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CHAPTER I

by Franz Spunda

MYSTICISM ON ATHOS

Mysticism and Theology of the Eastern church differ from the West by a substantial point, namely as regards the "God-recognition" In technical language (Western) Eastern) it/is called apophatic whereas the other/is known as kataphatic. Apophasis means denial. It is denied that man, a created being, is able to recognize features of the Creator. The only thing one can declare about God is His unexplorability. To add attributes to Him, attributes which have escaped the world of the created, is considered as an unapproachable effort. Whereas the kataContinued of Techniques and Applications and the Continues of the Continue

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phatic theology claims - kataphasis means affirmation-:
True, the Creator-god is unexplorable, and every declaration about Him would be mistaken, if Christ's incarnation and through Him the revelation had not been
allotted to us, out of which conclusions about the
essence of God are passi granted possible.

between these two theological interpretations

there exists no more dispute, one considers them just

as different modes of the interpretation, which get

on together in brotherly love, but which have taken

different roads since their arisings in mysticism,

liturgies and church-hystory.

The superworldly themes such as incarnation, transfiguration and the resurrection of Jesus, and

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the mystery of the Holy Trinity suit the superworldly character of the apophatic theology, whereas the kataphatic theologyof the West especially loves to be occupied with all that are humanly conceivable themes, it lay stress on the ethic value of the Bible and prefers every thing out of which God's attributes are opened up.

In the West, mysticism and theology are two related jet different paths of religious recognition, of which the latter's preeminence is admitted. In the East, on the contrary, both are one. Thanks to a personal experience mysticism is gained and verified theology, not a dithyrambic extacy which flares

up, but a calm inner ax blessing, a lasting state.

the character of the apophatic theology, whiteh the Another difference exists in the fact that the saints of the Western church stand so often in the against constant battle with the demon, from which the saints of the Byzantine culture-world have been spared and can therefore offer themselves to spiritual development less disturbed. What they report about their mystic experiences is expressed shortly and in the character of mark-sayings; the hymnlike rhetoric of extatic Spain or and Italy is completly missing. They stick to the apophatic rules of the Bishop Ignatius - first century: "Better silent and to be than talk without being" and "Whoever really has Christ's word, is able even to hear his silence".

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Before the mystic of the East ventures to rise up to the higher spheres of consciousness, he feels obliged to understand clearly to his body and his sur-He disaproves of that pagan or manichean roundings. dualism, according to which body and spirit stand m opposite each other as enemies. For the true Christian the material world is no work of a bad demon. but it also is a creation of God, on which though a darkness has fallen through Adam's sin , that has darkened also humanity. But now Christ, the second Adam, overcome the darkness throught His light. the soul has through the christening reattained her and-fit God-filiation, and thereby the strength, to become again as pure as Adam before his fall. The remunci-

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beautiful and thereby the etrength, to become

sain as yours as Adam before his fall. The remnet-

ation of the world equals a return of the soul to Thus says Isaak the Syrian: "The soul in afort of . augrapolognos to sorodra modeld act of witself. -un the arm you was a superior bearing at the itself is passionless. Only when it surranders to management to make the cuter world does it succumb to the passions." the base of the pure, constant wachfulness is needed. sound had a to show on at himse talmadam and main should glow, but the spirit must remain cool.

When this condition is fulfilled, there is given the possibility of a genuine mystical experience. According to the early christian anthropology the heart and source of all soul- and metaphysical Stiprings. Thus says Macarios the Egyptian: "The spirit and all thoughts of the soul are to be found in the heart." Therefore both must stand in harmonic relation.

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malf. Tous negw Least the System "The soul inhealt is pensionless. Only when it murranders to ", anticana nelt of democra it wook hims water a o as to keep it pure, constant smobiliness is needed. funed out plued out two down bloods thubes of .foco glaman Jose fluido est fud ,work bloom When this condition is fulfilled, there is given te possibility of a gardine systlesi experience of duest not unologousing antiquing vitas ent of galicoor Impinisionens bas -inon IIs to compon bas confg oritis derings. Thus says Macarico the Egyptions "The opt-

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watched over by the spirit. When it has got used to that it will gradually become able to watch over itself. The spirit as the place of the human person will then be given back its task, to guide God's grace into the heart.

which is not dull"slacking along, but it is throughout an active behavior, a constant practice of watchfulness. This wone (overcome) the first step into the
lightrealm of mysticism is done. The second lies in
awakening metania. The word really means to think
in a new way, but soon took on the meaning of repentance.
To experience that is an act of grace. Whoever has

bear tow and the mode . Thinks out yet rovo madot an estrangement from darkness, it will become his lot. hear lifty nowing manual only to movel out to shiver before the gates of paradice" and he continues and come a bou abling of their at a does nevin a by explaining: "Remorse is the presupposition for the right prayer. This is the personal communication with Prayer is the stand before the face of God." God.

> Thus it is understandable that a quite nominant of special requests of personal needs is not the right prayer, on it hang too many earthly things, which is humanly understandable, but - from t-he apophatic poin t of view - pollutes the higher purpos-e. 9 (?) Only the pure prayer prosefchi kathara, which only

and the sugressive villations of the said that the light is only possible through . Most be to the soul's Thus says Isaak the Syrien: "Remorse is the soul's -discount at the tage . Tomble application for at delich -Lundover to delibera dendunce a stolymond syling and one importance is given to prayer on Athos. Ap prayer mass. This form (overcome) the first step into the At sell hooses off . snot at matching to misertight amelening returns. The word really means to think

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To experience that is an act of grace. Whoever has

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Only the prepared proceeding business, which only

asks for spiritual values, is worthy to reach up . tol aki agnoss file #1 , accordant mont (passymentes of to God. The soul must pray beyond prayer. has any least the Byrian Phonorus is the soul age complete prayer is a spiritual (or mental in both German and Greek) prosefchi pnevmatiki and only this and dot apitison present and all parameter applications of is meant when one talks about prayer on Athos. There it has become the central conception of mysticism and ". not to said all orbins hears set at mysel . ho piousness.

It's xeeret In mental prayer the soul leaves importance is given to prayer on athor, Ag prayer the realm of the created, the becoming and them decaying, and rises into the world of eternal being. Then is reached the state of completed rest of the quiet soul and balance, the hesichia, the realm of splendour and joy in the silence of the spirit. This mystic state of god-"soakerd" relaxedness deprives itself



of any psychological description, for in this state
the soul has grown out of itself. He who has not
realised this is endangered into considering the Cristian hesichia a equal to the fakeerlike wiped out consciousness. Yet this case is the opposite: consciousness has become overalert, so much so, that our worldly understanding cannot grasp it. Consciousness is still there but in a higher sphere.

The orthodox hesichia must not be equalised to
the ecstacy of the western saints. The latter is a
sudden intoxicant state, in which the body sinks,
senceless and kataleptically. In the hesichia the
feeling of the body is still preserved but is submitted
under the soul's experience. Hesichia streches into

with the radial of a believed believe.



hours and does not end in exhaustion but with a newly gained feeling of strength.

Hesichia is the state of the coming age (aeon), in which the soul has a part of the divine enrgies which surround it. Were a paguan expression allowed one could call this state apollonic.

In the programm of the monk's life the evening is
the best time to practise hesichia, the hours from
the vespers untill sun-down. The monks go into the
garden, in the kiosk (gazeebo?), or to the cemetary
to submit themselves to the pious quiet. They sit
there quietly, and do nothing els than be silent.
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Romans otium. The Northerner must first learn what hesichia is: a happy bond with God, a prayer without words. When one asks a monk about hesichia the answer one gets is merely an embarrassed smile. How could one grasp what is beyond all words? On the other hand one is more inclined to bring the meaning of mental prayer claser to the stranger, that which is a fruit of hesichia. It must be everlasting , like breath and heartbeat, according to the words of the Bible: "Pray uninterruptedly!", calls for a special practice. In him the latent hesichia becomes active. This is to do nothing els than meet with the continuous down-pouring Grace, by human cooperation senergia, but it has nothing to do with the Asiatic prayer-mechanism.

cantile name catchia is a happy bond with God, a prayer without eres. When one asks a sonk about bostonia the ensure at dollar tand anguesta and of mento revers tavant to see any picture ore form during prayer." fruit of handoha. It must be everlasting , like om-pouring Grace, by human cooperation according but

so it is not suitable to talk of a Christian Yoga. The mental prayer., the prayer of the heart, goes back to ancient-christian tradition and at an early time it blood was put into wordings fit to be tought. Thus says Neilos the Sinafte on the subject: "If you want to see the to an end and the state of the heavenly Father, then do not strive

Diadochus of Photike: "The prayer of the heart and to change said of anthroppe transferred has about enables us to love God completly. The love is a godly fatogue a not affect, "ighterquired ains yand" sold energy which enflames the soul and binds it with God." aviton assessed alignment of mid mi . solters Basil the Great: "The good prayer is that in which the anomalinoo ont artw toom month ale parates of of at sime soul formulates the continuously operating God-thought." This formulation must happen consciously, because the

Eastern CRTHODOX does not know to be subconscious, no slumber of

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. anol mattering a to mist of elemina for al fit of no mental prayers, the prayer of the heart, gone back as put into wordings fit to be tought. Thus mays Heilos ne Single on the subjects "If you east no estimate on owners of the heavenly father, then do not uterve o see any picture ore form during prayer." mbles us to love God completly. The love in a godly ".bol mith of shad bes in bond best with God." ". Imports-bot anti-rego viewounds non est astalantol in a tornulation must happen commelously, because de the

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If the gospel announces: "God is light", the soul. then the formulatoin must also be light. Light is experienced as a real aspect in the knowledge: en gnosei Gnosis is on the highest grade of experiencing of God. the uncreated light. "In your light we see the light". (Ps. 36,10) Like this also, Symeon the New Theologian: "God is light and they that he makes worthy to see Him Who ever has received this light xxx see him as light. hase received the grace of God."

This divine light is the same as that of the burning bush, that which formed around (?) prophet Elias.

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This divine light is the same as that of the burning bush, that which formed around (?) prophet Elias,

that which threw down Saulus and which glorified (transformed?) the Lord on mount Tabor. According to Dionysios

Areopagita it is equal to the divine fire, which descen-

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ded on to the desciples as the Holy Chost at Pentecost. and is to be equalised with the divine energies, that stream downwards on the people as light of grace, an spiritual inner light. This is definitely no contradiction to the apophatic point of view. Indeed, according to this view the essence ousia of God is unexplorable for everyone, yet in the essence of God lies the possibility to operate in the created world. Exactly these operations are the energies. As an example the rays of the sun can serve as an example, they are not the sun itself yet they are experienced by human beings, because there exists in the man something which enables him to experien ence the light, his eye. "Were the eye not sun-ly..."

Yet this example is inaccessable because it sets up

an organic interrelation, which is missing in the religious sphere, for the inpouring of the energies is grace from the Homy Ghost. Metania repentance, and hesichia allow # man to hope, that God will listen to his prayer's cry, but they cannot force on the grace. The teaching from the in-pouring of the divine energies and the illumination ellampsis belongs neither to the intellect nor to the senses but is the reserved phe-

This light of illumination is, as Symeon the New The ologian says, a fire, really divine, not created, not material, without a beginning. It was according to the words of Gregorious Palamas in the 61d Testament frighten ing, in the New Testament it is mild. He teaches fur-

ed on to the descripton on the Holy Sheet at Pontagons, and in to be equalified with the divine converse, that ereem dorumerds on the people as light of grade, an ne apophatia point of view, indeed, seconding to thin of willideson edt seil hob to someses out ni toy tes pernie in the greated world. Exactly these operations nomenon of the mystical experience. Ments are easy of they are not the can street ist they are experienced by human beings, recause there wists in the man something which enables him to experien are the light, his eye. "Here the eye not sun-ly..."

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ther: "The light of illumination on the mount Tabor was visible for earthly eyes, because the desciples had race from the Heavy Chear's living a reportations, and at an earlier stage been seized by it. in the divine energies ix becomes likewise himself light. an proper's one, but they manner force on the grace. Those who are pure of heart see God, who lives in them because He is light and because He revealedHimself to those who love Him! This corresponds with the word of Paul: "The body must be spiritualised, must become a spiritual body,"

Tomus Hagioriticus concludes therfrom: "If the body with the soul should have a part in the unimaginable soods of the coming aeon then it must be able to do this here below as far as possible."

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Therein lies the key to the understanding of the

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Athos- mysticism: they body is no enemy of the soul,
but it is it's companion, which is likewise to the soul
called to take part of the enlightenment, at the same tim
time. Christ has ennobled the body by His incarnation,
and enabled it to take part in everything that comes
across the soul. Thus is the psycho-physical problem
soved in the sence of enlightenment-mysticism.

This spirit-bodily union explains the power of
the heart-prayer, for the heart is, as mentioned, the
mystic organ which binds the soul and body together.

Seraphim of Sarow says about that: "God is the fire, that
warms the hearts and turns them into glowingness. When
we feel cold in the heart, which comes from the demon, xixe
then we call to the Lord, and He will come and He will

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garm our heart through the love to Him and to the neighbour. Infront of the glow of His countenance the cold of the enemy will fade away. The cold and idleness akedia of the heart is a test, which every one must go through, who aspires the empletion of the soul." Symeon the New Theologian also describes these states: "Often did I see this light, at times it appeared in my innermost, when my soul posessed the peace and the silence, at times it shone only from far away or it hid completly. Then I fellt great soprow, for I feared never to see it again. As soon as I freed muself from everything tough and strove for genuine humility and tox/obe to be obedient, the light would shine anew. Thus didst thou disappear and appeared

and of but will of evel and describe transf and me to me day and night, unspeakable, invisible, untouchand of the energy will fade away. The cold and out to relately and solings of coming bliss. served on my innermost, when my soul possessed the pence rela hid completiy. Then I fells great negroup for

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The state of the state of the state and the state and the state and the state of th Isaak the Send and roseb pale and pole and pole and mount ". In Syrian says about that: "The realities of the coming acon - The state of them only have no actual name. One can receive of them only a certain simple cognizance, byond all words, all ele-This is a an unknowing which surpasses all knowledge."

> Symeon the New Theologian again states about the coming sight of God: "When we have reached completion, God appears not in any picture or in any tracex but He lets Himself be seen in His simplicity, which is

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arisen by the flameless and ungraspable light. I cannot say any more about it."

So the mystery is hidden in everything which aims at the coming aeon which eill be a life in love and light, a life in the Holy Ghost.

If one wishes to categorize the teaching of the

East according to time one finds a theefold partition

according to the works (or effects) of the Holy Trinity:

The old Testament lives in the faith strength of faith

and in directing hope for the (coming of) Son. The new

Testament realises throught the Son all the hopes and

Christ, the second Adam, has given us paradise back, the

leads the world to the realm of love, to the Holy Ghost.

Holy Chost fills it with light.

Wiber. The mystic Symoon is culled

Therewith is introduced the Parusia, the coming back of Christ and the last judgement, which will meet Thereof reports Symeon the New Theologian: the sinners. "Those that have become the children of light and sons of the coming day, the day of the Lord will never come to them. because they have all the time been in God. It will come suddenly though to those who live in the spirit of this world and who cling to the passing goods of it." The mystery of the divine light is called the mystery of the "eighth day", of eternity.

So we see that in the East dogmatic tradition and mystical experience go hand in hand and complete eachother. The mystic Symeon is called the Theologian,
because his mystic experiences form the foundation of

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gastern-church-makisf holds of belief, which gives a special importance also to the church festivities.

So Widsonx Whitsun like in the West is the feast of descent of the Holy Ghost, yet apart from that it is the feast of the Holy Trinity, for on this day poured the divine energies over the people, by the grace of a third divine person.

The celebration of Easteris the feast of the faith, because the belief in the resurrection of Christ has become the pledge for our own resurrection.

In the outline of the historical development of the two problems, the prayer of the heart and the sight of the Tabor-light, there is the following picture: Owing

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to the principle kataphatic frame of mind of the Westernchurch it is understandable that the apophatic theolo- . gy of the Orient met with her dismissal t considering that worldpolitics of both brother chuches wasgrowing more and more apart in the 13th century. Yet the exit of an open conflict was purely a theoretical one. Greek monk from Kalabria Barlaam represented a quarrelsom kataphatism, which enflamed the East to a resis-He chaimed that God gave us the possibility tance. to recognize the supernatuzal through the incarnation To deny of Christ, the same with his revelations. that is such an atrocity, that only the demon could have In the same manner Barlaam Whispered it to man. attacked the prayer of the heart, which supposedly

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by artificial costriction of the sences (or consciousness) is supposedly against natuer. For the same
reason he dismisses the sight of the Tabor-light as a
subjective illusion.

The learned archbishop of Thessalonica Gregorios Palamas answeres him in his 'Triads to the defence of the holy Hesichasts'. By sharp responses Barlaam showed himself more and more clearly as a Renaissance-Hum anist withm a platonic touch, thr by which he hame into the aura of a masked pagan for the Orient. The fight surged back and forth for x ten years until in August 1341 a council in the Hagia Sophia at Constantinople plainly took the side of Gregorios Palamas and discarded Barlaams thesis. The latter returned to Italy and in

his old age became the Greek-teacher of the poet Petrarca.

Now the victorious thoughts of Apophatism could prevail everyehere in the East without resistmance, and the flourish of Athos-mysticism began. One no longer shrank from applying the psychotechical means which B arlaam scorned, so as to reach union with God , the way suggested by Symeon the New Theologian: "Sitting in a quiet cell isolated from try to do what I tell you. Cut yourself off from the world around you and pull your spirit from those idle and passing things. Hereupon fix your chin to your chest and focuse your eyes to the middle of the tummy with all concentration. on the hevel that is to say. Hold your breath so that you do

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not breathe after your wish. Look into your innermost for the place of thr heart, where naturally all powers of the soul live. In the begining you will find unpenetrateable thick darknessm. If you persist though and try day and night you will- oh what a wonder!- find unending peace. As soon as the spirit tracks down the place of the heart, ih sees what it earlier never had experienced. For itt sees through the veil of the heart and sees itself in full clarity." To reach this goal a lot of endurance is nessessary. One is to hold infront of one's eyes allways the summons: "Pray without interruption." (1.Th.5,19) The church-father Chrysostome gives to that the explanation: "Hang onto the name of Jesus uninterruptedly, so that your heart absorbes

warm bires unitadipost to attament application out well a flourish of Athon-symilates became. One an longer . seek lies I same on or yet many haralout lies sale apirit from those this and passing talage, Merc-Tix your chin to your cheek and focuse your eyes to with my .moltratemence ile sitts while our le office

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the Lord and the Lord your heart, so that there become out of two one. This is not the work of a day or two,. but of a long time and constancy. Because a lot of fighting and time are needed, so that the enemy is thrown out of your heart and Christ takes it for habitation!

So when the one who practices does not slacken sperienced. For the sees through the well of the heads from his eagerness and the grace of God comes towards him the following takes place according to the holy Seraphim of Sarow: "As soon as man sees the inner light inside himself, his understanding (or consciousness) becomes clear and free of all earthly imaginations. Completly sunk into the seeing of uncreated goods he forgets the whole world of the sences, wishes also not

appears held film one neglecting you will find aspendent estentio think darknesses. If you persint though senting peace. As soon as the spirit tracks down the

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Interruption." (1.75.5,19) The charci-father Chryso-

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"Account aligned will see him to see her peak company

to see himself but to hide deep down in the heart of the earth just so as not to loose the real good, God."

These are all testimonies of mystics of earlier centuries. But are such experiences possible for men also, of our age? People whose sences are overflooded by enflamation since childhood, whose restlessness has become for them the element of life? How shall he then reach the inner complete quiet?

Yet even today the same mystical experiences

count as in the earlier days. A learned man of our

days, the athos monk Vassili Krivoschein, expresses

himself about that from his own experience: "So as to

understand mixedex Orthodox mysticism properly one

must keep in mind the central idea, namely the becoming

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Yet even today the same mystical experiences coursent to the earlier days. A learned man of our tiys, the atness monk Vassili Krivoschoin, exprenses tiys, the atness monk Vassili Krivoschoin, exprenses to the court that from his own experience: "So as to enderstand attender Orthodox systiches properly one

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This oneness is a grace of God. one with God. though mist also from his part aspire to God and his love for Him must be shown in work as an expression of This deepest expression of loving God is the prayer in which the whole human being turnes to God and aspires to be one with Him. Since according to parician anthropology the innermost centre of man is the heart, the proper spititual p rayer is accomplished in the heart. All appearances of imagination, all sencual imaginations are considerd something uncompleted, even harmful, because they are hindrances against direct union with God. And not only the soul but the whole man, spirit and body unite with God in spiritual prayer. That is the deepest purpose (or meaning) of Hesichasmus, .

clean fret relates , in his spiloges, about the

me with Cod. This comment is a grace of Cod. Man

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Allthough the prayer of the heart, si untill 30 years ago, was as good as unknown in the West, because the athos-books hardly mention it, since a short time it has found a cetain spreading here, curiously among the lay, while the Western meditation-forms, like the ones found in execitia spiritualia of Ignatius Loyola and i in the scriptures of St. John of the Cross and Theresa of Avila, are mainly practiced in clerical circles. In comparison to the Spanish contemplation-forms the prayer of the heart is of touching simplicity, without learned presuppositions. By what invisible ways it trickled int to our midst is unknown.

In the book 'The prayer of the Heart. The Century

Of Monks "Kallistus and Ignatius" (Munich 1955) Prof.

Gerhard Frei relates, in his epilogue, about the

practice of the prayer of the heart in the present of
nine cases that he ams come across during his 25 year
activity of looking after souls. A secretary, a paints
painter, a teacher, a book-keeper, a young mother and
a peasant-woman, have given themselves to the prayer of
the heart and tell how their their lives have become
happy by it. An eighty-yearold woman changed it into
'Lord Jesus I trust in Thee'.

Prof. Frei closes with conclusion that in our midst there is a congregation of devout people who carry the monk's cell whithin them and who constantly inhale the prayer of the heart like a braeth. He examines also the question wether the Jesus-prayer can be put on equal basis to the Indian Yoga; as a research r of religion

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he arrives at interesting conclusions. According to Him it rests on theee secrets, like every mantam, on the name , the heart, and the ruthm of breathing.

About the name he says: The dress of the x idea is the word, the soundbody of the idea. Every thing is a cristallised sound-body, is the word become visible. In the name the nemed one is present. Knowledge of the name means power over the named one. That is why the 'great' name , the secret name , is by all peoples only given to the initiated. Likewise also the name of Jesus has its secret power for this name was chosen by God Himself for His incarnated Son. Je-shua means: Jawe freed. That is the name above all names (Ph.2,9). The first Sunday of the year is the celebration of the

activity of looking after couls. . A secretary, a pa entator, a bescher, a book-keeper, a graing nother and many by it. on signify-years diament of the

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Prof. Frei closes with conclusion that in our mi

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name of Jesus. This name protects one from demons,
reaches into spheres outside the world, then. "The
Heart-prayer circulates like a planet around the sun

Frei says about the secret of the heart: "As man draws the stream of breath from the nose into the breast so must be send thoughts from the brain mix into the heart. The heart is the center between brain and sexus, therefor also the centre of the inner man. Life must be interwoven with spirit, neither heatedly stirring neither coolly calculating."

This is what he says about the secret of rythm
and breath: "Kosmos and history are built according
to measure, number and rythm, therefore the heart-prayer

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must also have the rythm of heart-beat and breathing. It must kend blend quietly and rlaxedly without drill and struggle. That which wishes to reach religious importance must be simple and easy to do again" (Rosenkranz, Litanei.) This is completed in a forward by by some thoughts in a forward of Andre Bloom: "The silence of the soul is the mystery of the coming time." (Vgl.S.8,13.) Prayer is a special gift from God and it cannot be brought to fulfillment by any artificial means neither by cunning or force. In prayer the static of quiet (hesichia) and dynamic of life unite.

Dew to the close connection of Athos and the Russian monasteries it is understandable that the heart-

prayer found great spreading at an early time in Russia. And namely by the book Dobrotoluje, which rached the most far off villages from the hundredthousand exemplars from St. Petersburg. Through the medium of pious old men, the starzes, millions found the happiness of pious construction. (Spiritual rconstruction?) It is a folkloric translation of the Greek Philokalia, an anonimus collection of mystic scriptures, printed for the first time in Venice 1782. A Frensh translation of chosen parts appeared in Paris 1933:J. Gouillard, Petite Philocalie. About the influence of Dobrolubje on the Russian piety , another little book reports to us. AIt is anonimus, Russian, a shaking document of religious innerness. (German translation by Reinhold

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von Walter, "Ein Russisches pilgerleben." berlin 1925.) The Russian Pilgrim is a simple peasant, who has learnt to read and write but dwe to a paralised left arm is unable to do any farming. Providance guids him to pious starez who initiates him into hte prayer secret of heart-prayer. Under his directions he first prays threethousand times a day and increases that number to four times as nuch in a short time. One can doubt if that is possible during the sixteen hours of the waking state, but nowhere in the text is there any sign of exageration. He passes, in continuous prayer, a happy summer in solitude and wonders after Wards across Russia and Sibiria untill he desides to Make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem whereupon he disappears £1

for the reader. The Russian life of pilgrimage is inits touching simplicity a gripping document of the purest love for God, which through the teaching of the devout starez, leads to the highest happiness reachable for man on earth.

But it also materially brings to the reader something new,. Thus teaches the starez tok the russian pilgrim and pupil, which according to the Russian vesion is to be prayed like this!" Imagen your heart exactly, focuse your eyes there as though you could see it through your breast, and imagin it as viviedly as possible. Listen if possible attentively how it sxim stirrs and beats each time. When you have found your way therein looking into this , begin at every beat to fit the

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ds to it. At the first beat say or think

prayer words to it. At the first beat say or think to yourself, 'Lord! by the second, 'Jesus,' by the third Christ', by the fourth, 'have mercy', by the fifth, 'upon me!' and repeat that as work as possible. Tthis will seem easy for you for you have already prepared yourself for the prayer of the heart. When you have got used to that though, then begin to the Jesus prayer at the same time as your breathing direct it into the heart and out again. as the Fathers teach it.. That means, you are to say when you inhale: Lord Jesus Christ! Then let out: 'Have mercy upon me!' Do this as often as possible . so then you will feel a distant pleasant pain in your heart; as then a warmth will sread therein. Thus you will reach the automatic operation of the



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Try also with all your strength to drive back all which your consciousness whispers or which might appear to you. Take up no picture! For the holy Fathers have announced that one is not to see anything during the inner prayer, so as not to fall to temptations."

A few pages further we find the resulting manifestations which dvelop by exact obedience to the given rules: "After listening to all this attentiwely he began full of eagerness to kenux praceed according to this way. About five days later he became aware of a strong inner Warmth and an unspeakably pleasant feeling in the heatt. apart from that also the inclination to repeat the prayer ontinuously which Tocked him the love of Jesus to him.

At times he saw a light shining although he did not percieve any objects therein. Occasionally it seemed to him, when he went into the depths of his heart, that at the same tome the strong flame of a burning candle udescribably blessed, arose in his heart and pressed out from his throat and shone around him. By the light d of this flame he could evem see things far away." Thus the heart-prayer becomes the exit-point of parapsychological phenomena, to which though the aspirant gives no importance, because they could distract him from the actual purpose of the prayer, the union with God. His soul has already overcome space and time and livesq there already in a beyondness, which is nothing but blessing love of God.

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That the operations of God-blessed old men, the ST zarzes had an effect in Russian literature is shown in the 'Folk-tales' of Tolstoj also the chapters in Dostojewskij' novel 'The Brothers Karamasoff', which are about the blessed works of the saintly Starez Sossima. In the year 1878 Dostojewskij looked for the Starez Amwrosij at the moastery of Optina. Leo Tolstoj had been to Amwrosij three times, during the fourth jurney to Optina he died on his way to Starez Joseph in 1910. In these authors we see the same meekness in behavior as we have got to know them in the Russian legends of Mt. Athos, which are also aimed at the mystic and ethic goal, which binds the other side with this side. added to them is a touching simplicity which is under-

standable to every one.

ties had the ties way to branch tought to 1910.

, while alide arise and so the salt whele deline , he

Now it would be interesting to know if there is any thing left of the tradition of the Starzes in todays Russia. To our surprise we hear from neutral travellers who can get as far as the villages and small touns that at many places, apart from the officially authorised religion, there exist secret and even tolerated, pious konventikel in which the sovjet people occasionally meet tom devotional practises, in primate flats, after having completed their state-duties. Among them there x are not only old people but also young ones who take part. Has the church returned to the Katakombes then? Such reports are confirmed by the notes taken

which the official newspaper takes when in 1962, Jan-

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levert for our emprise we hear from nameral travel when at mong places, apart from the officially such derinion, there extet engret and even tolarated, planting nest ten devotional practices, in private flats, et need smooth . endrand-orang these theretoes . Among them enderstern and of bonneses double ent sail .Jun

uary, it complains that still seventy percent of the population (!) are still believers. (This is taken from a Vienna church paper.) How is this to be under-Surely no other fact than that the pre-sovjet stood? tradition of the Starzes and the Dobrotolubje still live effectively, in secret. And with them the heartprayer and with it the Athos-mysticism - Like through a miracle it is preserved till today.

So as to return to the subject of the chapter, to the Athos-mysticism still practices in our days, the editor is convinced that a completely exhausting and perfect report on that is onlypossible to him who for years lives among monks as a monk and who absorball the secrets of the holy mountain. Hints towards the actual

spititual activity of these times of the holy mountain will be given in the following chapters.

That much the author was able to find out that
in Athos one is less and less talkative about questions
concerning Mystical problems, from year to year. One
guards these secrets from foreigners still more. No
wonder after the many unfortunate experiences one
had to bear dew to ununderstanding ore sensational
foreigners.

So it has come to be that Athos took up two aspects, one exoteric meant for foreigners and the other esoteric for pious pilgrims and serious visitors, learned people and theologists from whom one need not fear profanation of the holy. But also to the ones of the

first categoty if they are earnest and are taken by the aspiration for religious knowledge, one admits to them glimpses into the spiritual Athos-world occasionally One draws their attention to two easily understood founational ideas: 1. the goal of Athonite devotion is the union of the soul with God, the enosis and 2. this union cannot be forced even through the greatest praye2-"work" , but depends exclusively on the merciful Grace of God according to the existles Roman epistles9, 16: "So it lies not in someones will mr but in God's mercy" Therewith everything is said and the mystery MANNE MAN brought to awareness.



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