatońska

1. Introduction

This article[1] concentrates on the view of the soul-body compound as presented by Didymus the Blind in his *Commentary on Genesis*,[2] and also on some characteristic traits of Neoplatonic psychology which can be found in this commentary. Not

[1] For correcting my English I am indebted to William Gold.

[2] Didyme l'Aveugle, *Sur la Genèse*: Texte inédit d'après un papyrus de Toura. Introduction, édition, traduction et notes par Pierre Nautin, avec la collaboration de Louis Doutreleau, t. 1–2, *SCh 233–244*, Paris 1976–1978 (hereafter *Gen.Com.*).

surprisingly, this kind of task encounters at least two difficulties. The first is that Didymus' view will have to be reconstructed from his exegetical commentary, which might be regarded as a mere collection of more or less occasional opinions rather than a coherent exposition of his own thought. This is why any attempt to reconstruct Didymus' view requires a careful analysis of the comments, sometimes even vague mentions, which are interspersed throughout the text. Therefore, to make the analysis of Didymus' stance more valid, a wider range of illustrative material from Didymus' other texts will also be taken into account. The second difficulty arises from doubts in correctly identifying the philosophical doctrine sources used by Didymus. Scholars tend to take it for granted that the philosophical material found in Didymus' writings was taken from Philo and Origen, who both greatly influenced Didymus. Notwithstanding the indisputable fact that in many cases Didymus followed Philo[3] and Origen by repeating their exegeses, it is worth noting that not all of this philosophical material can be explained as some kind of debt he owes to his Alexandrian masters. A closer inspection of Didymus' texts confirms what ancient historiographers wrote about Didymus regarding his extensive education and knowledge in the fields of arithmetic, dialectic and philosophy.[4] From this, we can infer his compatibility with some patterns of thought which he may have shared with his contemporaries. One of the striking tendencies of late antique philosophy, and one that might have left its mark on Didymus' view, is that which enhances Aristotle's significance in Platonic psychology. As this is still a largely unexplored area of Didymus' thinking,[5] we shall

[3] D.T. Runia's, *Philo in Early Christian Literature: A Survey*, Assen, Minneapolis 1993, pp. 197–204; É. Lamirande, *Le masculin et le féminin dans la tradition alexandrine. Le Commentaire de Didyme L'Aveugle sur la 'Genèse'*, "Science et Esprit" 1989, vol. XLI, no. 2, pp. 137–165; A.C. Geljon, *Philonic Elements in Didymus the Blind's Exegesis of the Story of Cain and Abel*, "Vigiliae Christianae" 2007, no. 61, pp. 283–312; A.C. Geljon, *Philo's Influence on Didymus the Blind* [in:] *Philon d'Alexandrie. Un penseur à intersection des cultures Graeco-Romaine, Orientale, Juive et Chretienne*, Turnhout 2011, pp. 357–372; J.M. Rogers, *Didymus "the Blind" and His Use of Philo of Alexandria in the Tura Commentary on Genesis*, Cincinnati 2012; J.M. Rogers, *The Philonic and the Pauline: Hagar and Sarah in the Exegesis of Didymus the Blind*, "The Studia Philonica Annual" 2014, no. 26, pp. 57–77; H. Reuling, *Between Philo and Tradition: Literal Allegorical Interpretation in Didymus the Blind* [in:] *After Eden: Church Fathers and Rabbis on Genesis 3:16–21*, Leiden 2006, pp. 54–80.

[4] Socrates, *Hist. Eccl.* IV 25; Sozomen, *Hist. Eccl.* III 15; Theodoret, *Hist. Eccl.* IV 30.

[5] As we might expect, most studies on Didymus focus on issues regarding exegesis and theology. Among the limited number of analyses concerning the philosophical background of Didymus' thought, first and foremost we should note: R.A. Layton, *Didymus the Blind and His Circle in Late-Antique Alexandria*, Urbana, Chicago 2004; R.A. Layton, *Propatheia: Origen and Didymus on the Origin of the Passions*, "Vigiliae Christianae" 2000, no. 54, pp. 262–282; M.A. Ὀρφανοῦ, *Ἡ ψυχὴ καὶ τὸ σῶμα τοῦ ἀνθρώπου κατὰ Δίδυμον Ἀλεξανδρέα (τὸν Τυφλόν)*, Θεσσαλονίκη 1974; M. Zambon, *A servizio della verità: Didimo il Cieco 'lettore' di Aristotele*, "Studia Graeco-Arabica" 2012, no. 2, pp. 129–200; K. Plaxco, *Didymus the Blind and the Metaphysics of Participation*, "Studia Patristica" 2013, vol. LXVII, pp. 227–237; R. Sorabji, *Emotion and Peace of Mind: From Stoic Agitation to Christian Temptation*, Oxford 2000, pp. 351–352. Other works which at least partly contribute to the subject of Didymus' philosophical affinities are: H.S. Schibli, *Origen, Didymus, and the Vehicle of the Soul* [in:] *Origeniana Quinta*, R.J. Daly (ed.), Louvain 1992, pp. 381–391; B.J. Bennett, *The Origins of Evil: Didymus the Blind's Contra Menichaeos and its Debt to Origen's Theology and Exegesis*, Toronto 1997; B.J. Bennett, *Didymus the Blind's Knowledge of Manichaeism* [in:] *The Light and the Darkness: Studies in Manichaeism and its World*, P.A. Mirecki, J.D. BeDuhn (eds.), Leiden–Boston–Köln 2001; S. Blossom, *Mind, Text, and Commentary: Noetic Exegesis in Origen of Alexandria, Didymus the Blind, and Evagrius Ponticus*, Frankfurt

do no more than give an example of how this tendency can be traced to Didymus' concept of the soul-body compound, which was a prominent theme of the period. We shall therefore extract Didymus' general approach to the soul-body issue on the basis of a few passages from his *Commentary on Genesis*, which may be convergent with a Neoplatonic approach to the problem in question. After this, we shall look more closely at some possible Neoplatonic borrowings in Didymus' thought.

2. The soul's embodiment

One of the passages where Didymus raises the soul-body question is in *Gen.Com.* 81,1–108,15, where he discusses the interpretation of the fall of man as described in *Genesis* 3. According to this interpretation, the fall of man results in the association of the incorporeal soul with the material body. As Didymus also suggests in other passages, it is at this very moment that the soul affiliates with the material body characterised as dense (παχύ) and perishable (φθάρτον),[6] distinguished from the kind of quasi-immaterial body which the soul previously possessed.[7]

This is one of the examples showing that Didymus describes the fall of the paradisiacal man in terms of a transition from the immaterial to the material, from the incorporeal to the corporeal, from the intelligible to the sensible. Didymus' commitment to the idea is particularly evident in his interpretation of man's fall conceived as a change in man's mode of cognition, and specifically, as passing from intellection to sense-perception. The paradisiacal man is said to be illuminated by God and entirely engaged in intellection of God himself, and also of intelligible objects.[8] As long as he was involved in intellection, he could see God with the eyes of the soul, that is, with the noetic eyes of the inner man.[9] However, after the Devil had led the man astray and made him turn his eyes away from their proper object, the noetic eyes of the inner man were closed. What was instead opened were the sensible eyes which directed man's attention to the sense-perceptible objects and to the body. As a result, the man plunged into bodily desires and pleasures, and in this way he affiliated with the material body.[10]

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am Main, Berlin, Bern, Bruxelles, New York, Oxford, Wien 2010; J.C.M. van Winden (rev.), *Didyme l'Aveugle. Sur Zacharie. Texte inédit d'après un papyrus de Toura. Introduction, texte critique, traduction et notes de Louis Doutreleau*, *SCh* 83–85, Paris 1962, "Vigiliae Christianae" 1963, no. 17, pp. 181–183.

[6] *Gen.Com.* 107,9. See also *Gen.Com.* 106,10–108,15; 153,30–154,2, and 82,11–12.

[7] In *Commentary on Genesis* there are some, indirect references to the concept of that quasi-immaterial paradisiacal body. In *Gen.Com.* 108, 5–7 and 108, 14–15 Didymus indicates that a man in paradise could not have a dense body, in *Gen.Com.* 118,14–16 he mentions a different kind of corporeal substance (ἡ σωματικὴ οὐσία) appropriate for life in paradise, and in *Gen.Com.* 107, 4–7 he simply states that the man in paradise was immaterial (τὸ ἄϋλον). For discussion on Didymus' view of a quasi-immaterial body and its possible correspondence with the Neoplatonic doctrine of ὄχημα of the soul see: H.S. Schibli, *op.cit.*, pp. 381, 383–384, 387.

[8] *Gen.Com*. 89,22 and 89,4. See also *Gen.Com*. 81,27–82,11; 83,12–13; 84,25.

[9] *Gen.Com*. 81,26–82,1; 82,7–9; 83,12–13.

[10] Cf. *Gen.Com*. 82,11–12; 83,14–17; 87,20–21; 95,18–21; 97,15–19; 153,30–154,2.

In order to stress the transition from the domain of the incorporeal to that of the corporeal, which is the point of the fall of man, Didymus mentions some authors who claim that the first substrate (πρώτον ὑποκείμενον) of the soul was the incorporeal substance (ἀσώματος οὐσία), which was beyond every place (ἐκτὸς παντὸς τόπου) but became in a place (ἐν τόπῳ) at the very moment when the soul experienced the body. This opinion serves as the basis for explaining the meaning of the question "Where are you?" (Που εἶ;)[11] that God asked man after he had hidden himself from God, ashamed of his own nakedness. "Where are you?" is interpreted as follows: "You are in a place (ἐν τόπῳ), though you were free from every place (ἡ ἀπὸ παντὸς τόπου ἐλευθέρα) through incorporeality (διὰ τὸ ἀσώματος); since you did not preserve it and you have become attached to the body, you have come into a place (ἐν τόπῳ)."[12]

One can discern here the influence of Philo, who used a similar argument in his interpretation of *Gen*. 3:9. It should be noted, however, that Philo's exegesis of that passage does not refer to a difference between the incorporeal soul and the embodied soul (or the body); it simply highlights the difference between God, who according to Philo is not "in a place", and a creature, who is "in a place."[13] There is a different intention to Didymus' exegesis, where the basic stress is upon the soul's embodiment, suggesting that Philo might not be the sole source of inspiration to which Didymus alludes in *Gen.Com.* 91,1–7. Didymus' phrasing, as well as the meaning of the quoted passage, should be recognised above all as an echo of the specific line of reasoning inspired by Aristotle,[14] used by Plotinus, and developed by Porphyry.[15] Reiterating Plotinus' approach, Porphyry applies this line of reasoning to demonstrate the difference between incorporeal and corporeal things, and hence to expound how incorporeal things can be present in corporeal ones; in particular, how the soul can be present in the body. According to Porphyry, bodies which subsist in matter and extension are "in a place", whereas incorporeal things, which are free from matter and extension, cannot be "in a place". Porphyry states that, in the case of bodies, "'being somewhere' (πού) means being in a place (ἐν τόπῳ)"[16] as opposed to incorporeal things, which transcend every place (κρείττονα παντός ἐστι τόπου).[17] This is how Porphyry explains why a soul as an incorporeal thing cannot be present in a body in the same way as one body can be present in another. It is present in the body, as we read in *Sent*. 3, not locally (οὐ τοπικῶς), but by relation (τῇ σχέσει). This assumption implies serious difficulties in solving the problem of the soul's presence in the body, and at the same time in explaining the

[11] *Gen*. 3:9.

[12] *Gen.Com.* 91,1–7.

[13] *Leg. All*. III 51–52.

[14] *Phys*. IV 4,212a20.

[15] Plotinus, *Enn*. IV 3,20,10–15; V 2,2,19–20; Porphyre, *Sent.* 1–2 and 33. On this question, see also: G. Madec, *Notes sur les* Sentences [in:] Porphyre, *Sentences*, L. Brisson (ed.), Paris 2005, vol. 2, p. 383; C. D'Ancona, *Les* Sentences *de Porphyre entre les* Ennéades *de Plotin et les* Éléments de Théologie *de Proclus* [in:] Porphyre, *Sentences* L. Brisson (ed.), Paris 2005, vol. 1, pp. 157, 198. Cf. R. Sorabji, *The Philosophy of the Commentators, 200–600 AD: A Sourcebook*, vol. 1: *Psychology (with Ethics and Religion)*, Ithaca 2004, pp. 204–210 and also pp. 217–220.

[16] *Sent*. 33,3–4. Transl. J. Dillon [in:] Porphyre, *Sentences*, vol. 2, p. 816.

[17] *Sent*. 2.

nature of the soul-body compound. The main difficulty results from the supposition that the soul-body compound is made up of two contrasting natures.

It is easy to see in Didymus' text not only the repeated use of expressions used by Neoplatonists, but also a reference to their line of argument. In a similar vein to Porphyry, Didymus highlights that the soul-body compound is the compound of two antithetical natures: corporeal, described as being "in a place", and the other, incorporeal, described as being "beyond every place". The opposition of two antithetical natures is something which is consistently maintained when Didymus tackles the question of the soul-body compound, although in different parts of the commentary he does so using different terms. However, it is important to acknowledge that Didymus does not mention the conclusion formulated by the Neoplatonists here. Instead we find the phrase regarding the condition of the embodied soul: "since you did not preserve it (i.e. incorporeality) and you have become attached to the body, you have come into a place (ἐν τόπῳ)."[18] The meaning of this phrase, as well as that of the entire passage, is that before the embodiment the soul was an incorporeal being which cannot be "in a place", and when it experienced the body and affiliated with the body it somehow became a corporeal being which is "in a place."

Although Didymus indicates neither the authors to whom he ascribes such a view nor his own attitude towards it, it is easy to see that this is a kind of approach to the soul-body problem which draws on Neoplatonic sources and which is compatible with Didymus' interpretation of the fall of the paradisiacal man taken in terms of a transition from the intelligible to the sensible. This is why one could reasonably claim that in *Gen.Com*. 91,1–7 Didymus alludes to an opinion which supports his own view and which reveals a significant feature of his own approach to the problem of embodiment and, at the same time, to the problem of the soul-body compound. In order to explain this approach it is necessary to refer to other passages of Didymus' commentary.

3. The definition of man as a composite being composed of soul and body

In *Gen.Com*. 54,22–57,8 we find a definition of man that states that "*man* means a composite being composed of the soul and the body, but mostly the soul" (*Ὁ ἄνθρωπος* σημαίνει καὶ τὸ σύνθετον ζῶον τὸ ἐκ ψυχῆς καὶ σώματος συνεστὸς καὶ μάλιστα τὴν ψυχήν).[19] Not surprisingly, when discussing this definition, Didymus' primary interest was invariably the opposition between the two different aspects of human nature represented by the soul and the body. Let us start, then, by examining these fragments which show how Didymus conceives the soul and the body.

Regarding the soul, Didymus writes that the first element of the soul-body compound is an incorporeal and intelligible substance (ἀσώματος καὶ νοερὰ οὐσία).[20]

[18] *Gen.Com*. 91,6–7.

[19] *Gen.Com*. 54, 22–24.

[20] *Gen.Com*. 57, 7.

What seems to be significant is that similar descriptions of the soul appear whenever Didymus considers its original and essential nature,[21] which is intellect alone conceived as a superior element of the soul, clearly distinguished from its inferior element, i.e. the lower soul.[22] This is why the notion of the soul in Didymus' writings has a double meaning; it can either mean the soul's superior element, which is the intellect alone, or its inferior element, which is the lower soul.

The distinction between the superior intellectual soul, also referred to simply as "intellect", and the inferior soul, also referred to as "soul", has been demonstrated in the interpretation of *Gen.* 1:27, where Didymus takes the categories "male" and "female" as allegorical representations of the two opposite elements of human soul; "male" stands for the intellect while "female" stands for the soul, i.e. the lower soul.[23] The relationship between these two elements has been described in terms of the master–student metaphor as well as that of the sower and the one that receives the seed. According to these metaphors, the intellect, represented by "male", acts as the master sowing the seed of reason in the soul, whereas the soul, represented by "female", acts as the ground in which the seed is being sown. As Didymus explains, the soul is not capable of conceiving anything of itself, and is only able to receive the seed of learning from the higher being, i.e. the intellect, and nurture it.[24] He also suggests that this is a kind of relationship that is exemplified by the link between higher and lower beings, the latter being less endowed with reason.[25] This could be an indication that Didymus alludes to the Neoplatonic relation between the intellect as the higher being and the soul as the lower being, where the function of the higher one is to form the lower, whereas the function of the lower one is to receive the form. In this sense, Plotinus could say that the intellect resembles a form (εἶδος), while the soul is like a receptacle (δεχόμενον), and thus like a matter of the intellect (νοῦ ὕλη) (*Enn.* V 1,3,22–23).

Although the Neoplatonic relationship between the higher and the lower soul taken as a form-matter relation cannot be excluded as Didymus' frame of reference in *Gen.Com*. 63,7–9, it must be stressed that all that has been offered in the interpretation of *Gen.* 1:27 follows first and foremost Philo's leitmotiv, namely, association of the categories "male" and "female" with the two opposite elements of the soul, the higher element identified with the intellect or with the reason, and the lower element usually identified with sense-perception. In Philo's writings, therefore, the figures of the male and the female, as well as those of the sower and the recipient of the seed, express the bipolar nature of the soul in which the two opposite elements can be identified.[26] And this is also what can be found in Didymus' psychology.

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[21] Cf. *Gen.Com*. 91, 1–7; 152, 7–12; 153, 19–23.

[22] Cf. M.A. Ὀρφανοῦ, *op.cit.*, pp. 118–139.

[23] *Gen.Com.* 62, 21–23.

[24] *Gen.Com*. 62, 24–63, 3.

[25] *Gen.Com*. 63, 7–9.

[26] *QG* I 45; *Opif.* 165; *Leg.* II 44, 64, 73, III 49–50, 185; *Cher*. 41, 57; *Somn*. I 246; *QG* I 25, 37, 45–49, 52, II 49; *Spec. Leg*. 37, 201. See also *Leg.* II 14, 50, 73; *Leg.* III 11; *Ebr.* 59, *Sacr.* 103, *Somn.* II 9.

All this shows that the description of "soul" as an intelligible and incorporeal substance, which is found in the analysis of the definition of man as a soul-body compound in *Gen.Com*. 57,5–8, refers to the higher and essential nature of the soul, which is the intellect alone, clearly distinguished from the sensible and irrational inferior soul. This understanding of the soul in *Gen.Com*. 54,22–57,8 is additionally confirmed by the fact that in the same passage "soul" has been identified with the inner man, which for Didymus means precisely intellect. Although in *Gen.Com*. 55,1–3 we find only a vague mention which identifies the inner man with νοῦς, and equates it with ψυχή, in *Gen.Com*. 43,29 it is distinctly linked with intellect alone. Similarly, in other passages it is associated with an intelligible dimension of human nature. In *Gen.Com*. 81,27 –29 we are told that the eyes of inner man keep clear sight not in a sensible way, but in an intelligible way. In *Gen.Com*. 127,7 the inner man is described as a man hidden in thought (ἐν διανοίᾳ ἄνθρωπος). It is therefore apparent that what prevails in Didymus' descriptions of inner man is the intelligible dimension of human existence, and particularly the intellectual activity of man.

It is clear that, when Didymus explains his definition of man as a soul-body compound and that the soul is to be understood as inner man who can be equated with the intellect, by "soul" Didymus means exclusively the incorporeal and intelligible substance of the soul, in other words, the intellect alone.

We can now turn to the body, which, in Didymus' account in *Gen.Com*. 54,22–57,8, is identified with outer man and described as the visible and sense-perceptible (φαινόμενον καὶ αἰσθητόν) part of man, additionally called the in-formed body (σῶμα μεμορφωμένον).[27] Firstly, we should discuss the use of the term σῶμα μεμορφωμένον, which may refer to a particular view of the human body which Didymus alludes to in different passages of the commentary. The basis for this view seems to be the difference between the concept of body and that of matter as suggested in the exegesis of *Gen*.1:2. Although lacunae in the text prevent a thorough understanding of this important passage, we can still infer the conception of matter that was held in Alexandrian exegesis, which interpreted the figure of earth from *Gen*. 1:2 as an allegory of matter.[28] In keeping with Alexandrian tradition, Didymus asserts – as far as we can decipher from his exegesis of *Gen.* 1:2 – that matter (ὕλη) is devoid of qualities and formless (ἄποιος καὶ ἄμορφος),[29] and as such makes up the substrate (ὑποκείμενον) of bodies that are to be created.[30] Such a reading of the passage

[27] *Gen.Com*. 57, 7–8.

[28] On this subject see J.C.M. van Winden, *Arche. A Collection of Patristic Studies*, Leiden 1997, pp. 52, 99–101, 108–109, 134–138. Cf. also M. Alexandre, *Le Commencement du Livre Genèse I–V. La version grecque de la Septante et sa réception*, Paris 1988, pp. 74–80.

[29] *Gen.Com*. 3B.

[30] *Gen.Com*. 2 B 1–5. It is hardly possible to decipher the exact meaning of Didymus' account of unqualified and formless matter, not only because of the damage to the text, but also because in the preceding lines Didymus refers to the Manichaean view. As a result we cannot even separate the alleged Manichaean view from Didymus' own opinion. Didymus' interpretation of *Gen.* 1:2 as a report of the Manichaean view has been examined by Byard Bennett, who furthermore points out the possible Middle-Platonic sources of Didymus' account of unqualified matter: B. Bennett, *Didymus the Blind's Knowledge of Manichaeism*..., pp. 52–55.

conforms with *Gen.Com*. 48,20–25, where Didymus mentions the concept of λόγος σπερματικός, which forms the bodies of animals that emerge from earth (i.e. matter). It may be an indication that what makes bodies specific bodies is some immaterial factor, such as λόγος σπερματικός, that forms amorphous matter and brings bodies into existence. Thus, if Didymus did in fact acknowledge this kind of difference between the matter, which is intrinsically ἄμορφος, and the body, which is intrinsically μεμορφωμένον, the expression σῶμα μεμορφωμένον used at *Gen.Com*. 57,7–8 could be an indication that by "body" Didymus was referring to a particular body. This may be a body which is formed by some immaterial factor, some kind of form, and hence which already exists as a kind of compound of form and matter.[31]

Secondly, it is worth mentioning that Didymus identifies "body" with the outer man set in contrast with the inner man. While the association of the soul with the inner man is clear enough, the association of the body with the outer man requires a more extensive explanation. This is because the antithesis of inner man vs outer man serves in Didymus' text as an antithesis between the higher dimension of human nature, identified with the domain of the intelligible, and its lower dimension, identified either with the domain of the sensible[32] or with that of the irrational, and so not with the body alone. Moreover, it often takes the form of the antithesis between the intellect itself and the rest of the human constitution. This is what is maintained in *Gen.Com*. 43,29, where inner man was contrasted with irrational beings, and also in *Gen.Com*. 130,4–5, where he was contrasted with the irrational nature of man himself, strictly speaking with the vital power of the human soul (ζωτικὴ δύναμις τῆς ψυχῆς) depicted as a power related to the very outer man (ἀδελφὸς ... τοῦ ἔξω ἀνθρώπου). All of this shows that the notion of outer man refers not so much to the human body, but rather to the whole lower nature of man described as sensible and irrational. At the same time it may be an indication that the notion of outer man refers not only to the body, but to a particular kind of soul-body compound. This is what can result from the kinship between the outer man and the vital power of the soul indicated in *Gen.Com*. 130,4–5. The notion of the vital power of the soul (ζωτικὴ δύναμις τῆς ψυχῆς) may refer to the concept of the living body which comes into existence when the soul conjoins with the body and makes it an actual living body. This kind of concept is based on the premise that the human body does not exist on its own. It exists as a living body only while it is enlivened and informed by a soul; that is to say, it exists only as an ensouled body. Consequently, as an ensouled body it is conceived as the compound of the soul and the body where the soul is the source of life. Yet the soul that enlivens and informs the body may not be the superior intellectual soul, but the vital power of the soul or the whole inferior soul. This is what one might detect as

[31] The clear differentiation between the notion of matter and that of body as well as the understanding of "body" in terms of a compound of matter and form, and also a distinction between several kinds of formal elements which mould matter, such as εἶδος, λόγος, λόγος σπερματικός, and ποιός (ποιότης), was a question examined by the Middle-Platonists and Neoplatonists. The significance of the concept of "body" as a form-matter compound in Neoplatonism has been elaborated by L. Brisson, *Between Matter and Body: Mass (ὄγκος) in the Sentences of Porphyry*, "International Journal of the Platonic Tradition" 2010, no. 4, pp. 36–53.

[32] Cf. *Gen.Com*. 81,27.

Didymus' position as expressed in *Commentary on Psalms*,[33] where we are told that ὀρεκτικὴ ψυχή as it is ψυχὴ ἄλογος is separated from the intellect (χωρὶς νοῦ) and exists only in the association with the body "for which it is a soul", and hence ὀρεκτικὴ ψυχή perishes along with the body.

There are two important inferences that should be drawn from this statement. The first is the clear distinction between the intellect and the lower irrational soul (ψυχὴ ἄλογος). The second is that unlike the superior, intellectual soul, which seems to exist by itself, thereby preserving its autonomy, the lower irrational soul seems to serve as the very embodied soul directly conjoined with the body. It seems to exist as a kind of formal element of the body which comes into being and perishes along with the body.

From this, we can infer that when Didymus calls the body "outer man" he is indicating that the word "body" has been applied not to a sole material body, but to the living body made up of the irrational soul and the material body, which is in fact nothing but the complete natural human organism (except the intellect alone) enlivened and informed by the irrational embodied soul and treated as a kind of habitat for the lower side of human nature. Such usage of the word "body", which can be found in Didymus' remarks in his definition of man as a soul-body compound, can be of considerable significance. Firstly, it shows that by the second part of the compound, Didymus is describing not a material body but an ensouled body which is already a compound of the soul and the body. Secondly, it demonstrates that by the second part of the compound, Didymus is referring to the whole lower nature of man i.e. sensible and irrational, as it is these which are inherent to the ensouled body. If this analysis is correct, Didymus' definition of man as a soul-body compound can be understood as follows:

1) By "soul", Didymus means the intellect alone, which is an incorporeal substance (essence) of the soul. As such, the intellect accounts for the soul's superior, original nature, from which the whole soul as well as the whole human being derives its existence. Nevertheless, even after the association with the body, the intellect remains somehow separate and independent, and is therefore clearly distinguished from the inferior irrational soul directly associated with the body. Therefore, the intellect is the only element of the human constitution that preserves the soul's original nature, purely incorporeal and intelligible, and so it constitutes a superior, rational nature of man that consists of the intellectual activity inherent to inner man.
2) By "body", Didymus means a living body which comes into being when the soul conjoins with the material body, thereby enlivening and informing it. It exists as a compound of an inferior irrational soul and material body where the irrational soul accounts for the formal element of the body and so remains inseparable from it. This strict association of the irrational soul and material body constitutes the inferior nature of man, sensible and irrational, inherent to outer man.

As a result, what Didymus presents as the soul-body compound can also be understood as the compound of (1) the intellect alone, and (2) the ensouled living body which is already a compound of the irrational soul and the material body. Therefore, if

[33] *Ps.Com.* 45,9–11. Didymos der Blinde, *Psalmenkommentar (Tura-Papyrus)*, Teil I, L. Doutreleau, A. Gesché, M. Gronewald (eds.), Bonn 1969 (hereafter *Ps.Com.*). See also *Com.Gen*. 42, 14–15.

we have correctly analysed Didymus' accounts of the soul-body compound, it seems plausible to surmise that a superior, intellectual soul acts as a transcendent form. In contrast, the inferior soul comes into direct contact with the body and acts as a constituent of the living body similarly to an immanent form which remains inseparable from the body. We can therefore say that in the description of the superior soul the Platonic perspective prevails, where the stress is upon the transcendent, incorporeal, intelligible, and immortal character of the soul (this is perceived by Neoplatonists as compatible with the Aristotelian approach to the question of intellect[34]). By contrast, in the description of the inferior soul the Aristotelian perspective prevails; according to this: (1) the soul exists only in the association with the body as its cause and entelechy, (2) the soul perishes along with the body, and (3) the body is treated as an instrument (ὄργανον) by which the soul performs all vital functions of the living being. Such an appraisal of Didymus' concept of the soul-body compound shows its similarity to that of Neoplatonists such as Plotinus,[35] and especially Porphyry. As Andrew Smith[36] and, more recently, George Karamanolis[37] have shown, Porphyry's higher soul, i.e. the intellect alone, is seen as the soul in itself (καθ' αὑτὴν), and is understood exclusively in terms of an intelligible and immortal substance. The lower soul, on the other hand, is seen as a soul in relation to the body (κατὰ σχέσιν),[38] and is regarded as a secondary power (δεύτερα δύναμις) of the soul itself;[39] this may be understood as an immanent form that comes into being and perishes along with the body, similarly to Aristotle's ἐντελέχεια of the body. It is this kind of solution to the soul-body problem which Henry Blumenthal called the marriage of dualism and hylomorphism[40] and which left its mark not only on later Platonic tradition, but presumably also on Didymus.

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[34] On the agreement between Plato's transcendent soul and Aristotle's intellect, see L.P. Gerson, *Aristotle and Other Platonists*, Ithaca, New York–London 2005, pp. 139–140.

[35] It is worth noting, however, Plotinus' limited use of Aristotelian hylomorphism. As Christopher I. Noble has shown, Plotinus accepts the Aristotelian assumption that a living body is alive insofar as it is enlivened by enmattered form; nonetheless, a form which enlivens the body is not the soul itself but another entity, namely the "soul-trace" introduced by Plotinus in *Enn*. IV 4,18, in order to justify the animation of the body and at the same time to preserve the transcendence of the soul itself. This is why Noble can conclude his paper with the statement that Plotinus adapts Aristotelian ideas to the requirements of Platonism rather than harmonising Plato with Aristotle. C.I. Noble, *How Plotinus' Soul Animates His Body: The Argument for the Soul-Trace at Enneads 4.4.18.1–9*, "Phronesis" 2013, no. 58, pp. 278.

[36] A. Smith, *Porphyry's Place in Neoplatonic Tradition. A Study in Postplotinian Neoplatonism*, The Hague 1974, p. 14.

[37] G. Karamanolis, *Porphyry's Notion of Empsychia* [in:] *Studies on Porphyry, Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies*, G. Karamanolis, A. Sheppard (eds.), suppl. 98, London 2007, p. 95.

[38] Porphyry, 253F, 114–116 – *Porphyrii Philosophi Fragmenta*, A. Smith (ed.), Studgardiae et Lipsiae 1993.

[39] *Sent*. 4.

[40] H.J. Blumenthal, *Aristotle and Neoplatonism in Late Antiquity: Interpretations of the "De Anima"*, Ithaca, NY 1996, 111.

4. The compound of the irrational soul and the material body

A complete appraisal of the concept of the soul-body compound requires a closer inspection of the irrational soul, as it is this element which remains inseparably conjoined with the body. Discussion of this point also gives us the opportunity to take a closer look at the Platonic borrowings that can be found in Didymus' psychology. As in many other cases, while describing the irrational soul, Didymus draws his inspiration from different psychological models used by Platonists. He repeatedly refers to Plato's tripartite soul, which can be confirmed primarily by the presence of Plato's terminology. For instance, in *Gen.Com*. 119,23–26, Abel, a shepherd of animals,[41] is understood allegorically as a shepherd of senses (τῶν αἰσθήσεων), and so he is thought to represent imposing reasoning (λογισμός) on the spirited (τὸ θυμικόν) and desiring (τὸ ἐπιθυμητικόν) faculties. In *Gen.Com*. 140,14, where the shepherd allegory reappears, Didymus clarifies that Abel is a shepherd because he guides irrational faculties (ἄλογοι δυνάμεις), namely desiring (ἐπιθυμητική), appetitive (ὀρεκτική) and spirited (θυμική) ones. Although it is easy to discern here that Didymus makes use of Plato's terminology, we must emphasise that he does not adopt Plato's soul model literally. Significant modifications of Plato's stance that are characteristic of later Platonists can be detected here. Firstly, instead of parts (μέρη), Didymus usually distinguishes the faculties (δυνάμεις) of the soul.[42] This is a distinctive feature of later Platonism, where Plato's "parts" terminology was replaced by the terminology of "powers"/"faculties" from Aristotle.[43] This is why, even when referring to Plato's tripartite soul, Didymus points out that it is the soul which has three faculties (τριδύναμος).[44] The term τριδύναμος may refer to the terminology used in the debate held by Neoplatonists over why the soul should be recognised as having many faculties (πολυδύναμος), rather than as having three parts (τριμερής).[45] Secondly, in

[41] *Gen*. 4:3–5.

[42] For a discussion of the use of the terms concerning the parts and faculties of the soul in Didymus, see M.A. Ὀρφανοῦ, *op.cit.*, pp. 139–145.

[43] As for Didymus, one could, of course, regard his use of the term δύναμις instead of μέρος as an influence of Philo, who in fact employed the term δύναμις (cf. *Leg. All*. II, 24, 35, 45; III 185; *Migr*. 213; *Mut*. 110; *Opif*. 67). But Philo uses both terms, μέρος and δύναμις, interchangeably, whereas Didymus is much more consistent in using δύναμις, similarly to Neoplatonists.

[44] *Commentary on Ecclesiastes* 337,11 – *Kommentar zum Ecclesiastes (Tura-Papyrus)*, Teil VI, G. Binder, L. Liesenborghs (eds.), Bonn 1969; *Ps.Com.* 142,23 – *Psalmenkommentar (Tura–Papyrus)*, Teil III, M. Gronewald, A. Gesché (eds.), Bonn 1968. It is worth mentioning that the word τριδύναμος, which also appears in the texts of later Neoplatonists (Proclus, Hierocles, and Ammonius), is probably of Gnostic origin. Hippolytus uses it when referring to Peratics (*Refutatio omnium haeresium* 5.12.4.4 and 10.10.3.6). It also appears in a Coptic version in Nag Hammadi Sethian treatises. The arguments for the Sethian – and not the alleged Porphyrian – source of the presence of the word τριδύναμος in later Neoplatonists has been demonstrated by Tuomas Rasimus. See T. Rasimus, *Porphyry and the Gnostics: Reassessing Pierre Hadot's Thesis in Light of the Second and Third-Century Sethian Treatises* [in:] *Plato's Parmenides and Its Heritage*. *Vol. 2: Its Reception in Patristic, Gnostic, and Christian Neoplatonic Texts*, J.D. Turner, K. Corrigan (eds.) Atlanta 2010, pp. 81–110.

[45] Iamblichus, *De Anima* 11; Cf. Porphyry, 253F – *Porphyrii Philosophi Fragmenta*, A. Smith (ed.), Studgardiae et Lipsiae 1993.

Didymus' commentary, the irrational soul is composed not only of two irrational faculties borrowed from Plato, i.e. spirited (τὸ θυμικόν) and desiring (τὸ ἐπιθυμητικόν), but also of many others used by Neoplatonists. Similarly to Neoplatonists, who have a tendency to multiply the soul's faculties by designating almost each kind of activity that the soul reveals as a distinct δύναμις, Didymus mentions "various affections and movements of the soul, which are numerous and diversified."[46] Furthermore, he uses the general expression "irrational faculties" (ἄλογοι δυνάμεις) as a designation of the whole irrational soul, which can be regarded as a distinct, though multifaceted, sphere of irrational man's activities as opposed to activity of reason and intellect. All this shows that Didymus' approach mirrors the soul models which prevailed in late antiquity, dividing the soul into two areas, rational (or intellectual) and irrational, with further subdivision into separate irrational faculties within this.

The first category, which serves to delineate the irrational soul, is that of sense-perception. This is why Didymus often makes use of Philo's soul model which accounts for the soul's division into two parts: intelligible and sensible, νοῦς and αἴσθησις.[47] According to this division, the lower soul is regarded as having an immediate connection with the sensible world and thereby operating within the sphere of the senses.[48] Its basic faculty is that of sense-perception, which is understood as a cognitive faculty of the soul itself, that is based on impressions from sensible objects which are received by the physical senses. Didymus also ascribes imagination (φαντασία)[49] and memory (μνήμη)[50] to the lower soul faculties. All these are contrasted with higher cognitive faculties, among which Didymus includes λογισμός[51] and διάνοια,[52] described as faculties of reasoning and intellection called τὸ λογιστικόν[53] and τὸ θεωρητικόν.[54] Such a distinction between lower cognitive functions ascribed to the lower soul and higher cognitive functions ascribed to the higher soul are also in accordance with the similar distinction found in Neoplatonic philosophy. In this Neoplatonic philosophy, the former were conceived as bodily dependent (as they operate on images that come from sense-perception and so depend on affections in sense-organs of the body), whereas the latter were conceived as bodily independent (as Platonists believed that thinking, especially pure intellection, does not require the activity of any bodily organ). Consequently, the former were assigned to the lower soul, associated with the body, whereas the latter were assigned to the higher soul, separable from the body. It is worth noting, however, that Neoplatonists did not agree as to where the line of demarcation lies between the higher and lower cognitive functions.[55]

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[46] *Gen.Com*. 70,17–18.

[47] *Gen.Com*. 44,9–12; 62,22–25; 95,18–21; 119,23–26; 150,3–4; 152,10–11.

[48] Cf. *Gen.Com*. 81,19–82,18; 87,20; 217,23–24; 29–30.

[49] *Gen.Com*. 48,26–28; *Ps.Com*. 144,3.

[50] *Ps.Com*. 144,3; 202,34.

[51] *Gen.Com*. 44,11; 119,26; 71,8.

[52] *Gen.Com*. 84,25; 127,18.

[53] *Gen.Com*. 140,9; *Ps.Com.* 142,24.

[54] *Gen.Com*. 114,9; *Ps.Com*. 203,1.

[55] Cf. Iamblichus, *De Anima* 13.

They observed the peculiarity of Plotinus's view, according to which even discursive reasoning (διάνοια, λογισμός) was assigned to the lower cognitive faculties inherent in the lower embodied soul. Plotinus did so in order to single out the intuitive intellect (νοῦς) as the only kind of thinking which is entirely independent of the body and, as such, the only one that constitutes the higher intellectual soul.[56] Didymus does not seem to be as sensitive to the problem as Neoplatonists were. Nonetheless, he repeats the general division into lower and higher cognitive activities, assigned to the lower and higher soul respectively. As a result, he ascribes all intellectual activities, from discursive reasoning to intuitive intellection, to one rational/intellectual faculty of the soul, which contrasts with all other cognitive activities such as sense-perception, imagination, and memory.

Apart from sense-perception and other lower cognitive activities, the second category used by Didymus to describe the lower soul is that of the motive power behind a movement of the irrational soul as well as all human activity.[57] In some ways similar to Plato's Eros, it is understood as the universal power of desire inherent in human nature. This is why Didymus ascribes to the irrational soul various kinds of drives, from the lowest types up to higher human aspirations, among which he ranks passion/affection (πάθος),[58] impulse (ὁρμή),[59] desire (ἐπιθυμία),[60] spirit (θυμός),[61] and appetite (ὄρεξις).[62] It is worth noting, however, that it is not clear whether they are to be understood as separate faculties, or rather only as specific capacities or functions of the irrational soul, or even perhaps as some sub-faculties responsible for individual kinds of human emotions. Regardless of whether they are separate faculties or not, there is no reason to doubt that, referring to an ever growing number of differentiated powers, Didymus appreciates both the approach and terminology of Neoplatonism, as evinced by the enumerations of soul powers presented by Porphyry[63] and Iamblichus.[64]

Finally, let us turn to the lowest faculties of the soul, among which Neoplatonists mainly count the vegetative (φυτικόν), nutritive (θρεπτικόν), growth-promoting (αὐξητικόν), and reproductive (γεννητικόν) faculties which are responsible for all vital functions of the body. Regardless of incidental uses of typically Neoplatonic terminology, such as the mention of the faculty of reproduction (γεννητικὴ δύναμις) in *Gen.Com*. 97,10–15, Didymus generally uses the broad expression of a vital power of the soul (ζωτικὴ δύναμις τῆς ψυχῆς).[65] He seems to treat it as one faculty responsible for enlivening the body and the maintenance of its life, and appears not to explore further by examining separate sub-faculties within it, as Neoplatonists did. Moreover,

[56] *Enn*. VI 9,5,7–9.

[57] *Gen.Com*. 165,18–21; 166,10–13; 112,13–15.

[58] *Gen.Com*. 62,1–5; 70,17–18; 71,6–12; 165,18–19.

[59] *Gen.Com*. 48,26–28; 112,13–15; 235,22.

[60] *Gen.Com*. 62,3; 119,23–26; 140,14.

[61] *Gen.Com*. 119,23–26; 140,14.

[62] *Gen.Com*. 140,14.

[63] Porphyry, 253F, 16–17 – *Porphyrii Philosophi Fragmenta*, A. Smith (ed.), Studgardiae et Lipsiae 1993.

[64] Iamblichus, *De Anima* 12–13.

[65] *Gen.Com*. 43,12; 130,4.

when Didymus raises the issue of the vital power of the soul he comes to a comparison between the human irrational soul and the soul of animals. Both the animal and the human irrational soul enliven the body, set it in motion,[66] and perform all other vital and physical functions. In addition, Didymus indicates in *Gen.Com*. 48,26–27 that the soul of animals is endowed with faculties of imagination and impulse (κίνησις φανταστικὴ καὶ ὁρμητική). This means that the animal and human irrational souls carry out not only the vital power of the soul, but also the same psychic and lower cognitive functions. At this point human and animal nature overlap. Nevertheless, although the human irrational soul can be regarded as an analogue of an animal soul, this does not mean that they are exactly the same, especially as regards the question of immortality of a living being, that is, immortality of the compound of the irrational soul and the material body.

5. The soul-body compound with regard to the question of immortality of living being

When Didymus raises the issue of the difference between the animal and human irrational soul, he depicts an animal's soul as "corporeal" (σωματική). Regrettably, it is not clear enough from the text what exact meaning has been ascribed to this term. At first, we are told that in the case of an animal's soul to be corporeal means to be "in a body" as a component of bodily constitution.[67] This may suggest that the expression "corporeal soul" implies a strict connection between the soul and body so that the soul is understood as a form of the body. In the following sentence, however, we cannot ignore the quotation from *Lev*. 17:11, where we are told that the soul of every living being is its blood.[68] This suggests that an animal's soul is a corporeal substance. Although Didymus never confirms that *Lev*. 17:11 should be understood literally, and it would probably be rash to ascribe such a view to him, we cannot treat it as definitively impossible. Regardless of the exact meaning of the "corporeal soul", there is no doubt that Didymus depicts the "corporeal" nature of an animal's soul in order to emphasise its indissoluble bond with the body. This is why the passage concludes with the statement that an animal's soul does not exist separately from the body and thereby comes into being and perishes along with the body.[69] This means that an animal's soul is mortal and this is an aspect in which the animal and human soul differ, as the human soul survives the dissolution of the body.[70]

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[66] *Gen.Com*. 43,16–17.

[67] *Gen.Com*. 48,28–49,1.

[68] *Gen.Com*. 49,1–2. Cf. *Quaestiones et solutiones in Genesim* II 59, where Philo considers blood as a substance of the lower soul, and also *De Principiis* III 4,2, where Origen discusses a view on the "corporeal soul".

[69] *Gen.Com*. 48,12–14; cf. also: *Gen.Com*. 43,12–14.

[70] *Gen.Com*. 48,14–15.

It is clear that the human soul taken in its essential nature survives the dissolution of the body, i.e. the intellectual soul which subsists by itself and thereby is independent of the body; that said, it is not equally clear whether the same can be said of the inferior irrational soul, which is associated with the body and, as has been shown, is comparable to an animal's soul. The answer should be found in a meaningful passage on the appetitive soul.[71] Here, we are told that the appetitive soul, as an irrational soul, exists separately from the intellect (χωρὶς νοῦ) and by no means accounts for the foundation (οὐδὲ ὑφισταμένη τὴν ἀρχήν), unless in the compound (εἰ μὴ ἐν τῇ συνθέσει). It therefore perishes along with the body for which it is the soul. In this passage Didymus evidently separates the irrational soul from the intellectual and stresses that, as we have already seen, the irrational soul exists as a constituent of the soul-body compound, and therefore perishes along with the body. This should lead us to the conclusion that only the intellectual soul survives the dissolution of the body, while the irrational soul dies along with the body, similarly to an animal's soul. This is how the question of the lower soul has been solved in Neoplatonism, although here whether and how a lower soul perishes along with the body was a matter of dispute.[72] As for Didymus, meanwhile, we should note that even though in *Ps.Com*. 45,9–11 he unequivocally admitted that the irrational soul perishes along with the body, he could not admit that it perishes totally or irretrievably. It seems reasonable to suppose that for Didymus being dead is after all not tantamount to being utterly extinct. Death seems to be extinction only of a particular kind of activity of irrational soul operating in the extended sensible world, i.e. the activity that consists in performing vital functions of the living body as well as in satisfying its needs and desires. As Didymus claims, man is essentially τὸ σύνθετον ζῶον, i.e. the indissoluble compound of the soul and the body, similarly to all other creatures juxtaposed with God, who is the only completely incorporeal being. In other words, man was made up of two contrasting natures and exists in such a manner both before and after death, except that after death his lower nature undergoes a thorough transformation; instead of the material body man receives a pneumatic body (σῶμα πνευματικόν).[73] Therefore, as the soul that maintains the life of the material body, the lower soul is no longer active (rather than dissolved). What is presumably active instead is some kind of lower soul enlivening the resurrection body, somehow transformed and conformed to the intelligible realm, just as

[71] *Ps.Com*. 45,9–11.

[72] Cf. Iamblichus, *De Anima* 37, and also: J.F. Finamore, *Iamblichus and the Theory of the Vehicle of the Soul*, Chico, CA 1985, pp. 11–32.

[73] *Za.Com.* 231,12–20. Didyme l'Aveugle, *Sur Zacharie*. Texte inédit d'après un papyrus de Toura. Introduction, text critique, traduction et notes de L. Doutreleau, *SCh 83*, t. 1, Paris 1962 (hereafter *Za.Com*). See also: *Ps.Com*. 328,23ff and *Gen.Com.* 149,2–5. Although Didymus never specifies in greater detail the nature of the pneumatic body (σῶμα πνευματικόν) and its relation to the quasi-immaterial body which man possesses in paradise, the overall tenor of his thought inclines me to agree with H.S. Schibli in supposing that these are two different kinds of body. The "pneumatic" resurrection body seems to be an altered form of the material body (also called "house"), i.e. an altered form of the material body received as a result of the fall of man. As such it is to be distinguished from the paradisiacal quasi-immaterial body (presumably identified with "tabernacle") received by man at the beginning as an eternal quasi-immaterial substrate of the soul. Cf. *Gen.Com*. 106,10–108,15; 118,14–16. See H.S. Schibli, *op.cit.*, pp. 384–385.

a transformed pneumatic body, so that the whole human being attains his ultimate perfection and is therefore able to "see God face to face".[74]

6. Conclusion

The particular emphasis that Didymus places on the immortality of the whole human being is one of the examples that show that despite the standard dualistic psychological presupposition characteristic of Platonism – i.e. conceiving the human being as comprising two antithetical natures (intelligible and sensible, rational and irrational, independent of the body and involved with the body) – ultimately he inclines towards the concept of man conceived as an inherent unity of the soul-body compound. His reasons for advancing this concept are varied, but evidently include general increase in the human body's dignity and value characteristic of Christian tradition, and obviously the Christian doctrine of the resurrection of the body. And this is the point in which Didymus' and Neoplatonic psychology differ the most significantly.

It is nonetheless true that Didymus could have been influenced by Neoplatonism. What is more, among the remarkable amount of technical terms and arguments deriving from Platonic tradition, attention should be drawn to the use of Aristotle's nomenclature and reasoning gaining growing acceptance within Neoplatonic schools, as this is what could support a Christian justification of an infinite unity of the soul and the body. For Didymus, as well as for other Christian authors, Aristotelian hylomorphism could serve as a philosophical point of reference for the inextricability of the soul-body compound, both before and after death.[75] Admittedly, the growth of Aristotelian hylomorphism is a distinctive feature not only of late-antique Christian but also of Neoplatonic psychology. The Neoplatonic view on the lower soul that acts as a cause and entelechy of a living being and also the concept of the soul's vehicle shows an increasing significance of the understanding of man as a composite being necessarily

[74] *Za.Com.* 231.9–11. Didymus' writings give us some idea of the ultimate transformation of the human being. A good example, albeit an exceptional one, is Enoch's rapture to the heavens, interpreted by Didymus as an immediate consequence of his absolute perfection and plenitude attained in earthly life (*Gen.Com*. 148,7–149,18). Although Didymus does not define Enoch's perfection, it is clear enough that this is an example of a state that can be approached in this life, yet ultimately it is to be obtained at resurrection. Therefore, it seems reasonable to suppose that an ultimate transformation of the human being is related to the transformation attained through the perfection of an inherent human nature. This kind of human perfection consists in an assimilation of the whole lower nature into the higher. Didymus calls it a harmony of the soul (cf. *Gen.Com*. 33,13–16; 72,20–25), and depicts it by alluding to Plato's chariot metaphor (*Phaedrus* 253,c–d), where a charioteer driving two horses is taken as a reference to the reason's control over the spirited and desiderative parts of the soul (*Gen.Com*. 70,17–21; 71,6–12; 112,13–15; 119,23–26; 140,13–15, cf. also the whole passage in *Gen.Com*. 59,24–62,5). The most exact illustration of absolute human perfection is the description of man's sojourn in paradise, where the stress is upon immediate knowledge of God conceived by Didymus as a result of "putting the reason upon the senses" (*Gen.Com*. 81,29–30), so that the sense-perceptible nature of man is concealed, but not non-existent. This is how Didymus depicts the ultimate result of the prime conformity of the lower to the higher nature, namely a pure comprehension of God.

[75] Similarly, the Aristotelian classification of change was (among others) a theoretical framework which supported the understanding of the transformation of the resurrection body. Cf. *Ps.Com*. 328,23ff.

comprising two elements, formal and material. For Neoplatonists, however, it does not entail the acceptance of immortality of the whole lower nature of man including immortality of the material body. And this is why one can reasonably claim that Didymus takes the soul-body unity further than a slight corrective to Plato's soul-body dichotomy that is to be found in Neoplatonism.

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The Cognitive Value of Hallucinations

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Abstract

With beginnings probably dating back to the end of the Middle Palaeolithic period, shamanism seems to be predominantly connected with the use of hallucinogenic agents and the experiences resulting therefrom. For this reason it is worth asking how the shamanistic cultural complex could function over such a long period of time in adaptive terms if the substance of its practice and ideology included the processing of information based on hallucinations. In the light of contemporary nomenclature, the latter are understood as inadequate erroneous perceptions. Accepting such a concept of hallucinations, it is possible to explain the long currency of shamanism on the basis of evolutionary cognitive error management theory, costly signalling theory, or evolutionary psychiatric group-splitting theory. However, the dominant approach to the phenomenon of hallucination may be questioned, and it is conceivable that at least some of its contents constitute a mediated projection of subliminal percepts preceding an experience of hallucinations or co-occurring with them. Transformations of hallucinations preceding their entry to the field of consciousness may be governed by the rules of association described by Herbert Silberer's theory of self-symbolisation and those brought to light by such researchers on subliminal perception as Otto Pötzl, Charles Fisher, or Norman Dixon. From this new perspective, a new definition of hallucination must be developed – a definition that will take the actual cognitive value of this phenomenon into consideration and be more adequate for providing a description of the full cognitive dynamics of the shamanistic complex.

Key words: shamanism, hallucinations, terror management theory, subliminal perception, symbolisation
Słowa kluczowe: szamanizm, halucynacje, teoria zarządzania błędami, percepcja podprogowa, symbolizacja

For a scholar specialising in the comparative study of religion, the issue of hallucinations cannot remain neutral, considering both the phenomenon of experiencing involuntary or induced visionary states that is common across a variety of historical religious traditions and the global distribution of shamanism across traditional

societies and its occurrence in archaic societies presumed on the basis of ambiguously interpreted archaeological data. Mythological reconstructions proposed by Michael Witzel, who dates the genesis of mythology in general and shamanic mythology in particular for two archaic migrations of two prehistoric populations: the Gondwana type (of circa 65,000 years ago) and the Laurasian type (of circa 40,000 years ago), can be considered problematic.[1] Witzel connects occurrence of shamanistic motifs with mythological material of migrations of the latter type.[2] Yet, a greater evidentiary and circumstantial strength may be attributed to spatial and temporal scope of the data gleaned from Palaeolithic art rock and cave paintings analysed by Jean Clottes and David Lewis-Williams,[3] but first and foremost to the discovery in 2010 by archaeologist and botanist Sheila Coulson and and her team of the Rhino Cave grottoes, located in the Tsodilo Hills in Botswana, an area inhabited by the San bushmen, with artefacts related to snake cult and dating back to 70 thousand BC.[4] It is undoubtedly the humankind's oldest known centre of cult with the structure suggesting that the smaller cave held a site for the person of a shaman, in the state of trance becoming transformed into a python spirit represented by a two-tonne block of rock located inside the cave and representing the python's head.[5] These recent data seem to suggest that it would be prudent to date the beginnings of shamanism for the end of the Middle Palaeolithic period (350,000–40,000 BC). Therefore, it is not an exaggeration to state that the humankind shares the history of approximately 100,000 years during which it had dominantly functioned according to the shamanic model of the world, that is the period of time tens of thousands years longer than the time of existence of the oldest of the historical religions we are familiar with. According to Polish anthropologist Andrzej Wierciński, the rise of shamanism is to have stemmed, as an evolutionary process, from two fundamental characteristics of the demographically-conditioned process of intensification of the hunter-gatherer economy.

> resulted from the meeting of two factors: (1) the need to obtain skilled hunters because of intensification of hunting, and (2) the discovery of hallucinogens due to the intensification of gathering. The situation thus arose as follows:
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> Intensification of gathering and hunting among the nomadic groups, bearing the character of a 'joint family', led to a clearer division of biocultural roles between the two sexes and different age categories. Women bearing children and protecting young offspring, although helped

[1] M. Witzel, *The Origins of the World's Mythologies*, Oxford 2013, pp. 105–186, 279–356.

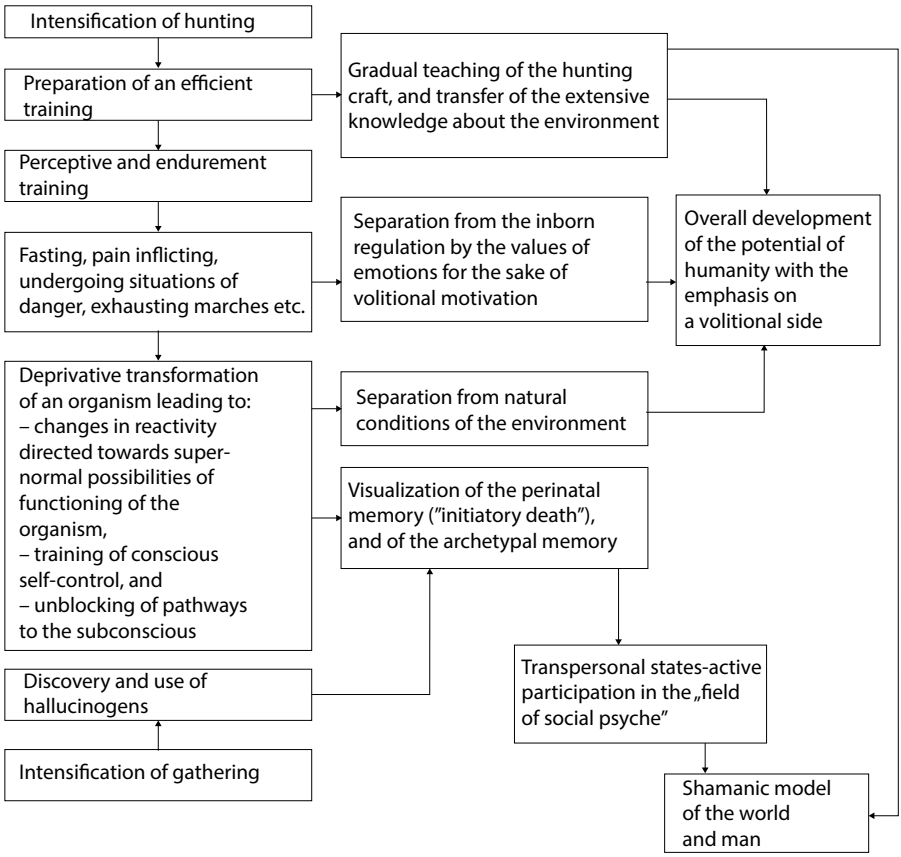
[2] M. Witzel, *op.cit.*, p. 422.

[3] J. Clottes, D. Lewis-Williams, *Les chamanes de la préhistoire. Text integral, polémique et réponses*, Paris 2001.

[4] S. Coulson, S. Staurset, N. Walker, *Ritualised Behavior in the Middle Stone Age: Evidence from Rhino Cave, Tsodillo Hills, Botswana*, "PaleAnthropology Society" 2011, pp. 18–61.

[5] Coulson and her collaborators display a far-reaching discretion in terms of interpretation of the obtained data in shamanistic complex categories, nevertheless, such an interpretation is admissible, should one accept an assumption on incidence of various types of shamanism (their family recemblances) as manifest in the continuum from an individual to collective trance and taking into account the research into relationships between shamanism and hunter-gatherer mode of economy, see: D.S. Whitley, *Hunther-gatherer religion and ritual* [in:] V. Cummings, P. Jordan, M. Zvelebil, *Oxford Handbook of the Archaeology and Anthropology of Hunter-Gatherers*, Oxford 2014, pp. 1224–1228.

by older children, were mainly concerned with gathering around a temporary place of stay, taking care of the fire and preparing food, whereas men were undertaking distant hunting expeditions. Their life was full of dangerous events which demanded comprehensive and detailed observation of their environment, the fauna and the flora, the landscape, weather and the sky. All the data had to be correlated with one another in meaningful mnemotechnical whole, taking into consideration symptomatic signals (cracks of twigs, sounds and trails of animals etc.). This paves the way for the cognitive development and for thinking based on figurative analogizing. Hence comes an additional problem as to an intergeneration transfer of quite extensive knowledge about the environment, tool production, and hunting behavior. Next, the hunter must have had at his command a very efficient human organism which could endure physical exhaustion, thermal extremities, hunger, pain, fear etc., and he had to develop his volitional motivation (self control). Finally, the hunting expedition demanded a coordinated and self-sacrificial cooperation of all the members of one sex, and age groups variously related to one another. It also demanded the forms of behavior directed towards the obligatory altruism. This is why the upbringing and training of a skilled hunter should, on the one hand, cover an intergeneration transfer of the knowledge about the surrounding and of the hunting craft and, on the other hand, comprehensive perceptive and endurance tests. A complex model of the origin of shamanism is shown in the following diagram.[6]



[6] A. Wierciński, *On the origin of Shamanism* [in:] *Shamanism: past and present*, M. Hoppal, D.J. von Sadovszky (eds.), Budapest–Los Angeles 1989, pp. 21–22.

According to Wierciński:

> the use of hallucinogens was responsible for the origin of the systems of initiation of shamanistic type: the hallucinogens were introduced into the organism possessing a high degree of self-control which was previously prepared by means of deprivation. [...] this had deep cognitive effects and changes in personality.[7]

Wierciński's theory entails a number of diverse consequences, among others the fact that for entire millennia the primitive man functioned in a mythical-ritual system oriented on ASCs with a particular emphasis on hallucinations. Hence, the issue of hallucinations opening to a varied degree counterintuitive worlds inhabited by counterintuitive beings should be treated by the evolutionary cognitive studies of religion as central on a par with the issues related to dreaming. It has already been afforded precisely such a treatment by the scientific study of religion, although the connection between the shamanic techniques of ecstasy and the use of hallucinogenic substances was not initially as obvious as it is today as confirmed by the statement from Lewis-Williams: "Hunter-gatherer shamanism is fundamentally posited on a range of institutionalized altered states of consciousness."[8]

As I have already described it, in the paradigmatic work of the famous Romanian scholar, Mircea Eliade, Shamanism: Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy[9],

> one searches with difficulty for a certain uniform concept regarding the use of hallucinogenic substances and the function of hallucinations in traditional and archaic societies, although instead of that one may find a host of vague and often mutually contradictory statements connected with this topic, where the propositions of evaluating nature rather than the genuine research of the work's author, M. Eliade, find an expression. Their main accents may be summarized as follows: the use of hallucinogenic substances in shamanic techniques of ecstasy does not belong to their primary repertoire, having a secondary character displaying their hybridization. This strong view, several times reiterated by the Romanian researcher, is in no way disturbed by the fact that in various parts of the mentioned text this same author considers the use of narcotics (for such is the confusing term often used by Eliade to define hallucinogenic substances) to be an element of shamanism analogical to the use of shaman's drum, or to be equally included within the list of ritual invariables which accompany tribal initiations or those leading to membership of secret societies. Of interest is that the negative opinion concerning hallucinogenic substances in the book is expressed most often in the context of Siberian shamanism, with almost no mention where the discussion concerns the use of such substances in South American shamanic traditions.[10]

The research into the relationship between shamanism and use of hallucinogenic substances conducted after Eliade's monograph had been published by such authors as Weston La Barre, Geraldo Reichelt-Dolmatoff, Marlene Dobkin de Rios, Peter Furst, Bruce Lang, Chareles Grob, and others distinctly demonstrated that Eliade's

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[7] *Ibidem*, p. 23.

[8] J.D. Lewis-Williams, *A Cosmos in Stone: Interpreting Religion and Society Through Rock Art*, Alta Mira 2002, p. 196.

[9] M. Eliade, *Shamanism: Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy*, Bollingen Foundation 1964.

[10] T. Sikora, *Użycie substancji halucynogennych a religia*, Kraków 2003. p. 389.

view requires to be corrected and that the question at issue requires an in-depth investigation.

What, therefore, is the fundamental problem to be explained in connection to the issue of hallucinations in the context of their principal role in archaic and contemporary traditional societies? To provide an answer to this inquiry, it is fitting to examine the meaning of this notion on the basis of the dictionary that presently enjoys the status of the basic reference book in this scope: "Hallucination can be defined as a percept, experienced by a waking individual, in the absence of an appropriate stimulus from the extracorporeal world. [...] The term hallucination comes from the Latin verb **halucinari* which means to wander mentally or to be absent-minded. It has its root in the Greek verb *aluein*, which means to wander or to be distraught."[11]

If we find this definition of the phenomenon of hallucination as an inadequate, erroneous perception to be obligatory, and if we refer it to the principal subject of our deliberations, then, we will be forced, in defining the figure of the shaman, to logically recognise him to be a person specialised in this scope, a person who in the waking state erroneously experiences a perception of a given state of affairs despite the lack of an adequate stimulus from the external world. In other words, a shaman is a person who periodically experiences the external world in a counterfactual manner. Adopting etymology as a starting point, a shaman is a person who wanders mentally, is absent-minded or distraught. It would seem that such a definition of shamanism cannot be challenged and everything is clear. Yet, from the perspective of evolutionary and cognitive studies into the phenomenon of religion, such a definition must be a source of endless theoretical and methodological problems. It is so since a fundamental question arises, namely what the adaptive value of hallucinations and shamanic type of social control is. How small communities which, in light of the above-given definition of hallucinations, to a large degree function on the grounds of recognising as an authority people specialising not exclusively, but in an exceptionally substantial manner, in experiencing hallucinations, how such small communities survived under extremely difficult conditions over tens of thousands of years. To perform a simple simulation, let us imagine a small group of people directed by a hallucinating, absent-minded and distraught man in the Amazon jungle, or Siberian tundra, or vast terrains of African subtropical steppe with survival problems characteristic of these ecosystems. Even assuming that such a group has at its disposal a resource of adequate, traditional knowledge about the surroundings, this will not be of much assistance for the group if in its actions it follows hints from a man who, due to his specialisation, makes decisions on the basis of inadequate perceptions occurring "in the absence of an appropriate stimulus from the extracorporeal world."

How can one attempt to solve the paradox of adaptive usefulness of erroneous inadequate perceptions stemming from the commonly established definition of the phenomenon of hallucinations? A host of theories has been proposed in this matter. In principle, all of them question the cognitive value of hallucinations, yet in the frames of a broader theoretical system of reference, they do not rule out their adaptive value.

[11] J.D. Bloom, *A Dictionary of Hallucinations*, Berlin–New York 2009, p. 218.

The error management theory may provide the broadest system of reference for them. This theory, represented by Johnson, Haselton, Buss, and Nettle,

> suggests that if the costs of *false positive* and *false negative* decision-making errors have been asymmetric over human evolutionary history, then natural selection would favor a bias towards the least costly error over time (in order to avoid whichever was the worse error). So, for example, we have a bias to sometimes think that sticks are snakes (which is harmless), but never that snakes are sticks (which may be deadly).[12]

In turn, the group-splitting theory (proposed by evolutionary psychiatrists Anthony Stevens and John Price) is an example of a theory which can be logically placed within the frames of the metatheory that the error management theory is.[13] In their approach, in archaic communities, people characterised by a high degree of hallucinatory experiences were also characterised by a dissociative personality, typical of people with disorders which nowadays are classified as borderline, schizotypal or paranoid personality disorders. Due to the occurrence of these disorders, they were supposed to be predisposed to cause splits within the group, which may have led to its division into smaller groups with higher adaptive capabilities in the scope of mastering and taking advantage of a given ecumene. From this perspective, the apparently erroneous following of the individual who in his actions is guided by contents of hallucinations as inadequate perceptions, in a longer timeframe could result in increased adaptivity and fitness of the humankind as a whole.

It does not necessarily offer us any consolation, yet from the perspective of the evolutionary error management theory, the truth does not always have a higher adaptive force than falsehood.

Analogically, the costly signalling theory proposed by Joseph Heinrich, within which the shaman guided by hallucinations as inadequate perceptions is, nevertheless, the master of the ritual, might be a theory subordinate to the superordinate error management theory. Such a ritual, despite potentially being completely or partially derived from hallucinatory experiences, may intensify socialisation (E. Durkheim's thesis) and the phatic function (B. Malinowski's thesis), as well as reinforce cooperation and group cohesion (Heinrich's thesis) and in effect it may lead to the increased fitness of the group as an adaptive unit. Similarly, such theories of shamanic ritual as the psychodynamic theory (Weston La Barre[14]) and quasi neurobiological theories (E. Frecska, Z. Kulcsar,[15] M. Winkelman[16]) may be interpreted within the error management theory. From their perspective, thanks to such a ritual, the group undergoes

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[12] D.P. Johnson, *The Error of God: Error Management Theory, Religion, and the Evolution of Cooperation* [in:] *Games, Groups and the Global Good*, S.A. Levin (ed.), Berlin–New York 2009, p. 169.

[13] A. Stevens, J. Price, *Evolutionary Psychiatry: a New Beginning*, London–New York 2002, pp. 141–162.

[14] W. La Barre, *Hallucinogens and the Shamanic Origins of Religion* [in:] *Flesh of the gods*, P.T. Furst (ed.), London 1972, pp. 261–278.

[15] E. Frecska, Z. Kulcsar, *Social Bonding in the Modulation of the Physiology of Ritual Trance*, "Ethos" 1989, no. 17, pp. 70–87.

[16] M. Winkelman, *Shamanism. A Biopsychical Paradigm of Consciousness and Healing*, Santa Barbara 2010, pp. 183–230.

a collective catharsis, cleansing the group's members of subconscious emotional problems, and experiences a reduction in stress levels, which may be accompanied by hyper-activation of the endogenous opioid system with a potentially therapeutic character. From the point of view of these theories, the epistemic fallacy of hallucinations does not negatively impact their potential adaptive value in the scale of a species. Hallucinations as inadequate perceptions may have been cultivated for tens of millennia since their indirect subconscious effects and hidden functions, in the evolutionary scale, have resulted in the increased fitness of the species.

Obviously, these theories do not negate the cognitive value of the entire knowledge of archaic and traditional communities in the scope of their hunting and gathering activities, but merely try to somehow come to terms with the fact that their steering elites attributed a cognitive value to hallucinatory experiences which in light of the definition of the phenomenon of hallucinations had to be inadequate in cognitive terms. I am far from rejecting the above-described theories explaining the adaptive value of shamanism by its paradoxical power to cause positive evolutionary side-effects.

However, I seem to get an impression that the definition of a hallucination as "a percept, experienced by a waking individual, in the absence of an appropriate stimulus from the extracorporeal world" provided in Dirk's dictionary is too ambiguous and it *a priori* suggests that hallucinations are devoid of any cognitive value.

In my 1999 work *The use of Hallucinogenic Substances and Religion. Research Perspectives on Ritual and Symbolization* and in the monograph *Hallucinations and Visions from the perspective of the Research into Subliminal Perception and Synaesthesia* which I am currently working on, I advocate the need to revise the dominant manner for defining the notion of hallucinations and restoring them their cognitive value with a direct, as opposed to indirect, adaptive value. On the basis of the earlier-presented material and data being currently processed, I postulate to find that at least a part of the phenomena referred to as hallucinations should be recognised as cognitive representations of specific states occurring both in the internal and external environment of each individual. I deliberately use the wording "cognitive perceptive representations" instead of "symbols," since the notion of symbol, in itself monstrously ambiguous, should be reserved for universal representations transcending concrete individual experiences and semantically broader than representations of concrete internal and external experiences. Moreover, from the neurocomputative and Peirce's semiotic perspectives, all contents of an experience, as a result of neurophysiological processing are symbolic in relation to their basis. In relation to hallucinations as cognitively adequate, but specifically transformed representations of internal states, which Dirk's definition in principle passes over in silence, the auto-symbolisation theory of Austrian psychoanalyst Herberta Silberer concerning hypnagogic hallucinations may be successfully applied.[17] Silberer clearly demonstrates that contents of hallucinations may constitute a relatively straightforward pictorial representation of three aspects of internal experience.

[17] H. Silberer, *Űber die Symbolbildung und andere psychoanalytische Schriften*, Wien 1988, pp. 7–17.

1. Hallucinations may contain a given pictorially transformed c o n t e n t of current thought and imaginative processes. For example, a person under the influence of lysergic acid diethylamide is thinking of buying a concrete insurance policy – at the same moment a hallucination appears: the person finds himself/herself at a roulette table in a casino.
2. Hallucinations may represent as images the f o r m in which thought and imaginative processes occur. For example: a person under the influence of lysergic acid diethylamide is repeatedly engaging in unsuccessful attempts to solve a specific mathematic problem – at the same moment a hallucination appears: the person is wandering through a labyrinth
3. Hallucinations may transmit in the form of images r e p r e s e n t a t i o n s of s o m a e s t h e t i c s e n s a t i o n s. A person under the influence of lysergic acid diethylamide has a running nose and limited ability to breathe – at the same moment a hallucination appears: the person is travelling on board of a crowded lift.

These three modes of hallucinatory mapping may occur simultaneously. In each of the mentioned cases a relation occurs – that of an, in a way, adequate correspondence between the subject's internal state and its phenomenally perceived representation.

Analogically, in relation to hallucinations, it is possible to speak of their certain cognitive value as a representation in relation to the external world. This is indicated by the research into subliminal perception initiated in 1917 by Otto Pötzl. [18]Pötzl, and other researchers following in his footsteps – Charles Fisher, Howard Shevrin, Norman Dixon, Wolfgang Leuschner, Stephan Hau, and many others – demonstrated that images displayed subliminally with the duration time of 1/100 second, and therefore unnoticed by the subjects, upon certain transformations appeared as the content of their dreams. Pötzl also observed the occurrence of this phenomenon in the case of hallucinations accompanying alcoholic delirium. As early as in 1946, the Soviet research conducted by Leonid Wasiliew and his team demonstrated intensification of subliminal perception under the influence of mescaline and in the 1960s occurrence of a similar effect with the use of LSD was confirmed by an independent research by Samuel Friedman and Charles Fisher.[19] The presence of this effect is also confirmed by numerous observations made by Stanislav Grof. Subliminal stimuli show a tendency for manifesting not only in dreams, but also in various types of hallucinations. The above-mentioned studies suggest that the notion of hallucinations as inadequate perceptions, adopted from psychiatry and used in anthropological research must be revised. It should also take into account new directions for research, such as the influence of synaesthesia in the scope of subliminal stimulus processing, as well as the potential of lucid dreaming techniques in the scope of subliminal stimuli

[18] O. Pötzl, *Experimentell erregte Traumbilder in ihren Beziehungen zum indirekten Sehen*, "Zeitschrift für die gesamte Neurologie und Psychiatrie" 1917, no. 37, pp. 278–349.

[19] L. Wasiljew, *Tajemnicze zjawiska psychiki człowieka*, przeł. J. Stobnicki, L. Stobnicki, Warszawa 1970, pp. 150–152; S.M. Friedman, Ch. Fisher, *Further Observations on Primary Modes of Perception*, "Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association" 1960, no. 8, pp. 100–129.

deciphering. Such a revision will facilitate a more complete evaluation of the adaptive value of shamanism in the prehistory of the humankind.

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Religious Cognition as Social Cognition

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Abstract

In this paper, I examine the relationship between social cognition and religious cognition. Many cognitive theories of religion claim that these two forms are somehow related, but the details are usually left unexplored and insights from theories of social cognition are not taken on board. I discuss the three main (groups of) theories of social cognition, namely the theory-theory, the simulation theory and enactivist theories. Secondly, I explore how these theories can help to enrich a number of cognitive theories of religion. The theories I discuss are Stewart Guthrie's anthropomorphism, Justin Barrett's hyperactive agency detection device, Jesse Bering's existential theory of mind, Pascal Boyer's minds with full strategic access and Tanya Luhrmann's porous theory of mind. Finally, I look at how enrichment with insights from social cognition can help to combine different existing theories of religious cognition into a unified framework.

Key words: cognitive science of religion, social cognition, theory-theory, simulation theory, enactivism
Słowa kluczowe: religioznawstwo kognitywne, poznanie społeczne, teoria teorii, teoria symulacji, enaktywizm

1. Introduction

In this paper, I aim to examine the relationship between social and religious cognition as proposed in a number of cognitive theories of religion, and suggest prospects for how cognitive theories of religion can be enriched by insights from theories of social cognition. Many theories propose such a relationship, namely that supernatural beings are believed to have mental states or be minded like humans, but without discussing this in detail. Philosophical and psychological discussion about social cognition is much older and further developed than the cognitive theories of religion. It is therefore likely that including insights from theories on social cognition will be helpful and enriching. Although the literature on social cognition is vast, three main (groups of)

theories can be distinguished: the theory-theory, the simulation theory, and enactivist theories. For our purposes, the cognitive theories of religion that propose a link between social and religious cognition can also be divided into two groups: those that consider supernatural minds to be similar to human minds, and those which see supernatural minds as being (very) different. Since arguing for one theory of social or religious cognition would require one or many more other papers, I will only discuss the main theories in each field and see how cognitive theories of religion can be enriched by theories of social cognition. I will argue that enriching the existing cognitive theories can result in a more accurate account of religious cognition and can help in combining different existing theories into an overarching framework.

This paper is structured as follows: in Section 2, I introduce the cognitive theories of religion that propose a link between religious and social cognition. I also propose a distinction between two groups of theories as to whether they consider supernatural minds to be different from human minds or not. I have limited the discussion to the most influential theories in the field and to their main proponents. In Section 3, I discuss theories on social cognition, namely the theory-theory, the simulation theory and enactivist theories. In the final section, I look at the question of which theory on social cognition fits best with which group of cognitive theories of religion, and see how the latter can be enriched by the former. I also make suggestions on how the enriched cognitive theories can be combined into one overarching framework.

2. Social cognition in cognitive science of religion

Many, if not most, cognitive theories of religion propose a link between religious cognition and social cognition. By social cognition, I mean the mental abilities and processes involved in gaining knowledge about other people's mental states. According to many cognitive scientists, religious cognition is somehow similar to, or a subpart of, social cognition. Stewart Guthrie claims that religious beliefs arise when methods of inferring people's mental states are applied to inanimate natural phenomena. For example, when people see clouds that resemble smiling faces, they will conclude to supernatural agency, just like they conclude to human agency when they see a smiling human face.[1] Justin Barrett argues for something similar when he claims that religious beliefs result from a hyperactive agency detection device. Because it was beneficial from an evolutionary perspective, the cognitive mechanism people use for detecting agents is prone to conclude to agency upon very limited evidence. As a result, natural phenomena like rustling of leaves or a stick that looks like a snake suffice to conclude to agency.[2] Jesse Bering claims that religious beliefs result from attributing meaning to meaningless events whereby meaning is associated with intentional acts by a god.[3] Pascal Boyer claims that the religious concepts people believe in are

[1] S. Guthrie, *Faces in the Clouds: A New Theory of Religion*, New York–Oxford 1993.

[2] J.L. Barrett, *Why Would Anyone Believe in God?*, Oxford 2004.

[3] J. Bering, "The Existential Theory of Mind", *Review of General Psychology*, 2002, no. 6, pp. 3–24.

always agents with a firm interest in moral behaviour. These agents are different from normal human agents because they have full access to people's thoughts and desires.[4] Ara Norenzayan makes similar arguments.[5] Tanya Luhrmann suggests that forming religious beliefs depends on a porous theory of mind by means of which religious people believe that God interacts with them by implanting thoughts.[6]

All these theories hold that gods, or other supernatural beings, are believed to be minded or have mental states. However, all also hold that religious cognition is to some extent different from ordinary social cognition. According to Guthrie's and Barrett's theories, supernatural minds are believed to be invisible. In both Boyer's and Luhrmann's theories, divine minds are believed to be more powerful than human minds. Therefore all theories seem to agree that religious cognition is a particular subclass of religious cognition, but the difference with ordinary cognition appears to be stronger in Boyer's and Luhrmann's theories. For Guthrie, Barrett and Bering, gods are invisible, but there is no real difference between human minds and the minds gods are believed to have. In Guthrie's and Barrett's theories, supernatural minds have the same agential powers as human minds, and in Bering's theory both human and supernatural minds engage in intentional meaningful acts. According to Boyer, supernatural minds are clearly different since they have full access to people's mental states whereas human minds do not, while Luhrmann's argument suggests that supernatural minds have the ability to intrude on other minds but human minds do not.

If religious cognition can be considered a subclass of social cognition, religious cognition is in many ways similar to social cognition. Theories of religious cognition could thus benefit from insights into social cognition. This is, however, largely missing in most theories of religion. In order to fill this lacuna, we will look at three influential approaches to social cognition in recent philosophy of mind.

3. Theories of social cognition

In this section, I will discuss three influential theories of social cognition: the theory-theory, the simulation theory and enactivist theories.[7] I will lay out the theories and discuss the empirical evidence that their proponents refer to. Arguing for one theory over another would require several other papers, so I will not take a stance on this issue.

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[4] P. Boyer, *Religion Explained: The Human Instincts That Fashion Gods, Spirits and Ancestors*, London 2002, pp. 171–183.

[5] A. Norenzayan, *Big Gods: How Religion Transformed Cooperation and Conflict*, Princeton, NJ 2013.

[6] T.M. Luhrmann, *When God Talks Back: Understanding the American Evangelical Relationship with God*, Vintage 2012.

[7] I have omitted the older analogical theory (see A. Hyslop, *Other Minds* [in:] *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2014 Edition), E.N. Zalta (ed.), http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2014/entries/other-minds/ [accessed: 24 June 2015]) because it has been largely abandoned. Some features of the analogical theory have been incorporated in the simulation theory.

Notable adherents of the theory-theory are Alison Gopnik and Peter Carruthers.[8] Carruthers defines his position as follows: "I believe that our understandings of mentalistic notions – of belief, desire, perception, intention, and the rest – is largely given by the positions those notions occupy within a folk-psychological theory of the structure and functioning of the mind."[9] Gopnik illustrates what this folk-psychological theory amounts to by her metaphor of "the child as a scientist."[10] She writes, "According to this position, our everyday conception of the mind is an implicit naive theory; children's early conceptions of the mind are also implicit theories, and changes in those conceptions are theory changes. We refer to this explanatory position as the "theory-theory."[11] The children's naive theory functions in the same way as a scientific theory does for a scientist. Like scientific theories, the naive theory has content, namely ideas about other people's mental states. On the basis of this content, children can make empirical predictions and these predictions are different from those of alternative accounts. When the predictions turn out true, the child's theory is corroborated, and when they turn out false, the theory is in need of revision. Gopnik adds that this naive theory need not be explicitly formulated.[12]

Now what is the content that forms the basis of children's theories and predictions? Carruthers writes,

> It is in virtue of knowing such things as: the relationship between line of vision, attention, and perception; between perception, background knowledge, and belief; between belief, desire, and intention; and between perception, intention, and action; that one is able to predict and explain the actions of others.[13]

The main goal of naive theories is thus to explain the actions of others. Mental states are theoretical entities needed to do the explaining, much like the Higgs boson particle was needed to explain why some fundamental particles have mass. Both Carruthers and Gopnik stress that naive theories are underdetermined by the evidence; the evidence does not clearly show what mental states best explain it. As a result, multiple conflicting naive theories can coexist as long as they are not ruled out by falsified predictions.

As evidence, advocates of the theory-theory often refer to the false belief test.[14] In the original test, children under the age of 3 were introduced to a puppet who has a piece of chocolate and then hides it in a cupboard. The puppet leaves and a second puppet enters the scene. The second puppet hides the piece of chocolate in a box. When

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[8] P. Carruthers, *Simulation and Self-Knowledge: A Defence of Theory-Theory* [in:] *Theories of Theories of Mind*, P. Carruthers, P.K. Smith (eds.), Cambridge 1996; A. Gopnik, A.N Meltzoff, P.K. Kuhl, *The Scientist in the Crib: What Early Learning Tells Us About the Mind*, New York 2001.

[9] P. Carruthers, *Simulation and Self-Knowledge*..., p. 22.

[10] A. Gopnik, A.N Meltzoff, P.K. Kuhl, *op.cit.*

[11] A. Gopnik, H.M Wellman, *The Theory Theory* [in:] *Mapping the Mind: Domain Specificity in Cognition and Culture*, L.A. Hirschfeld, S.A. Gelman (eds.), New York 1994, p. 257.

[12] *Ibidem*.

[13] P. Carruthers, *Simulation and Self-Knowledge*..., p. 24.

[14] H. Wimmer, J. Perner, *Beliefs about Beliefs: Representation and Constraining Function of Wrong Beliefs in Young Children's Understanding of Deception*, "Cognition" 1983, vol. 13, pp. 103–128.

the children are asked whether the first puppet knows that the piece of chocolate is now in the box, they usually answer yes. For proponents of the theory-theory, the false belief test shows that children's theorising over other people's minds is subject to revision as they grow older. Gopnik also claims that people use the same cognitive mechanisms for theorising over other people's mental states as for scientific theory building.[15]

A second influential theory, the simulation theory, received its best-known defence from Robert Gordon and Alvin Goldman. Advocates of the simulation theory object to the overly rational, or even cold, account of the theory-theory. Goldman writes, "People often say that they understand others by empathising with them, by putting themselves in others' shoes."[16] Gordon writes: "The [simulation theory] imputes to us a hot methodology, which exploits one's own motivational and emotional resources and one's own capacity for practical reasoning."[17] On the simulation theory, people arrive at beliefs about someone else's mental states by transporting themselves in their imagination into the situation of that other person. For example, to form beliefs about someone else who is in love, a person will transport herself to the situation where she herself is in love and conclude from her own mental states what the other person's mental states are.[18] Simulation is thus process-driven rather than theory-driven.[19] This process need not be conscious. As Goldman writes, "Mental simulations might occur automatically, without intent, and then get used to form beliefs about mind-reading questions."[20]

The simulation theory draws support from a tradition going back at least to David Hume, which stresses the importance of empathy and sympathy in judging others.[21] Apart from this common-sense defence, defenders of the simulation theory sometimes refer to mirror neurons as evidence for their theory. These neurons are believed to be a class of visuomotor neurons that respond both when a particular action is performed and when the same action is observed in another person.[22] Neuroscientific research has, however, cast doubt on the existence of mirror neurons in humans.[23]

The last recent approach has its roots in enactivist theories of cognition.[24] Enactivists object to the rationalism of traditional cognitive sciences and opt for an embodied, narrative and enactive approach to human cognition instead. Shaun Gallagher

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[15] A. Gopnik, A.N. Meltzoff, P.K. Kuhl, *op.cit.*

[16] A. Goldman, *Simulating Minds: The Philosophy, Psychology, and Neuroscience of Mindreading*, Oxford 2006, p. vii.

[17] R.M. Gordon, *Radical Simulationism* [in:] *Theories of Theories of Mind*, P. Carruthers, P.K. Smith (eds.), Cambridge 1996, p. 11.

[18] *Ibidem*.

[19] A. Goldman, *Interpretation Psychologized*, "Mind and Language" 1989, vol. 4, pp. 161–185.

[20] A. Goldman, *Simulating Minds...*, p. 40.

[21] *Ibidem*, p. 17.

[22] V. Gallese, A. Goldman, *Mirror Neurons and the Simulation Theory of Mind-Reading*, "Trends in Cognitive Sciences" 1998, vol. 2, pp. 493–501.

[23] A. Lingnau, B. Gesierich, A. Caramazza, *Asymmetric fMRI Adaptation Reveals No Evidence for Mirror Neurons in Humans*, "Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences" 2009, vol. 106, pp. 9925–9930.

[24] E.g. S. Gallagher, D. Zahavi, *The Phenomenological Mind*, London 2012; D.D. Hutto, E. Myin, *Radicalizing Enactivism: Basic Minds Without Content*, Cambridge 2012.

holds that "[...]primary intersubjectivity [...] is the primary way we continue to understand others in second-person interactions."[25] In his view, understanding other people's mental states is neither theoretical nor based on simulation, but an embodied practice. He does not deny that theorising and simulation play some role in social cognition,[26] but its role is very limited. These practices are emotional rather than rational, sensory-motor rather than cognitive, perceptual rather than theoretical, and nonconceptual. Gallagher also refers to these practices as "interpersonal pragmatics". The practices lead to a direct, pragmatic understanding of another person's mental states. According to Daniel Hutto, understanding other people's mental states cannot happen outside of narratives. He notes that "[...] by far the best and most reliable means of obtaining a true understanding of why another has acted is to get the relevant story directly from the horse's mouth."[27] He further claims that folk-psychological narratives do a lot of work in making sense of other people's mental states.[28]

All three theories of social cognition appear to be (very) different, with the theory-theory taking a theoretical approach, the simulation theory taking a softer, more empathic approach and enactivist theories taking an embodied approach. Hybrid theories have been suggested, but they are rather rare.

4. Religious cognition as social cognition

In this section I will work towards an integrative framework for understanding religious cognition as social cognition. As we saw in the second section, cognitive scientists of religion tend to consider religious cognition as a particular subclass of social cognition. We also noted that some cognitive scientists see supernatural minds as rather similar to human minds, while others see supernatural minds as (very) different. The distinction is important because both groups of theories appear to fit better with various theories of social cognition.

4.1. Religious cognition as situated social cognition

In the theories of Guthrie, Barrett and Bering, gods are believed to be invisible, but their minds not to differ from human minds. Stewart Guthrie starts from the observation that humans tend to look at the world in an animistic fashion, meaning that they often see non-living things as alive; for example boulders as bears and flying pieces of paper as birds. Humans also do something more – they anthropomorphise; when humans see patterns like faces in clouds or thunderstorms, they will see it as intentionally created. Guthrie does not claim that humans see intentional action everywhere, but does hold that in situations where uncertainty and stakes are high,

[25] S. Gallagher, D. Zahavi, *The Phenomenological Mind*..., p. 83.

[26] This remark by Gallagher is quite remarkable since few theorists in social cognition have combined the theory-theory and the simulation theory. Usually the two theories are contra posted.

[27] D.D. Hutto, *The Narrative Practice Hypothesis: Origins and Applications of Folk Psychology* [in:] *Narrative and Understanding Persons*, D.D. Hutto (ed.), Cambridge 2007, p. 46.

[28] *Ibidem*.

they usually will. According to Guthrie, this tendency results from our evolutionary history. For our ancestors, it was much safer to attribute most patterns to intentional actions because not doing so could result in a failure to note a predator or potential enemy. Guthrie adds that all of this usually remains unconscious.[29]

According to Justin Barrett, religious cognition results from hyperactivity of the "agency detection device" (ADD). Because it is hyperactive, the ADD is prone to find agents even on very modest evidence of their presence, and the detected agents are sometimes believed to be supernatural. Humans constantly scan their environments for the presence of other agents, and ambiguous evidence, like rustling leaves or wispy forms, will usually be interpreted as stemming from the behaviour of an agent. Barrett argues that this process may contribute to the formation of religious concepts in two ways. First, ADD can identify an ambiguous thing itself as an intentional agent. Examples are interpreting fog or clouds as ghosts or spirits. Second, ADD can interpret ambiguous evidence (noises, natural phenomena) as resulting from agency without finding a physical, visible agent responsible for it. The ADD may then conclude that the observed phenomena are caused by an invisible agent. Barrett uses similar evolutionary foundations to Guthrie; claiming that it was safer for our ancestors to detect too many agents than too few, because detecting one predator too few could result in death, whereas detecting too many predators would not. Like Guthrie, Barrett does not claim that this whole process is always conscious.[30]

Jesse Bering developed the most explicit social account of religious cognition. He explicitly connects religious cognition to the theory of mind (ToM), which is the cognitive system responsible for human social cognition. Bering writes that,

> The presence of an existential theory of mind (EToM) suggests that individuals perceive some nondescript or culturally elaborated (e.g. God) psychological agency as having encoded communicative intentions in the form of life events, similar to a person encoding communicative intentions in deictic gestures.[31]

He suggests that the EToM is a special function of the ToM responsible for perceiving meaning in certain live events. Events that are perceived as meaningful are intuitively connected with intentionality since only minded beings are believed to be able to give meaning. Upon perceiving meaningful events where no apparent meaning giver is to be found, people will be inclined to infer to an ultimate meaning giver or God, claims Bering. He does not take a stance on whether this whole process takes place consciously or not.

Although simulation is not immediately ruled out, none of the three accounts suggest that beliefs about supernatural minds result from simulation processes. The accounts do fit well with a theory-theory approach. On all three accounts, beliefs about supernatural minds can be said to explain certain phenomena. In Guthrie's view, supernatural minds explain patterns in nature; in Barrett's, they explain allegedly agential phenomena; according to Bering, they explain the occurrence of

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[29] S. Guthrie, *Faces in the Clouds...*, pp. 39–61.

[30] J.L. Barrett, *op.cit.*, pp. 31–44.

[31] J. Bering, *The Existential Theory of Mind*, "Review of General Psychology" 2002, no. 6, pp. 3.

meaningful events. However, none of the theories make any mention of empirical theory testing and theory revision. This might be because Guthrie, Barrett and Bering are primarily interested in the roots of religious cognition and not in their further development. Obviously, religious beliefs move well beyond the beliefs Guthrie, Barrett and Bering discuss. No religion merely believes in gods that cause patterns, cause agential phenomena or invest meaning in nature. Nonetheless, perceptions of design, reports about supernatural interventions and experiences of profoundly meaningful events do play an important role in many religions. It is not unlikely that the root beliefs Guthrie, Barrett and Bering discuss set off a process of theory testing and revision similar to the one proposed by Carruthers and Gopnik.

4.2. Religious cognition as exceptional social cognition

Two influential cognitive theories hold that supernatural minds are very different from human minds. Pascal Boyer writes,

> [A]re [...] gods just like other people? Not really. There is one major difference, [...] we always assume that other people are agents with limited access to strategic information [...]. In interaction with supernatural agents, people presume that these agents have *full* access to strategic information.[32]

Boyer defines strategic information as "the subset of all the information currently available (to a particular agent, about a particular situation) which activates the mental systems that regulate social interaction."[33] Examples of strategic information are people's intentions or desires. It is strategic because it has a bearing on how to interact with somebody. Boyer notes that strategic information is much more important to humans than to any other species because humans rely on social interaction to a far greater extent. For our ancestors, who relied on social interaction to coordinate hunting and food gathering, strategic information was even a matter of life and death. Having limited access to other people's strategic information thus made humans vulnerable – and continues to do so. Gods, on the other hand, are not believed to have these limitations. For them, other minds are fully transparent. Boyer argues that believing in (a) god(s) with full access of this kind caused people to be more inclined to follow social rules. Especially if the god(s) are believed to be morally concerned and will punish or reward people in accordance with their obedience to social rules, groups that believe gods are watching will coordinate their activities better and will be more successful.[34] Similar views have been defended by Scott Atran,[35] Ara Norenzayan[36] and Todd Tremlin.[37]

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[32] P. Boyer, *op.cit.*, p. 178 (italics in original text).

[33] P. Boyer, *op.cit.*, p. 173.

[34] *Ibidem*, pp. 155–191.

[35] S. Atran, *In Gods We Trust*, Oxford 2002.

[36] A. Norenzayan, *op.cit.*

[37] T. Tremlin, *Minds and Gods: The Cognitive Foundations of Religion*, Oxford 2010.

We noted in Section 3.1 that Bering puts ToM at the root of both social and religious cognition. Tanya Luhrmann also focuses on ToM, but argues that it requires some modification for religious cognition. In normal situations, minds are believed to be strictly separated; people normally believe that no external thoughts can enter their own minds. According to Luhrmann, this changes in religious cognition. For religious cognition the ToM has to become "porous", meaning open for intrusion by another (supernatural) mind. According to this view, supernatural minds are able to intrude on people's minds, whereas ordinary human minds are not.[38] Emma Cohen argued for something similar when she discussed how in some religions spirits are believed to enter people's minds and influence their thoughts.[39]

Both these accounts do not fit well with simulation; arriving at beliefs about supernatural minds that differ (greatly) from human minds seems impossible by simulation, because using one's own mind will not lead to conclusions about (very) different minds. They also do not fit as well with the theory-theory as with the previous group of theories. It seems strange that people would settle on a mind with full access to strategic information or with the ability to intrude other minds as a conclusion to explain some observed phenomena. They might conclude to supernatural minds of this sort on the basis of experiences, but even then it remains unclear what kind of experiences these would have to be. Both accounts fit better with enactivist theories of social cognition. Both Boyer's and Luhrmann's ways of conceiving religious cognition can be understood as incarnated in embodied practices. By definition, social norms always function within a community, and cannot be detached from the concrete social corporation they intend to give direction to. This was not only the case for our caveman ancestors; today, for people who believe that a god is watching them, this belief manifests itself in their concrete daily activities. Similarly, Luhrmann discusses the porosity of religious minds in the context of American evangelical churches. She describes how for evangelical Christians the belief that God can implant thoughts is not an abstract idea, but becomes concrete during prayer and religious services[40]. The importance of narrativity is less obvious in Boyer's and Luhrmann's theories. However, in many religious traditions beliefs about God's moralising nature form an important part of religious stories. Luhrmann also discusses the role of testimonies in evangelical churches in teaching believers how to discern thoughts implanted by God.

4.3. Toward a unified account

Cognitive science of religion has been criticised for giving too restricted a view of religious cognition that does not match what religious believers actually believe.[41]

[38] T.M. Luhrmann, *When God Talks Back...*

[39] E. Cohen, *The Mind Possessed: The Cognition of Spirit Possession in an Afro-Brazilian Religious Tradition*, Oxford 2007.

[40] T.M. Luhrmann, *When God Talks Back: Understanding the American Evangelical Relationship with God*, New York 2012.

[41] J. Jong, Ch. Kavanagh, A. Visala, *Born Idolaters: The Limits of the Philosophical Implications of the Cognitive Science of Religion*, "Neue Zeitschrift für Systematische Theologie und Religionsphilosophie" 2015, no. 57, pp. 244–266.

There have also been concerns that cognitive theories of religion neglected the importance of culture.[42] Enriching the theories with insights about social cognition shows how these problems can be overcome.

At first glance, the theories of Guthrie, Barrett and Bering bear little resemblance to how believers in the major world religions of today perceive their gods, though Barrett's theory does to some extent resemble animistic religions. By incorporating the theory-theory into the first group of cognitive theories, this difference can be bridged. The experiences that Guthrie, Barrett and Bering discuss can be considered as root experiences that first raise awareness of supernatural minds. Secondly, people form initial beliefs about these supernatural minds to explain their experiences. Thirdly, the initial beliefs are revised when the circumstances make it necessary. Since these circumstances will likely be different in different cultures, the revised beliefs will probably also be (very) different from culture to culture. Thus the three theories can accommodate cultural differences while retaining their cognitive focus.

Matters are somewhat different for the second group of theories we discussed. Incorporating enactivist theories of social cognition does not allow culture to be seen as something that is added to root experiences, because cultural embodied practices and cultural narratives play an indispensable part in the formation of religious beliefs. Without social corporation, belief in supernatural minds with full access to other minds will not emerge, and without prayers and religious services, neither will belief in a supernatural mind that can intrude human minds. A problem emerges; on this account, religious cognition depends on cultural practices and narratives (social cooperation while being watched by god for Boyer and religious services and prayer for Luhrmann), but the cultural practices and narratives themselves cannot be understood apart from religious beliefs. As a result, this account is circular, and the origins of religious beliefs remains a complete mystery.

This problem can be solved by combining the two groups of cognitive theories into one overarching framework. The first group can explain the root experiences that lie at the basis of religious cognition and explain how the initial beliefs can be revised when circumstances make this necessary. Over time, revisions of initial beliefs will result in cultural differences, and then cultural practices and narratives can influence religious cognition themselves. The first group can thus account for basic religious cognition, and the second group for advanced cultural religious cognition. Both are needed to give an adequate account of religious cognition.

[42] Emma Cohen, Jonathan Lanman, Harvey Whitehouse and Robert McCauley address this point as one of the common criticisms against the cognitive science of religion under the heading "The CSR is too narrow," but claim that taking regard of cultural variation falls beyond the scope of cognitive science of religion (E. Cohen, J.A Lanman, H. Whitehouse, R.N McCauley, *Common Criticisms of the Cognitive Science of Religion – Answered*, "Bulletin of the Council of Societies for the Study of Religion" 2008, vol. 37, no. 4, p. 114).

5. Conclusion

In this paper, I examined how cognitive theories of religion that propose a relationship between social and religious cognition can be enriched by insights from theories on social cognition. I argued that this is indeed the case. Cognitive theories that consider supernatural minds to be similar to human minds can be enriched with insights from the theory-theory. The resulting theory holds that people have certain root experiences that lie at the basis of initial religious beliefs. These initial beliefs act as a theory which can be revised when the circumstances require it. Cognitive theories that consider supernatural minds to be (very) different from human minds can be enriched with insights from enactivist theories of social cognition. Religious cognition is thus understood as embedded within embodied, cultural practices and cultural narratives.

I have also argued that both groups of theories need not be in conflict but can be combined. The first group then explains basic religious cognition by accounting for its root experiences and initial cultural development. The second group can explain advanced religious cognition when culture has moved beyond the point where it influences how religious beliefs are formed. The combination provides a richer and more accurate account, because it explains how religions can differ and it does justice to the importance of culture for religion.

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Why Atheism Is More Natural Than Religion

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Abstract

Cognitive science of religion (CSR) suggests the naturalness of religion. Religious beliefs are viewed as natural because they are intuitive and cognitively effortless. They are also inevitable and more obvious than atheism. In consequence, atheism is an unnatural phenomenon which requires special cultural and social support. However, this naturalness of religion hypothesis seems overestimated. Here we show that atheism is more natural than religion and religious beliefs in the cognitive sense because it meets the criteria appropriate for natural selection in the sense of ultimate explanation. Religion and religious beliefs require cultural inputs. Without cultural support, they seem unnatural.

Key words: cognitive science of religion, religious beliefs, naturalness, intuitiveness, theism, atheism, natural selection
Słowa kluczowe: religioznawstwo kognitywne, wierzenia religijne, naturalność, intuicyjność, teizm, ateizm, naturalna selekcja

Religion cannot be cognitively natural because it is biologically unnatural

The "cognitive theory of religion" was introduced by Stewart Guthrie in 1980.[1] Cognitive science of religion (CSR) assumes the immutability and homogeneity of cognitive mechanisms which are independent of cultural diversity.[2] CSR explains (but does

[1] A. Visala, *Ashgate Science and Religion: Naturalism, Theism and the Cognitive Study of Religion: Religion Explained?* Surrey 2011, p. 10; S. Guthrie, *A Cognitive Theory of Religion*, "Current Anthropology" 1980, vol. 21, no. 2, pp. 2–3.

[2] D. Leech, A. Visala, *Naturalistic Explanation for Religious Belief [and Comments and Reply]*, "Philosophy Compass" 2011, no. 6 (8), p. 554.

not interpret) religious beliefs, ideas, and behaviours, and looks for their cognitive roots.[3] CSR naturalises religion and religious beliefs.[4] Religious beliefs are interpreted as a natural phenomenon which is a result of cognitive biases.[5] Atheism does not have this natural cognitive support.[6] We are aware that the term "religion" and "religious beliefs" are the subject of debate and are not unequivocal. When we use these terms we mean an individual belief that there is another kind of reality, or at least another kind of phenomena which are evoked by these religious concepts. We do not identify these terms with theism. We refer to the beliefs which are possessed by an individual.

In this paper, the term "naturalness" in the light of CSR signifies that religious beliefs are a cognitively effortless and intuitive phenomenon. Religious beliefs are more effortless than atheism, which "requires some hard cognitive work."[7] Religious beliefs are produced by natural cognitive intuitions (HADD, for instance), and are cognitively effortless. Cognitive easiness is a consequence of the assumption that religious beliefs are produced by intuitive biases. In this paper we do not accept this point of view. Atheism is less intuitive than religious culture, but it seems a natural starting point in a pre-religious environment. Alleged theistic inclinations which are associated with natural cognition cannot be a result of cognition, but instead are a result of its cultural environment. These cultural inputs result in religious interpretations of the world becoming easier and more natural than atheistic explanations. However, this attractiveness of religion and religious beliefs seems associated with their psychological and existential usefulness rather than with the activity of natural cognitive mechanisms, which can support both religious and atheistic concepts.

We reject the above definition of the naturalness of religion as an intuitive and cognitively effortless phenomenon. We also refer to the third meaning of naturalness: something evolved by natural selection. CSR usually rejects this sense of naturalness in regard to religious beliefs, and interprets religion as an evolutionary by-product. We wish to say that naturalness understood as intuitiveness in general – and not only in religious matters – requires this third kind of evolutionary naturalness. We assume that evolutionary continuity over a long time makes a phenomenon more intuitive than other phenomena which are not supported by evolution. We mean intuitiveness as a result of an adaptation when some trait is evolved by natural selection for the purpose of some function.

Atheism seems natural at the level of biological selection. It may also be natural at the level of cultural group and individual selection, where there are no religious inputs. Religion and religious beliefs work on the level of cultural group selection,

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[3] J.E. Benson, *The "New Cognitive Science of Religion" and Religious Pluralism*, "Dialog: A Journal of Theology" 2007, vol. 46, no. 4, p. 382; S. Atran, *In Gods We Trust: The Evolutionary Landscape of Religion*, New York–Oxford, p. 173.

[4] E.T. Lawson, *Towards a Cognitive Science of Religion*, "Numen" 2000, vol. 47, no. 3 (Religions in the Disenchanted World), p. 344.

[5] A. Visala, *op.cit*., p. 55.

[6] A. Norenzayan, W.M. Gervais, *The Origins of Religious Disbelief*, "Trends in Cognitive Sciences" 2013, vol. 17, no. 1, p. 20.

[7] *Ibidem*.

and may often be understood as an adaptation, but in the sense of cultural, not natural, selection. Religion and religious beliefs can give an advantage for one religious individual over a non-religious individual in the natural selection sense too. In this case, when we refer to a difference between proximate and ultimate explanation, religious beliefs are natural in the proximate but not in the ultimate sense. In the Holocene era, benefits appropriate for an acceptance of religious beliefs connect cultural group selection with natural evolution when a religious group works better than a secular one.

In secular societies, religion lost its selective and adaptive advantage at the level of group selection. We can echo Ara Norenzayan's comment that "Big Gods were replaced by Big Governments."[8] Religious beliefs work on the level of individual selection. Religion and religious beliefs are psychologically important for the believer in secular societies too, and their psychological usefulness is more important than the desire for religious experience and moral support. Is this psychological advantage of religion and religious beliefs a kind of cultural or a kind of biological evolution? It may be interpreted in this case as an adaptation evolved by natural individual selection. This correlation is accidental and contingent and does not work at the level of natural group selection. Consequently, religion and religious beliefs may be an adaptation at the level of cultural group selection and natural individual selection, but not at the level of natural group selection. Naturalness of religion and religious beliefs at the level of the individual, in a biological sense, also requires prior cultural group selection. This is why the third meaning of naturalness is needed to show that religion and religious beliefs cannot be natural in the first and the second sense (intuitively and cognitively effortless), because they did not evolve by natural selection as the general human feature.

The prior biological intuitiveness of nonbelief in the Pleistocene era was replaced by religious cultural inputs in the Holocene. This conventional and contingent advantage and popularity of religious beliefs and religion does not imply their intuitiveness in a cognitive sense. The power of religion and religious beliefs was the result of their psychological usefulness for individual and political as well as social and economic benefits for the group – benefits in the sense of parochial altruism. Religion and religious beliefs play a role for love and trust within the group, and for hate and conflicts with those outside the group.[9] However, this correlation is not stable and does not support the cognitive naturalness of religion hypothesis claimed by CSR. We would like to show that the usefulness and popularity of religious beliefs is, the result of their psychological and social utility, rather than of natural theistic or religious inclinations of human cognition. Cognition in a secular environment supports a development of secular, not religious ideas. Economic equality and existential security cause the decline of religion. The agricultural revolution caused the rise of social hierarchy and inequality. Religions and religious beliefs also evolved in the Holocene. It seems that they were correlated with inequality and social misery. It may be that the lack of

[8] *Ibidem*, p. 171.

[9] H. Rusch, *The Evolutionary Interplay of Intergroup Conflict and Altruism in Humans: a Review of Parochial Altruism Theory and Prospects for Its Extension*, "Proceedings of the Royal Society of London B: Biological Sciences" 2014, vol. 281, p. 1.

religious beliefs in the Pleistocene, an era in which small human groups were equal, explains the real origin of religious beliefs not connected with natural cognition.

Natural selection and information processes exclude the theory of the cognitive naturalness of religion.[10] In the pre-religious environment in the Pleistocene, religious beliefs are not biologically important. Religious beliefs are not a result of stimuli received from the natural environment and, consequently, they cannot be intuitive and cognitively effortless. Natural selection favours features which increase the chances for group and individual survival.[11] At the lower level of competition, natural selection probably favours defectors. At the higher level of competition, natural selection probably favours cooperators.[12] The transition from foraging to farming radically changed the natural human environment and required a new behavioural tool. Religion and religious beliefs were able to emerge as these tools under the selective pressure. But the natural history of religion and religious beliefs considered in terms of biological evolution seems too short a period of time to permit the interpretation of religion as a phenomenon which is useful in the sense of natural selection, except in the restricted sense of psychological usefulness to the individual mentioned above.

In particular conditions, religion and religious beliefs could have strengthened cooperation between unrelated individuals especially for the purposes of inter-group conflicts. Religious beliefs are not unique to one group, and are a necessary cultural tool which favours cooperation. This important question of the role of religion and religious beliefs for aggression and cooperation[13] is not the subject matter of this paper, but this context shows what facets of human life are the appropriate place for the application of religion, and may show religion's real origin to be not in natural cognition, but in the social and economical requirements of the Holocene.

The history of religious beliefs spans a very short period in human history. CSR focuses on recent human history in the Holocene and proclaims the cognitive naturalness of religion and religious beliefs on the basis of their popularity. We should separate the geographical and historical approaches. The geographical approach supports the naturalness of religion hypothesis because different people in different cultures share similar religious beliefs and, statistically, religious beliefs dominate atheistic and secular ideas. The long historical approach, at least since the late Pleistocene, rather supports the naturalness of atheism or unbelief, showing that religious beliefs emerged in the recent period of the history of humanity. CSR usually takes this geographical approach and proximate perspective. Consequently, atheism is understood as an unnatural phenomenon which requires special effort because it is incompatible with natural intuitions and their accompanying religious beliefs. Atheism is only the

[10] G. Załucki, W. Zawadzki, *Układ nerwowy i narządy zmysłów* [Nervous System and Sensory Organs] [in:] *Fizjologia zwierząt* [Animal Physiology], T. Krzymowski, J. Przała (eds.), Warszawa 2005, p. 18.

[11] J. Diamond, *Trzeci szympans* [The Third Chimpanzee], transl. J. Weiner, Warszawa 1998.

[12] M.A. Nowak, *Five Rules for the Evolution of Cooperation*, "Science" 2006, December, vol. 314, p. 1561.

[13] See: A. Norenzayan, *Big Gods: How Religion Transformed Cooperation and Conflict*, Princeton 2013.

secondary approach, which must overcome natural intuitions[14]. Atheism is bound to be charmed away.[15]

Armin W. Geertz and Gudmundur Ingi Markússon show that atheism may in some conditions be more natural than religion and religious beliefs. Religious beliefs are a counterintuitive phenomenon which is sometimes rejected by an individual who uses only intuitive knowledge.[16] Benson Saler and Charles A. Ziegler suggest that atheism is sometimes natural and religion and religious beliefs are a cultural phenomenon.[17] Norenzayan, Will M. Gervais and Scott Atran suggest an equivalent cognitive and cultural basis for theism and atheism.[18] Norenzayan and Gervais suggest that humans have "intuitive mental representation of supernatural factors", and that atheism is contrary to the intuitive ability to accept the concepts of supernatural beings.[19] We do not share their conclusion, because religious beliefs are a more intuitive phenomenon only under the presence of cultural inputs. The correlation between HADD (agency detection), religious beliefs, and the concepts of supernatural beings is relevant only among religious people, but it is not a stable correlation. It is not present among unbelievers.[20] Atheism is more intuitive and cognitively natural in the non-religious environment.[21]

In the Pleistocene, the natural environment is a pre-religious world. Despite the same cognitive abilities, human ancestors did not create spontaneously religious beliefs, which instead probably emerged by the pressure of social changes. The origin of religion and religious beliefs was probably associated more with their practical implications (in-group trust and love, inter-group hate, conflicts and aggression) than with spontaneous cognitive activity. We suggest that this pragmatic context for the application of religion and religious beliefs is an argument for their compatibility with the purposes of natural selection (the third meaning of naturalness). However, we cannot claim that religion and religious beliefs evolved by natural selection, because it was not always needed for all and did not always guarantee survival. We accept only the level of natural individual selection according to which religion and religious beliefs can contingently be an adaptation for an individual through its

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[14] J.L. Barrett, *Why Would Anyone Believe in God? Cognitive Science of Religion Series*, Walnut Creek, Calif. and Oxford 2004; A. Norenzayan, W.M. Gervais, *op.cit.*, p. 20; A.W. Geertz, G.I. Markússon, *Religion Is Natural, Atheism Is not: On why Everybody Is Both Right and Wrong*, "Religion" 2010, vol. 40, p. 157; B. Saler, C.A. Ziegler, *Atheism and the Apotheosis of Agency*, "Temenos" 2006, vol. 42, no. 2, pp. 16–22.

[15] C.L. Caldwell-Harris, *Understanding Atheism/Non-belief as an expected Individual-Differences Variable*, "Religion, Brain and Behavior" 2012, vol. 2 (1); J. Morgan, *Untangling false Assumptions regarding Atheism and Health*, "Zygon" 2013, vol. 48, no. 1.

[16] A.W. Geertz, G.I. Markússon, *op.cit.*

[17] B. Saler, C.A. Ziegler, *op.cit.*

[18] A. Norenzayan, W.M. Gervais, *op.cit.*, p. 20; S. Atran, *op.cit.*, p. 57.

[19] *Ibidem*, pp. 20, 23.

[20] M. van Elk et al., *Priming of supernatural agent concepts and agency detection*, "Religion, Brain & Behavior" 2014, pp. 25–26.

[21] W.M. Gervais, A.K. Willard, A. Norenzayan, J. Henrich, *The Cultural Transmission of Faith. Why innate intuitions are necessary, but insufficient, to explain religious belief*, "Religion" 2011, September, vol. 41, no. 3, p. 404; J. Morgan, *op.cit.*, p. 18; S. Atran, *op.cit*., p. 11.

psychological usefulness. This third meaning of naturalness shows that religion and religious beliefs are not natural in a cognitive sense because they did not evolve by natural group selection.

Natural cognition and cultural environment

CSR usually analyses religious beliefs which exist in a particular cultural environment.[22] It tries to take into account the impact of cultural inputs on cognitive mechanisms.[23] The cognitive naturalness of religion and religious beliefs understood as the cognitively effortless nature of religious beliefs was developed by a long cultural history of religious systems. This is why "mind-blind atheism" refers not only to sophisticated concepts of God,[24] but also to any religious beliefs in every pre-religious environment. The human mind is blind to theism in pre-religious conditions. The "mind-blind atheism" hypothesis describes cognitive capacities under a religious culture and does not say anything about pre-religious, natural conditions of human cognition. "Mind-blind atheism" states that a person does not have theistic and religious intuitions, positing that nobody has them. Instead, we should say that theistic and religious inclinations are shaped by the religious environment and do not have a theistic nature because they need cultural inputs which decide cognitive preferences. This is why Norenzayan and Gervais are probably wrong when they write that "some people become atheists also because they turn against the intuitive biases that make some supernatural concepts intuitive."[25] The atheist does not turn against his intuitions. He has the same intuitive biases which are commonly shared by atheists and theists, such as intuitive physics, biology, psychology, and ontology. The atheist does not interpret the world in a religious, theistic, manner, and does not give his intuitions religious content. The difference lies in the way of interpreting the natural and human world which is determined by cultural, educational, and social inputs. Cultural learning is the most important factor, because lack of religion can exclude acquisition and development of religion.[26] Learning also plays a crucial role in many other fields which refer to human behavioural patterns and morality.[27]

"Apatheism" is associated with high and secure standards of life and is developed in the richest and the most secure countries.[28] However, the standard of life

[22] A. Norenzayan, W.M. Gervais, *op.cit.*, pp. 20–21.

[23] W.M. Gervais, A.K. Willard, A. Norenzayan, J. Henrich, *op.cit*., pp. 390, 405; B. Saler, C.A. Ziegler, *Atheism and the Apotheosis of Agency*, "Temenos" 2006, vol. 42, no. 2, p. 35; A.W. Geertz, *Too much Mind and not enough Brain, Body and Culture: On what needs to be done in the Cognitive Science of Religion*, "Historia Religionum" 2010, no. 2, p. 37; A.W. Geertz, *Religious Narrative, Cognition and Culture: Approaches and Definitions* [in:] A.W. Geertz, J. Sinding (eds.), *Religious Narrative, Cognition and Culture: Image and Word in the Mind of Narrative*, Sheffield Oakvill 2011.

[24] A. Norenzayan, W.M. Gervais, *op.cit*., p. 21.

[25] *Ibidem*, p. 23.

[26] *Ibidem*.

[27] F. Cushman, *The role of learning in punishment, prosociality, and human uniqueness* [in:] K. Sterelny, R. Joyce, B. Calcott, B. Fraser (eds.), *Cooperation and its Evolution*, Cambridge, MA 2013.

[28] A. Norenzayan, W.M. Gervais, *op.cit*., pp. 21–22.

was probably higher before the Agricultural Revolution, and was associated with the above-mentioned equal and stable nature of small social groups. The standard of life rose again in recent decades only in a small part of the world and was associated with the rise of atheism. This negative correlation is an argument for the cognitive naturalness of atheism, which is the natural point of view under a good standard of life. Here we refer to natural selection. Religion and religious beliefs cannot be understood as evolved by natural group selection, because they were not used to improve the standard of life and the probability of survival. However, they could be motivated by some natural tendencies to survival when humanity looked for cultural tools which enabled cooperation between unrelated individuals for the purpose of intergroup conflicts. A low standard of life is often correlated with an increasing level of religiosity. In this particular sense religion and religious beliefs can be understood as a natural approach.

We should go beyond the proximate explanation of origin and transmission of religious beliefs, which refers only to cognitive mechanisms. Rather, we should look for the ultimate factors associated with the natural and cultural adaptive function of religion and religious beliefs.[29] However, we have excluded a direct correlation between natural selective pressure and religious beliefs and underlined the cultural and social usefulness of religious beliefs. Of course, in some sense this cultural and social application of religion and religious beliefs is mediated by primary natural biological human interests. Inter-group conflicts are a feature of natural selection because they are used to win territories, food and mates. Religion and religious beliefs may foster conflicts. In this sense, religious beliefs are a cultural tool which is beneficial for natural group and individual selection. Theoretically, religious idols can strengthen the power of moral rules more than the authority of living persons. They can play the role of a managing leader of the group.[30] Finally, as Norenzayan claims, "watched people are nice people."[31]

We can find a similar explanatory difficulty in moral and ethical matters when looking for selfish or altruistic human nature in terms of biological evolution.[32] In some sense, the alleged naturalness of religious beliefs or unbelief leaves an explanatory gap. They are two sides of the same biological human orientation to look for tools which increase the biological chances for survival. Just as aggression is sometimes more useful than altruism, theism or religiosity is sometimes more useful than atheism. However, this latter dichotomy is more associated with education and formation of ideology than with the dichotomy between aggression and altruism which work in the natural animal world. The altruistic or selfish approach could develop spontaneously in the framework of natural ecological pressure. Religious beliefs require cultural inputs, and the connection of religious beliefs with existential pros and cons is less important and stable, and more superficial, random and contingent than

[29] B.Crespi, B. Summers, *Inclusive fitness theory for the evolution of religion*, "Animal Behaviour" 2014, no. XXX, p. 2.

[30] *Ibidem*, pp. 5–6.

[31] A. Norenzayan, *op.cit.*, p. 19.

[32] K. Szocik, *Roots of self-domestication*, "Science" 2014, November, vol. 346, issue 6213, p. 1067.

altruistic and selfish behavioural patterns. This is why we can speak about the naturalness of religion only with rigorous reference to cultural inputs.

Naturalistic cognitive anthropology explains religion and religious beliefs by looking for the material causes of mental representations.[33] The cognitive processes and mechanisms used by religious beliefs are common to all kinds of beliefs.[34] Therefore we speak in terms of the universality of basic religious beliefs rooted in the universality of the cognitive system. Of course, basic beliefs are modified in particular cultures.[35] Religious beliefs, like other kinds of beliefs, can be explained causally.[36] However, Aku Visala suggests going beyond this narrow naturalistic and reductive approach to a wider explanatory perspective.[37] This cognitive and neuronal background of religious beliefs implies the fourth meaning of the naturalness of religion – the non-supernatural. This meaning is obvious, and we do not refer to it. We focus only on the above-mentioned intuitiveness (the first meaning of naturalness), the cognitively effortless nature of religion and religious beliefs (the second meaning), and an assumption of something evolved by natural selection (the third meaning). However, this fourth meaning of naturalness does not imply the first two meanings of naturalness of religion and religious beliefs. Science is also non-supernatural, but it is not intuitive and cognitively effortless.[38]

Pre-religious human ancestors

Religious beliefs are commonly shared in the world, despite their lack of reference to real events and phenomena.[39] The HADD (Hypersensitive Agency Detection Device) hypothesis suggests that human beings have a tendency to look for, to see, and to interpret reality in terms of an agent and an agency.[40] HADD, together with "Theory of Mind" (ToM), is the natural cognitive background for the production and transmission of religious beliefs.[41] HADD theoretically generates supernatural representations

[33] S. Atran, *op.cit.*, p. 10

[34] J. Sørensen, *Religion in Mind: A Review Article of the Cognitive Science of Religion*, "Numen" 2005, vol. 52, no. 4, p. 469.

[35] J.L. Barrett, *Cognitive Science of Religion: Looking Back, Looking Forward*, "Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion" 2011, 50 (2), p. 231.

[36] A. Visala, *Ashgate Science and Religion...*, p. 22.

[37] A.Visala, *Explaining Religion at Different Levels: from Fundamentalism to Pluralism* [in:] *The Roots of Religion. Exploring the Cognitive Science of Religion*, R. Trigg, J.L. Barrett (eds.), Farnham 2014, pp. 56, 65.

[38] R.N. McCauley, *Why Religion is Natural and Science Is Not*, Oxford 2011.

[39] S. Fondevila, M. Martin-Loeches, *Cognitive Mechanisms for the Evolution of Religious Thought*, "Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences" 2013, 1299, p. 84.

[40] J.L. Barrett, *Why Would Anyone Believe in God? Cognitive Science of Religion Series*, Walnut Creek, Calif. and Oxford 2004.

[41] P. Boyer, *Religion Explained. The Evolutionary Origins of Religious Thought*, New York 2001, p. 71; D. Leech, A. Visala, *Naturalistic Explanation for Religious Belief [and Comments and Reply]*, "Philosophy Compass" 2011, vol. 6 (8), pp. 554–555.

of natural causes.[42] ToM equips religious figures in improved human properties connected to a more complete access to strategically important information.[43]

Boyer explains the origin of HADD by an evolutionary reference to predator and prey. Care about life and the biological continuation of the organism is a stable biological feature.[44] However, Boyer's point of view overestimates human rational abilities. How did human ancestors in the Pleistocene create religious beliefs? Like all animal species, humans are ruled by biological needs. In the pre-religious period the lives of our human ancestors were more similar to the lives of other primates than to those of the Homo sapiens sapiens living today. It seems impossible that human ancestors in the Pleistocene could naturally, in an intuitive and cognitively effortless way, create religious beliefs by HADD and other cognitive abilities. Religious beliefs are not natural and evident. This tendency to create them is contrary to the biological nature of humans, which is determined more by emotions, instincts and biological intuitions than by evolutionarily costly rational processes.[45] Religious beliefs are not natural and intuitive merely in virtue of this biological background. This religious ability does not seem to be adaptive and useful. Religious beliefs may be useful for large groups to include and consolidate unrelated individuals. With reference to kin selection and direct reciprocity – which has worked throughout almost all human history – every natural device for the creation of religious beliefs is useless. Mutual trust is based on kinship and "tit-for-tat" sociality, not on strange and unnatural beliefs.

The MCI hypothesis (Minimal Counterintuitiveness) tries to explain the impact of religious beliefs on the human mind.[46] Objects and phenomena incompatible with intuitions provoke more human attention than intuitive phenomena.[47] A person uses intuitive physics, biology, and psychology.[48] Religious beliefs flout intuitive ontological categories.[49] However, there are plenty of intuitive beliefs and concepts which are more successful than counterintuitive religious beliefs – such as truth, goodness, justice, causality, or purposefulness, which are intuitively commonly shared. In contrast, religious beliefs could not have survived without institutional support and cultural transmission. In this context, their compatibility with intuitiveness does not matter.[50] The dogmas of the Holy Trinity or the divine nature of Jesus could not have survived without long and hard institutional support, despite their counterintuitive-

[42] B. Saler, C.A. Ziegler, *op.cit.*, pp. 18–19.

[43] P. Boyer, *Religion Explained. The Evolutionary Origins of Religious Thought*, New York 2001, p. 156; S. Atran, *op.cit.*, p. 59.

[44] P. Boyer, *Religion Explained. The Evolutionary Origins of Religious Thought*, p. 145.

[45] J. Haidt, *The Emotional Dog and Its Rational Tail: A Social Intuitionist Approach to Moral Judgment*, "Psychological Review" 2001, vol. 108, no. 4.

[46] P. Boyer, *The Naturalness of Religious Ideas: A Cognitive Theory of Religion*. Berkeley–London 1994; S. Atran, *op.cit.*, pp. 96–97, 106–107; J.L. Barrett, *Cognitive Science of Religion: What is it and why is it?*, "Religion Compass" 2007, vol. 1/6, p. 771.

[47] S. Fondevila, M. Martin-Loeches, *op.cit.*, pp. 85–86.

[48] L. Näreaho, *The Cognitive Science of Religion: Philosophical Observations*, "Religious Studies" 2008, March, vol. 44, no. 1, p. 84.

[49] D. Leech, A. Visala, *Naturalistic Explanation for Religious Belief [and Comments and Reply]*, "Philosophy Compass" 2011, vol. 6 (8), p. 554.

[50] W.M. Gervais, A.K. Willard, A. Norenzayan, J. Henrich, *op.cit*., p. 396.

ness. Also children require educational training, which in religious families prepares them for religious initiations.

How do non-human animals react to counterintuitive phenomena? Are there useful traits in terms of natural selection? What cognitive strategy could be better for survival: either remembering better intuitively (part of the natural world) or disregarding counterintuitively things and phenomena (they really do not exist)? We can assume that humans are an exceptional animal because of their large brain size and their ability to produce religion, philosophy or literature. However, we should not overestimate the significance of religion. Mental cognition and imagination are natural human abilities. Their religious, philosophical or literary contents are a secondary cultural matter and do not say anything about the naturalness of religion, philosophy or literature.

According to Boyer, a minimal counterintuitiveness of religious beliefs is a sufficient condition for their propagation.[51] Daniel Dennett suggests that religious beliefs need a high level of counterintuitiveness and paradoxicality, which protect them against critique. Paradox provides coherence for elements which may be truly copied and cannot be paraphrased.[52] Counterintuitive ideas have a mnemonic advantage over intuitive ones.[53] Boyer claims that the most popular religious ideas have to be compatible with mental predispositions.[54] In this sense, they are interpreted as a natural result of cognition which works with intuitive physics, biology, and psychology.[55] The cognitively effortless ability to accept counterintuitive contents appears to be an anti-evolutionary feature, and would create a great fissure with the natural approach appropriate for non-human animals and humans. A feature which is unnatural in the biological sense cannot be natural in a cognitive manner (consider from before: the naturalness in the first and the second meaning requires the third meaning of naturalness).

Agency detection device and naturalistic approach

If CSR is right, atheism is cognitively unnatural.[56] According to Barrett, a naturalistic explanation of unidentified phenomena is contrary to HADD. Atran claims that HADD can explain peculiar phenomena.[57] Naturalism requires education, in contrast

[51] E.T. Lawson, *op.cit*., p. 345.

[52] D.C. Dennett, *Odczarowanie. Religia jako zjawisko naturalne* [Breaking the Spell. Religion as a natural phenomenon]. transl. B. Stanosz, Warszawa 2008, pp. 271–272; A.W. Geertz, *How Not to Do the Cognitive Science of Religion Today*, "Method and Theory in the Study of Religion" 2008, vol. 20; G.R. Peterson, *Why the New Atheism shouldn't be (completely) dismissed*, "Zygon" 2007, December, vol. 42, no. 4, p. 805.

[53] E.T. Lawson, *op.cit.*, p. 346.

[54] P. Boyer, *Religion Explained...*, p. 50

[55] A. Visala, *Ashgate Science and Religion: Naturalism, Theism and the Cognitive Study of Religion: Religion Explained?*, Farnham 2011, pp. 38–39

[56] J. Jong, *Explaining Religion (Away?). Theism and the Cognitive Science of Religion*, Sophia 2013.

[57] S. Atran, *op.cit.*, p. 78

to the easy and intuitive theistic explanation warranted by HADD.[58] Consequently, Barrett assumes the self-evidence of theism. He interprets CSR as a discipline which strengthens the theistic approach. Barrett and Ian M. Church suggest that the false nature of theistic beliefs which are based on natural cognition would undermine the effectiveness and credibility of human cognition, which in this case would create false outputs.[59] As we showed above, it seems that in the pre-religious environment atheism is a more adaptive approach for a biological organism which is predisposed to natural explanations, natural events and natural phenomena. Human beings have cognitive access only to natural things. This access is based on sensation and perception. HADD may look for other organic motivations rather than relying upon religious beliefs that are brought in by the culture. HADD, understood as a natural cognitive device which automatically generates religious beliefs, sounds like a biological aberration. Why look for a God/gods instead of for food, mates and predators?

An atheist does not create and adapt religious beliefs, despite having the same cognitive mechanisms (HADD, ToM) as a believer. If someone does not accept religion, he nevertheless knows it and its social importance. Cognitive mechanisms do not lead to theistic interpretations in the case of anxiety. Cultural representations of religious figures as beings which are particularly engaged in individual human life may cause reference to them when human beings do not feel existentially secure. Not all humans share the religious interpretations of uncertain and unexplained phenomena. Humans sometimes interpret the same things and events in different manners. The basis for these explanatory variations is different cultural factors, which provide either religious or secular contents.

Conclusions

Within CSR, religion is understood as a phenomenon which refers to various cognitive mechanisms. Religion and religious beliefs are natural in the sense of non-supernatural phenomena. Another basic meaning of their naturalness which is used in CSR seems more troublesome. The first and second meaning of the naturalness of religion assume that religion and religious beliefs are intuitive and cognitively effortless. Consequently, they are understood as phenomena which are more evident than atheism. Some parts of religion and some religious beliefs could perhaps be interpreted as natural in this cognitive sense. Others require strong cognitive effort and therefore, as evolutionarily costly, are rather unnatural. Referring to HADD is the correct approach under the culture in which religious inputs exist. Without the cultural inputs, HADD probably cannot produce religious beliefs.

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[58] J.L. Barrett, *The relative unnaturalness of atheism: On why Geertz and Markússon are both right and wrong*, "Religion" 2010, vol. 40, p. 170.

[59] J.L. Barrett, I.M. Church, *Should CSR Give Atheists Epistemic Assurance? On Beer-Goggles, BFFs, and Barrett & Church, Skepticism regarding Religious Beliefs*, "The Monist" 2013, vol. 96, no. 3, pp. 321–322.

We are trying to demonstrate the correctness of our critique of the cognitive naturalness of religion hypothesis by reference to the third meaning of naturalness – which is evolution by natural selection. In our approach the intuitive trait becomes cognitively intuitive by its biological naturalness. As we showed, religion and religious beliefs do not have this kind of naturalness at the level of natural group selection. The potential correlation between religion, religious beliefs and natural individual selection is not sufficient. Moral patterns such as aggression, empathy, and altruism became intuitive because they were natural behavioural strategies with a very long evolutionary history. They are deeply rooted in human biology. Analogously, religious beliefs could become intuitive when they were biologically natural. However, we know that religious beliefs did not meet with intensive selective pressure. From elsewhere we know that religion and religious beliefs are not natural in the biological sense, and consequently they cannot be natural in the cognitive sense. Natural cognitive processes are blind and can be fulfilled by religious or secular contents.

Perhaps, however, we should not make a distinction between human predispositions and patterns along atheistic and theistic or religious lines. It seems better to interpret these two approaches as two sides of one human life-strategy, which sometimes requires religious beliefs and sometimes secular and atheistic ideas.

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The Possible Significance of Sensorimotor Synchronisation in Modern Postural Yoga Practice

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Abstract

The aim of the paper is to discuss the possible role of sensorimotor synchronisation in Modern Postural Yoga (MPY) *āsana* ritual. The hypothesis is that such synchronisation contributes to the subjective efficacy of MPY practice and facilitates the transmission of doctrinal concepts related to it.

Grounding the discussion in the enactive paradigm, the author describes the phenomenon of sensorimotor synchronisation and the mechanisms responsible for its emergence. The ritual character of MPY *āsana* practice is then accounted for, based on McCauley and Lawson's theory of ritual competence. A discussion of forms of synchronisation occurring during *āsana* ritual follows, with a special focus on Iyengar Yoga. The author then suggests the possible influence of such synchronisation on the perceived effectiveness of the practice and on the acceptance of certain religio-philosophical notions.

Keywords: Cognitive Science of Religion, enactivism, social cognition, sensorimotor synchronisation, sensorimotor entrainment, ritual competence, Modern Postural Yoga
Słowa kluczowe: religioznawstwo kognitywne, enaktywizm, poznanie społeczne, synchronizacja sensomotoryczna, porwanie sensomotoryczne, kompetencja rytualna, nowoczesna joga posturalna

Introduction

The term "Modern Yoga" (MY) has gained relevance within the study of religions in recent years. It denotes an array of systems which began to develop in colonial India under Euro-American influence.[1] Many of these systems have been successfully implemented globally, with English serving as the lingua franca enabling their transmission. As a result, MY strands have become an important part of the contemporary religious landscape.

[1] E. De Michelis, *A History of Modern Yoga: Patañjali and Western Esotericism*, London 2004.

Modern Postural Yoga (MPY), as a conglomerate of systems aimed at maintaining health and agility, occupies an especially important place within MY. Fitting well into the global wellness movement,[2] MPY holds a special appeal for thousands of people, who look for alternative ways to improve their fitness, reduce stress and relieve ailments. Its techniques often serve as exercise routines, whose alleged ancient origin may contribute to their perceived legitimacy. But MPY strands offer more than just exercise routines. They are systems combining a 20th-century take on *haṭha yoga* (influenced by the import of European physical culture) with religio-philosophical underpinnings adopted liberally from *Sāṃkhya-Yoga* and *Vedānta*.[3] For a scholar of religions, MPY strands are systems of eclectic ritual practices combined with equally eclectic doctrinal notions, and as such they demand close attention.

There are many factors to consider during a comprehensive study of MPY. The historical influences on its development have already received substantial attention.[4] As yet, no in-depth examination of its doctrines has been made. The present paper focuses on the ritual aspect of MPY, namely on *āsana* practice. It draws attention to certain effects of this practice and attempts to interpret them by applying the concepts adopted from neurocognitive science. The aim of the paper is to show how MPY practice creates conditions for the emergence of *sensorimotor synchronisation*. The hypothesis is that synchronisation achieved during MPY ritual contributes to the subjective efficacy of this ritual and may facilitate the popularisation of MPY as well as contribute to a better assimilation of doctrinal concepts related to it.

Once the hypothesis has been presented, some reservations must be made. The paper does not aspire to venture into the realm of neuroscience, and when synchronisation is mentioned, only its behavioural, and not neural, correlates are discussed. Moreover, the paper does not summarise any experimental research pertaining to the subject, nor does it propose a particular design for future research. It is an attempt made by a scholar of religion to draw attention to a possibly interesting area of interdisciplinary study. Its objective is to encourage future research projects, which would make it possible to verify the proposed hypothesis. For the time being, the author's aim is to prove that there are grounds for formulating this hypothesis, and that it is a worthwhile pursuit.

Embodiment, enactment and social cognition

This discussion is situated within the Cognitive Science of Religions (CSR), to the extent that it focuses on the modes of cognition which may result in the formation and transmission of religious concepts and behaviour. However, it is quite distant from the interest of CSR in a strict sense, which makes use of the modular model of

[2] See S. Strauss, *Positioning Yoga. Balancing Acts across Cultures*, New York 2005, pp. 57–59.

[3] See M. Singleton, *Yoga Body. The Origins of Modern Postural Practice in India*, Oxford 2010; E. De Michelis, *op.cit.*

[4] See E. De Michelis, *op.cit.*; M. Singleton, *op.cit.*

the mind[5] to explain religious concepts as by-products of the interaction of innate, encapsulated and domain-specific mental modules. The departure point in the present context is the notion of *cognition as enactment*.[6] The *enactive* approach pictures knowledge acquisition not as modular computation, but as ceaseless perception and action resulting in the emergence of recurrent, meaningful sensorimotor patterns. In this approach, the key concern of a perceiving subject is not what concepts they may abstract from a given situation, but rather what *action* they may undertake in it. The subject's sensorimotor endowment forms a part of the *embodied mind*, a dynamic cognising mechanism tied closely to the environment.

Within this environment, other cognising bodies provide a distinct class of stimuli. Other humans also undertake actions, which the perceiver may enact by mapping them onto his or her own body. As such processes may be reciprocated, *social cognition* is possible, understood as simultaneous participation in the *same* cognitive process, or "an emergent product of jointly recruited and time-locked processes."[7] The fact that such co-cogitation occurs and that it contributes to the formation or culture was acknowledged by Émile Durkheim. According to Durkheim, the state of *collective effervescence*, achieved during stimulating social activity, facilitates the formation of collective representations and feelings.[8] As rituals provide perfect conditions for effervescence to occur, their relevance for the emergence of collective representations must be acknowledged. Considering the significance of social cognition within CSR provides a way to re-examine the role of ritual in the formation and transmission of religious concepts. It encourages looking at religions not merely as shared systems of beliefs, but as forms of embodied social interaction, within which ritually entrenched sensorimotor patterns and systems of beliefs intertwine.

Sensorimotor synchronisation and its significance

The concept of social cognition implies synchronicity of behaviour among group members. The actions within a group co-occur in response to one another, so the emergent joint action is something more than just the sum of individual actions. It is easy to observe that group activity often becomes synchronous, e.g. during mass protests and parades or among dancers. As various studies have shown, synchronicity at the level of behaviour (shared motor patterns or emotional states) is accompanied by resonance at the level of neural patterns correlated with this behaviour.[9] Gün Semin and John

[5] See J. Fodor, *The Modularity of Mind: An Essay on Faculty Psychology*, Cambridge 1983.

[6] F. Varela, E.T. Thompson, E. Rosch, *The Embodied Mind. Cognitive Science and Human Experience*, Cambridge 1993, p. 172 ff.

[7] G.R. Semin, J.T. Cacioppo, *Grounding Social Cognition. Synchronization, Coordination, and Co-Regulation* [in:] *Embodied Grounding. Social, Cognitive, Affective, and Neuroscientific Approaches*, G.R. Semin, E.R. Smith (eds.), Cambridge 2008, p. 121.

[8] See É. Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, trans. K.E. Fields, New York 1995.

[9] See e.g. T. Komendziński, *Ciała i umysłu poruszone razem. Sensomotoryczne podstawy (neuro) estetyki tańca* [in:] *Neuroestetyka muzyki*, M. Bogucki *et al.* (eds.), Poznań 2013, p. 143 ff.

Cacioppo define synchronisation as "jointly and simultaneously recruited sensory-motor processes... evident in a neurophysiological mirroring of the producer by the perceiver."[10] As a perceiver observes an action, neurophysiological processes occur which facilitate its performance. The actual performance may be inhibited (in such cases one may talk about their *simulation* without execution), but without the synchronous neural representation synchronous behaviour would not be possible. In other words, it is both "our brains and bodies [which] effectively form embodied interactions."[11]

The relationship between perception, neural representation and action is dynamic. As an observed motor act is simulated and executed, it becomes a new perceptual stimulus, which, upon its subsequent simulation and execution, provides yet another stimulus. In this way, perceptuo-motor resonance between interacting subjects occurs, resulting in a *perception-action loop*.[12] Such feedback reinforces synchronisation, as with each loop the participants' actions may become more and more attuned.

Stimuli enabling synchronisation may come from different modalities, not necessarily visual. A special class of stimuli is formed by rhythmical patterns, whose shared perception enables *sensorimotor entrainment*. This form of synchronisation (evident e.g. during dancing or performing music together) is based on the ability to both detect and generate rhythmical signals, and to integrate motor performance with them.[13] The source of rhythmical patterns may come from the external environment, or from other participants in the action (*social entrainment*). The stimulus may also come from the subject themselves – in that case one may speak of *self-entrainment*.

Synchronisation may occur in relation not only to motor activity, but also to somatosensory experience. Experimental data suggests that observing the emotional states of others triggers the same neural response as the actual experiencing of these states.[14] The same applies to the observation of tactile stimulation, or to witnessing pain being inflicted.[15] When appropriate neural mechanisms are activated, and simulation of a given somatosensory state occurs, actual experience of that state is facilitated. In this way, members of a group may potentially share feelings, experiencing what is referred to as empathy.

Synchronisation is a complex process, partially automatic and partially voluntary, engaging various neural structures and cognitive functions. The most basic mechanism involved is *mirroring*, i.e. automatic response of a particular group of visuomotor neurones to the observation of an action. These are the so-called *mirror neurones*, first discovered by Giacomo Rizzolatti in macaque monkeys.[16] They

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[10] G.R. Semin, J.T. Cacioppo, *op.cit.*, p. 123.

[11] S. Schüler, *Synchronized Ritual Behavior: Religion, Cognition and the Dynamics of Embodiment* [in:] *Religion and the Body: Modern Science and the Construction of Religious Meaning*, D. Cave, R. Sachs Norris (eds.), Leiden 2011, p. 84.

[12] T. Komendziński, *op.cit*., p. 154.

[13] *Ibidem*, pp. 151–152.

[14] See e.g. A. Goldman, *Simulating Minds. The Philosophy, Psychology and Neuroscience of Mindreading*, Oxford 2006, pp. 117–118.

[15] *Ibidem*, pp. 135–136.

[16] G. Rizzolatti, L. Fadiga, V. Gallese, L Fogasi, *Premotor Cortex and the Recognition of Motor Actions*, "Cognitive Brain Research"1996, no. 3, pp. 131–141.

become activated both when an action is performed and when it is merely observed. A similar, though more complex, mirroring system has been identified in the human brain.[17] Although it is crucial for synchronisation, as it provides its most rudimentary neural substrate, it is not sufficient, especially for the performance of higher-order, goal-mediated actions. A more complex mechanism, postulated by Alvin Goldman, is *enactment imagination* (or *e-imagination*).[18] This involves deliberate construction of mental representations, mainly of a quasi-visual character. It can be applied for a variety of purposes in many different contexts, one of which is representing an action to be performed.

An important factor possibly significant for synchronisation is the use of language. As speaking and doing are evolutionarily entwined, mental construal of actions supports the comprehension of language, and vice versa. Vittorio Gallese and George Lakoff[19] propose a theory of *neural exploitation*, claiming that as the human brain evolved, additional functions were taken up by neural structures already in place, originally intended for different purposes. As a result, language comprehension employs neural systems otherwise used for perception, action, and emotional processing. According to Arthur Glenberg,[20] the meaning of an expression is grasped in relation to the set of actions a subject can undertake in the situation implied by this expression. As a sentence is comprehended, these actions are simulated, and thus their performance is facilitated. Indeed, various studies have shown that being exposed to particular linguistic content influences subjects' motor capabilities.[21]

Since attending to language involves simulating action, one may expect that being simultaneously exposed to the same linguistic content would result in synchronous simulation of similar sensorimotor patterns. Similar simulations, in turn, mean facilitation of similar motor acts, and thus smoother synchronisation. This fact is less trivial than it might initially seem, as the process involved is largely automatic – hearing a verbal command may result in an automatic facilitation of the muscles responsible for a given action, even before the agent has time to think about – and e-imagine – what they are hearing and doing.

This brief discussion of the phenomenon of synchronisation may give an idea of its significance in a religious, or, more precisely, ritual context. During rituals, groups of people engage in collective activity, involving chanting, dancing or offering sacrifice. They may be guided by the voice of the priest, or by the sound of music. The possibility of achieving neural resonance in the process, and sharing not only actions, but also emotions, is immense. The following section is a discussion of some possible forms of synchronisation during a very particular ritual, namely that of *āsana* within Modern Postural Yoga.

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[17] See Goldman, *op.cit.*, p. 135.

[18] *Ibidem*, p. 149 ff.

[19] V. Gallese, G. Lakoff, *The Brain's Concepts: The Role of the Sensory-Motor System in Conceptual Knowledge*, "Cognitive Neuropsychology" 2005, no. 22 (3–4), p. 456.

[20] A.M. Glenberg, *Toward the Integration of Bodily States, Language, and Action* [in:] *Embodied Grounding. Social, Cognitive, Affective, and Neuroscientific Approaches*, G.R. Semin, E.R. Smith (eds.), Cambridge 2008, pp. 43–70.

[21] See e.g. *ibidem*, pp. 47–48, 51–52.

Modern Postural Yoga and the *āsana* ritual

The term Modern Postural Yoga (MPY)[22] denotes yoga practice systems, whose origin dates back to the late colonial period in India, and whose main focus is the performance of *āsana* (yogic postures) and *prāṇāyāma* (breath-control techniques). Nowadays, MPY strands are spread globally, but English remains their primary language. According to Mark Singleton, their development was strongly influenced by the emergence of the European physical culture movement,[23] imported to India by the British. Popular exercise routines found their way into Indian gymnasia, where, combined with elements derived from *haṭha yoga*, they were turned into comprehensive systems. In these systems, the concept of *āsana* played a central role.

Perhaps paradoxically, the Western influence drew the emerging movement closer to its Indian roots. To set the "indigenous" systems apart from their European counterparts, their founders strove to provide them with ancient legitimisation. Medieval *haṭha yoga* provided an ideal of a noble, heroic Indian ascetic.[24] At the same time, attempts were made to prove the correspondence between the modern *āsana* practice and the *aṣṭāṅga yoga* of *Patañjali*. As a result, contemporary MPY strands are a combination of modern systems of exercise with a slightly vague religio-philosophical background, built around the categories borrowed from *Sāṃkhya-Yoga* and the modernised, Westernised *Vedānta*.[25]

Nowadays, the most widespread strands of MPY are Iyengar Yoga (IY; founded by B.K.S. Iyengar, 1918–2014), and Ashtanga Vinyasa (AV; founded by K. Patthabi Jois, 1915–2009). In both systems, the focus is placed on the practice of *āsana* sequences. In a typical setting, a group performs a sequence together, under the guidance of a teacher. In both IY and AV a different model is possible, in which each practitioner performs their own sequence, according to their own needs.[26] However, for the purposes of the present discussion, simultaneous group practice is of the most interest.

Solid foundations exist for understanding MPY *āsana* practice in terms of religious ritual. This does not imply that MPY, or strands thereof, should be unambiguously classified as *religions*. Considering the plurality of the definitions of religion, and the recent debate within CSR concerning the question of whether religion can be anything more than just a "convenient non-technical pointer"[27] to the vast field of interest of the study of religions, it is clear that no unanimous verdict can be given in

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[22] See E. De Michelis, *op.cit.*, p. 187 ff.

[23] M. Singleton, *op.cit.*, p. 81 ff.

[24] *Ibidem*, p. 169.

[25] This "modernised, Westernised" version was popularised to the greatest extent by Swami Vivekananda. See E. De Michelis, *op.cit.*, p. 127 ff.

[26] This is the case during individual practice and therapeutic classes in IY, and during so-called *Mysore style* practice in AV.

[27] P. Boyer, E*xplaining Religious Concepts: Lévi-Strauss, The Brilliant and Problematic Ancestor* [in:] *Mental Culture. Classical Social Theory and the Cognitive Science of Religion*, D. Xygalatas, W.W. McCorkle (eds.), Durham 2013, p. 171.

that matter. This, however, does not change the fact that ritual practices exist within MPY which are related to certain doctrinal assumptions of a possibly "religious" character.

A typical group *āsana* ritual has a tripartite structure, with a short meditation and a chant as the opening phase, the practice of a sequence of *āsanāni* as the main phase and passive relaxation as the closing phase. Elizabeth De Michelis interprets this structure in terms of van Gennep's model of the rite of passage[28] (with its phases of separation, transition, and incorporation), referring to MPY practice as "healing ritual of secular religion."[29]

For the purposes of this paper, Robert McCauley and Thomas Lawson's understanding of ritual is suitable.[30] According to them, comprehension of ritual structure engages cognitive mechanisms employed to represent action in general.[31] The key difference between any kind of action and ritual action is that in the latter so-called *culturally postulated superhuman agents* (or *CPS-agents*) play a pivotal role. During ritual activity, a constrained group of actors, applying assigned instruments, acts upon assigned patients to effectuate a transaction with CPS-agents and cause change in a postulated religious world.

At first glance, it might not be obvious that MPY *āsana* practice fulfils McCauley and Lawson's criteria. Specifically, the presence of CPS-agents in the given context might seem dubious. However, a closer look at the religio-philosophical assumptions underlying MPY may clear up the matter. In the following paragraphs, Iyengar's exposition of these categories will serve as an example.

According to *Sāṃkhya-Yoga* cosmology, two exclusive principles constitute reality: *prakṛti*, the substrate of the phenomenal world, and *puruṣa*, the absolute, transcendent consciousness, independent from *prakṛti* substantially, but attached to it for the purpose of its own liberation. Apart from the subtle and gross elements, *prakṛti* also makes up the human mental apparatus. The *Yoga Sūtra* of *Patañjali* refer to this apparatus as *citta* – a tripartite structure consisting of *manas* (the "mind"), *ahaṅkāra* (the "I" principle) and *buddhi* (the discriminative consciousness). *Buddhi*, by virtue of its disposition of *jñāna* (knowledge, insight), serves a salvific role, liberating *puruṣa* from its entanglement with *prakṛti*. In this context, *puruṣa*, on account of its omniscience related to its unlimited vision (it is called *draṣṭṛ* – "the seer"), and its ability to exist after the dissolution of the world, may be interpreted as a CPS-agent.[32]

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[28] See A. van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage*, London 1960.

[29] E. De Michelis, *op.cit.*, p. 252 ff.

[30] R.N. McCauley, E.T. Lawson, *Bringing Ritual to Mind. Psychological Foundations of Cultural Forms,* Cambridge 2004. The classically cognitivist (i.e. representationalist) grounding of McCauley and Lawson's theory is at odds with the more radical forms of enactivism (see E. Myin, D.D. Hutto, *Radicalizing Enactivism. Basic Minds without Content*, Cambridge, MA, 2013). However, for the purpose of the present paper, applying very general notions of both *enaction* and *representation*, referring to this theory is justified.

[31] *Ibidem*, p. 8 ff.

[32] Even though *puruṣa* is considered completely passive (*akartṛ*), it could still be construed as an agent, provided that agency is understood in terms of intentionality, rather than ability to exert physical force. Being conscious (*cetana*), *puruṣa* is a subject (*viṣayin*), an experiencer (*bhoktṛ*) and a knower (*jñātṛ*). Despite its passivity, it effectuates its own liberation by influencing *prakṛti* to act for its benefit

Iyengar identifies *ahaṅkāra* with "ego" or the "small self", and *buddhi* with "intelligence" – these are the two principles guiding a yogi's life and practice. *Puruṣa*, on the other hand, is identified with *ātman* (the conscious principle of the *Upaniṣad* and *Vedānta*), the Universal Soul, or "inner divinity"[33] (understood in a vague, syncretistic manner adapted to the more or less theistic, atheistic or agnostic views of IY practitioners).

The goal of the *āsana* ritual may be understood as holistic healing, effectuated in a mechanistic way. However, the notion of agency – or, in fact, CPS-agency – is very much present in it. The human body is represented as a sacred realm ("the temple of the soul"),[34] in which conscious forces of divine origin operate. Yoga practice is aimed at "the tracing of the source of consciousness – the seer [*puruṣa*] – and then diffusing its essence... throughout every particle of the... body."[35] In other words, its aim is to encounter the inner divinity and, as if through dissolving it in fluid, spread it evenly inside the body. The said fluid is consciousness (*citta* or *buddhi*) and, at the same time, *prāṇa*. Its infusing with the divine essence and homogenous distribution is achieved through cultivating proper body alignment in *āsana*. To interpret this notion in terms of ritual agency, during *āsana* practice the agent of *buddhi*, using the instrument of the body and the medium of *prāṇa*, acts to come into contact with inner divinity. This sacred encounter (explained in terms of the "divine marriage of Nature and the Universal Soul"[36]) leads to a qualitative transformation of the body.

The understanding of the effects of the *āsana* ritual in theistic terms does not exclude its simultaneous secular interpretation. A variety of psychosomatic effects (stimulating, calming, anti-depressive, anti-anxiety etc.) are attributed to different postures and sequences thereof. Especially in IY, precisely crafted *āsana* sequences are used for therapeutic purposes, to relieve a large variety of ailments (from the common cold to life-threatening diseases). To explain the efficacy of such sequences, the categories of Western medicine are employed. In effect, a practitioner may seek proper alignment in *āsana* to both restore the proper functioning of the thyroid and encounter the divine within.

(see O. Łucyszyna, "Czy puruṣa jest podmiotem? Na podstawie analizy opozycji podmiotu (viṣayin) i przedmiotu (viṣaya) w klasycznej sāṃkhyi", [in:] *Purusza, atman, tao, sin... Wokół problematyki podmiotu w tradycjach filozoficznych Wschodu*, O. Łucyszyna, M.St. Zięba (eds.), Łódź 2011, pp. 77–89). In other words, according to the criteria proposed by CSR, *puruṣa* could be attributed *mentality* (in terms of so-called folk psychology, *not* sāṃkhyan ontology – according to the latter *puruṣa* is substantially distinct from *manas* – "the mind"). Since the concept of mentality can be construed without an underlying concept of physicality (see J.L. Barrett, *Coding and Quantifying Counterintuitiveness in Religious Concepts: Theoretical and Methodological Reflections*, "Method and Theory in the Study of Religion" 2008, no. 20, p. 327), it is sufficient for *puruṣa* to be a passive, disembodied spectator, for it to bring about notions of (super)human agency.

[33] See e.g. B.K.S. Iyengar, *Light on Life. The Yoga Journey to Wholeness, Inner Peace and Ultimate Freedom*, Vancouver 2005, pp. 3, 148, 9 ff.

[34] See e.g. B.K.S. Iyenagar, *Yoga Vṛkṣa. The Tree of Yoga*, Oxford 1988, p. 17; B.K.S. Iyenagar, *Light on the Yoga Sūtras of Patañjali. Pātañjala Yoga Pradipika*, New Delhi 2005, p. 145.

[35] *Ibidem*, p. 4.

[36] B.K.S. Iyengar, *Light on Life...*, p. 201.

The purpose of the next section of the paper is to show that both the subjective efficacy of the practice (perceived as relaxation, stimulation, alleviating of disease symptoms) and the comprehension of religio-philosophical notions, such as those pertaining to *puruṣa*, may be associated with the experience of sensorimotor synchronisation during the *āsana* ritual.

Modes of synchronisation in MPY *āsana* ritual

Despite the similarity of the general structure of the *āsana* ritual (brief meditation, sequence of postures, relaxation), the differences in the performance of IY and AV *āsana* sequences are significant. In AV, the postures are executed in an aerobic manner, accompanied only by the basic commands of the teacher. The fairly dynamic alteration of poses is synchronised with the breath, which is controlled and, very importantly, audible. In IY, each posture in a sequence is broken down into numerous configurations of precisely delimited body parts. As the *āsanāni* are performed, the teacher describes these configurations in detail. The teacher's commands guide the practitioners systematically along the entire pose, motion after motion, usually starting with the lowermost body parts (i.e. the feet), and ending with the uppermost ones. Depending on the advancement of the group, the described body parts and their movements may be quite large (e.g. "push the thigh back", "roll the shoulder back and down") or quite minute (e.g. "move the indent between the femur head and the buttock into the body" or "suck the skin on the sides of the neck towards the cervical vertebrae"). In both AV and IY, practitioners are arranged in the room in an ordered manner, facing in the same direction. A teacher or an assistant commonly faces the group, presenting the postures to the participants.

The most fundamental aspect of synchronisation during the *āsana* ritual is mirroring. Especially in IY, practitioners lean on the teacher's modelling of the postures. As the model faces the group, they perform the *āsanāni* in the opposite direction, literally becoming the mirror image of the students. This facilitates automatic imitation of the motor patterns they present. Apart from the mirroring of the teacher/assistant, possible mirroring synchronisation between co-practitioners may occur. Although the members of a group are discouraged from focusing on the performance of others, in most postures part of the group always remains within their scope of vision. Therefore visual stimuli, also of a subliminal character, are always present, enabling automatic, if not deliberate, synchronisation.

Apart from visual stimuli, rhythmical patterns are available during the *āsana* performance, providing conditions for sensorimotor entrainment. In AV this element is especially salient, due to the audibility of the practitioners' synchronised breaths. In IY, a fair degree of rhythmicity is provided by the sound of verbal commands. The teachers usually speak in a melodious manner, accentuating the verbs pertaining to the ascribed movements. The more concise the commands, the more rhythmical they become. Since each command is accompanied by immediate execution of the movement, the motion of the group may be reminiscent of dancing.

The semantic content of spoken commands also needs to be considered as a factor aiding synchronisation. As the practitioners attend to the commands, they simulate the motor acts described by them fairly simultaneously. Thus, in the entire group similar movements are facilitated even before anyone executes them. During advanced classes, many commands concern varieties of motion invisible to an outside observer. For instance, the aforementioned motion of "the skin on the sides on the neck into the cervical vertebrae", though visible upon close inspection in the form of subtle elongation of the neck, is felt rather than seen. Attending to the same, precise expressions enables the sharing of the subtle proprioceptive experience by the entire group. It seems that during advanced practice, when the described motor acts gradually become infinitesimal, the verbal commands are often used to guide proprioception rather than motion. Without the ability to simulate this experience through language comprehension, its sharing would not be possible.

The last aspect of synchronisation is related not so much to group practice as to the individual experience of each practitioner. Various aspects of *āsana* performance suggest the possibility of what may be termed *auto-synchronisation*. Especially in IY, executing a posture involves feeling the actual position of the body, then simulating the target position, the movements necessary to achieve it, executing them, feeling the new body configuration, once again juxtaposing it to the desired one, simulating and executing corrective movements etc. A likely result is what may be termed *proprioception-action loop*, and a kind of *interoceptive overload* in which the feed of stimuli coming from the body significantly exceeds the number of stimuli of which a person is aware in a normal situation. Attending to one's breath, providing yet another salient stimulus and conditions for self-entrainment, may reinforce this effect. The psychological and neurophysiological implications of such over-stimulation seem an interesting subject for empirical research.

The significance of sensorimotor synchronisation in MPY *āsana* ritual

Discussing the phenomenon of *collective effervescence*, Durkheim depicts astounding effects of joint action that occur in times of social unrest.

> The result of that heightened activity is a general stimulation of individual energies. People live differently and more intensely than in normal times... man himself becomes something other than what he was. He is stirred by passions so intense that they can be satisfied only... by acts of superhuman heroism or bloody barbarism.[37]

Similar arousal, though on a much smaller temporal scale, occurs during Australian aboriginal *corroborees*.

> Once the individuals are gathered together, a sort of electricity is generated from their closeness and quickly launches them to an extraordinary height of exaltation... The initial impulse is...

[37] É. Durkheim, *op.cit.*, p. 213.

> amplified each time it is echoed, like an avalanche that grows as it goes along... gestures and cries tend to fall into rhythm and regularity, and from there into songs and dances... The effervescence often becomes so intense that it leads to outlandish behavior; the passions unleashed are so torrential that nothing can hold them.[38]

Group MPY practice brings about similar effects, though milder in degree. "Individual energies" are indeed stimulated as the strength, stamina and agility of individual practitioners increase. Especially during large workshops and conventions, when hundreds of people gather together, the participants often claim to be able to "do more". Individual limitations are transcended and progress is facilitated. It is likely that mutual synchronisation between practitioners is the key factor contributing to this effect.

The other issue is the subjective effectiveness of the practice. In a group, the psychosomatic effects resulting from *āsana* performance seem more salient. The quietening, stimulation or exhilaration are much more visible, when participants are more numerous. Such sharing may be mediated by two mechanisms. On one hand, motor expressions of calmness or joy of one practitioner may be mirrored by others. On the other hand, sharing verbally guided somatosensory experience through its synchronous simulation may produce a similar result. Effects such as pain or stress relief are probably aided by the same mechanism.

The last issue concerns the influence of *āsana* practice on the transmission of religio-philosophical notions. It has been postulated on numerous occasions that participation in rituals may aid the acceptance of doctrine. In a truly cognitivist vein, Durkheim appreciates the power of ritual to exert "invisible influence over consciousnesses" and its "manner of affecting our states of mind". The "moral support" offered by the community in a ritual setting creates a "predisposition toward believing", regardless of any inconsistencies in doctrinal statements.[39] Almost a century later, Harvey Whitehouse highlights the ability of highly arousing rituals to facilitate memorising experiences and concepts through activating *flashbulb memory* – memory of an episodic kind, using particularly vivid and detailed visual representations.[40] Scott Atran points out that in a ritual setting aversive stimuli (i.e. related with initiatory practices) are usually paired with the feeling of social acceptance.[41] This mixture may contribute to a better memorisation of doctrinal concepts. Moreover, "ritual ceremonies... rivet attention on specific and conspicuous sources of sensory stimulation, including stimulation emanating from one's own body."[42] If, then, doctrinal knowledge somehow corresponds to those embodied stimuli, and is encoded not only in discourse, but also in modes of behaviour, its transfer may be greatly facilitated.[43]

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[38] *Ibidem*, p. 218.

[39] É. Durkheim, *op.cit.*, pp. 364–365.

[40] H. Whitehouse, *Modes of Religiosity. A Cognitive Theory of Religious Transmission*, Oxford 2004, p. 106 ff.

[41] S. Atran, *In Gods We Trust. The Evolutionary Landscape of Religion*, Oxford 2002, p. 174.

[42] *Ibidem*, p. 181.

[43] See S. Schüler, *Religion, Kognition, Evolution. Eine Religionswissenschaftliche Auseinanderung mit der Cognitive Science of Religion*, Stuttgart 2012, p. 191.

During MPY ritual, naturally, there can be no talk of strongly aversive stimuli typical of traditional initiatory rites. However, the factor of increased social cohesion is definitely present. Positive evaluation of social interaction during practice may contribute to a more accepting attitude towards the religio-philosophical notions presented along the way. This is especially the case if these notions are incorporated into the ritual, e.g. through providing a particular *āsana* sequence with a motto in the form of a given *sūtra* from the collection of *Patañjali*. With IY, what is especially relevant is that all categories of *Pātañjala Yoga* are translated into the *āsana* experience. One of Iyengar's famed claims is that within *āsana*, all limbs of *aṣṭāṅga yoga* may be practiced.[44] Careful investigation of other concepts stemming from *Sāṃkhya-Yoga*, such as the aforementioned notion of *puruṣa*, proves that their interpretation is grounded in Iyengar's long-lasting experience related to *āsana* and *prāṇāyāma* performance. In other words, doctrinal concepts, thanks to their embodied interpretation, may be *felt*. If this feeling is shared and amplified through synchronisation, the said concepts may be comprehended more easily.

To illustrate this claim, one may once again refer to Iyenagar's understanding of *buddhi* and *puruṣa*. As noted above, *buddhi* is construed as fluid that should be distributed evenly inside the body. In this fluid, *puruṣa* should be diffused – dissolved or dispersed like particles in a suspension. This conceptualisation has its source in the specific somatosensory experience associated with IY *āsana* performance. As the teacher describes the movements of particular body parts, the practitioners' attention moves along and inside the body, bringing about the notion of fluidity. As the practice progresses, and postures are refined, multiple body parts and their configurations are felt simultaneously. This results in the notion of the fluid filling the entire body evenly. Naturally, to recreate this kind of interoceptive experience one does not need group practice. Becoming familiar with the IY style of *āsana* performance and applying it individually may be sufficient. However, sharing the somatosensory patterns through synchronisation may contribute to their greater salience. During group *āsana* ritual the practitioners are likely to feel more and with greater intensity. Like many other issues raised by this paper, this one also requires further study.

Conclusion

The foregoing discussion hopefully directed attention to the ways in which MPY group *āsana* practice promotes sensorimotor synchronisation. Since synchronisation goes beyond co-regulation of motor patterns and provides grounds for sharing somatosensory experience, it may be expected that participation in group *āsana* rituals contributes to shared proprioception and interoception, including shared feelings of emotion. This may contribute to the observed subjective efficacy of the practice (in the form of positive psychosomatic effects). It may also be a factor facilitating the transfer of doctrinal notions. To verify this hypothesis, empirical studies should be

[44] B.K.S. Iyenagar, *Yoga Vṛkṣa*..., pp. 51–76.

designed that investigate both the behavioural and the neuronal correlates of synchronisation. Special attention should be given not only to cases of mirroring, but also to the role of language in triggering shared motor activity and somatosensory experience. Apart from group practice, individual practice should be studied as well, to investigate the existence and the effects of the postulated *proprioception-action loop*, and of forms of self-entrainment. During experimental research, modes and effects of sensorimotor synchronisation in different strands of MPY (such as IY and AV) should be compared. The differences between beginner and advanced practitioners should be considered, too, as well as the effects of long-term practice on the ability to simulate and synchronise both motor and somatosensory states. Finally, the influence of synchronisation on the comprehension and acceptance of doctrinal notions should be investigated. Careful analysis of the results of such research may not only provide additional insight into the phenomenon of synchronisation itself, but it may also contribute to a better understanding of the increasing global popularity of modern forms of yoga practice.

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How is Consciousness (*rnam shes*) Related to Wisdom (*ye shes*)? The Eighth Karma pa on Buddhist Differentiation and Unity Models of Reality[1]

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Abstract

This study examines how Mi bskyod rdo rje (1507–1554), the Eighth Karma pa of the Karma Bka' brgyud lineage, articulates and defends a key distinction between consciousness (rnam shes) and wisdom (ye shes). The first paper focuses on the author's clarification of the distinction both as an accurate account of the nature and structure of human consciousness and as an indispensable principle of Buddhist soteriology. Arguing that human beings have two "concurrent but nonconvergent" modes of awareness, conditioned and unconditioned, Mi bskyod rdo rje urges the practitioner to discern amidst the adventitious flux of dichotomic thoughts an innate nondual mode of awareness that is regarded as the ground and goal of the Buddhist path. That the recognition of their difference is the key to realizing their underlying unity is central to the Karma pa's response to the perennial Buddhist problem of reconciling two divergent Buddhist models of reality: [1] a differentiation model based on robust distinctions between conventional and ultimate truths or realities (saṃvṛtisatya versus paramārthasatya) and their associated modes of cognition and [2] an identification (yuganaddha) model of the two realities (satyadvaya : bden gnyis) which emphasizes their underlying unity. This article concludes with an annotated translation and critical edition of a short text by the Karma pa on the subject entitled "Two minds in one person? A Reply to the Queries of Bla ma Khams pa" (bla ma khams pa'i dris lan mi gcig sems gnyis).

Key words: Tibetan Buddhism, Bka' brgyud, Kagyu, Mi bskyod rdo rje, consciousness, wisdom, jñāna, mind, Buddhist philosophy of mind, Buddhist models of reality, two truths, ultimate truth, contextualism

[1] This article constitutes the first of a two-part study of Mi bskyod rdo rje's views on the *rnam shes*/*ye shes* distinction. Part Two, which deals with certain polemical issues in Mi bksyod rdo rje's justification of the distinction, will appear in the next issue of this periodical. The author would like to take this opportunity to offer sincere thanks to the anonymous reviewer of this study.

Słowa kluczowe: buddyzm tybetański, Bka' brgyud, Kagyu, Mi bskyod rdo rje, świadomość, mądrość, jñāna, umysł, buddyjska filozofia umysłu, buddyjski model rzeczywistości, dwie prawdy, prawda ostateczna, kontekstualizm

The relationship between consciousness (Skt. *Vijñāna*, Tib. *rnam shes*) and wisdom (*jñāna* : *ye shes*) has been the focus of much discussion and debate in Indo-Tibetan Buddhist scholasticism. Perhaps few scholars in the history of Buddhist thought have given more detailed and nuanced attention to clarifying the nature of this relationship and its soteriological ramifications than Mi bskyod rdo rje (1507–1554), the Eighth Karma pa of the Karma kaṃ tshang lineage. In his many and varied treatments of this issue, Mi bskyod rdo rje comes up against the perennial problem of how to understand and reconcile two traditional Buddhist models of reality and cognition. One is a *differentiation* model based on robust distinctions between conventional and ultimate truths or realities (*saṃvṛtisatya* versus *paramārthasatya*) and their associated modes of cognition. The other is an identification or unity (*yuganaddha*) model of the two realities (*satyadvaya* : *bden gnyis*) and their associated modes of cognition. In Buddhist scholasticism, the differentiation model was typically aligned with a strongly innatist view of the ultimate (buddha nature, the nature of mind, or the nature of reality) which underscores its "sublime otherness" (*gzhan mchog*) from all that is conventional and adventitious. This model has figured in a wide range of canonical Buddhist distinctions between innate and adventitious modes of reality and their associated prediscursive and discursive modes of cognition.[2]

By contrast, the identification or unity model, predicated on the acceptance of a prediscursive dimension of human experience which is the source of all conditioned and unconditioned phenomena, has drawn attention to the pervasiveness of the ultimate and its immanence within the conventional in order to indicate how the ultimate permeates the mind-streams of individuals in bondage. The unity model has found expression in a variety of Madhyamaka and tantric formulations, such as the nonduality (*advaya* : *gnyis med*) or coemergence (*sahaja* : *lhan cig skyes pa*) of the two truths or realities, the unity of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa (*'khor 'das zung 'jug*), the inseparability of manifestation and emptiness (*snang stong dbyer med*), and the unity of thoughts and *dharmakāya*.

Tibetan scholars have devoted considerable attention to the issue of how to reconcile and coordinate these differentiation and unity models within pertinent traditional Buddhist theoretical contexts such as buddha nature (*tathāgatagarbha*), the two truths (*satyadvaya*), the three natures (*trisvabhāva*), the two modes of emptiness (*rang stong* and *gzhan stong*), the hermeneutics of the three turnings of the *dharmacakra*, and the related hermeneutical distinction between definitive meaning

[2] On Rnying ma treatments of these distinctions, cf. Higgins D., *The Philosophical Foundations of Classical rDzogs chen in Tibet: Investigating the Distinction between Dualistic Mind (sems) and Primordial Knowing (ye shes)*, Wiener Studien zur Tibetologie und Buddhismuskunde, Heft 78, Wien 2013. On Bka' brgyud treatments, cf. D. Higgins, M. Draszczyk, *Mahāmudrā and the Middle Way: Post-classical Kagyü Discourses on Mind,Emptiness and Buddha-nature*, 2 vols. Wien 2016 (in press).

(*nītārtha*) and provisional meaning (*neyārtha*). The aim of this paper is to explain how Mi bskyod rdo rje could be both an advocate of robust soteriological distinctions between innate and adventitious modes of reality and cognition (differentiation model) and at the same time a proponent of the Mahāmudrā view of the unity (*zung 'jug*) nonduality (*gnyis med*) or inseparability (*dbyer med*) of the ultimate and conventional. It is argued that his attempts to resolve this antinomy were guided by his philosophical Madhyamaka ambition to chart a middle course between the two metaphysical extremes of absolutism (known as the extreme of eternalism or existence) and nihilism (the extreme of annihilation or nonexistence). With this trajectory in sight, the Karma pa shows how the meditator on the path must distinguish adventitious from innate modes of cognition in order to discern the mind's preconceptual nature from the flux of superfluous mental and affective activities that reify and obscure it. But to the extent that the meditator realises a "unity beyond extremes" wherein superfluous thoughts and feelings are recognised as distortive (conventional) manifestations of the abiding (ultimate) nature of mind and reality, the former are resolved into the latter and both are understood to be alike in remaining beyond discursive elaboration (*spros bral*).

1. The doctrinal background of the two models

Let us begin by sketching in rough strokes some Indian antecedents of the two models and the problem of reconciliation they brought into play. One highly influential precedent for the differentiation model was Asaṅga's **Mahāyānasaṃgraha* I.45–48,[3] where the author drew a sharp distinction between unconditioned supramundane mind (*lokottaracitta*) and the conditioned substratum consciousness (ālayavijñāna), thereby specifying an innate, unconditioned mode of cognition that is prior to and a precondition of the eight modes of consciousness (*kun gzhi tshogs brgyad*) as elaborated in the Yogācāra psychology. By contrast, influential examples of the identification model that are encountered in the *Laṅkāvatāra* and **Ghanavyūha* sūtras explicitly identify buddha nature with the substratum consciousness (ālayavijñāna).[4] One

[3] Cf. R. Davidson, *Buddhist Systems of Transformation: Āśraya-parivṛtti/-parāvṛitti Among the Yogācāra*. Unpublished PhD thesis, Berkeley: University of California 1985, p. 215; K. Mathes, *A Direct Path to the Buddha Within, Gö Lotsawa's Mahāmudrā Interpretation of the Ratnagotravibhāga*, Boston 2008, p. 58. Sthiramati draws a similar distinction between ālayavijñāna and the supramundane gnosis (*lokottarajñāna* : *jigs rten las 'das pa'i ye shes*) which fundamentally transforms or sublates *parāvṛtti*) it in his commentary on *Triṃśikā* 29–30. Cf. *Vijñaptimātratāsiddhi* (ed. S. Lévi, Bibliothèque de l'École des Hautes Études, Sciences historiques et philologiques 245, vol. 1: The text, Paris 1925), p. 44; R. Davidson, *op.cit.*, p. 218 and n. 28. On replacement and elimination models of fundamental transformation (āśrayaparivṛtti), cf. H. Sakuma, *Die Āśrayaparivṛtti-Theorie in der Yogācārabhumi*. Alt- und Neu-Indische Studien 40, 1–2, Stuttgart 1990.

[4] On this interpretation and some of its Tibetan adherents such as the bKa' brgyud scholars 'Gos lo tsā ba Gzhon nu dpal and 'Ba' ra ba rgyal mtshan dpal bzang, cf. K. Mathes, *A Direct Path...*, p. 18, 117 and 464 n. 612. 'Gos lo tsā ba noted (*ibidem*, pp. 341–342) that the equation of ālayavijñāna with *tathāgatagarbha* is based on the acceptance of two aspects of the former: a stained ālayavijñāna, which needs to be reversed in order to attain Buddhahood, and a purified ālayavijñāna taken as an unconscious

may also mention here a parallel unity or nondifferentiation model of truth/reality, which was widely adopted in many non-tantric and tantric discourses emphasising the nonduality of the two realities (*bden gnyis gnyis med*), the inseparability of appearance and emptiness (*snang stong dbyer med*), and unity of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa, and coemergence of mind and wisdom.[5]

Faced with the task of reconciling these seemingly incommensurable ontological and soteriological paradigms, leading post-classical Bka' brgyud thinkers such as Mi bskyod rdo rje adopted different versions of *soteriological contextualism*, a term I have elsewhere coined to describe the view that the sense, relevance and efficacy of soteriological models can only be understood relative to the context(s) in which they are employed.[6] From this perspective, the differentiation and unity models, with their seemingly oppositional categories and metaphorics –the first positing a basic difference between conventional and ultimate and comparing it to the sky and its clouds, the second positing their essential equality as illustrated by the ocean and its waves – came to be regarded not as contradictory but as complementary, relating as they do to different contexts of salvific theory and praxis. According to Mi bskyod rdo rje, an aspirant on the Buddhist path should conceptually distinguish what is to be abandoned ("adventitious mind", *glo bur gyi sems*) from what is to be realised ("innate mind", *gnyug ma'i sems*). But this path is said to lead beyond such oppositional constructs, culminating in the disclosure of a nondual nonconceptual wisdom (*nirvikalpajñāna*) of the undifferentiated nature of things (*dharmadhātu*) which recognises all spiritual countermeasures (*gnyen po*) as being of the same unborn (*skye med*) and prediscursive (*spros bral*) nature as what they are meant to counteract.[7] This is the view of unity (*zung 'jug*), which is generally identified as a hallmark of Mahāmudrā teachings. In this view, the Buddhist path is ultimately self-undermining insofar as the conceptual distinctions which are necessary to realise nondual nonconceptual wisdom necessarily consume themselves at the time of its realisation.[8]

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vijñāpti or subtle inward mind, which 'Gos lo identifies with the *dharmadhātu*. Based on the identification of the ālayavijñāna with the *tathāgatagarbha*, the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* interprets āśrayaparāvṛtti as the transformation or purification of the seventh consciousness (*manas*), which liberates the pure ālayavijñāna. Cf. W. Lai, *The Meaning of "Mind-Only" (Wei-Hsin): An Analysis of a Sinitic Mahāyāna Phenomenon*, "Philosophy East and West" 1977, vol. 27, no. 1, p. 67 f. In a similar vein, the **Ghanavyūhasūtra* states (D 110, $55b_1$; L 113, $85a_{6-7}$): "The Tathāgata taught **sugatagarbha* using the term *ālaya* [*vijñāna*]." *bde gshegs snying po dge ba'ang de | | snying po de la kun gzhi sgras | de bzhin gshegs pa ston pa mdzad |*

[5] These models and their doctrinal sources are examined in D. Higgins, M. Draszczyk, *op.cit.*

[6] For a general account of contextualist views, which have been gaining popularity in contemporary philosophy, cf. A.W. Price, *Contextuality in practical reason*, Oxford 2008.

[7] Shākya mchog ldan had similarly maintained that while realisation of the unity of the two truths, and of appearance and emptiness, was the goal of the Buddhist path, it is nonetheless necessary to balance the divergent perspectives of consciousness and wisdom while on the path. Likewise, the second 'Brug chen Padma dkar po (a contemporary of Mi bskyod rdo rje) used Yang dgon pa's distinction between *mahāmudrā* in its modes of abiding (*gnas lugs phyag chen*) and delusion ('*khrul lugs phyag chen*) to underscore the need to discern the irreducible unity of the common ground (*mahāmudrā* in the abiding mode) from the reifications which distort and conceal it (the mode of delusion). On their interpretations, cf. D. Higgins, M. Draszczyk, *op.cit*.

[8] Post-classical Mahāmudrā exegetes were keenly aware that the method of radical negation employed in Madhyamaka must be self-consuming: since conceptual reasoning is by definition conditioned

2. Karma Bka' brgyud assimilations of the differentiation model

The Eighth Karma pa's views regarding wisdom (*ye shes*) and the nature of mind (*sems nyid*, *sems kyi rang bzhin*) and how they differ from consciousness (*rnam shes*) and dualistic mind (*sems*) are indebted to the works of his Karma kaṃ tshang predecessors, particularly the Third Karma pa Rang byung rdo rje. In general, Bka' brgyud exegetes deployed a varied repertoire of distinctions between mind and the nature of mind drawn from a diverse body of texts and commentaries belonging to the Mahāyāna, Vajrayāna and Siddha genres. Tibetan terms variously used to describe the nature of mind – some of which were translations of Indic terms, others Tibetan neologisms[9] – include mind as such (*sems nyid*), natural awareness (*tha mal gyi shes pa*),[10] natural mind (*rang bzhin gyi sems*), the beginningless nature of mind (*thog*

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and adventitious, and therefore not beyond the scope of its own critical surveillance, it must at some point deplete or consume itself, as suggested by a well-known analogy from the *Kaśyapaparivarta* of the *Ratnakūṭa* that Kamalaśīla famously cited as follows: "The characteristic of discerning the real (*bhūtapratyavekṣa*) is here [in the *Nirvikalpapraveśadhāraṇī*] considered to be mental nonengagement (*amanasikāra*). That [discernment] has the nature of being conceptual, but it is burned away by the fire of innate wisdom arising from it, just as a fire kindled by rubbing two pieces of wood burns these very pieces." *Nirvikalpapraveśadhāraṇīṭīkā*, P: no. 5501, 157b$_{5–6}$: *yang dag par so sor rtog pa'i mtshan ma ni 'dir yid la mi byed par dgongs so | | de ni rnam par rtog pa'i ngo bo nyid yin mod kyi | 'on kyang de nyid las byung ba yang dag pa'i ye shes kyi mes de bsregs par 'gyur te | shing gnyis drud las byung ba'i mes shing de gnyis sreg par byed pa bzhin no* | | Kamalaśīla presents the same example in *Bhāvanākrama* III (ed. G. Tucci in: Tucci G., *Minor Buddhist Texts, Part III, Third Bhāvanākrāma*, Roma 1971) and makes reference to the *Ratnakūṭa*: "[...] *nirvikalpe ca bhūtajñānāgnau samutpanne sati kāṣṭhadvayanig harṣasaṃjātavahninā tatkāṣṭhadvayadāhavat sāpi paścāt tenaiva dahyata evety uktam āryaratnakūṭe* |" Note that the same concept, mutatis mutandis, occurs in non-Buddhist works such as the Ātmabodha by Śaṅkara st. 5; *Parātriṃśikātattvavivaraṇa* by Abhinavagupta, ed. R. Gnoli, *Il Commento di Abhinavagupta alla* Parātriṃśikā *(*Parātriṃśikātattva-vivaraṇa*) traduzione e testo*, Roma 1985, pp. 98, 161; *Tantravaṭadhānikā* by Abhinavagupta, cf. F. Sferra, La *Tantravaṭadhānikā* di Abhinavagupta [in:] *Le Parole e i Marmi: studi in onore di Raniero Gnoli nel suo 70° compleanno*, R. Torella (ed.), Serie Orientale Roma XCII. vol. 2, Roma 2001, 2001, pp. 755 and 767 for additional references.

[9] Some of these are included in a list of synonyms (*ming gi rnam grangs*) for the beginningless nature of mind (*sems nyid thog med*) given by Karma phrin las pa in his *Zab mo nang don nyin byed 'od kyi phreng ba*, 17$_6$–18$_2$: "As for its quasi-synonyms, which are said to be limitless, they include natural awareness, fresh mind, innate mind, Mahāmudrā, supreme bliss, *nāda*, invincible *hūṃ*, space-pervading space *vajra*, *tathāgatagarbha*, energy current of wisdom, central channel of wisdom, invincible seminal nucleus and Prajñāpāramitā [goddess] from the standpoint of the perfections." *de la ming gi rnam grangs su ni | tha mal gyi shes pa | sems so ma | gnyug ma'i yid dang | phyag rgya chen po dang | bde ba chen po dang |* nā da dang | *gzhom med kyi huṃ | mkha' khyab mkha'i rdo rje dang | de bzhin gshegs pa'i snying po | ye shes kyi rlung dang | ye shes kyi rtsa dbu ma dang | gzhom med kyi thig le dang | pha rol tu phyin pa'i phyogs las shes rab kyi pha rol tu phyin ma zhes sogs rnam grangs mtha' yas pa gsungs so | |* Dwags ram pa adds to the list these synonyms, many of which are found in the *Vimalaprabhā* commentary on the *Laghukālacakratantra*: supremely unchanging bliss supreme (*mchog tu mi 'gyur ba'i bde ba chen po*), coemergent wisdom (*lhan cig skyes sbyor pa'i ye shes*), great compassion (*snying rje chen po*), primal buddha (*dang po'i sangs rgyas*), original protector (*thog ma'i mgon po*), **sugatagarbha* (*bde bar gshegs pa'i snying po*), great seminal nucleus (*thig le chen po*), *de kho na nyid* (thusness), utterly pure mind (*rnam par dag pa'i sems*). Cf. *Zab mo nang don sems kyi rnam par thar pa'i gsal ba'i rgyan*, in Rang byung rdo rje's RDsb vol. 12, 45$_6$–47$_2$.

[10] On this important Bka' brgyud Mahāmudrā term, cf. D. Higgins, M. Draszczyk, *op.cit*., pp. 36, 59, 153, 163, 176, 178, 187 and n. 534, 283, 338 et passim.

ma'i sems nyid), innate mind (*gnyug ma'i yid*), wisdom (*ye shes*), nondual wisdom (*gnyis med kyi ye shes*), naked awareness (*rjen pa'i shes pa*), and coemergent wisdom (*lhan cig skyes pa'i ye shes*). Bka' brgyud exegetes used such terms not only to characterise the enduring, nondual character of mind but also to emphasise its primacy, and its distinction from adventitious dualistic mind (*sems*), mentality (*yid*), cognition (*shes pa*) or consciousness (*rnam shes*). These latter terms commonly describe delusive objectifying and subjectivising forms of cognition that Buddhist insight and practices aim to transcend. Mi bskyod rdo rje often registers his concern about the lack of conceptual precision among Buddhist exegetes regarding the proper formulation and use of such distinctions, taking the term *sems nyid* as a case in point. The particle *nyid*, he argues, denotes a basic nature (*chos nyid*) of the phenomenon (*chos can*)[11] mind, and is used "in the sense of an ineliminable distinctive feature" (*khyad chos mi spong bar don*) which should never be confused with the conventional condition or characteristics of ordinary mind.

> Regarding terms such as *sems nyid* etc., *sems nyid* [combines] a term denoting a phenomenon (*chos can* : *dharmin*) [i.e. mind] and a term that denotes its basic nature (*chos nyid* : *dharmatā*), viz., a distinctive feature (*khyad par gyi chos*) [i.e. the nature of mind]. Here, the term denoting a phenomenon [mind] is qualified in the sense of an ineliminable distinctive feature. In general, this abiding mode[12] of mind (*sems kyi gnas lugs*) is presented both as a conventional mode or characteristic or an ultimate mode or characteristic. Among these [two], mere cognition and mere clarity (*rig tsam gsal tsam*) are the conventional mode. Consequently, although there are many people here in Tibet for whom it is the real abiding mode (*don gyi gnas lugs*) and [who thus] take it as their view and meditation, this is an insuperable mistake![13]

Mi bskyod rdo rje accorded considerable importance to the distinction between pure mind and impure mind introduced by Karma pa III Rang byung rdo rje on the basis of Mahāmudrā and the Maitreya texts. The Third Karma pa had maintained

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[11] The Eighth Karma pa here understands the term *chos can*, phenomena, to refer to that which possesses the nature of phenomena.

[12] The term *gnas lugs* renders various Sanskrit terms including [1] *vṛtta* (appearance, occurred, become, turned, matter, incident, issue, mode of life, state, as e.g., *vastuvṛtta* : *dngos po'i gnas lugs*, nature of things); [2] *sthiti* (abiding, staying, situation, state, abode, remaining or being in any state or condition); [3] *saṃniveśa* (assembly, situation, open place, foundation); and [4] *saṃsthāna* (being, standing, abiding, standing still or firm, abode, dwelling-place, nature, essence, there-being (Dasein), condition). In the present context, it refers to the prevailing mode or state of mind, as indicated by the alternative defining characteristic (*mnyam nyid*). Cf. Negi 1993–2005 s.v. *gnas lugs*.

[13] *Dgongs gcig 'grel pa* Ic, in MKsb vol. 4, 1087_6–1088_3: *sems nyid ces bya ba zhes sogs la | sems nyid ni chos can brjod pa'i sgra dang | de'i chos nyid ni khyad par gyi chos brjod pa'i sgra yin pas 'dir chos can brjod pa'i sgras khyad chos mi spong bar don la brjod pa yin no | | spyir sems kyi gnas lugs 'di la kun rdzob kyi gnas lugs sam mtshan nyid dang | don dam gyi gnas lugs sam mtshan nyid gnyis yod pa las | rig tsam gsal tsam ni kun rdzob kyi gnas lugs yin pas de don gyi gnas lugs yin par bod 'dir lta sgom byed pa mang du yod kyang nor ba bla na med pa yin no | |* In D. Higgins, *The Philosophical Foundations of Classical rDzogs chen in Tibet: Investigating the Distinction between Dualistic Mind (sems) and Primordial Knowing (ye shes)*, Wiener Studien zur Tibetologie und Buddhismuskunde, Heft 78, Wien 2013, it is argued that *sems nyid* was a specialised rendering of *citta* (sometimes also *caitanya*) in cases where the original referred to the nature of mind and not dualistic mind. This along with *ye shes*, one of several terms used to render the Sanskrit *jñāna*, reflect the Tibetan penchant for translating single Indian terms by various Tibetan ones according to context.

that "the general discourses of all vehicles refer to mind as such (*sems nyid*) but this should be known to be twofold: possessing purity and being impure."[14] He equates mind possessing purity variously with [1] mind as such (*sems nyid*) as described in Saraha's *Dohākoṣagīti* 43[15] as the seed of all of *saṃsāra* and *nirvāṇa*, [2] the buddha quintessence (*buddhagarbha*) as described in *Ratnagotravibhāga* 1.55–57[16] by analogy with space which supports the other elements but is itself unsupported by any, and [3] mind's luminous nature (*'od gsal ba'i sems*) as described in *Aṣṭasāhasrikāprajñāpāramitā* 5b.1–2.[17] His commentators further identify the pure mind with the tantric hermeneutical categories of the ground of the clearing process (*sbyang gzhi*), the first of the four aspects of the clearing process and the continuum (*rgyud* : *tantra*) of the ground or causal phase, and the first of the three continuities (*rgyud gsum*) whose *locus classicus* is said to be the supplemental tantra (*uttaratantra*) of the *Guhyasamāja*.[18] Such identifications reveal the extent to which Rang byung rdo rje and his successors looked for doctrinal common ground among discourses on the nature of mind found in the sūtras, tantras and Siddha works in order to highlight regions of shared soteriological concern and semantic reference.

Rang byung rdo rje equates the impure mind with the ālayavijñāna, which is taken, following texts such as the *Abhidharmasamuccaya* and **Mahāyānasaṃgraha*, to refer to the source of all obscurations, but *not* of *buddhajñāna* which, conversely, is identified as what destroys the ālayavijñāna.[19] Rang byung rdo rje's Rnying ma colleague Klong chen rab 'byams pa drew a similar distinction between pure mind (*sems dag pa*) and impure mind (*sems ma dag pa*) and further subdivided pure mind into pure mind as such (*sems nyid dag pa*) and pure mind (*sems dag pa*) in order to underscore how the "pure" applications of ordinary mind – ethical and contemplative

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[14] *Zab mo nang don rang 'grel*, 381_{3-4}: *theg pa thams cad kyi spyi skad la sems nyid ces gsungs kyang | dag pa dang bcas pa dang | ma dag pa gnyis su shes par bya |* For a lucid summary of this distinction, cf. K. Mathes, *A Direct Path...*, pp. 57–59.

[15] Note that the original (ed. M. Shahidullah, *Les chants mystiques de Kāṇha et de Sahara: Les Dohākoṣa (en apabhraṃśa, avec les versions tibétaines) et les Caryā (en vieux bengali)*, Paris, pp. 140) has *citta*, while Tibetan Bstan 'gyur editions generally have *sems nyid* (not just *sems* as one might expect). The *nyid* may have originally been added for metrical reasons.

[16] For a translation and discussion of this passage in relation to Rang byung rdo rje's interpretation, see K. Mathes, *A Direct Path...*, p. 57.

[17] "That Mind is not [dualistic] mind; Mind's nature is luminous." The corresponding passage from the Sanskrit is given in L. Schmithausen, *Textgeschichtliche Beobachtungen zum 1. Kapitel der* Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā [in:] *Prajñāpāramitā and Related Systems: Studies in Honor of Edward Conze*. Ed. Lewis Lancaster and Luis O. Gómez. Berkeley Buddhist Studies Series 1, Berkeley 1977, p. 41 as lines E.b.1–2 *tathā hi tac cittam acittam | prakṛtiś cittasya prabhāsvarā | |.* Note, however, that the introductory words *tathā hi* are not rendered in the Tibetan translation.

[18] According to colophonic information appended to this text in different editions of the *Rnying ma rgyud 'bum*, the *Guhyasamāja mūlatantra* (GST) was translated by Vimalamitra and Ska ba dpal brtsegs circa the 8th century, whereas the appended *uttaratantra* (Ch. 18), known in Tibetan as *Gsang 'dus rgyud phyi ma* ("Later *Guhyasamāja*"), was translated later by Buddhaguhya and 'Brog mi dpal ye shes. Cf. R. Mayer, Pelliot tibétain 349: A Dunhuang Tibetan Text on rDo rje Phur pa. *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 27/1, 2004, p. 130 n. 4.

[19] *Zab mo nang don rang 'grel*, 382_{4-5}: "[The ālayavijñāna] is the root of all obscurations; it is what is to be destroyed by *buddhajñāna*"*...sgrib pa thams cad kyi rtsa ba sangs rgyas kyi ye shes kyis gzhom par bya ba yin no |*

– that are conducive to goal-realisation differ from the primordially pure nature of mind, which is the state of realisation itself. Rang byung rdo rje also advocated a key distinction between supramundane mind (*'jigs rten las 'das pa'i sems* : *lokottaracitta*) and mundane mind – the ālayavijñāna with its eightfold consciousness (*kun gzhi tshogs brgyad*) – in his *Zab mo nang don* with reference to **Mahāyānasaṃgraha* 1.45–48[20] as well as in his *Dharmadhātustava* commentary to stanza 46ab, which states that mind is observed to have two aspects, the mundane and transmundane.[21] The idea that there is a mode of consciousness more fundamental than ālayavijñāna was implicit in the distinction between ālayavijñāna and supramundane mind that was famously elaborated in the above-mentioned **Mahāyānasaṃgraha* passage (MS 1.45–48).[22]

Sthiramati drew a similar distinction between ālayavijñāna and the supramundane *jñāna* (*lokottarajñāna* : *jigs rten las 'das pa'i ye shes*) which overturns or replaces it (*parāvṛtti*) in his commentary on *Triṃśikā* 29–30.[23] Building on the Third Karma pa Rang byung rdo rje's distinction between pure and impure minds, the Karma pa's commentator Dwags ram pa Chos rgyal bstan pa (1449–1524) had reaffirmed that the so-called pure mind (*dag pa'i sems*) which is identified as the causal continuum (*rgyu rgyud*) of tantrism and pure all-ground wisdom (*dag pa kun gzhi ye shes*) is to be differentiated from the ālayavijñāna, which constitutes impure mind (*sems ma dag pa'i kun gzhi rnam shes*).[24] Citing MS 1.45–48 in support of this view, he further notes that "this MS text specifically characterises the ālayavijñāna as the basis of sentient being (*sems can gyi gnas*) but says it is *not* the cause of *nirvāṇa* (*mya ngan las 'das pa'i rgyu*)."[25] But if this is the case, what does produce the qualities of purification (*rnam par byang ba'i chos* : *vyavadānadharma*)? To this rejoinder, Dwags ram pa answers that "the entire range of qualities of purification depend on the all-ground wisdom (*kun gzhi ye shes*), the aforementioned pure mind."[26] He goes on to criticise certain Sa skya Lam 'bras followers who, having neither seen nor heard the MS passages cited above, assert that the ālayavijñāna is the causal continuum all-ground (*kun gzhi rgyu rgyud*), thereby exhibiting their own hidden flaws (of interpretation).[27]

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[20] *Vijñaptimātratāsiddhi*, p. 44; R. Davidson, *op.cit.*, p. 218 and n. 28 and K. Mathes, *A Direct Path...*, p. 58.

[21] *Chos dbyings bstod pa'i 'grel pa*, 61_1 ff., which comments on *Dharmadhātustava* 46ab: *sems nyid rnam pa gnyis su mthong | ci ltar 'jig rten 'jig rten 'das | |* For a diplomatic edition of the original Sanskrit text, see *Dharmadātustava*. *The Dharmadhātustava. A Critical Edition of the Sanskrit Text with the Tibetan and Chinese Translations, a Diplomatic Transliteration of the Manuscript and Notes*, Liu Zhen (ed.), China Tibetology Research Centre/Austrian Academy of Sciences, Sanskrit, texts from the Tibetan Autonomous Region no. 17. Beijing, Vienna 2015.

[22] R. Davidson, *op.cit.*, p. 215 and K. Mathes, *A Direct Path...*, p. 58.

[23] *Vijñaptimātratāsiddhi* (VMS), p. 44; cf. R. Davidson , *op.cit.*, p. 218 and n. 28.

[24] *Zab mo nang don sems kyi rnam par thar pa'i gsal ba'i rgyan*, MKsb vol. 12, 107_1–108_1 et passim.

[25] *Ibidem*, $111_{5–6}$: *theg bsdus kyi gzhung 'dis kun gzhi'i rnam par shes pa ni sems can gyi gnas khyad par can du brjod la | mya ngan las 'das pa'i rgyu ni ma yin par brjod do |*

[26] *Ibidem*, 111_6–112_1: *rnam par byang ba'i chos ji snyed pa ni sngar brjod pa'i dag pa'i sems kun gzhi ye shes la brten pa ste |*

[27] *Ibidem*, $114_{3–4}$.

It is in the light of such developments that one can assess Mi bskyod rdo rje's own interpretations of Rang byung rdo rje's distinction between pure and impure minds. A striking example is his *Reply to the Queries of Bla ma khams pa Concerning "One Person, Two Minds"* (*Bla ma khams pa'i dris lan mi gcig sems gnyis*), where he builds upon Rang byung rdo rje's distinction to clarify and validate his own differentiation between innate mind (*gnyug ma'i sems*) and adventitious mind (*glo bur gyi sems*).[28] This short text (edited and translated in the Appendix below) offers a lucid summary of the Eighth Karma pa's views in support of "a certain [unspecified] person's assertion that two minds exist separately and non-convergently within every sentient being."[29] We can detect in the Karma pa's affirmative answer – he deems this assertion to be fully "in accord with the enlightened intent of all the buddhas of the three times" – his characteristic blending of the key distinctions concerning buddha nature and the nature of mind that are integral elements of his interpretative standpoint.

To abridge the main points, Mi bskyod rdo rje begins by noting that Rang byung rdo rje explained in his *Zab mo nang don* auto-commentary that mind has both pure and impure modes, and that this is described in the *Ratnagotravibhāga* (RGV I.47) according to the three phases of impure, pure-impure and completely pure. As the Eighth Karma pa explains, the pure mode refers to self-aware wisdom free from obscurations (*sgrib bral rang rig pa'i ye shes*), whereas the "impure" refers to mundane consciousness that is deluded ignorance along with its obscurations (*sgrib bcas rmongs pa ma rig pa'i rnam par shes pa*). To sharpen the contrast between pure (innate) and impure (adventitious) modes of consciousness, he redeploys a distinction that was widely used by realist Buddhist philosophical schools: "when these are [taken] metaphorically as different 'entities', the former is the substantially existing entity (*rdzas yod kyi dngos po* : *dravyasat vastu*)[30] whereas the latter is a nominally existing entity (*btags yod kyi dngos po* : *prajñaptisat vastu*). This is because the former is buddha nature – innate, self-originated, and innately undeluded, whereas the

[28] Rheingans 2008 contains a short discussion of this text (220–221). The identity of the Bla ma khams pa is unknown, the colophon mentioning only that the text was composed in reply to a question by Bla ru bla ma, uncle and nephew (*bla ru bla ma khu dbon*) (J. Rheingans, *The Eighth Karmapa's Life and his Interpretation of the Great Seal*, unpublished PhD thesis, Bristol, p. 219 n. 9).

[29] *Bla ma khams pa'i dris lan mi gcig sems gnyis*, MKsb vol. 3, 220_{1-2}: *'o na sems can thams cad la sems gnyis ma 'dres par so sor yod pa de su zhig gis bzhed snyam na...* See also Appendix for translation and edited edition of this text.

[30] In Sarvastivāda Abhidharma philosophy, substantially existing entities are ultimate simples, anything that cannot be reduced either physically or conceptually into smaller units, such as indivisible particles of matter and indivisible moments of time. By contrast, nominally existing entities are anything physically or conceptually constructed that are therefore imputed and reducible to smaller units. The former are dharmas and possess intrinsic nature (*svabhāva*). The latter are not dharmas, being without intrinsic nature (*niḥsvabhāva*). Cf. *Abhidharmakośa* 6.4. According to this view, only momentary entities are substantially real, whereas the temporal series formed by them (*santāna*) are only nominally existing. Cf. A. Rospatt, *The Buddhist Doctrine of Momentariness: a Survey of the Origins and Early Phase of this Doctrine up to Vasubandhu*, Stuttgart 1995, p. 97; R.P. Hayes, *Principled Atheism in the Buddhist Scholastic Tradition*, [in:] *Indian Philosophy: A Collection of Readings*, R.W. Perrett (ed.), New York 2001, p. 113 (Originally published in "Journal of Indian Philosophy" 16 (1) 1988). It is worth noting that in Madhyamaka philosophy, all dharmas are nominally existent and none are substantially existent.

latter is the chaff [i.e. superfluous] part – adventitious defilement, innately deluded, and saṃsāric."[31]

In line with this linguistic convention, he goes on to say that when the sun of non-deluded wisdom which is substantially existent dawns, the dark shroud of the deluded nominally existent consciousness is dispelled. The Karma pa concludes that those who want to awaken to unsurpassed, complete and perfect buddhahood must accept innate mind and reject adventitious mind without mixing or confusing the two. "This is so," he maintains, "because the goal of complete purification is not attained by any path apart from that and because when one takes as a cause what is not a cause,[32] despite one's exertions, there is only exhaustion that is fruitless [i.e. has no result]."[33]

Now, in regard to the authentic or innate mind (*gnyug ma'i sems*) which equated with buddha nature in the mind-streams of sentient beings, the author describes it as a "boundless complex that is indivisible into the categories of 'consciousness' and 'wisdom'."[34] On the other hand, he continues, "the mind of adventitious stains may have been arbitrarily described using the terms 'wisdom' or 'consciousness': extensively, as the eightfold ensemble (Yogācāra); more concisely as the sixfold ensemble (non-Yogācāra) and, most succinctly, as nothing more than a single complex because it is a limited cognition that sees a limited object of knowledge."[35]

3. The problem of reconciling differentiation and unity

At this point, a question unavoidably arises: "if the innate and adventitious minds exist separately but nonconvergently in the continuum of a single individual, does this not contradict [Sgam po pa's] precept that 'thoughts themselves are *dharmakāya*'?"[36] In other words, if ordinary thoughts are fundamentally distinct from *dharmakāya* – as would appear to follow from the sharp distinctions drawn between innate and adventitious mind streams, and between buddha nature and adventitious stains – this would seem at first glance to preclude Sgam po pa's assertion that thoughts are in essence not different from *dharmakāya*. The ramifications of this question are far-reaching. For if these two central doctrines turn out to be mutually contradictory, does this not

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[31] *Bla ma khams pa'i dris lan mi gcig sems gnyis*, MKsb vol. 3, 221_{1-3}: *'di nyid kyang tha snyad du dngos po tha dad pa las | snga ma ni rdzas yod kyi dngos po dang | phyi ma ni btags yod kyi dngos po yin te | snga ma ni gnyug ma rang byung lhan cig skyes pa ma 'khrul pa bde gshegs snying po dang | phyi ma ni glo bur gyi dri ma lhan cig skyes pa 'khrul pa 'khor ba shun pa'i cha yin pa'i phyir ro |*

[32] That is, if one takes the adventitious mind as the cause or basis of awakening.

[33] *Bla ma khams pa'i dris lan mi gcig sems gnyis*, MKsb vol. 3, 221_{5}: *...rgyu min la rgyur bzung nas 'bad kyang ngal ba 'bras bu med pa nyid kyi phyir |*

[34] *Ibidem*, 221_{5}: *...rnam shes dang ye shes kyi ris su bye ba med pa tshogs mtha' yas...*

[35] *Ibidem*, 221_{6}–222_{1}: *glo bur dri ma'i sems ni ye shes sam rnam shes ming gang rung du brjod kyang rung | mang na tshogs brgyad dang nyung na tshogs drug dang | ches bsdud na tshogs gcig las 'da' ba med de | shes bya nyi tshe mthong ba'i shes pa nyi tshe ba yin pa'i phyir | |*

[36] *Ibidem*, 222_{1}:*'o na gang zag gcig gi rgyud la gnyug ma dang glo bur gyi sems gnyis ma 'dres par so sor yod na rnam rtog chos skur smra ba dang 'gal*[a] *lo zhes na |* [a] text: *'ga'*

point to a fundamental incompatibility, or even incommensurability, between the differentiation and unity models of goal-realisation?

Mi bskyod rdo rje's response to this quandary, cryptic though it is, gives important clues on the specific type of unity (*yuganaddha*) model he endorses and how it can resolve the apparent inconsistencies: "There is no contradiction," he replies, "because the thoughts of adventitious mind do not exist as fundamentally different from the *dharmakāya* of innate mind, but that mind which exists only as conceptual superimposition, therefore has no independent existence, even *conventionally*, apart from *dharmakāya*. Hence 'thoughts themselves are indeed *dharmakāya*'."[37] The author further clarifies this doctrine in his MA commentary: "When this Madhyamaka view [of Dwags po Bka' brgyud Mahāmudrā] is born in one's mind-stream, it is called 'eliciting natural awareness' (*tha mal gyi shes pa mngon du mdzad*) or 'directly realising *dharmakāya*' (*chos sku mgnon sum du byas*). When it is realised that the phenomenal (*chos can*), such a sprout and the thoughts [about it], are not established [as anything] apart from their nature of phenomena (*chos nyid*), this was termed the 'arising of thoughts as *dharmakāya*'."[38] Put simply, thoughts *are dharmakāya* in the specific sense that they are phenomenal (*chos can*) expressions of the nature of phenomena (*chos nyid*): they are discursive superimpositions which both derive and deviate from their prediscursive source.

Returning to the dialogue, Bla ma Khams pa next asks what is meant by "innate mind," to which the Karma pa answers that it is natural awareness (*tha mal gyi shes pa*) in one's own mind-stream in the present moment. In response to the ensuing question of whether the "two minds" thesis makes claims (in tantric and Siddha discourses) about the inseparability (*dbyer med*) or equality (*mnyam nyid*) of *saṃsāra* and *nirvāṇa* problematic, he replies "this is not a problem, because phenomena of the saṃsāric and nirvāṇic minds are both conventionally alike in being separate and nonconvergent", and yet they are inseparable inasmuch as "the very nature of the saṃsāric and nirvāṇic minds is ultimately present as a great openness and equality, inseparable in their freedom from discursive elaborations." To summarise, Mi bskyod rdo rje advocates a model of unity (*yuganaddha*) characterised by an asymmetrical priority relation between the terms of the relation: adventitious mind is inseparable from innate mind insofar as it exists only nominally, that is, as a superfluous superimposition or epiphenomenon that resolves into the innate mind – i.e. its very nature, *dharmakāya* – at the time of goal-realisation. Until such time, these two modes are present *concurrently but nonconvergently* in the mind-streams of sentient beings.

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[37] *Ibidem*, 222_{1-3}: *...mi 'gal te | glo bur gyi sems rnam rtog de gnyug ma'i sems chos sku las rdzas gzhan du med cing rtog pas btags pa tsam du yod pa'i sems de ni chos sku las gzhan tha snyad du'ang rang dbang pa min pa'i phyir | rnam rtog nyid chos skur gyur to | |*

[38] *Dwags brgyud grub pa'i shing rta*, 12_{2-6}: *'di'i dbu ma'i lta ba rgyud la skyes pa na tha mal gyi shes pa mngon du mdzad ces pa dang | chos sku mgnon sum du byas zer ba dang | chos can myu gu dang rnam rtog sogs de dag de'i chos nyid las gzhan du ma grub par rtogs pa na rnam rtog chos skur shar ba zhes tha snyad mdzad nas |...*

4. Clarifying the relationship between consciousness and wisdom

The Eighth Karma pa elsewhere consecrates considerable attention to another key distinction, between consciousness (*rnam shes*) and wisdom (*ye shes*), which played a central role in the Third Karma pa's tantric and non-tantric Mahāyāna exegesis. The sixth chapter of Rang byung rdo rje's *Zab mo nang gi don*, a detailed exposition on body, mind and cosmos according to the Highest Yoga tantras (*bla na med pa'i rnal 'byor gyi rgyud*), is devoted to clarifying the complex relationship between *rnam shes* and *ye shes* and the transition between them.[39] The distinction is further clarified in his *Treatise on Distinguishing Consciousness and Wisdom* (*rnam shes ye shes 'byed pa'i bstan bcos*),[40] which details the fundamental transformation of the eightfold consciousness into the four modes of wisdom as elaborated in *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra* IX.67 f. (and IX.42 f.),[41] which was expanded to five in the *Kālacakra* and other Higher Yoga tantras.[42]

The distinction between *vijñāna* (*rnam shes*) and *jñāna* (*ye shes*) has a long history in Indian Buddhism,[43] an early and influential example being its occurrence as the fourth of four "recourses" (*pratisaraṇa* : *rton pa*) of textual hermeneutics – namely, the injunction "to rely on wisdom, not on consciousness" – which were outlined in the *Catuḥpratisaraṇasūtra* and widely quoted from the *Abhidharmakośavyākhyā* onward.[44] In this regard, the *Bodhisattvabhūmi* comments that the four truths are not understood merely through discursive knowledge (*vijñāna*) gained by study and

[39] Cf. Rang byung rdo rje, RDsb vol. 7, 355 f.

[40] *Ibidem*, vol. 7, pp. 269–276. For a translation of this treatise, along with Kong sprul Blo gros mtha' yas' commentary, cf. Brunnhölzl 2009.

[41] The classification of four states of mind – waking, dreaming, deep sleep and the fourth state – can be traced to the Upaniṣads, and is a major theme of the *Mandukya Upaniṣad*. It has been suggested that the *Kālacakra* association of the first three states with the three *guṇas*/*doṣas* of Brahmanical Sāṃkhya and Ayurvedic systems – *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* respectively – represents one of its many striking similarities with Indian non-Buddhist systems, especially nondual Kaśmīr Śaivaite tantrism. A crucial difference, however, is that the Śaivaite tantras portray the fourth state of self-realisation in which one realises the essential Self (ātman) and thereby transcends ignorance, whereas the *Kālacakra* specifies that the fourth state, although nondual at the time of sexual emission, is still tainted by latent tendencies of ignorance, and must therefore be eliminated in order to attain wisdom (*jñāna*) and supreme bliss (*mahāsukha*). Cf. V.A. Wallace, *The Inner Kālacakratantra a Buddhist Tantric View of the Individual*, New York 2001, pp. 36–38, 156–157 et passim.

[42] Cf. K. Mathes, *op.cit.*, p. 262 f.

[43] The reviewer of this paper pointed out that this distinction also has a long history in the Brāmaṇical tradition and can be traced at least as far back as the epic literature. There, "when vijñāna and jñāna are opposed, the first is usually the ordinary knowledge, whereas the second is the supramunane knowledge of the true nature of things (ātman, God etc.)" (from reviewer's comments).

[44] The classic study of these four principles, literally "recourses" (*pratisaraṇa* : *rton pa*), is É. Lamotte, *The Assessment of Textual Interpretation in Buddhism*, "Buddhist Studies Review" 1985, vol. 2, no. 1. There he renders *vijñāna* as "discursive consciousness" and *jñāna* as "direct knowledge". The fourth recourse was said to encompass the first three: [1] rely on the teachings, not the person; [2] rely on the meanings, not the words; [3] rely on definitive meanings, not provisional meanings.

reflection, but through direct knowledge (*jñāna*) based on meditation.[45] Mention should also be made of Candrakīrti's distinction in the *Prasannapadā* (on MMK XXV.16) between *jñāna* (*ye shes*) and *vijñāna* (*rnam shes*) which La Valleé Poussin, in his critical edition of MMK, glosses as "intuitif" and "discursif" respectively.[46] However, as with the parallel distinctions between *sems/sems nyid*, *sems/ye shes* and *sems/rig pa* that are also extensively developed in Rnying ma exegesis, the search for Indian antecedents typically turns up only scattered references, and seldom the kind of rigorous philosophical treatment that such distinctions received in the hands of their Tibetan interpreters, especially those in the Bka' brgyud and Rnying ma schools.

In a number of exegetical contexts, Mi bskyod rdo rje protests that the distinction between ordinary consciousness (*rnam shes* : *vijñāna*) and wisdom (*ye shes* : *jñāna*) was not always adequately drawn in Indian texts, and deems this to be a source of significant confusion. A case in point is his objection in his *Madhyamakāvatāra* (MA) commentary to the tendency he observes in classical Yogācāra-Cittamātra texts (unfortunately these are not specified) to confuse the definitions of consciousness (*rnam shes*) and wisdom (*ye shes*), thereby blurring the difference between them. He hints that this tradition's lack of terminological specificity and vagueness regarding the criteria which are sufficient or necessary for the application of terms referring to dualistic and nondualistic modes of cognition may be attributed to its proclivity to treat mind as a real entity. Of the Alīkākāravāda Cittamātra thinkers, he says "since you did not grasp the essential and specific properties[47] of what is meant by "apprehended-apprehending" and thus took [it] as the meaning of "consciousness" (*rnam shes*) or "awareness" (*rig pa*), you imputed that which is only [ordinary] knowledge (*shes pa*) to "wisdom" (*ye shes*) and proceeded to aggrandise it to [the status of] a truly established ultimate."[48] The author proceeds to offer a genealogical analysis of the roots of this lack of terminological specificity in Indian Cittamātra works, and relates this to the problems faced by Tibetan translators of Buddhist terms for cognition:

> Thus, there are limitless terms in Cittamātra texts for [nondual knowledge], some calling it nondual knowing (*gnyis med kyi shes pa*), some calling it nondual wisdom (*gnyis med kyi ye shes*), some calling it mere knowledge without duality (*gnyis su med pa'i shes pa tsam*) and some [others] calling it nondual mind and awareness (*gnyis med kyi blo dang rig pa*). Should one think "what is the point of such occurrences?", the verbal root *jñā* was rendered as knowledge (*shes pa*) or restricted to transcendent knowledge (*mkhyen pa*),[49] while the terms *saṃjñāna* and *vijñāna* [etc.] were rendered according to context as correct knowledge (*yang dag par shes pa*), thorough knowledge (*kun nas shes pa*), elevated knowledge (*rab tu shes pa*), consciousness

[45] This paraphrases the passage from *Bodhisattvabhūmi* (BBh, 257) as translated in É. Lamotte, *The Assessment of Textual Interpretation...*, p. 24 n. 43.

[46] MMK, 533.8–17. We thank Dr Anne MacDonald for first drawing our attention to this passage. Cf. A. MacDonald, *Knowing Nothing: Candrakīrti and Yogic Perception* [in:] *Yogic Perception, Meditation and Altered States of Consciousness*, E. Franco, D. Eigner (ed.), Wien 2009, pp. 163–164.

[47] We have taken *ngo khyad* as a coordinative compound for *ngo bo dang khyad par*.

[48] *Dwags brgyud grub pa'i shing rta*, 33_{1-3}: *gzung 'dzin gyi don gyi ngo khyad 'dzin pa med pas rnam shes sam rig pa'i don la zhugs pas shes tsam de la ye shes su btags nas de don dam bden grub tu rlom pa...*

[49] *Mkhyen pa* is the honorific of *shes pa* and refers to the special knowledge of a realised *arhant* or *buddha*.

> (*rnam par shes pa*), wisdom (*ye shes*) and so forth. Apart from [such cases], neither the classical scriptures nor the grammatical [treatises] etc. [said] anything at all about the need to lexically delimit cases where "mind" or "cognition" in Cittamātra accounts referred to [ordinary] consciousness (*rnam shes*) and where "mind" or "cognition" in Madhyamaka accounts referred to "wis-dom" (*ye shes*). Therefore, since "consciousness" could have the sense of the term "wisdom", while "wisdom" could have the sense of the term "consciousness", it was not [observed] that the applications of these two definitions are completely in-compatible [with one another].[50]

Mi bskyod rdo rje here identifies semantic vagueness, specifically *criterial vagueness*, as a source of certain basic category errors pertaining to the nature and structure of human cognition.[51] His student and secretary Gtsug lag phreng ba (1504–1566) adds to this assessment his own observation that early Tibetan translators (during the Royal Dynastic Period, ca. 7th–9th c. CE) found it necessary to variously render *jñāna* as *shes pa* ("cognition") or *rnam shes* ("consciousness") when describing the cognition of a sentient being, and as *ye shes* ("primordial knowing") when describing the cognition of a buddha, there being no such difference conspicuous in the original term:

> In general, there were imperial edicts requiring scholar-translators to translate the term *jñāna* as *rnam shes* or *shes pa* when referring to the cognition of a sentient being or as *ye shes* when referring to the cognition of a buddha, despite there being no [such] distinction [specified] in the original [Sanskrit] term... Hence, the debate over whether or not buddhas have *jñāna* is a parochial way of thinking. From the standpoint of the *pratyavekṣaṇa*[*jñāna*], they cannot be imputed as *not* having it, while from the standpoint of the *dharmadhātujñāna*, they cannot be imputed as having it.[52]

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[50] *Dwags brgyud grub pa'i shing rta*, $34_{1–13}$: *des na sems tsam gyi gzhung la lar gnyis med kyi shes pa dang | la lar gnyis med kyi ye shes dang | la lar gnyis su med pa'i shes pa dang | la lar gnyis med kyi blo dang rig pa zhes sogs mtha' klas par 'byung la | de ltar 'byung ba'i gnad ci snyam na |* jñā zhes pa shes pa'am mkhyen pa tsam la 'jog pa dang | *saṃ jñā na dang bi jñā na zhes 'byung ba yang dag par shes pa dang | kun nas shes pa dang | rab tu shes pa dang | rnam par shes pa dang | ye shes sogs skabs thob kyis sbyar ba ma gtogs sems tsam pa 'dod pa'i sems sam shes pa la rnam shes zhes nges bzung gi sgra sbyor dgos pa dang | dbu ma pa 'dod pa'i sems sam shes pa la ye shes kyi sgra sbyor dgos pa'i nges bzung gsung rab dang sgra rig sogs 'gar yang med do | des na rnam shes kyang ye shes sgra don can yin la | ye shes kyang rnam shes kyi sgra don can yin pas | de gnyis sgra don 'jug pa gtan 'gal ba ni ma yin no | |*

[51] As Philip Devos argues, semantic vagueness is an inherent semantic language phenomenon. That is, it is a *language* phenomenon, and not an extra-linguistic one, given that vagueness cannot be imputed to objects or the world. And it is a *semantic* phenomenon, not a pragmatic one (i.e. the intentional use of semantic vagueness, for example the use of "collateral damage" as a euphemism for state-sanctioned manslaughter). Cf. Devos 2003, 123–124. Words are vague when their semantic scope is unclear. This happens in at least these two ways: [1] *vagueness in criteria* – the inherent indeterminacy or uncertainty regarding the criteria used in the application of a word. E.g. what activities are included in "sport". [2] *vagueness in degree* – the degree or extent that determines when we can or cannot apply words. E.g. when does one become "old"?; how close does someone have to live to be a "neighbour"? Ibid., 124–125. The Eighth Karma pa indeed appears to be claiming that Buddhist terms for cognition, especially as deployed in certain Cittamātra texts, are characterised by criterial vagueness, which is a function not only of their polysemy (multiple possible meanings of a single term) but also their semantic indeterminacy, "a phenomenon in which one single word meaning refers to a segment of reality which is further cognitively divisible and specifiable into smaller and clearer segments" (Devos, ibid., 130).

[52] *Byang chub sems dpa'i spyod pa la 'jug pa'i rnam par bshad pa*, 764.5 f.: *...spyir dznya na'i sgras sems can gyi shes pa brjod tshe shes pa'am rnam shes dang sangs rgyas kyi shes pa brjod tshe ye shes su bsgyur dgos par lo pan gyis bka' sa bcad pa yin gyi skad dod tha dad med la |...*

In other words, the early Tibetan translators recognised that the polysemy of Indian Buddhist terms for cognition presented early Tibetan translators with a significant problem for translation and understanding so long as the semantic ranges of specific uses of terms were not carefully drawn and the criteria sufficient and necessary for using such terms consistently applied. One way, therefore, that early translators sought to ameliorate this type of semantic indeterminacy was by introducing a number of Tibetan renderings of a single Sanskrit term (*jñāna*, *vidyā* etc.) and employing these variants in translating the terms according to the specific contexts in which they had been used.

For Mi bskyod rdo rje, the distinction between wisdom and consciousness is not only a cornerstone of Buddhist thought and practice in general, but also an indispensable key point in his own Bka' brgyud Mahāmudrā tradition's instructions on recognising the nature of mind. The Eighth Karma pa therefore reserved some of his harshest criticisms for those among his coreligionists who had, in his eyes, failed to adequately distinguish the innate and adventitious modalities of consciousness. In the second and final part of this study, I will turn my attention to some of Mi bskyod rdo rje's polemical criticisms of Tibetan scholars, whom he accused of conflating aspects of consciousness with aspects of wisdom.

Appendix

Translation and critical edition of mi bskyod rdo rje's *two minds in one person? A reply to the queries of bla ma khams pa (bla ma khams pa'i dris lan mi gcig sems gnyis)*

Introductory Remarks: This short text addresses the question of whether a single person has two distinct modes of consciousness. The Karma pa answers affirmatively that a single human being does indeed possess two concurrent yet nonconvergent mind-streams: an innate mind (*gnyug ma'i sems*), which is "innate, self-originated, and innately undeluded" and identified with the ever-present buddha nature, and an adventitious mind (*glo bur gyi sems*), which is identified with adventitious stains. He adds, however, that the difference between them obtains only so long as the innate mind remains shrouded by adventitious mind. In reality, adventitious mind has no autonomous existence apart from *dharmakāya*, its nature being nothing else, and it dissipates into the latter at the time of realisation. This point of clarification enables the author to maintain a strong conventional distinction between innate and adventitious minds while at the same time upholding Sgam po pa's precept that thoughts themselves are *dharmakāya*. It also makes room for the Madhyamaka and Vajrayāna principle that *saṃsāra* and *nirvāṇa* (and the kinds of minds constitutive of each) are ultimately inseparable, both being beyond elaborations (*spros bral*).

The only known and extant edition of the *Bla ma khams pa'i dris lan mi gcig sems gnyis* was used in preparing the following translation and critical text:

MKsb: *Mi bskyod rdo rje gsung 'bum*, vol. 3, pp. 219–23.

3a. English Translation of *Bla ma khams pa'i dris lan mi gcig sems gnyis*

Two Minds in One Person? A Reply to the Queries of Bla ma khams pa[53]

I prostrate to Śrī Mahāmudrā for the sake of conveying this heart-lancet treatise on the unmingled coexistence of two minds in the continuum of all sentient beings.

Now if one thinks about a certain person's assertion that two minds exist separately and nonconvergently within every sentient being, this assertion is identical with the intent of all the buddhas of the three times. This was declared with the same voice by the 'Bri gung pa 'Jig rten gsum gyi mgon po, and it was also asserted by the Great Karma pa Rang byung rdo rje. According to [his] commentary on the root text of the *Zab mo nang don*, the pure is described as mind and the impure is [also] described as mind.[54] As for explaining the first of these two, [the *Ratnagotravibhāga* 1.47] states:

[53] This figure's identity remains unknown. See note 28.

[54] This is a paraphrase of a passage in *Zab mo nang don rang 'grel*, RDsb vol. 7, $382_{2–3}$: "[Mind] is explained in many ways among the tantras and treatises. It is described as that possessing purity. In

According to the phases of being impure,
Partly pure and partly impure, and completely pure,
One speaks of a sentient being, a bodhisattva
And a Tathāgata [Thus-gone].

To explain the second, [the *Zab mo nang don* 1.1] states:

As for the cause, it is the beginningless nature of mind,
Although uncurtailed in scope and not falling into bias,
From [the perspective of] its unimpeded play,
It is empty in essence, luminous in nature and
Unimpeded in aspects, manifesting as anything.
[Thus,] it does not recognise itself by itself.[55] [221]

In terms of this explanation, the first mind is self-aware wisdom free from obscurations. The second is consciousness that is delusional ignorance possessing obscurations.

[Now,] from these being conventionally [taken as] different "entities", the former is the substantially existing entity (*rdzas yod kyi dngos po* : *dravyasat vastu*),[56] whereas the latter is a nominally existing entity (*btags yod kyi dngos po* : *prajñaptisat vastu*). This is because the former is buddha nature – innate, self-originated, and innately undeluded, whereas the latter is the chaff [i.e. superfluous] part – adventitious defilement, innately deluded, and saṃsāric. Now, in terms of linguistic convention, when the sun of undeluded substantially existing wisdom dawns, the dark shroud of deluded nominally existing consciousness is dispelled. When those who want to awaken to unsurpassed, complete and perfect buddhahood engage in accepting and rejecting these two "minds" [respectively] without mixing them up, by this training, they are fully awakened. This is so because the result of complete purification is not attained by any path apart from that and because when one takes as a cause what is not a cause,[57] despite one's exertions, there is only exhaustion that is fruitless [i.e. has no result].

Now, the mind that is buddha nature in the mind-streams of sentient beings is a limitless and immeasurable whole that is indivisible into categories of "consciousness" and "wisdom". However, the adventitious mind may have been arbitrarily described using the terms "wisdom" or "consciousness": if [described] extensively, it is

describing the impure as 'mind', it is what is called ālayavijñāna." *...rgyud dang bstan bcos rnams las kyang mang du gsungs pa ni dag pa dang bcas pa brjod pa yin no | | ma dag pa la sems su brjod pa ni kun gzhi'i rnam par shes pa zhes gsung pa gang yin pa ste |*

[55] *Zab mo nang gi don*, RDsb vol. 7, 311_{1-2}.

[56] In *Abhidharma*, the substantially existing entity is any ultimate *simple*, anything that cannot be reduced either physically or conceptually into smaller units, whereas the nominally existing entity is anything physically or conceptually constructed that is therefore superfluous and reducible to smaller units. The former are *dharma*s and possess intrinsic nature (*svabhāva*). The latter are not *dharma*s, being without intrinsic nature (*niḥsvabhāva*). Cf. AK 6.4. According to this view, only momentary entities are substantially real, whereas the temporal series formed by them (*santāna*) has only nominal existence. Cf. A. Rospatt, *op.cit.*, p. 97.

[57] That is, "if one takes the adventitious mind as the cause or basis of awakening...".

the eightfold constellation [of Yogācāra traditions]; if more concisely, it is the sixfold constellation [of non-Yogācāra traditions], and if most succinctly, it is nothing more than a single constellation because it is a partial cognition that sees a partial object of knowledge.

Query: Well then, if the innate and adventitious minds exist separately and nonconvergent in the continuum of a single individual, does this not contradict [Sgam po pa's] precept that "thoughts themselves are *dharmakāya*"? *Reply*: There is no contradiction because the thoughts of adventitious mind do not exist as substantially other than the *dharmakāya* of innate mind, but that mind which exists only as conceptual imputations therefore has no independent existence, even conventionally, apart from *dharmakāya*. Thus "thoughts themselves are *dharmakāya*."

Query: What, then, is the innate mind? *Reply*: It is simply this natural awareness (*tha mal gyi shes pa*) in one's own mind-stream in the present moment.

Query: How is it now made manifest given that it has gone into the cover of adventitious mind that is deluded and contrived? *Reply*: Having put in place the set of relationships (*rten 'brel*) which separate the pure essence from the dregs so that all the contrived phenomena stemming from the contrived, deluded mind resolve into their source, this set of relationships falls into place naturally on its own.[58] Then that innate mind which is uncontrived and free from delusion manifests.

Query: Well then, if the two minds exist separately and nonconvergently, isn't it a problem to explain *saṃsāra* and *nirvāṇa* as being inseparable or equal? *Reply*: This is not a problem because both phenomena of the saṃsāric and nirvāṇic minds are conventionally equal in being separate and nonconvergent. But as for their inseparability, the very nature of the saṃsāric and nirvāṇic minds is ultimately present as a great openness and equality, inseparable in their freedom from discursive elaborations.

These words were [conveyed] in answer to questions relating to [the issue of] two minds [223] posed by Bla ru Bla ma uncle and nephew (*khu dbon*). By the virtue of the composition of [this response] by Karma pa Mi bskyod rdo rje in Zul phud,[59] I pray that innate mind may emerge from the sheath of adventitious defilements. One [question] asked. Ask another one!

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[58] Here, the Karma pa seems to be saying that by arranging or putting in place (*bsgrigs*; the *tha dad pa* verb form) the set of interdependent processes (*rten 'brel*) that enable one to separate the pure essence of innate mind from the dregs of adventitious mind, this set of processes falls into place (*'grig pa*; the *tha mi dad pa* verb form) or unfolds naturally on its own. In other words, the voluntary gives way to the involuntary.

[59] This may refer to Zul phu, the seat of a monastic college (*bshad grwa*) mentioned in 'Gos lo tsā ba's *Deb ther sngon po* (Roerich 1949, 80), which is said to have been founded by the early Vinaya master Bya 'dul 'dzin Brtson 'grus 'bar (1091–1166).

3b. Critical Text of *Bla ma khams pa'i dris lan mi gcig sems gnyis*

Bla ma khams pa'i dris lan mi gcig sems gnyis gzhugs so | | [220]

sems can thams cad kyi rgyud la sems gnyis ma 'dres par yod pa'i bstan bcos snying gi thur ma 'di brjod pa'i ched du dpal phyag rgya chen po la phyag 'tshal lo | | 'o na sems can thams cad la sems gnyis ma 'dres par so sor yod pa de su zhig gis bzhed snyam na bzhed pa de ni dus gsum gyi sangs rgyas thams cad kyi dgongs pa gcig tu gnas pa de 'jig rten gsum gyi mgon po 'bri gung pas dbyangs gcig gis gsung la | de nyid karma pa chen po rang byung rdo rjes kyang bzhed de | <u>zab mo nang don rtsa 'grel</u> las | dag pa la sems su bshad pa dang ma dag pa la sems su bshad pa gnyis las | dang po 'chad pa na |

ma dag ma dag dag pa dang | |
shin tu rnam dag go rim bzhin | |
sems can byang chub sems dpa' dang | |
de bzhin gshegs pa zhes brjod do | |

zhes dang | | gnyis pa 'chad pa na |

rgyu ni sems can thog med pa | |
rgya chad phyogs lhung ma mchis kyang | |
de nyid ma 'gags rol pa las | |
ngo bo stong la rang bzhin gsal | |
rnam pa 'gag[60] med cir yang 'char | |
de nyid rang gis rang ma rig | |

ces [221] 'byung ba'i phyir | sems dang po ni sgrib bral rang rig pa'i ye shes dang | gnyis pa ni sgrib bcas rmongs la ma rig pa'i rnam par shes pa'o | |

'di nyid kyang tha snyad du dngos po tha dad pa las | snga ma ni rdzas yod kyi dngos po dang | phyi ma ni btags yod kyi dngos po yin te | snga ma ni gnyug ma rang byung lhan cig skyes pa ma 'khrul pa bde gshegs snying po dang | phyi ma ni glo bur gyi dri ma lhan cig skyes pa 'khrul pa 'khor ba shun pa'i cha yin pa'i phyir ro |

'o na tha snyad du rdzas yod ma 'khrul pa'i ye shes kyi nyi ma shar ba na btags yod 'khrul pa rnam shes kyi mun pa drungs nas 'byin pa'i phyir | bla na med par yang dag par rdzogs par 'tshang rgya bar 'dod pa dag gis sems gnyis po 'di ma 'dres par blang dor du byas nas bslab pa de dag gis mngon par byang chub ste | de las gzhan pa'i lam gang gis kyang 'bras bu rnam par dag pa thob par mi 'gyur ba'i phyir te | rgyu min la rgyur bzung nas 'bad kyang ngal ba 'bras bu med pa nyhid kyi phyir | des na sems can gyi rgyud kyi bdeg gshegs snying po'i sems ni rnam shes dang ye shes kyi ris su dbye ba med pa tswhogs mtha' yas pa dang gzhal du med pa yin la | glo bur dri

[60] Ms.: *'gal*; *Zab mo nang don*: *'gag*

ma'i sems ni ye shes sam rnam shes ming gang rung du brjod kyang rung | mang na tshogs brgyad dang nyung na tshogs drug dang | ches bsdus na tshogs gcig las 'da' pa med de | shes [222] bya nyi tshe ba mthong ba'i shes pa nyi tshe ba yin pa'i phyir |

'o na gang zag gcig gi rgyud la gnyug ma dang glo bur gyi sems gnyis ma 'dres pa so sor yod na rnam rtog nyid chos skur smra ba dang 'gal[61] lo zhes na mi 'gal te | glo bur gyi sems rnam rtog de gnyug ma'i sems chos sku las rdzas gzhan du med cing rtog pas btags pa tsam du yod pa'i sems de ni chos sku las gzhan tha snyad du'ang rang dbang du grub pa min pa'i phyir | rnam rtog nyid chos skur gyur to | |

'o na gnyug ma'i sems ni gang zhe na de ni da ltar rang rgyud kyi tha mal gyi shes pa 'di'o | 'di la 'khrul bcas bcos ma glo bur gyi sems kyi klubs su chud pas da ji ltar mngon du bya snyam na | 'khrul bcas bcos ma'i sems 'di'i bcos chos 'di kun ma bcos ar drungs su bcug pa'i dvangs snyigs[62] phye ba'i rten 'brel bsgrigs nas rten 'brel de rang babs su 'grig pa na 'khrul bral ma bcos gnyug ma'i sems de 'char ba yin no | |

'o na sems gnyis so sor ma 'dres par yod na 'khor 'das dbyer med dam mnyam nyid du bshad pas skyon no zhe na mi skyon te | 'khor 'das kyi[63] sems kyi chos can gnyis ka kun rdzob du[64] so sor ma 'dres pa mnyam zhing | dbyer med kyang 'khor 'das kyi sems kyi chos nyid don dam par spros bral du dbyer med mnyam pa nyid gdal ba chen por grub pa'i phyir | zhes bya ba 'di bla ru bla ma khu dbon gyis [223] sems gnyis la brten pa'i dri lan du | karma pa mi bskyod rdo rjes zul phud du sbyar ba'i dge bas 'gro ba thams cad kyi gnyug ma'i sems glo bur dri ma'i spun nas thon pa'i phyir bsngo'o | | gcig gzhus so | yang gcig zhus | |

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1. Abbreviations

D: Derge edition of Bstan 'gyur, *The Tibetan Tripiṭaka*, Taipei Edition, Taipei 1991.
H: *Lhasa edition of the Bstan 'gyur*, Lhasa 1934.
P: Peking edition of Bstan 'gyur. *The Tibetan Tripiṭaka*, Peking Edition, Tokyo/Kyoto 1957.

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[61] Ms.: *'ga'*
[62] Ms.: *snyings*
[63] Ms.: *kyis*
[64] addit. as per *don dam par* on next line.

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_____ D: Derge Bka' 'gyur 110, *mdo sde*, vol. *cha*, 1–55b$_7$

_____ P: Peking Bka' 'gyur 778, *mdo sde*, vol. *cu*, 1–62b$_8$.

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Mi bskyod rdo rje, Karma pa VIII.

_____ *Bla ma khams pa'i dris lan mi gcig sems gnyis* [in:] MKsb, vol. 3, pp. 219–23.

_____ *Dgongs gcig 'grel pa* Ic. Full title*: Dpal rdzogs pa'i sangs rgyas karma pa mi bskyod rdo rje'i zhabs kyis skyob pa 'jig rten gsum gyi mgon po'i dbon mkhyen rab kyi dbang phyug rin chen rnam rgyal chos kyi grags pa la Dam pa'i chos dgongs pa gcig pa'i bshad pa'i gsung rgyun reg zig rgyal ba thams cad mkhyen pa nyid kyis zhal lung dri ma dang bral ba bdud rtsi'i 'dod ster grub pa'i dpyid thig gzhon nu bde ba'i lang tsho gar dgu'i sgeg pa kun mkhyen rab tu 'bar ba'i phung po bskal me 'jig byed ces bya ba tshoms dang po gzhan 'grel du mdzad pa*, [in:] MKsb vol. 4, pp. 885–1140.

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_____ RDsb, *Rang byung rdo rje gsung 'bum*, 16 vols. Ziling 2006.

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Siedem instytucji, jedna wspólnota

(Recenzja: Elżbieta Przybył-Sadowska, *Triuno. Instytucje we wspólnocie Lasek 1911–1961*, Kraków 2015, ss. 277).

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Książka *Triuno. Instytucje we wspólnocie Lasek 1911–1961* autorstwa Elżbiety Przybył-Sadowskiej poświęcona jest dziejom wspólnoty podwarszawskich Lasek w okresie obejmującym lata 1911–1961. Podjęty przez autorkę temat bez wątpienia zasługiwał na opracowanie monograficzne. Wprawdzie w dotychczasowej historiografii można znaleźć publikacje poruszające pośrednio lub bezpośrednio to zagadnienie, w większości jednak dotyczą one pojedynczych postaci lub instytucji, nie dają natomiast całościowego obrazu funkcjonowania wspólnoty, nie ukazują też jej specyfiki ani historycznego rozwoju. Na tle dotychczasowych publikacji książka *Triuno*... stanowi cenne monograficzne opracowanie, które cechuje nowatorskie ujęcie tematu. Ukazując historyczny proces rozwoju wspólnoty w Laskach oraz jej ewolucję, prezentuje ją jednocześnie jako zjawisko społeczne i religijne.

Książka składa się z siedmiu rozdziałów. Całość dopełnia zestaw 11 ilustracji zamieszczonych na stronach poprzedzających poszczególne rozdziały i przybliżających czytelnikowi opisywane „Dzieło Matki Czackiej" oraz osoby z nim związane.

Klasyczny wstęp autorka zastąpiła rozbudowanym wprowadzeniem, w ramach którego przedstawiła, w rzetelny i skrupulatny sposób, problematykę związaną ze złożoną strukturą przedstawianej wspólnoty (s.7–49). Co zrozumiałe, znalazło się tutaj także miejsce dla zagadnień metodologicznych. Na początku ukazano poszczególne „komponenty" tworzące wspólnotę w Laskach, omówiono specyfikę jej różnorodności w odniesieniu do innych tego rodzaju wspólnot występujących w Kościele katolickim, a na tym tle ogólnie zdefiniowano Laski jako wspólnotę religijną (s. 7–15). Następnie określono ramy chronologiczne książki, precyzyjnie wyjaśniając zarówno *terminus a quo*, jak i *terminus ante quem* (s. 15–16). Dalej zaprezentowano definicje wspólnoty w ujęciu socjologicznym i teologicznym oraz podjęto próbę ich odniesienia do Dzieła Lasek (s. 17–24). Następnie autorka zajęła się kwestiami metodologicznymi. Wyszczególniła wykorzystane metody oraz problemy, z jakimi

musi się zmierzyć każdy, kto podejmuje tego rodzaju zagadnienie badawcze (s. 24–29). Wprowadzenie zamyka omówienie materiału źródłowego, na którym została oparta publikacja (s. 29–42), a także przedstawienie dotychczasowego stanu badań (s. 42–49). Tak rozbudowane wprowadzenie, stanowiące w strukturze pracy niejako integralną cześć rozdziałów, pozwoliło autorce nie tylko uporządkować zagadnienia metodologiczne, ale – co ważne – wyposażyć czytelnika w zasób wiedzy i narzędzia niezbędne do pełniejszego zrozumienia istoty, rozwoju i funkcjonowania opisywanej instytucji.

Zasadniczą część książki otwiera rozdział *Towarzystwo Opieki nad Ociemniałymi (TOnO)* (s. 51–103). Został on podzielony na sześć podrozdziałów. Najpierw Elżbieta Przybył-Sadowska szczegółowo przedstawiła dzieje towarzystwa w latach 1911–1961, poprzedzając je genezą powstania przyszłej instytucji. Towarzystwo zostało utworzone z inicjatywy Róży Czackiej, przez nią samą oraz Stanisława Bukowieckiego, Aleksandra Jackowskiego, Wandę z Badeńskich Krasińską i Antoniego Górskiego (podrozdział I, s. 51–58). Następnie autorka ukazała pierwsze lata działalności Towarzystwa od 1911 do 1918 roku (podrozdział II, s. 58–63). Skoncentrowała się tutaj również na jego celach i zadaniach, do których należało przede wszystkim „niesienie wszechstronnej pomocy pozbawionym wzroku", a przez to – zmiana jakości życia niewidomych. W działania te wpisywał się patronat, czyli opieka nad niewidomymi w ich rodzinnych domach. Towarzystwo prowadziło szeroko rozumiane działania edukacyjne, łączące przekazywanie podstawowej wiedzy z nauką zawodu, co w dalszej perspektywie miało pozwolić niewidomym na niezależne utrzymanie. Wypełniając ten postulat, tworzono różnego rodzaju warsztaty z internatami dla dziewcząt i chłopców. W trzecim podrozdziale (s. 63–78) przedstawiono proces rozwoju instytucji w dwudziestoleciu międzywojennym (1918–1939). Autorka nie tylko skupiła się tutaj na rozwoju i zmianach organizacyjnych, jakie nastąpiły w tym okresie, ale także na radykalnej zmianie związanej z sytuacją finansową Towarzystwa. Po odzyskaniu niepodległości przez Polskę do kasy Towarzystwa zaczęły napływać zapisy i darowizny od osób prywatnych. Placówkę wspomogły dużą subwencją także władze odradzającego się państwa polskiego.

Drugą ważną zmianą, której autorka poświęca wiele uwagi, jest założenie nowego zgromadzenia, które miało wspierać Towarzystwo w jego pracy. Mowa tu o Zgromadzeniu Sióstr Franciszkanek Służebnic Krzyża (FSK), zatwierdzonym przez prymasa abp. Aleksandra Kakowskiego w listopadzie 1918 roku. W kolejnych akapitach tej części powraca osoba Róży Czackiej, tym razem już jako matki Elżbiety, w kontekście jej działań prowadzących do podkreślenia katolickiego charakteru Towarzystwa. Relację wzbogacono o cytaty zaczerpnięte z *Historii i zarysu organizacyjnego „Dzieła Lasek"* napisanej przez Założycielkę. Następnie autorka rozprawy omawia kolejne etapy rozwoju Towarzystwa, aż do momentu, kiedy mogło ono spełniać wszystkie postawione przez Założycielkę zadania. Elżbieta Przybył-Sadowska zwróciła uwagę między innymi na zmieniające się warunki lokalowe, powiązane z rozpoczęciem budowy zakładu w Laskach, oraz na powiększenie pod względem liczbowym, ale – co najważniejsze – także jakościowym grona współpracowników m. Czackiej. W drugim dziesięcioleciu istnienia Towarzystwa w Laskach zamieszkali między innymi:

Antoni Marylski, s. Katarzyna Sokołowska, s. Maria (Miriam) Gołębiowska, s. Teresa Landy, s. Katarzyna Steinberg, Zygmunt Serafinowicz i Henryk Ruszczyc.

Najboleśniejszy czas w dziejach podwarszawskiej wspólnoty, lata II wojny światowej, autorka opisała w czwartym podrozdziale (s. 78–86). Jak słusznie podkreśliła, wybuch wojny zahamował „dynamiczny rozwój Towarzystwa". W czasie kampanii wrześniowej Towarzystwo poniosło olbrzymie straty materialne, szacowane na 75 procent całego majątku. Szczęśliwie udało się uniknąć strat w ludziach. Przeżyli niemal wszyscy świeccy pracownicy, siostry i niewidomi pozostający w tym czasie pod ich opieką. Dodatkowo, zgodnie z prawem wprowadzonym przez okupanta, Towarzystwo formalnie przestało istnieć. Działało więc nieformalnie dzięki determinacji m. Elżbiety i pozostałych sióstr Zgromadzenia z s. Wacławą Iwaszkiewicz na czele. Mimo trudnych warunków Towarzystwu udało się otrząsnąć po zniszczeniach z pierwszego okresu wojny. Powrócono, w miarę możliwości, do realizacji wytyczonych wcześniej kierunków prac. Domy Towarzystwa w Laskach, Żułowie i Warszawie stały się miejscem pomocy charytatywnej i duszpasterskiej nie tylko dla ociemniałych, ale również dla miejscowej ludności. Schronienie znajdowali w nich uciekający przed aresztowaniami hitlerowców księża, a wśród nich ks. Stefan Wyszyński, ukrywający się przed Niemcami w Żułowie na Lubelszczyźnie od listopada 1941 do czerwca 1942 roku. Pomoc znajdowali tu także żołnierze Armii Krajowej.

W kolejnym podrozdziale (s. 86–98) autorka ukazała dzieje Towarzystwa w latach 1945–1961. Omawiając powojenną historię Lasek, zwróciła uwagę na reaktywację Towarzystwa w 1945 roku oraz na proces jego odbudowy. Wiele uwagi poświęciła zmaganiom z władzami w nowej rzeczywistości ustrojowej. Działania ówczesnego obozu rządzącego zmierzały do likwidacji lub marginalizacji roli zakładu. Do tego celu miały prowadzić podejmowane przez władze kilkukrotne próby przekształcenia placówki w szkołę dla dzieci upośledzonych umysłowo. Próby takie podejmowano chociażby w roku 1952 i 1958. Oprócz nacisków z zewnątrz, jak pisze badaczka, Towarzystwo Opieki nad Ociemniałymi musiało w tym czasie zmierzyć się z trudnościami wewnętrznymi. Były nimi choroba i śmierć duchowych przywódców wspólnoty: ks. Władysława Korniłowicza (zm. 26 września 1946) oraz m. Elżbiety Czackiej (zm. 15 maja 1961). W kolejnych akapitach powrócono po raz kolejny do osoby Matki Założycielki, a dokładnie do jej choroby i ostatnich decyzji zmierzających do uporządkowania spraw związanych z zarządzaniem Dziełem po śmierci.

W szóstym, a zarazem ostatnim podrozdziale (s. 98–102) została omówiona organizacja Towarzystwa. Autorka szczegółowo przeanalizowała statut, na podstawie którego instytucja funkcjonowała do końca interesującego nas okresu, czyli do 1961 roku. Statut ten uzyskał urzędowe zatwierdzenie przez ministra pracy i opieki społecznej Stanisława Jurkiewicza w dniu 24 marca 1928 roku. Obowiązywał na terenie całego kraju. Rozdział zamyka krótkie zakończenie, w którym autorka, podsumowując dotychczasowe badania, wprowadza czytelnika w kolejne części rozprawy.

Drugi rozdział książki nosi tytuł *Zgromadzenie Sióstr Franciszkanek Służebnic Krzyża (FSK)* (s. 105–161). W rozdziale tym, podzielonym na pięć podrozdziałów, w układzie chronologicznym przedstawiono historię Zgromadzenia w latach 1918–1961. Pierwszy (s. 105–121) został poświęcony genezie powstania Zgromadzenia

i omówieniu głównego jego zadania, którym, podobnie jak w przypadku Towarzystwa, miało być niesienie pomocy osobom niewidomym. Zrelacjonowano też początki funkcjonowania Zgromadzenia. Należy podkreślić, że było to pierwsze żeńskie zgromadzenie zakonne na ziemiach polskich erygowane tuż po odzyskaniu przez Polskę niepodległości. W drugim podrozdziale (s. 121–134) autorka zaprezentowała historię trudnych, z wielu względów, pierwszych lat istnienia zgromadzenia oraz proces największego jego rozwoju pod względem liczebnym, intelektualnym i formacyjnym. Rozpoczął się on w 1926 roku i trwał aż do wybuchu II wojny światowej. Znalazły się tutaj również bardzo istotne informacje na temat relacji między Towarzystwem a Zgromadzeniem. Określała je najpierw umowa ustna z 1923 roku, potem zaś umowa pisemna z 8 kwietnia 1935 roku.

Rozwój Zgromadzenia, jak wspomniano wyżej, zahamował wybuch wojny. Elżbieta Przybył-Sadowska pisze o tym w kolejnym podrozdziale (s.134–142). Okupacja przyniosła ogromne zmiany. Mimo trudnych warunków lokalowych konieczności opuszczania zajmowanych domów w poszukiwaniu bezpiecznego schronienia i ograniczeń władz okupacyjnych siostry nie zaniechały wykonywania swoich obowiązków. Jak podkreśla badaczka, „dzieląc losy całego Dzieła", „w różny sposób wspomagały Towarzystwo i poszczególnych jego członków w ich działalności, również tej konspiracyjnej, co w rzeczywistości oznaczało, że w oczach okupanta ponosiły, jako kierowniczki i właścicielki zakładu, odpowiedzialność za wszystko, co się działo na jego terenie" (s. 137). Co ważne, okres okupacji hitlerowskiej to także czas wytężonej pracy m. Czackiej nad nowymi konstytucjami Zgromadzenia, zatwierdzonymi w 1944 roku, oraz czas wzmożonych wysiłków formacyjnych. To także okres powstania nowych domów w miejscowościach Pniewo, Wojnów, Sobieszów i Pieścidła.

Dwa ostatnie podrozdziały ukazują dalszą historię Zgromadzenia, odpowiednio w latach 1945–1950 (podrozdział czwarty, s. 142–150) i 1950–1961 (podrozdział szósty, s. 150–161). Zwrócono w nich uwagę na zmiany personalne, jakie następowały w gronie osób współpracujących z Towarzystwem i Zgromadzeniem. Wspomniano między innymi o śmierci kierownika duchowego Zgromadzenia ks. W. Korniłowicza, o odejściu z Lasek pierwszego kapelana ks. Jana Ziei (kapłana przedwojennej diecezji pińskiej). Przedstawiono także etapy stopniowego procesu rezygnacji m. Elżbiety Czackiej z zarządzania Zgromadzeniem, począwszy od złożenia urzędu przełożonej generalnej Zgromadzenia Sióstr Franciszkanek w 1950 roku. Dodatkowo przeanalizowano decyzje podejmowane przez Matkę Założycielkę pod kątem ich wpływu na funkcjonowanie i wzajemne relacje Zgromadzenia i Towarzystwa, wskazując w końcu na wypracowanie modelu, w którym obie instytucje wspólnie podejmują wiążące decyzje. Narracja podrozdziałów została osadzona w szerszym tle historycznym odnoszącym się nie tylko do stosunków Państwo–Kościół w okresie powojennym, ale także do dziejów i realiów, w jakich przyszło funkcjonować Zgromadzeniu w nowej rzeczywistości politycznej. Należy zaznaczyć, że każdy z wymienionych powyżej wątków ujętych w dwóch pierwszych rozdziałach został omówiony w formie podrozdziałów. W związku z tym rozdziały te stanowią czytelny i logiczny ciąg wydarzeń uzasadniający *terminus a quo* recenzowanej pracy.

Ostatnich pięć rozdziałów stanowi niejako uzupełnienie rozdziałów pierwszego i drugiego, w ramach których zostały przedstawione, w ujęciu historycznym, kolejne instytucje wchodzące w skład „Dzieła" budowanego przez Założycielkę. Ich nazwy pokrywają się z tytułami rozdziałów. I tak w rozdziale trzecim zaprezentowano Trzeci Zakon św. Franciszka w Laskach (s. 163–169), w rozdziale czwartym Bibliotekę Wiedzy Religijnej (s. 173–181), w piątym „Kółko", czyli grupę intelektualistów skupioną wokół ks. W. Korniłowicza (s. 183–193). W kolejnym znajdują się informacje dotyczące „Verbum" rozumianego jako czasopismo wraz z dwoma innymi inicjatywami z nim związanymi: wydawnictwem i księgarnią, noszącymi tę samą nazwę (s. 195–211). W końcu w siódmym, ostatnim rozdziale opisano Dom rekolekcyjny w Laskach (s. 213–231). Nie wchodząc w szersze omawianie tego wieloaspektowego zagadnienia, należy jedynie podkreślić, że wszystkie te instytucje współdziałały z Towarzystwem na wiele sposobów. W pierwszej kolejności poprzez prace w jego zakładach, w drugiej poprzez umacnianie wspólnoty ideowej, wreszcie także poprzez szeroko rozumianą działalność apostolską.

Podsumowując wyniki swoich badań w zakończeniu (s. 233–237), Elżbieta Przybył-Sadowska zwróciła uwagę na trwałe rozrastanie się struktur instytucjonalnych we wspólnocie Lasek w omawianym okresie – od momentu powstania Towarzystwa Opieki nad Ociemniałymi, poprzez erygowanie kolejnych instytucji. Wszystko to zachodziło przy jednoczesnych przemianach instytucjonalnych i ideowych wszystkich składników „Dzieła". Główną rolę w tym procesie odegrały idee religijne. Nie tylko były one czynnikiem determinującym działania i wpływającym na ich rozmach, ale także istotnie pogłębiały zaangażowanie osób należących do wspólnoty. Jak napisała na samym końcu autorka:

> Właśnie idee napędzały działalność zarówno wewnątrz wspólnoty, jak i poza jej obrębem. Spójność wspólnoty ufundowanej na podstawach religijnych przy jednoczesnym jej otwarciu na tzw. świat zewnętrzny, wyrażającym się poprzez różne formy działalności nie tylko o charakterze religijnym, lecz także społecznym (choć z wyraźnym deklarowaniem ich religijnych założeń), ostatecznie sprawiły, że wspólnota Lasek stała się jednym z ważniejszych centrów odnowy katolickiej w dwudziestoleciu międzywojennym w Polsce i jednym z najbardziej twórczych środowisk katolickich w Polsce (s. 237).

W zakończeniu znalazło się także miejsce dla mocnego podkreślenia niepodważalnej roli osoby m. Czackiej i ks. W. Korniłowicza, a także ich wkładu w integrację instytucji tworzących wspólnotę, odnajdywanie dla nich właściwego miejsca w strukturze społeczności i wyznaczanie kierunków aktywności.

Książka Elżbiety Przybył-Sadowskiej niewątpliwie jest pracą pionierską. Jest to pierwsze całościowe ujęcie pierwszego półwiecza dziejów wspólnoty założonej przez m. Elżbietę Czacką. Jej rangę naukową podnosi baza źródłowa. Autorka wykorzystała źródła rękopiśmienne przechowywane w Archiwum Sióstr Służebnic Krzyża w Warszawie (w nim zespoły akt m. Czackiej (1876–1961) oraz księdza Władysława Korniłowicza (1884–1946)), w Archiwum Towarzystwa Opieki nad Ociemniałymi w Laskach i w Archiwum Biblioteki Tyflologicznej w Laskach. Autorka sięgnęła także do wielu źródeł drukowanych i wykorzystała – wydaje się, że kompletnie – liczne opracowania, skrupulatnie przywoływane w przypisach. Podziw budzi także

nienaganna narracja oraz strona edytorska publikacji. Jakkolwiek pewne zastrzeżenia można zgłosić do struktury pracy, a ściślej – do nierównomiernego rozłożenia materiału w poszczególnych rozdziałach, to jednak uwaga ta ma raczej charakter dyskusyjny i nie wpływa na końcową ocenę książki, a tę zdecydowanie należy uznać za wysoką. Elżbieta Przybył-Sadowska w pełni wywiązała się z niełatwego zadania określonego w tytule rozprawy i swym monograficznym opracowaniem w istotny sposób wypełniła dotychczasową lukę w historiografii Kościoła katolickiego w Polsce. Z tym większą niecierpliwością należy oczekiwać ukazania się drukiem zapowiedzianej przez autorkę we wprowadzeniu, kolejnej publikacji poświęconej środowisku Lasek zatytułowanej: *Triuno. Ludzie we wspólnocie Lasek 1911–1961*.

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Straszliwe boginie

(Recenzja: Małgorzata Oleszkiewicz-Peralba, *Fierce Feminine Divinities of Eurasia and Latin America: Baba Yaga, Kālī, Pombagira and Santa Muerte*, New York 2015, ss. 188).

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Małgorzata Oleszkiewicz-Peralba jest wykładowcą na Uniwersytecie San Antonio w Teksasie. Jej zainteresowania badawcze sytuują się w obrębie kultury i literatury latynoamerykańskiej. Specjalizuje się również w badaniach porównawczych, międzykulturowych oraz Gender Studies, czego dowodem jest między innymi jej poprzednia książka *The Black Madonna in Latin America and Europe: Tradition and Transformation*.

W książce *Fierce Feminine Divinities of Eurasia and Latin America: Baba Yaga, Kālī, Pombagira and Santa Muerte* autorka porównuje cztery boginie przynależące do różnych kręgów kulturowych. Swoje założenia badawcze i metodologiczne przedstawia we wprowadzeniu. Wskazuje, że chociaż analizowane przykłady dzielą obszary pochodzenia i czas, autorka zauważa wiele elementów wspólnych. Wszystkie poddane oglądowi przykłady bogiń są opisywane w źródłach jako pełne mocy, niezależne, mądre i odważne. Każda z nich związana jest z aspektem śmierci i narodzin, przekraczania światów i granic. Jak podkreśla autorka, w wypadku wszystkich analizowanych przykładów spotykamy również analogie w przedstawieniach ikonograficznych, co wyraża się w często pojawiających się atrybutach, takich jak ludzkie kości, czaszki czy węże. Zdaniem autorki boginie w swoim straszliwym aspekcie stają się upostaciowaniem liminalności – koncepcji, która w wymiarze antropologicznym została wieloaspektowo opisana przez Victora Turnera. Wskazują na to ich miejsca przebywania – są to często tereny marginalne, takie jak cmentarze (lub w wypadku Kali pola kremacyjne), lasy bądź rozdroża. Symbolika z nimi związana odnosi się do śmierci i odrodzenia. Ponadto wszystkie analizowane przykłady pochodzą z regionów świata uznawanych za marginalne, to jest wschodniej Europy, Azji Południowo-Wschodniej oraz Ameryki Łacińskiej.

Książka składa się z dwóch części, z których każda zawiera po dwa rozdziały. W części pierwszej, dotyczącej obszaru Eurazji, przedstawia Babę Jagę oraz hinduistyczną boginię Kali (Kālī). Źródłami dla rozdziału *Baba Yaga, the Witch from Slavic Fairy Tales* są słowiańskie, przede wszystkim rosyjskie, baśnie magiczne. Na podstawie elementów w nich występujących autorka rekonstruuje atrybuty Baby Jagi i symbolikę związaną z jej postacią. W ramach analizy odnosi się również do innych elementów folkloru słowiańskiego, między innymi polskiego wzornictwa ludowego. Dowodzi, że sposób opisywania Baby Jagi może być uznany za pozostałości kultu Wielkiej Bogini w folklorze słowiańskim, a ona sama może być interpretowana jako słowiańska bogini śmierci i odrodzenia. Drugi rozdział części dotyczącej bogiń Eurazji (*Kālī, the Ultimate Fierce Feminine*) poświęcony jest Kali. Autorka na podstawie analizy opracowań i tekstów źródłowych wnikliwie eksploruje wątki związane z manifestacją żeńskiej energii (śakti), posesjami oraz ikonograficznymi przedstawieniami bogini. Jednak jest to również rozdział najkrótszy, ubogi w materiał ikonograficzny w porównaniu z pozostałymi – co zaskakuje, zwłaszcza że właśnie wizerunek tej bogini widnieje na okładce. Niewątpliwie ta część zawiera interesujące wątki warte dalszego rozwinięcia, jak na przykład jedynie wstępnie zarysowany problem kultu Kali poza Indiami.

W części drugiej autorka analizuje postaci dwóch współcześnie czczonych bogiń latynoamerykańskich: Pombagiry (rozdział *Pombagira, the Holy Streetwalker*) i Santa Muerte (*Santa Muerte, Death the Protector*). W obu rozdziałach autorka prezentuje materiał oparty na wielokrotnych badaniach terenowych, a także zgromadzony przez siebie materiał ikonograficzny. Zarówno kult Pombagiry, jak i Santa Muerte w ich obecnych formach pojawił się w XX wieku, w dobie społeczno-ekonomicznego kryzysu. Autorka dowodzi, że obie postaci są niezwykle interesującymi przykładami współczesnego synkretyzmu religijnego, a ich wieloznaczność i ambiwalencja pozwalają na adaptację kultu do potrzeb wyznawców, którzy często rekrutują się z grup marginalnych i społecznie nieuprzywilejowanych czy nawet środowisk przestępczych.

Monografia Małgorzaty Oleszkiewicz-Peralby jest wartościową pozycją z zakresu religioznawstwa porównawczego. Autorka podjęła się analizy postaci straszliwych bogiń w wymiarze dotychczas nieprezentowanym, porównując postaci z odległych obszarów kulturowych. Warto zaznaczyć, że w wymiarze badań religii latynoamerykańskich książka porusza tematy dotychczas stosunkowo słabo zbadane, zarówno kult Santa Muerte, jak i Pombagiry nie mają bowiem licznych naukowych opracowań, zwłaszcza w formie monografii. Napisana przystępnym językiem, erudycyjna i dobrze opracowana pod względem naukowym książka *Fierce Feminine Divinities of Eurasia and Latin America: Baba Yaga, Kālī, Pombagira and Santa Muerte* może stanowić interesującą lekturę dla studentów i specjalistów z zakresu latynoamerykanistyki, religioznawstwa, kulturoznawstwa czy Gender Studies.