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# MULTIPLE RELIGIOUS BELONGING: RUSSIAN REFLECTIONS

By **Elizabete Taivāne**

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## **Abstract**

Russian experts in Religious Studies are not acquainted with the notion of multiple religious belonging. Gradually, they are becoming more aware of contact and interrelation among different cultures and religious traditions. They question whether new synthetic forms of religiosity, which combine aspects of Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, etc., are possible and what the result of such a synthesis is. A few arguments in favor of exclusivity by prominent Russian experts in religious studies are touched on in this paper. One of the most popular is the incompatibility of different cultural paradigms and anthropological patterns.

## **Key words**

Multiple religious belonging, Russian exclusivism, double belief, Russian religious studies.

## **Western Context**

Multiple religious belonging (MRB) is a topical field of research in contemporary religious studies in Europe and is associated with the notion of the hybridity of religion and the phenomenon of hyphenated Christians.<sup>1</sup> Experts in the field claim that it is necessary to cultivate “interreligious theology”—the advanced version of the theology of MRB.<sup>2</sup> The task

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<sup>1</sup> See, for instance, Gideon Goosen, *Hyphenated Christians: Towards a Better Understanding of Dual Religious Belonging* (Bern: Peter Lang AG, International Academic Publishers, 2011).

<sup>2</sup> Simone Sinn, “Vulnerability and Agency in Multiple Religious Belonging: Or, Why God Matters” in ed. Peniel Jesudason Rufus Rajkumar and Joseph Prabhakar Dayam, *Many Yet One? Multiple Religious Belonging* (Geneva: WCC Publications, 2016), 64-65.

of interreligious theology is to pass through the borders of confessional theologies<sup>3</sup> and to redefine Christian identity in light of communication with other religions. Almost all theological reflections about MRB represent some sort of apology for religious hybridity trying to adjust to biblical patterns of Christian exclusivism.

The phenomenon of MRB “coined from within theology, is now approached from within various disciplines.”<sup>4</sup> The starting point of research in the field is the interpretation of religion as lacking unity and quintessence. As Joantine Berghuijs indicates, “all religions are hybrid and continually change.”<sup>5</sup> This interpretation of religion is inspired by Ninian Smart, for whom religion is a sum of pieces of history, metaphysics, texts, experiences, ritual patterns, and so forth. They are all picked and collected together in order to construct the collage of religion.<sup>6</sup> Such a definition of religion, lacking the permanent quintessence, allows for further discussion about the hybridization of religion. In the context of MRB, no religion has definite borders. Religious identity is a contextual phenomenon that is fully constructed by cultural, historical, and individual factors.

According to Catherine Cornille, there are five types of MRB: cultural identity (the case of East Asia); drinking from multiple spiritual wells as a free choice; theosophy and New Age, which implies the new formations of the religious; interreligious marriages wherein both parents and children are involved; and interreligious dialogue, which may change a participant “as a dialogue participant increasingly identifies with convictions or practices of dialogue partners.”<sup>7</sup>

In Europe, MRB as drinking from multiple spiritual wells is most widespread. Dutch expert Joantine Berghuijs notes that the title “MRB” is already justified in the Netherlands if a person is involved in one of the following modalities of MRB: affinity, practice and material culture, ideology (i.e. religious beliefs), narrative (i.e. religious stories, persons, or books), origin (religion of parents/guardians), experience, ethics, social participation, and identification (i.e. self-identification).<sup>8</sup> It is enough, for example, to be involved in Christian practice and to

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<sup>3</sup> Perry Schmidt-Leukel considers that interreligious theology should transform into the theology of future. This type of theology is deconfessionalized, but not neutral. (Simone Sinn, “Vulnerability and Agency in Multiple Religious Belonging: Or, Why God Matters”, 65.)

<sup>4</sup> Joantine Berghuijs, „Multiple Religious Belonging in Netherlands: An Empirical Approach to Hybrid Religiosity”, *Open Theology* 3 (2017), 20.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ninian Smart and Steven Konstantine, *Christian Systematic Theology in a World Context* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991), 42.

<sup>7</sup> Sinn, “Vulnerability and Agency in Multiple Religious Belonging: Or, Why God Matters,” 66-67.

<sup>8</sup> Joantine Berghuijs, “Multiple Religious Belonging in Netherlands: An Empirical Approach to Hybrid Religiosity,” 22.

keep a small figure of Buddha at home, or just to be attracted by Buddhist rituals in order to be called a “hyphenated Christian.”

Such an approach to multireligious belonging is criticized by Steve Bruce. He contends that:

‘belonging’ to some religion is not—as MRB suggests—solely a matter of personal preference. The three Abrahamic religions have statements of faith and requirements that distinguish themselves from other and even the supposedly tolerant religions of Hinduism and Buddhism have beliefs and practices that allow little confusion as to whether one is Hindu or a Buddhist. [...] There needs to be a reciprocal acceptance from those empowered to approve or reject personal preferences. I could announce tomorrow that I am Jewish [...] but the local rabbi and Jewish community will not accept my claim.<sup>9</sup>

Bruce adds that “actual involvement in more than one religion is extremely rare.” He refers to the 2011 census in England and Wales that indicates that only 0.017% of the population in Bolton practice ‘mixed religion,’ whereas, “of those whom Berghuijs initially describes as combining Christianity and Buddhism, 45% is active Christians but only 4% is involved in a Buddhist community and 3% is involved in both a Christian and Buddhist community.”<sup>10</sup>

## **Russian Context**

Bruce represents some sort of empirical exclusivism, while Russian researchers express ontological exclusivism.<sup>11</sup> My paper discusses the arguments against the phenomenon of MRB in Russian religious studies. It is worth noting that the prominent Russian experts mentioned represent paradigmatic views and attitudes towards the problem. The attempt to separate theological reflection in my paper has only been partially successful because Orthodox holistic mentality is related to the essentialist interpretation of religion in Russian religious studies. It is noteworthy that prominent thinker Sergey Horuzhy is employed in the field of phenomenology of religion as well as in Orthodox theology.

Essentialism demonstrates preferences for Eastern patterns of mentality in Russia. Its main feature is a special respect paid to the irrational and permanent values that makes it difficult for Russian researchers to engage in dialogue with postmodern principles of decomposition and fragmentation of religion. Russian researchers are not well acquainted with

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<sup>9</sup> Steve Bruce, “Multiple Religious Belonging: Conceptual Advance or Secularization Denial?” in *Open Theology* 3 (2017), 606.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 607.

<sup>11</sup> I have partially discussed the question of exclusivism in Russian religious studies in the context of interreligious dialogue and Russian theological and philosophical reflection. See: Elizabete Taivāne, “Starpreliģiju dialogs: daži krievu ekskluzīvisma piemēri”, *Latvijas Universitātes Raksti* 803, 2015, 102-121.

the notions of hybridity of religion and MRB. The only term they recognize is “double belief” (*двоеверие*) which implies two meanings: the first is the designation of early encounters of Christianity with old pagan ideas and practices in medieval Russia. Sometimes, experts attribute the notion of double belief to current times, implying a mixture of Orthodox Christianity and surviving paganism. The latter interpretation of double belief is an episode of what is widely known in Europe as “double belonging” or MRB. At the same time, Russian experts in the field of religious studies are aware of the invasion of Asian religious ideas and practices in the West, reflecting on the matter in ways that are unusual for Western readers—they don’t interpret it as multireligious belonging but they elaborate upon it, using completely different terms.

Horuzhy—an expert in physics, mathematics, philosophy, and a prominent researcher in the field of Hesychasm—tries to translate the main categories of Hesychasm into contemporary language. He elaborates a new anthropological paradigm and terminology. One of his terms is “virtual religiosity,” which is the same as MRB in the Western sense of the word. In order to understand Horuzhy’s virtual religiosity, it is worth starting with the notion of authenticity in Russian religious reflection. Religion is considered to be a phenomenon *sui generis*. The existence of Ultimate Reality has never been contested by Russian religious studies experts during the post-soviet period. Ultimate Reality is accepted as an axiomatic starting point for any research. Thus, religion is endowed with a permanent core or quintessence. The essentialist interpretation of religion is linked to the notion of authentic religion, authentic religious experience, and an authentic path innate to any authentic religious system.

Horuzhy proposes a new anthropological paradigm in which humans are defined as dynamic beings endowed with the border consisting of three segments: an ontological segment and two ontic segments. If a person engages in an authentic and unmixed religious practice within his native tradition, he or she crosses, or transcends, the “ontological” segment of his or her border and, in the case of Hesychasm, is deified. That person becomes one with God because the Ultimate Other<sup>12</sup> dwells beyond the ontological border of the human.<sup>13</sup>

Because there are three segments within the border, there are two more strategies of human existence. It is possible to come close to the ontic border, which divides conscious

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<sup>12</sup> Here, Horuzhy refers to the Other mode of being (Rus. *Инобытие*).

<sup>13</sup> С. С. Хоружий, “Человек: сущее, трояко размыкающее себя” (2001) // *Очерки синергической антропологии* (Москва: Институт синергической антропологии: Институт философии, теологии и истории св. Фомы, 2005), 26-29.

belonging to the human entity and the unconscious situated beyond. The latter is interpreted by Horuzhy as the subconscious of Sigmund Freud: the entity of the Other is the Supra-Source, whereas the unconscious is the Sub-Source<sup>14</sup> of psychoses, phobias, etc., which coincide with the reality of temptations and passions. If a person cooperates with evil or goes astray during contemplative practice, he or she dies trying to cross the ontic segment of the border.<sup>15</sup> Obviously, in the context of Orthodox understanding of salvation as deification or the union with God, death here is interpreted as spiritual death.

The second ontic segment is the door leading to the entity of the *virtual* that is not endowed with its own independent existence. The virtual entity can be defined as a lack of actualization and fullness of being. There is nothing beyond this ontic segment of the border.<sup>16</sup> The virtual entity is the chaotic mixture of foreign religious ideas and practices entering Europe from Asia. Westerners are interested in Eastern religiosity, but they are not able to accept it in its original form. The Western consumer makes use of the distorted and the simplified, and, thus, adjusts to his or her worldview elements of Eastern religious ideas and psycho-techniques.<sup>17</sup> There is no system, no wholeness, and no perspective of ontological transformation. A person who comes close to this segment of the ontic border imitates the process of spiritual growth and finally dies in the ontological sense of the word. Hence, virtual reality is considered to be synonymous to fake religion or imitation of authentic religiosity. It does not mean, however, that Horuzhy denies non-Christian and non-Orthodox religious traditions. He is quite positive in his reflections on the theme of other religions. For instance, he mentions the experience of Buddhist nirvana as one of the paths leading beyond the ontological human border.<sup>18</sup> For this reason, the exclusivist position can be designated as ‘tolerant exclusivism.’

According to Horuzhy, it is not good to mix different religious paths. He contends that nowadays, when classic European anthropology has lost its vitality, the search for a new anthropological paradigm is taking place in the West, which is why Westerners are interested in Eastern religiosity. Albeit distorted and reduced, Eastern practical methods are actively and, to some extent, successfully used. However, any attempt to understand them theoretically fails

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<sup>14</sup> С. С. Хоружий, “Феномен православной аскезы как междисциплинарная проблема» // *Очерки синергийной антропологии*,” 213.

<sup>15</sup> С. С. Хоружий, “Человек: сущее, тройко размыкающее себя,” 39-40.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 42.

<sup>17</sup> “Судьба Адама и судьба Ивана (Разговор с Сергеем Шаповалом 19 февраля 2005 г.)” // С. С. Хоружий, *Очерки синергийной антропологии* (Москва: Институт синергийной антропологии: Институт философии, теологии и истории св. Фомы, 2005), 170.

<sup>18</sup> С. С. Хоружий, “Шесть интенций на бытийную альтернативу” // *Очерки синергийной антропологии*, 115.

due to completely divergent anthropological paradigms. The basic notions of classical Eastern practices cannot be translated into the language of European anthropology.<sup>19</sup>

Similar arguments concerning the incompatibility of different cultural paradigms are expressed by Russian Islamic expert Andrey Smirnov. He indicates that it is not possible to explore foreign cultures through the comparative method of research, i.e. it is not adequate to attribute Western cultural paradigms to other cultures. He proposes the civilizational approach that allows examination of any culture as a phenomenon, though endowed with its own markers or features and its own logic. Culture is not an accidental sum of components (contrary to Smart's definition of religion), but a system endowed with quintessence that produces a specific meaning.<sup>20</sup> He considers two different cultural paradigms—the West and Arabic Islam.

The basis of Western mentality is the substantial worldview rooted in the philosophy of Aristotle, whereas the Islamic interpretation of reality is processual. We are used to discovering borders and differences among substances, such as the spirit and body. The Arabic notion of process implies complementary logic, not allowing contradiction, and hierarchy of spiritual reality and the body. The process or relationship that binds the entities together is paramount, whereas the entities as such are inferior.<sup>21</sup>

Together with an expert in the field of Japanese studies, A.A. Nakorchevsky, Smirnov composed an edifying text—*Dialogue of a Buddhist and a Sufi about the Truth*. The authors explain that their task is to show that mysticism, as a common base for religions, is fiction. Any religion is linked to a unique worldview, constructing a completely unique mystical experience.<sup>22</sup> The dialogue starts with the assumption that the Buddhist and the Sufi have a common goal but different paths. During the discussion, they discover that no common goal exists. The Buddhist wants to realize the non-self, whereas the Sufi does not want to neglect the personality. Buddhist karma and reincarnation contradict the Muslim idea of one life. For the Sufi, the truth manifests after the death of the body, but for the Buddhist, the death of the body is just a short episode in the endless *samsaric* journey. The Sufi cannot accept the

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<sup>19</sup> “Новая антропология (разговор с Александром Гордоном 27 октября 2003 г.)” // *Очерки синергической антропологии* (Москва: Институт синергической антропологии: Институт философии, теологии и истории св. Фомы, 2005), 148-149.

<sup>20</sup> The interview with Andrey Smirnov: *14 Андрей Смирнов – Диалог культур*, Институт философии РАН, published Nov. 8, 2012, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OgzlAAW8yu4>, accessed 04.07.2019.

<sup>21</sup> See more about the features of Arab-Islamic culture in A.V. Smirnov, “Арабский язык, исламская доктрина и возникновение арабо-мусульманской философии” // ред. А.В. Смирнов, *История арабо-мусульманской философии: учебник* (Москва: Академический проект, 2013), 55-59.

<sup>22</sup> А. А. Накорчевский, А. В. Смирнов, “Диалог буддиста и суфия о том, что есть истина,” *Историко-философский ежегодник* 92 (Москва: Наука, 1994), сс. 182-199, <http://psylib.ukrweb.net/books/nakor01.htm>, accessed 03.20.2014.

Buddhist truth of the Void or *śūnyatā*, and the Buddhist does not agree that the truth can be associated with the idea of total unification. Such fruitless discussion allows the partners to conclude that universal truth does not exist. They decide to come together once more in order to discuss divergencies in their religions.<sup>23</sup> This text is not at all informative and proposes no chance for a fruitful comparative analysis of the two religions. The aim of the text is didactic.

Critical remarks concerning the search of the objective truth in the process of interreligious dialogue are also expressed by Russian Indologist V.K. Shokhin. He states that religion is something very practical. A person becomes a believer at the moment when he or she accepts a sum of non-verifiable truths, which is not in accord with the search for the objective truth. The main criterion of his or her faith is the ability to resist any counter arguments.<sup>24</sup> Like Nakorchevsky and Smirnov, Shokhin states that it is not possible to take mystical experience out of doctrinal context: Byzantine Palamists, as well as German mystics, were subject to contemplative discipline; yet in both cases, the discipline was linked to different paths and patterns of mystical encounter.<sup>25</sup>

As for interreligious context, Shokhin states that it is not possible to reconcile such divergent Christian and Hindu ideas as the notion of God the Creator and reincarnation.<sup>26</sup> It is interesting to note that the same incompatibility argument is expressed by Bruce in *Multiple Religious Belonging: Conceptual Advance or Secularization Denial?*: “[...] it is hard to see how one can simultaneously believe in a creator God who sent his only son to die as a sacrifice that redeemed our sins and in an endlessly self-recreating universe of suffering from which one escapes the necessity of rebirth by following certain ethical codes, practicing yogic detachment, or praying to bodhisattvas.”<sup>27</sup>

Shokhin expresses skepticism about the strategy of creating a “religion of the future.” According to the pluralistic point of view, such a new religion should be adjusted to the needs of all humankind and concurrently not destroy divergences among religious traditions. Shokhin contests the potential reciprocal enrichment of religions and simultaneous preservation of their identities. He refers to Coward and Panikkar in his designation of the reciprocal enrichment of religious traditions as “reciprocal impregnation.” Theoretically, such impregnation should not deprive partner religions of innocence; however, inviolability in the situation of the reciprocal

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> В. К. Шохин, “Диалог религий»: виртуальное понятие и реальное значение”, [http://www.gumer.info/bogoslov\\_Buks/Relig/Shoch\\_DialRelig.php](http://www.gumer.info/bogoslov_Buks/Relig/Shoch_DialRelig.php), accessed 07.04.2019.

<sup>25</sup> В. Шохин, “Диалог религий»: идеология и практика”, <http://www.pravmir.ru/dialog-religiy-ideologiya-i-praktika/>, accessed 07.04.2019.

<sup>26</sup> В. К. Шохин, “Диалог религий»: виртуальное понятие и реальное значение.”

<sup>27</sup> Steve Bruce, “Multiple Religious Belonging: Conceptual Advance or Secularization Denial?”, 608.



impregnation is a logical contradiction.<sup>28</sup> Shokhin admits that Christianity allows itself to be impregnated and deformed much more easily than other religions. Christianity easily gets rid of the most important and basic Christian idea of Jesus Christ as the Son of God. Shokhin is rather ironic in his discussion of the attempt by John Hick to liberate himself from the main obstacle of interreligious dialogue, i.e. the concept of Incarnation. Such de-mystification of Incarnation seems pleasing to Muslims. In reference to dialogue between Hick and California University professor and imam Muzammil H. Siddiqi, he cites Siddiqi about the Muslim's positive assessment of Hick's book *The Myth of God Incarnate*. According to Siddiqi, this book can serve as a good base for Christian-Muslim dialogue.<sup>29</sup> Considering any episode of interreligious dialogue to be an act of proselytism, he welcomes the exclusivism as a healthy form of resistance against language viruses. In the case of non-resistance, the organism of culture experiences stagnation, leading to death. Shokhin doesn't deny the dialogue. He endorses interest in Eastern philosophy, poetry, etc., but advises against crossing the borders of the Eastern religious world.<sup>30</sup>

Philosopher V.V. Schmidt's position regarding the clash of different religious systems seems to be curious. He underscores the basis of any culture and religion as the semiotic chain of signs and symbols. Signs and symbols are endowed with specific features and relate to other signs and symbols in a chain, which allows the chain and its signs or symbols to become a marker and identifier of a culture. The interreligious communication, or the clash of different semiotic chains, results in a mixture of cultural zones that were once carefully preserved. The chains are subject to the process of total destruction, whereas the signs and symbols, taken out of their original context, become secularized and lose their deeply religious meaning. No new metaphysics and semiotic chains originate. Order and holism transform into atomic polycentrism that, in turn, approaches intractable chaos. False types of soteriology and metaphysics come into being.<sup>31</sup>

Bruce agrees with Schmidt. Bruce underscores that "in both its social psychological and social structural effects, increasing diversity weakens religion. [...] The most religious societies in the West are the most religiously homogeneous: Poland, Ireland and Greece. [...] It is also the case that almost every Western society has become more religiously diverse since 1900 and

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<sup>28</sup> В. Шохин, "Диалог религий": идеология и практика."

<sup>29</sup> М.Н. Siddiqi. "A Muslim Response to John Hick: Trinity and Incarnation in the Light of Religious Pluralism" // *Three Faiths—One God*, 213. In В. Шохин, "Диалог религий": идеология и практика."

<sup>30</sup> Шохин, "Диалог религий": виртуальное понятие и реальное значение."

<sup>31</sup> В. В. Шмидт, "О знаке и символе в религии и обществе как проблеме межинституционального диалога," *Религиоведение* 3/2011, 69-73.

they have become less religious.”<sup>32</sup> It is curious that Steve Bruce agrees with Russian researchers while concluding:

Religious people might regard MRB as a counter to secularization, but the social scientist should see it instead as an *expression* of secularization. It is such in three senses. First, that it exists at all shows the weakness of our once-hegemonic religious organizations; like the ecumenical movement, it is not something that was permitted by the Abrahamic faiths when they were powerful enough to resist such radical re-interpretation of their core tenets. Second, its rejection of institutional authority and its preference for the individual’s right to decide what he or she will believe, is a clear instance of the general rise in consumerist orientation that is the death of the historic faiths. Third, the numbers interested in constructing their own faith packages from degrees of involvement in a variety of faiths is tiny. Secularization permits us MRB; it also ensures that few of us will take up the opportunity.<sup>33</sup>

The contemplative context of Hesychasm allows Horuzhy to propose one more valid argument against MRB. The incompatibility of religions is not just rooted in the incompatibility of doctrines. Regarding religious tradition, Horuzhy stresses that the contemplative tradition as a core of any religion must be practiced individually. At the same time, individual practice is linked to the supra-individual, historical, and social wholeness. The contemplative tradition and, hence, religious tradition are able to exist thanks only to the mechanism of its translation or transmission. Tradition needs to be transmitted from the teacher to his disciple. Thus, personal religious practice might be socialized.<sup>34</sup>

As Horuzhy contends, any spiritual practice is a complicated occupation, cultivating psychological, somatic, and intellectual techniques. It requires very precise and careful observation of inner psychic processes. In order to observe them, the skill of identification and control of dynamically changing states of consciousness are demanded. The feature of this strategy is the necessity to follow the teacher’s instructions exactly. For this purpose, the logic of translation does not allow any freedom, distortion, or varieties of the spiritual practice. If the meta-anthropological strategy is misrepresented, a disciple receives false experiences and loses the path leading to ontological transformation and deification. Horuzhy writes that the demand to achieve pure experience and to follow the preserved and narrow path is evidence of the impossibility of combining experiences and practices of various religions. Any religious

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<sup>32</sup> Steve Bruce, “Multiple Religious Belonging: Conceptual Advance or Secularization Denial?”, 609.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 610.

<sup>34</sup> С. С. Хоружий, “Глобалистика и антропология” // *Очерки синергийной антропологии*, 376-380.

tradition is a self-sufficient entity, preserving itself from everything that is foreign. The relationship between such entities is that of incompatibility and reciprocal exclusion.<sup>35</sup>

Transmission as the main mechanism of religious tradition is discussed by other Russian researchers as well. In the 1980s, Indologist V. Semencov stressed that Indian religiosity in its essence is nothing but the skill of imitating the teacher.<sup>36</sup> Sinology and Indology experts, such as V.V. Maliavin and A. Piatigorsky, were fascinated by Semencov's views and endorsed any attempt to learn the tradition,<sup>37</sup> underscoring the divergence between the teacher-disciple relationship (representing the essence of religion) and the context.<sup>38</sup>

Horuzhy's interpretation of the incompatibility of various religious traditions indicates that there can be no place for "performative compatibility" or "compossibility" of religions, as discussed by Dutch expert André van der Braak. In the context of Zen-Christian dual religious belonging, Braak states that "according to the cultural-linguistic model of religion, its authenticity is not so much a matter of the cognitive-propositional compatibility of Buddhist and Christian doctrines, but of the performative compatibility of Buddhist and Christian practices and ways of life."<sup>39</sup> In the context of the cultural-linguistic model, religion is interpreted as a form of life. Conversely, the cognitive-propositional model of religion presupposes the approach to religion primarily in terms of its institutional doctrine.<sup>40</sup>

It is worth noting that the performative mode of multireligious belonging is, to some extent, expressed in the biography of the German-Japanese Jesuit Hugo M. Enomiya-Lassalle (1898-1990). As a Christian, he utilized the practice of Zen as a natural path toward the supernatural goal. Lassalle emphasized that the practice of Zen and Buddhist philosophy were two different things that could be isolated.<sup>41</sup> In light of Russian tolerant exclusivism and essentialism, doctrine and religious practice cannot be compartmentalized. Sinologist Yevgeny Torchinov noted that the quintessence of any religious doctrine is soteriology, which in its turn is "a directive to reproduce the basic experience."<sup>42</sup> Such an interpretation of religion excludes

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 379-381.

<sup>36</sup> В.С. Семенов, "Проблема трансляции традиционной культуры на примере судьбы Бхагавдгиты" // *Восток-Запад: исследования, переводы, публикации* (Москва: Наука, 1988), 19-20.

<sup>37</sup> В.В. Малявин, "В поисках традиции" // *Восток -Запад: исследования, переводы, публикации* (Москва: Наука, 1988), 33.

<sup>38</sup> "Мифология и сознание современного человека: лекция Александра Пятигорского" // *Полит.ру*, <https://polit.ru/article/2006/03/02/pjatigorsky/>, accessed 04.07.2019.

<sup>39</sup> André van der Braak, "Zen-Christian Dual Belonging and the Practice of Apophasis: Strategies of Meeting Rose Drew's Theological Challenge," *Open Theology* 3 (2017), 439.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 436.

<sup>41</sup> Werner G. Jeanrond, "Belonging or Identity?" in ed. Catherine Cornille, *Many Mansions? Multiple Religious Belonging and Christian Identity* (Oregon: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2010), 113.

<sup>42</sup> Евгений Торчинов, *Религии мира: Опыт запредельного. Психотехника и трансперсональные состояния* (Санкт-Петербург: Азбука-классика, Петербургское Востоковедение, 2005), 62.

any option to combine religious traditions only in their performative (or ‘reproductive’ in Torchinov’s definition) aspect because it is not possible to take practice out of the soteriological, i.e. doctrinal context.

To conclude, it is important to discover why the phenomenon of multireligious belonging is defined and cultivated in Europe; but in neighboring Russia, the same phenomenon is neglected, deemed inadequate, and not legitimated. Possibly, the crux of the matter is expressed in Horuzhy’s emotional remarks. He admits that the Western world easily refuses its Christian roots. Referring to Novalis’ prominent text *Christianity or Europe*, he indicates that in the 18th and 19th centuries, these two terms were identical. Novalis was sure that the convergence of the two is permanent. In the 21st century, Europeans express completely opposite opinions: the European Union constitution is free of any references to the eternal goal and makes no mention of the Christian roots of European culture. Horuzhy underscores that this symbolic event epitomizes the peak of secularization and dissociation of Europe from Christian identity. The paradigmatic phrase “Christianity or Europe” is now substituted by “Post-Christianity or Europe.”<sup>43</sup>

Returning to Horuzhy, Europe’s loss of classical and self-sufficient patterns of Christian orthodoxy and orthopraxis makes it easily involved in the project of hybridization of religion. It willingly erases the borders between Christianity and other religious systems in favor of new forms of religiosity, whereas Russia continues to represent vivid forms of Christian self-identification, and awareness of the threat of agony and the death of Christianity is resulting in a camp of resistance around it.

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<sup>43</sup> С. С. Хоружий, “Христианство и другие мировые религии в современном мире: в поисках новых перспектив диалога и взаимопонимания”: Раздел коллективной монографии *Мировые религии в контексте современной культуры: новые перспективы диалога и взаимопонимания*. (Спб., 2011), 1, [http://synergia-isa.ru/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/hor\\_dialog\\_religiy-2.pdf](http://synergia-isa.ru/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/hor_dialog_religiy-2.pdf), accessed 04.07.2019.

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