Personalistic Dimensions of Neo-Patristic Synthesis and Modern Search for New Subjectivities

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1.

The establishment of the St. Sergius Theological Institute in Paris in 1925 included a small episode hardly mentioned by historians of this famous institution. Lev Platonovich Karsavin, a well-known religious philosopher and historian of medieval spirituality, has applied for the chair of patrology in the institute-to-be, but his application was declined. The chair was given to another scholar, Georgy Florovsky, who was much younger and was then the author of just a few articles on Russian history and culture. The two candidates represented sharply different figures, a young provincial with clerical roots, and a brilliant Saint-Petersburg professor with the family origins in the Imperial ballet milieu. Their ways in the Russian Diaspora went in opposite directions: Florovsky, one of the founders of the leftist (roughly speaking) Eurasian Movement, broke with it and started to criticize it, while Karsavin, his application being rejected, joined the Eurasians to become their leading theoretician. But notwithstanding all their oppositions, they are the closest allies in one of the main fields of their work, in the development of the Christian teaching on personality.

Neo-patristic synthesis, Florovsky's principal contribution to Christian theology, states the necessity of the permanent address to patristic thought conceived as both a fund of ideas and concepts, and a special modus of creative thought brought first into existence by Greek Church Fathers and combining thorough conceptual analysis with the firm rooting in Christocentric experience, both individual and conciliar. Personology is the key part of patristic teaching: both triadology and Christology focus on personality and looked at from the conceptual angle; their main task is the constitution of this notion.

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More precisely, patristic personology developed a particular paradigm that may be called the *theocentric personological paradigm* (TPP): according to it, the principle of personality refers to uncreated Divine being, and not to empiric human being. Contrary to it, in classical European metaphysics a different paradigm was adopted, the *anthropological personological paradigm* (APP), according to which personality is considered as a characteristic of the human individual (and created being, in theological terms). At least since the Enlightenment époque this paradigm completely dominated European thought, and the theological paradigm was practically superseded by it. However, in the 20th c. the rediscovery and renascence of the theological paradigm takes place, and the pioneers of this important process were Karsavin and Florovsky. Here their contributions complement each other: Karsavin elaborates mainly philosophical aspects of the paradigm while Florovsky historical and theological ones. In what follows we are going to present systematically this personology of Florovsky that can be considered by right as an integral part of his neo-patristic synthesis.

It should be added that during nearly all the 20th c. personological reflection developed intensely in the Orthodox ecumene so that the principal trend in Orthodox theology in recent decades had often been described as "the theology of personality". One relates usually the origins of this trend to Vladimir Lossky's work; but one can see clearly that Lossky's vision of the problem of personality was from the very start influenced by Karsavin's ideas. In his youth he was a student of Karsavin and there were friendly ties between Karsavin and the family of Losskys, the head of which, a prominent religious philosopher Nicholas Lossky, was like Karsavin a professor of St.-Petersburg University. Florovsky's contribution is also essential: already his early books on the Church fathers provide a full-fledged and self-consistent presentation of the TPP. Lossky's classical work which appeared more than a decade later gave the finished form to the modern formulation of the TPP complementing its patristic foundations with the contribution of the palamitic theology of Divine energies (absent in Florovsky's presentation) and providing more profound and detailed theological discussion.

This personalist trend in Orthodox thought continues to be living and active nowadays having Greek theologians and philosophers Metropolitan John (Zizioulas) and Christos Yannaras as its chief spokesmen. In the recent period, a new aspect or new line is developed here which is related to the general process of anthropological turn in Christian theology and even more general

process of the transition of European reason to post-secular paradigm. It was stressed that although the TPP deals in the first place with personality as the principle of Divine being, it includes also the part related to human being: *via* Christology and theology of Divine energies the notion of personality acquires the connection with man's being as well. Man is defined ontologically by the fundamental relation *Man-God* and actualizing this relation in his striving to God he participates in the Divine being. Since the latter is "personal being-communion", to the extent of his participation in the Divine being man acquires the personal mode of being, and his transformation into personality takes place, which represents ontological transcending. This transcending is realized in a specific spiritual and anthropological ascending process, which is cultivated specially in the ascetical practice of hesychasm. From the personological point of view, hesychast practice is nothing but the practice of man's self-transformation (*la pratique de soi,* in Foucault's terms) in which the constitution of the human being is formed up or, in other words, his structures of personality and identity are built up; and what's crucially important, the constitution in question corresponds to increasing participation in personal being-communion (in energies, and not the essence of the latter, according to the palamitic dogma). It means that the TPP, in addition to its contents relating to Divine being and belonging to the foundations of dogmatic theology, includes equally important anthropological aspects, in which it represents the paradigm of the constitution of human person; and moreover, this constitution in its practical realization is closely connected with the hesychast practice. The study of these aspects is a special problem field for theology (and philosophy) of personality and the elaboration of this field amounts basically to systematic reconstruction of hesychast anthropology and structures of hesychast practice. Obviously, such reconstruction represents one of necessary tasks of the modern stage in the development of Orthodox theology of personality that succeeds the (now classical) stage presented in Florovsky's, Lossky's and Karsavin's works. To some extent, this task was accomplished in my studies of hesychast experience (mainly, in the book "The Phenomenology of Ascesis", 1998).

The turn to anthropological and experiential ground makes it possible to discover new epistemological resources of the TPP, extending the principles of patristic personology beyond the original sphere of the latter. The paradigm of the constitution of human person corresponding to the TPP can be characterized as *synergic constitution*: its key element is *synergia*, i.e. meeting and har-

monious collaboration of Divine and human energies. It is due to *synergia* that the structures of human personality and identity are constituted, which correspond to the ascension to the union with God in His energies. This union is termed deification (*theosis*) in Orthodox theology and, as Karsavin stressed, in its personological aspect, deification is personification, *litsetvorenie*, in Russian. Now, from the anthropological viewpoint, *synergia* means the opening or unlocking of human being towards Divine being or ontological unlocking. The category of unlocking was used by Heidegger in *Sein und Zeit* as one of basic categories (*Erschliessen, Erschliessung*) in the constitution of the being-presence, *Dasein.* Keeping in mind this patristic and Heideggerian history of the concept, we come to the idea that the unlocking of man can be interpreted as a universal paradigm of the constitution of human person. Realization of this idea leads to "anthropology of the unlocking" or "synergetic anthropology" developed in my works. In addition to the ontological unlocking, in which a human person unlocks him/herself towards another mode of being, this anthropology identifies and describes other kinds of the anthropological unlocking that define different types of the human constitution (such as the unlocking towards the unconscious realized in the phenomena studied in psychoanalysis or the virtual unlocking realized in virtual anthropological practices). In this way, we arrive at pluralistic personology that presents human being as a manifold of different modes of subjectivity, one of which (singled out in certain respects) is the ontological mode constituted in the unlocking towards God. One can say that this personology and anthropology is of markedly dialogical and post-secular character: in one its part, as phenomenology of the ontological unlocking, it is a version of hesychast anthropology that is completely in line with patristic personology and its modern presentation in neo-patristic synthesis; while in other parts (based on the same unlocking paradigm) it is kindred to the search of new modes of subjectivity in present-day philosophy that tries to find its way out of the postmodernist devastation.

Coming back to Florovsky's work, we see that further development of his personology had basically two stages:

1) anthropological turn, or the exposition of anthropological dimensions of the TPP through the connection with the hesychast practice;

2) the extension of the TPP to the general paradigm of the anthropological unlocking that becomes the base for nonclassical pluralistic anthropology.

In the concluding section we shall discuss briefly these stages. But first we present a concise description of Florovsky's personology.

2.

Greek patristics and Russian spiritual and cultural history are two principal subjects of all Florovsky's work. This dual structure goes to his personology as well: its main part represents the reconstruction and analysis of the conceptions of personality in Greek Church Fathers while the other part brings to light personalistic contents of various pages (époques, trends or figures) of Russian culture. This personology is scattered over many texts of different periods and genres; nowhere he gives it a systematic exposition and nowhere he presents systematically the constitution of the concept of personality. Nevertheless it represents a fully self-consistent conception based firmly on the principles of theocentric and Christocentric personalism.

To start with, Florovsky locates patristic personology in cultural and historical context. Its place and role is determined for him by the opposition of Christianity and classical, i.e. pagan antiquity: the latter was the world that produced cosmological and naturalistic worldview and did not know the principle of personality, while the former was a new world, the main novelty of which was exactly in the discovery of personality and its decisive advancement into the centre of being and history. "The world of antiquity did not know the mystery of personal being. There was no word in the ancient languages that would mean exactly "personality". The meaning of the Greek *prosopon* was rather *mask* than *face*... and the same must be said about the Latin *persona*"[1]. "The Greeks could not imagine anything genuinely personal, only "typical"... In Aristotle particular existence is not personality"[2]. In contrast to this, in Christianity "God enters human history and becomes historical personality... God turns out to be so deeply and personally worried by the destiny of man (and by the concrete destiny of every "one of these little ones") that He intervenes as a Personality in the disorder and wretchedness of his lost life... It is *personal connection* that is now established between God and man"[3]. This connection is nothing but faith ("I conceive faith as personal communication with personal God"[4]) that determines all the order and character of human

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1. *Vostochnye Otsy IV veka.* Paris, 1931. p. 22. We omit the name of the author in the references to the works by G.V. Florovsky. The italics in all the quotations are author's own.
2. Vek patristiki i eschatologiya, Izbrannye bogoslovskie stat'i. Moscow, 2000. p. 238, 237.
3. Utrata bibleiskogo myshleniya, Izbrannye bogoslovskie stat'i. p. 214.
4. Ib.

existence: "Personal meeting of a believer with Christ is the very kernel of all spiritual life of Orthodox man"[5]. This conversion of the nature of human existence should imply similar personalistic conversion of the nature of human mind and his activity: "If there is any room for Christian metaphysics at all, it must be a metaphysics of persons"[6]. In comparison with the ancient Greek worldview, it is the most cardinal change, so Florovsky concludes: "The idea of personality was the greatest contribution of Christianity into philosophy"[7]. However, in his works this idea is treated almost exclusively in theological and historico-cultural discourse.

The main part of Florovsky's personology is a perfectly clear reconstruction of the TPP presented in the two now classical books on patrology. There is no need to describe it here, but it is worth to single out its principal accents. The first important point is that the discourse of personality created by the Cappadocians was the discourse of a new nature quite different from Greek philosophy. "It was not adequate to accept philosophical terms in their habitual use: the fund of ancient words turned out to be not sufficient for theological confession. One had to remold ancient words, remelt ancient notions. This task was undertaken by the Cappadocians... St. Gregory [Nazianzene] speaks usually in the language of Plato and neo-platonists... But the ideas that he presents in the platonic language are not platonic"[8]. Besides the "remelting of notions", the Church dogmas are another new element of the discourse that brings forth radical distinction with philosophical discourse: indeed, dogmatic formulas elaborated by the Church Councils are products of religious experience of a special "conciliar" kind radically different from philosophical experience.

The core of the TPP is the conceptual complex *hypostasis (= prosopon), ousia, physis* which constitutes the central, Trinitarian block of this paradigm. Next, the TPP includes also the important negative thesis that took its definitive shape somewhat later, in the Chalcedonian and post-Chalcedonian period: the thesis about the non-existence of "human hypostasis", i.e. any autonomous

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5. Etos Pravoslavnoi Tserkvi, Izbrannye bogoslovskie stat'i. p. 273.
6. "*St. Gregory Palamas and the Tradition of the Fathers*", *Collected Works*, vol. 1. Nordland Publ. Company. Belmont, MA, 1972. p. 119.
7. Vek patristiki i eschatologiya. p. 239.
8. Vostochnye Otsy IV veka. pp. 75, 98, 100.

personal principle belonging specifically to empiric man. "The notion of "hypostasis" must be separated from the notion of the "individual"... "Hypostasis" is not the same thing as individuality"[9]. This thesis provides definitive demarcation with the anthropological personological paradigm which was developed in Western metaphysics and associated the concept of personality with the categories of the subject and the individual relating to empiric man. For Florovsky, the category of the individual expresses the tendency to self-isolation which prevents the formation of personality. "Personality is something immeasurably greater than individuality[10] ... The isolated, bounded and self-sufficient individuum is a product of the exaggerated abstraction"[11]. As for the subject, it is for him a rather neutral term that may be used in the context of the TPP as well (cf., e.g.: "Beside God there arises the second not consubstantial to Him "substance" or nature, as a distinct from Him and to some extent independent and self-active subject"[12]). However, the category of the "transcendental subject" belongs specifically to the Western personological paradigm and is incompatible with the TPP: "Man distracts himself from himself, depersonalizes himself... transforms himself into a "transcendental subject"... The "transcendental subject" will never hear the voice of God... And it is not to the "transcendental subject", not to the "consciousness in general" that God speaks. God of the Revelation speaks to living persons, to empiric subjects"[13].

As said above, in addition to the conception of Divine Personality, the TPP includes also another part, the statements concerning "human personality" or, more correctly, concerning the relation of empiric (created and fallen) man to Divine Personality. Obviously, this part is connected more closely with Christological theology and Councils of the 5-8th cc. The leading thread here is the idea or paradigm of participation: human being is constituted as personality in one and only one way, in his/her communion with and participation in Divine

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9. Ib. p. 80. In fact, Florovsky goes further and states that even "In Christ there is no human hypostasis" ("The Resurrection of Life" *Bulletin of the Harvard University Divinity School,* XLIX (8), 1952. Quoted in: Georges Florovsky. *Russian intellectual. Orthodox Churchman.* A. Blane ed. Crestwood, 1993. p. 299.)

10. O smerti krestnoi, Izbrannye bogoslovskie stat'i. p. 92.

11. Pamyati P.I. Novgorodtseva, Iz proshlogo russkoi mysli. Moscow, 1998. p. 214.

12. Tvar' i tvarnost', Izbrannye bogoslovskie stat'i. p. 39.

13. Bogoslovskie otryvki, Izbrannye bogoslovskie stat'i. p. 124-125.

Personality and, more concretely, the Hypostasis of Christ, Son and Logos, Who adopted the human nature. "It is only in the permanent contact with God that personal principle and personal character can be kept"[14]. The idea of *theosis* which, according to Florovsky, appears first in St. Athanasius of Alexandria and becomes a full-fledged theological conception in St. Gregory of Nazianzus is interpreted by him as a direct expression of the participation paradigm: "Gregory means by "theosis" neither the transformation of the created nature nor its trans-substantiation, but the complete participation in and penetratedness by the Divine"[15]. Then Florovsky deepens his interpretation of *theosis* and its personal dimensions with the aid of the concepts "enhypostasization" and "personification" taken from subtle and sophisticated Christology of Leontius of Byzantium: "Into the united hypostasis of God-man ... there is accepted and as if "personified" (*"ἐνπροσωποποίησε"!*) human nature, and still the Divine Hypostasis remains simple and unchanged as it was before the union... Human nature is accepted into the very Hypostasis of the Word"[16]. Later on *theosis* becomes one of key concepts not only of Orthodox theology but of ascetics as well. It embraces a wide spectrum of functions and aspects, but always one of its main roles is to secure the participation of human person in Personality (thus providing the connection between anthropology and personology): "The mystery of *personal* communion was involved at this point [in *theosis*]. *Theosis meant a personal encounter*. It is that intimate intercourse of man with God, in which the whole of human existence is, as it were, permeated by Divine Presence"[17].

One of basic subjects of personology is the problem of personal (self-) identity. Greek patristic personology as it is described by Florovsky does not yet approach this problem explicitly. However, it goes closely to it in the discussion of at least one theme, resurrection of the dead. This theme implies unavoidable questions: is it "the same" man that will be resurrected? And how the formula "the same" should be understood in this case? The treatment of the theme by St. Gregory of Nyssa can be considered as the first solution (though implicit one so far) of the self-identity problem in Christian thought. Florovsky describes this solution as follows: according to St. Gregory, each man pos-

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14. Nochnaya t'ma, Izbrannye bogoslovskie stat'i. p. 206.
15. Vostochnye Otsy IV veka. p. 116.
16. *Vizantiiskie Otsy V-VIII vekov.* Paris, 1933. pp. 124, 125.
17. "St. Gregory Palamas and the Tradition of the Fathers". p. 115.

sesses "an *eidos*, inner image, idea or form of the body... this is an ideal face of man... In the events of falling it gets distorted or, more accurately, it gets "shielded by an alien mask"... It is by this image that the soul in the Resurrection "will recognize its body as some clothes different from other ones"... Not only the unity of the subject, but also the identity of the substrate will be preserved, both the individual identity of personality and continuity of the substance"[18].

According to Florovsky, ethical problems are also treated in Greek patristics on the personological basis. The problem of the evil is represented here as a problem of a completely personalistic nature: "In the strict sense, the evil exists only in persons... it is perverted personal activity. But this activity goes unavoidably to the impersonal. The evil performs the depersonalization of the personality. However, it is impossible to reach the complete impersonality. Even devils never cease to be personalities"[19]. Human passions have the closest connection with the evil. "Passions are the location, the nest of the evil in human person... Passions are always impersonal; they are the centre of cosmic energies that transform human person in their prisoner and their slave... A passionate man, "one who is possessed by passions", loses his personality and personal self-identity. He turns into a chaotic and contradictory being having a host of faces or, more correctly, masks"[20].

Any full-fledged personology includes necessarily the circle of inter-subjective and social problems, and in the framework of the TPP such problems are treated on the ecclesiological basis. Ecclesiology is one of the main areas of Florovsky's work and his personology is firmly rooted in ecclesiology, it is essentially *ecclesiastic personology*. In the first place, such rootedness is provided by his conception of the "catholic transfiguration of personality" which takes place when the latter enters and becomes integrated into the conciliar (*soborny*) unity of the Body of Christ. In the Church "catholic transfiguration of human soul is actualized by means of its rejection of its closeness and self-sufficiency. However, this rejection is not the fading-away of personality and not its dissolution in the plurality. Quite the opposite, it is the extension of personality, the inclusion of many other "I" into one's own inner "I"... And this is

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18. *Vostochnye Otsy IV veka.* pp. 175, 182.
19. Nochnaya t'ma. p. 206.
20. Ib.

exactly where the genuine mystery of the Church lies"[21]. Clearly, this conception follows the line of Orthodox theology of conciliarity (*sobornost*) founded by Khomiakov; and, as usually in this line, it is opposed by Florovsky to ecclesiological and personological positions of Western theology and metaphysics. "Catholic transfiguration of personality" in the Church generates a specific ability of perfect communion between persons, kindred to the communion-perichoresis between the Hypostases of the Holy Trinity. "For natural consciousness, the notion of personality is the principle of division and isolation... it means the demarcation between "I" and "non-I". But there is no such split into "I" and "non-I" in Divine Life. In the Church, following the Trinitarian prototype, this impenetrability of "I" and "non-I", mutual impenetrability of plural "I" is softened and removed... However, catholicity is not at all corporatism or collectivism... catholic consciousness is by no means generic or racial consciousness... Catholicity is the mode of organization, order or structure of personal consciousness... It is the telos of personal consciousness actualized in creative development and not by means of cancellation of the personal principle"[22]. It is important to note that Florovsky's conception of catholicity (conciliarity, *sobornost*) eradicates completely the property which is present in nearly all the Russian theories of *sobornost*: the primacy, if only partial, of the social or collective over the personal, and the suppression of the latter by the former. What makes it possible to avoid this property is the principle of direct personal communion with God, which is an indisputable part of Orthodox theology, but was pushed aside and forgotten in Russian thought for a long time. Florovsky puts it again to the foreground: "The personal is not to be sacrificed or dissolved in the corporate... because each [human personality] is in direct and immediate union with Christ and His Father"[23].

<div style="text-align:center">3.</div>

As said above, the second component of Florovsky's personology is to be found in his works on Russian cultural history. Personological contents of these works are again twofold. Firstly, in all his reconstructions of cultural phenomena Florovsky emerges as a staunch personalist: for him, the main criterion

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21. Bogoslovskie otryvki. p. 134.
22. Ib. pp. 134, 146, 147.
23. "The Church: Her Nature and Task" *Collected Works,* vol. 1. p. 67.

of the value and truth of these phenomena is always the principle of personality and the place given to it. The examples abound: he explains the conflict between the Slavophiles and Westernizers by their "divergence in the interpretation of the idea of personality"; he appraises most highly Dostoevsky and Herzen because they were ardent champions of personality; he rejects the teaching of Nikolay Fedorov (on the resurrection of the dead with the help of technology and science) for the reason that "there is no place for the realization of personality" in Fedorov's scheme; etc. etc. Secondly, a certain conception of personality emerges gradually in these works. In his early historico-cultural texts such conception is absent, although the personality is stated very decisively as a criterion (cf., e.g.: "Personality must be the genuine criterion and directive task of any creative work in culture"[24]). But gradually Florovsky stops to be just an "intuitive personalist" and elaborates his own conception of personality; in the "Ways of Russian Theology" (1937) this conception is already presented in a rather clear outline. It is very interesting that *it is not exactly the TPP* which he is reconstructing at the same time in his patrological and ecclesiological works. However, not coinciding completely with the TPP, it does not contradict it either, but complements it. The dogmatic discourse of Divine Personality is absent here. The author deals with personalistic dimensions of human existence.

In the article "Evolution und Epigenesis" (1930) written in German Florovsky tries to outline a philosophical conception of personality. He takes as a basis the opposition *personality vs. organism*, characterizing the dynamics of organic being by the notions of development and evolution, and the dynamics of personality by the notion of epigenesis taken from biology: "The formation of personality is not development... It can be defined as epigenesis because something essentially new emerges in this formation, an increase of being takes place"[25]. The main property of personality is the free choice of goals: "Man is conscious of himself as a personality exactly when he apprehends and feels himself in the world of tasks", and his tasks take him "out of the horizon of natural formation... Man finds and realizes himself in exceeding his innate natural measure, in the "going out of his own self", and it is in such acts that he be-

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24. Pis'mo k P.B. Struve ob evrasiitsakh, Iz proshlogo russkoi mysli. p. 128.
25. "Evolution und Epigenesis" *Der Russische Gedanke.* 1930, Heft III. p. 246.

comes a personality"[26]. Florovsky tries here to conceive personality, avoiding the Christian context completely, and we are not surprised that it was only an isolated attempt. Except this work, all his personology, including that found in the culturological works, is fully integrated into this context. By right these works can be classified under theology of culture and it is not difficult to find in them statements about the Christian origins and nature of personality, like this one: 'Apology of personality' leads us to the faith in Personal Triune God... If there is no God as Person then there is no person in man". *Eo ipso*, the "person in man" is not just personality, but "Christian personality": the notion opposed sometimes by Florovsky to the "personality, isolating itself" that is for him the analogue of the "individual" of Western metaphysics. "Christian personality" is the key concept of Florovsky's theology of culture. It is not given to a man initially, but it is for him an object of creative building so that the actualization of personalistic potential of human existence is "the process of spiritual and moral formation of Christian personality"[28].

The nature of this process is determined by two principles, which are usually considered as almost opposite to each other, but are interpreted by Florovsky as extremely close to each other: namely, *ascesis* and *creativity*. This interpretation is based mainly on a new understanding of human creativity: by Florovsky, creative work is, in the first place, man's activity in his inner, and not outer world, and the "inner creation" is exactly the ascesis: "The ascesis is man's creative work over himself, creative building-up of his Self"[29]. However, the ascesis, in Florovsky's view, is not at all a purely introspective activity. It is a special mode of organization of human consciousness and the whole human being, which makes it possible for man to master secular problems and forces: it is "the overcoming of the world by means of the formation of a new personality, and it can be called the way of cultural creation"[30]. Being interpreted in this way, as determining mutually each other, the ascesis and creative work taken together constitute a specific modus of human existence: the existence oriented towards personality. This modus is characterized by "moral and voli-

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26. Ib. p. 249.
27. V mire iskanii i bluzhdanii Iz proshlogo russkoi mysli. pp. 202, 204.
28. *Puti russkogo bogosloviya.* Paris, 1983. p. 21.
29. Khristianstvo i tsivilizatsiya Iz proshlogo russkoi mysli. p. 224.
30. *Puti russkogo bogosloviya.* Paris, 1983. p. 22.

tional responsibility, concentration of the spirit, integrity of life, experience and vision"[31]. But Florovsky stresses that modern man has also a competing opposite modus, in which not the formation but the disintegration of personality takes place; it is characterized by utopianism, dreaminess, "elemental lack of will", and "whirl of impulses and passions".

Summing up, we find that, strictly speaking, personology presented in Florovsky's historico-cultural essays and studies is not completely in accordance with his theological personology: semantics and connotations of the concepts "personality" and "person" in these two fields of his work are noticeably different. But, notwithstanding this formal divergence, they form an inseparable unity of the same kind as the unity of Christological and Trinitarian theology.

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One of distinctive features of Orthodox thought is its experiential nature: it endeavours always to be firmly grounded on the direct Christocentric experience. This feature implies the paramount importance of the ascetics as the sphere in which such experience is specially cultivated; in fact, theological thought of Orthodoxy is often characterized as a synthesis of patristics and ascetics. Thus it is not surprising that ascetics and ascetic experience make their contribution to Orthodox personology as well. Of course, this contribution concerns not Divine Personality, but human person obtaining his/her constitution in the transcension into Divine being, or personal being-communion. As explained in the Section 1, ascetic (hesychast) practice is nothing but the way to such transcension. It has the structure of an ascending process divided into steps, i.e. it is a ladder, and the first treatise describing all this process systematically had the title "The Ladder of Paradise" (7th c.). Since the ascension is directed to the union with God in His Energies (but not in His Essence), it is human energies that are (self-)transformed in this process so that each step of the Hesychast Ladder must be conceived as a certain configuration of all the energies of a human being, intellectual, emotional and corporeal ones, and the step-by-step ascending means the successive change of these configurations. Thus we see that hesychasm develops an energetic view of the human being and human Self treating them as energetic formations, which should be transformed into such formations that correspond to *synergia* and *theosis*.

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31. Ib. p. 4.

The steps of the Hesychast Ladder follow from the bottom ones, which correspond to the conversion and *metanoia*, and are sometimes called Spiritual Gate, to the upper ones corresponding to the approaches to *theosis*; the fullness of the latter is not achievable in empiric reality. What matters for us now is the fact that each of these steps can and must be interpreted personologically: as a certain element of the constitution of human person. The paradigm of the human constitution realized here is the formation of an ascending series or hierarchy of dynamic (energetic) anthropological and/or personological structures, each of which corresponds to a definite step of the Ladder. In contrast to philosophical paradigms presenting the human constitution as an abstract conceptual construction, here this constitution is presented in practical and operational discourse, as a concrete set of dynamical forms and relating anthropological procedures.

In the lower steps such as penitence, contrition and struggle with the passions man's attention and activities are still directed to worldly life, and the configurations of his energies have no differences of principle from the structures corresponding to his everyday practices. But when the overcoming of the passions (*apatheia*) is achieved there comes the turning-point in the ascetic process, including its personological dimension. Man's attention changes its vector from worldly life to the relation to God, and the concentration on this relation begins to produce new anthropological energetic structures. The first one of them is the famous *Descent of the Mind into the Heart*. At this step the crucial restructuring of man's energetic configuration is performed: the dual structure of the "Mind-Heart" is formed up, in which intellectual and emotional energies are tied together firmly. This is a *sui generis* equator of the ascetic process which creates the conditions necessary for the further advancement to the *telos* of the process, *theosis*: as St. Theophan the Recluse says, "You should unite your mind with your heart... and then you will get the rudder to steer the ship of your soul, the lever, by means of which you will start to put into motion all your inner world"[32]. And from the personological point of view, the structure "Mind-Heart" is the first specific structure corresponding to the constitution of human person in ontological transcension realized in the ascension to *theosis*.

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32. Umnoe delanie o molitve Iisusovoi. Sbornik pouchenii Svyatykh Otsov i opytnykh ee delatelei. Sostavil igumen Valaamskogo monastyrya Khariton. Moscow, 1992. p. 114.

As the ascetic (and not only ascetic) experience shows, energetic configurations, in which human energies of different kinds are coupled together, have relative stability. Due to this, on the basis of the Mind-Heart structure the further steps of the Ladder can form up. At these steps the process advances from *Praxis to Theoria*: human energies reach contact and arrange the collaboration with Divine Energies, and due to this *synergia*, the character of the process changes. The presence of God's grace becomes more and more explicit, and due to this, "the motion of the inner world" takes the form of a spontaneous process. New configurations of human energies corresponding to the higher steps of the Ladder (such as the incessant prayer, pure prayer, contemplation of the Light of Tabor and emergence of new perceptive modalities, *noera aisthesis*) begin to be generated spontaneously, as if their formation would not need any human effort. In these configurations more and more close approach to ontological transcension is reached, which means that their structure approaches more and more closely that of personal being-communion characterized by the Three Hypostases united by ontological dynamics of the *perichoresis*. It is a rich structure, and the spontaneous generation of anthropological/personological dynamic forms approaching it has obviously some traits of the self-organization processes or, more precisely, synergetic processes, in which ascending hierarchies of dynamic structures are spontaneously generated due to the presence of some outer energy.

Thus the close analysis of hesychast practice discovers not just some new structures, but also new formative mechanisms corresponding to the patristic paradigm of the constitution of human person (the constitution *via* the participation in Divine being realized in the ascension to the union with Christ in His Energies). And the reconstruction of these personological structures and mechanisms can be considered as a modern development of personology of Fr. Georges Florovsky.

As shown in the Section 1, the patristic and hesychast paradigm of the human constitution based on *synergia* can be extended to the universal paradigm of the human constitution based on *anthropological unlocking*. In the general anthropological context, *synergia* is but one form of such unlocking (the unlocking towards another mode of being, or ontological unlocking) and, in addition to this form, synergetic anthropology singles out two other basic forms of the unlocking of human person, namely, the "ontical unlocking" towards the unconscious, and the virtual unlocking realized by means of immersion into virtual anthropological reality such as the life in cyber-spaces and cyber-cities,

etc. Each of these unlocking forms, being a concrete representation of the general paradigm of the human constitution, generates its own particular personology, i.e. a certain full set of structures of personality and identity added with the set of practices and processes, in which these structures are formed up. Moreover, the basic forms produce their superpositions and combinations or "hybrid forms" (the typical example is provided by ascetic demonology, in the phenomena of which energetic configurations corresponding to the steps of the Hesychast Ladder are mixed with and distorted by the patterns of the unconscious perceived and interpreted as interventions of devils). Taken together, all these representations of the universal unlocking paradigm define certain anthropology, a full-fledged conception of man and his existence. In contrast to classical European anthropology and personology based on the concept of the universal "essence of man", it does not use this concept at all, and is highly pluralistic.

In this conception, the human being in his/her personological structure can be characterized as a community consisting of many personalities extremely different from each other. (Here we use the term personality not in the meaning of the TPP, of course, but in the meaning of a creature implementing any of the existing types of the constitution of human person as such[33]. In this meaning, personality is close to the notion of "mode of subjectivity" widely used in recent philosophy). "Ontological man" constituted in the unlocking towards another mode of being is the only member of this community whose constitution includes the transcension beyond the limits of empiric being. "Ontical man" constituted in the unlocking towards the unconscious has radically different personological structures. This type of the human constitution is actualized in patterns of the unconscious that correspond to the phenomena studied in psychoanalysis, like neuroses and complexes, psychoses, manias and phobias... The dynamics of all such processes is most adequately characterized as topological dynamics: the unconscious manifests itself as a force or forces the source of which lies beyond the horizon of human consciousness and experien-

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33. It should not be forgotten that there is plenty of types of the human constitution, in which human person constitutes him/herself not "as such", but reducing him/herself to some partial roles or manifestations, in other words, *partializing* him/herself (e.g., if a man conceives and constitutes himself as a member of some group, party, nation, etc.). We don't consider here such partializing models of the human constitution.

ce, and so it induces effects that change geometry and topology of this horizon (e.g., making some areas of the consciousness disconnected, etc.) and have the nature of variegated topological anomalies. Rich discourse for describing such topological effects is developed in the works by Lacan and Deleuze; but it is directly evident that this topological dynamics is drastically different from ontological dynamics of the spontaneous generation of the ascending hierarchy of personological structures. Clearly, the topological anomalies should tell on the structures of personality and self-identity as their defects and traumas, which is quite the opposite to their building-up and enriching in the ontological unlocking. As for the "Virtual man", who moves quickly to domination nowadays, this is even more peculiar anthropological formation. Virtual reality as such is defined with respect to actual reality as its incomplete actualization so that any virtual phenomenon belongs to the "virtual cloud" of some actual phenomenon that includes all its "virtualizations", i.e. all phenomena differing from the latter in a privative way, by the lack of some basic predicates of its nature. This under-actualized nature of virtual reality implies similar nature of personological structures of the "Virtual man". Analysis of his manifestations shows that personality and self-identity of a human person constituted in virtual practices are characterized by the ineradicable incompleteness: they always lack some basic elements or structures of the full-bodied human self-identity. Finally, the hybrid forms of the anthropological unlocking produce their own sets of personological structures, increasing further the variety of models of the human constitution.

Thus the extension of the patristic and hesychast paradigm of the human constitution to a universal personological paradigm brings forth a pluralistic conception of human being, in which this being is represented as a community of beings that have fundamentally different constitution, but despite this perform all kinds of conversions into each other. Clearly, such conception has something in common with the positions of present-day philosophy. After the "death of the subject" and the rejection of classical European anthropological model, problems of personology came to the forefront of European thought. *Who comes after the subject?* was the title of an important collective work by 20 prominent European thinkers composed by the initiative of Jean-Luc Nancy and published in 1991. Anthropology of the unlocking can be considered as one of possible answers to this question. In the West, the principal trend of personological thought seen clearly, e.g., in the late work of Michel Foucault, is the search for new modes of subjectivity, out of which a new pluralistic ima-

ge of Man could emerge. To some extent, our answer goes in the same direction, although it has much different history and motivation. At the same time, this answer can be considered as a modern development of the personology of Fr. Georges Florovsky and his conception of neo-patristic synthesis demonstrating that Florovsky's ideas still keep their creative force.

Obviously, such combination of aspects in anthropology of the unlocking shows some new configuration of the relationship between religious and secular schools of thought. To my mind, this configuration goes in line with the emerging post-secular paradigm that aims to establish a new dialogical type of relations between religious and secular consciousness.