

# Review of: "First Days after Death - A Jungian Comparison between the Beliefs of the Serbian Orthodox Church and the Post-mortem Experiences in the Tibetan Bardo Plan"

Paul Van Der Velde<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Radboud University of Nijmegen

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First Days after Death – a Jungian Comparison between the Beliefs of the Serbian Orthodox Church and the Post-mortem Experiences in the Tibetan Bardo Plan

Dragana Gavre

The article is a good example of reciprocal interests of comparisons between two religious traditions, at least the Jungian vision on these. This is the main contribution of the study. We must keep one thing in mind however. The version of the Tibetan Book of the Dead that Jung refers to is the version of Walter Evans Wentz. That is a Theosophical version of the Bardo Thodol (tib.: Bard.do thos.grol). It is doubtful whether this version of the texts was ever used in Tibet.

I strongly advise the researcher to take the book of Donald Lopez in consideration (the Tibetan Book of the Dead, A Biography. Princeton Un. Press 2011). In this book Lopez convincingly expounds how the present form of the Bardo Thodol as it is read in the West is in fact the result of the interpretation of Walter Evans Wentz himself, based on translations of Kazi Dawa Sandup handed over to him. Of most of these texts no original Tibetan versions were found, according to Lopez. Maybe Evans-Wentz composed these texts himself in accordance with Theosophical thinking. This was part of the western Esoteric, theosophical tradition. Evans-Wentz was a convinced theosophist himself. Moreover Lama Anagarika Govinda whom is mentioned in the article was not a Tibetan but a German (Lothar Hoffman) and also deeply involved with Theosophy. This all results in very peculiar interpretations of what Tibetan Buddhism is or was and what the Bardo Thodol deals with.

Now it is true that the study is on Jungian comparison on these two traditions, the Serbian Orthodox Church and the Tibetan Bardo. But we must keep in mind that if the Tibetan BardoThodol is concerned it is the very explicit (not to say very selective) reading of Jung of the texts of Evans Wentz.

I think the article would become stronger if these thoughts are taken into consideration. In that case it would do justice to the Servian tradition, the Tibetan tradition and the unique Jungian reading of both.