

**THE AGE OF IMPERIALISM**  
**(1900-1914)**

*Volume VIII*

*of*

**AN ESSAY IN UNIVERSAL HISTORY**

*From an Orthodox Christian Point of View*

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*Great empires in history have been the best protection of vulnerable minorities... When a great empire is defeated in war, then it can turn on its minorities. But great empires in the period of their prosperity on the whole are the best guarantee, because the great enemy of empires is nationalism and nationalism is the antithesis of a cosmopolitan empire.*

Hugh Trevor-Roper.

*Aristocrats legitimize themselves by a notion of quality which runs counter to the despotism of egalitarian democracy.*

Henry Kissinger.

*Monarchy can easily be 'debunked;' but watch the faces, mark the accents of the debunkers. These are the men whose tap-root in Eden has been cut: whom no rumour of the polyphony, the dance, can reach - men to whom pebbles laid in a row are more beautiful than an arch. Yet even if they desire equality, they cannot reach it. Where men are forbidden to honour a king they honour millionaires, athletes or film-stars instead: even famous prostitutes or gangsters. For spiritual nature, like bodily nature, will be served; deny it food and it will gobble poison.*

C.S. Lewis.

*Land of Hope and Glory, Mother of the Free,  
How shall we extol thee, who are born of thee?  
Wider still and wider shall thy bounds be set;  
God who made thee mighty make thee mightier yet...*  
Sir Edward Elgar, "Coronation Ode" (1902).

*What is the glory of Rome and Jerusalem where all nations and races come to worship and look back, compared with the glory of America, where all races and nations come to labour and look forward!*

Israel Zangwill, The Melting Pot (1908).

*We will glorify war – the world's only hygiene.*  
The Futurist Manifesto (1909)

*Russia, if you fall away from your faith, as many intelligently have already done, then you will no longer be Russia or Holy Rus'. And if there is no repentance in the Russian people, the end of the world is near. God will remove the pious tsar and send a whip in the persons of impious, cruel, self-appointed rulers, who will drown the whole earth in blood and tears... The earthly fatherland with its Church is the threshold of the Heavenly Fatherland. Therefore love it fervently and be ready to lay down your life for it, so as to inherit eternal life there.*

St. John of Kronstadt (1905).

*There is no law beyond do what thou wilt; every man and woman is a star; the word of sin is restriction.*

Aleister Crowley, The Book of the Law (1904).

*The Russian Empire was the most democratic monarchy in the world.*

Baron A.D. Meyendorff.

*May the merciful Lord defend the remnant which still believes in Him. But this remnant is small, and getting smaller.*

St. Ignaty Brianchaninov.

*In view of the prevailing, all-encompassing movement of universal apostasy, let your hand not rise in the attempt to stop its elemental flow and progression. It is allowed by God because of human sinfulness to overshadow Christendom and is far beyond our meagre attempts to do something about it. Instead, 'acquire the spirit of peace, and thousands around you will be saved!'*

St. Ignaty Brianchaninov.

*Man's minds were out of balance. This explained everything and, by explaining it, condoned it. The penchant of psychology to explain the world solely in terms of the mind now received full play. Cruelty and sexual perversion were natural outlets for frustration induced by the suppression of the id by the ego.*

George L. Mosse, The Culture of Western Europe (1988).

*After God "died", man himself became the supreme person, the only divinity... With the field thus cleared of supernatural encumbrances, the true approach to the divine came to consist in man's probing of his own innermost states. For this century everything from dream analysis to the perception of relativity, became self-knowledge as the first stage to self-assumption. The ancient sin of hubris, man's too-great arrogance in the face of the cosmos, disappeared when divine powers no longer existed outside man. Evil was confined to failure in confronting oneself.*

Robert Shattuck, The Banquet Years (1968).

*Nicholas II was not stupid. Nor was he nearly as weak as is commonly thought. The dilemmas of ruling Russia were vast and contradictory, and it was an illusion to think that simply by agreeing to become a constitutional monarch Nicholas could have preserved his dynasty and empire.*

Dominic Lieven.

*I reject the omnipotence of the secular state because I see it as a tyranny: others reject it because it is not their tyranny... We made the French Revolution. Our fathers thought it was to free themselves. Not at all: it seems it was only to change masters... We have guillotined the King: long live the state King!.. We have dethroned the Pope: long live the state Pope!.. I know the state. It has a long history, full of murder and blood... The state is by its nature implacable: it has no soul, no entrails, it is deaf to pity.*

Georges Clemenceau, Prime Minister of France (1903).

*The destiny of the Tsar is the destiny of Russia. If the tsar rejoices, Russia will rejoice. If the tsar weeps, Russia will weep, while if there is no tsar, there will be no Russia. Just as a man with his head cut off is no longer a man, but a stinking corpse, so Russia without a tsar will be a stinking corpse.*

St. Anatoly of Optina (1916).

*The supreme power in a pure, true monarchy is unlimited, but not absolute, for it is limited morally by the content of its ideal.*

Hieromartyr John Vostorgov (+1918).

*Everyone has stopped talking: instead they importunately DEMAND that their lives must improve, that the working day should be reduced and wages raised, and they demand this AT*

ONCE. They also demand the introduction of a democratic republic AT ONCE. Russia has become a madhouse... it's like an epidemic of plague or cholera.  
Ivan Zabelin (1905).

*Lords without anger and honour, who dare not carry their swords,  
They fight by shuffling papers; they have bright, dead, alien eyes,  
They look at our labour and laughter as a tired man looks at flies,  
And their load of loveless pity is worse than ancient wrongs.*  
G.K. Chesterton (1908).

*We must reverently preserve the Orthodox Faith, standing firm in it in spite of the fact that we live in a non-Orthodox country... while faithfully preserving the Orthodox Faith, everyone must also take care to spread it among the non-Orthodox. Christ the Savior said that having lit the candle, men do not put it under a bushel but on a candlestick so that it gives light to all (Matt. 5.15). The light of the Orthodox Faith has not been lit to shine only for a small circle of people. No, the Orthodox Church is catholic; she remembers the commandment of her Founder, Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature and teach all nations (Mark 16.15; Matt. 28.19).*  
St. Tikhon, Patriarch of Moscow and Apostle to America

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## INTRODUCTION

This book is the eighth volume of my *Essay in Universal History*. It describes the zenith of the power of the westernized empires, which now, from the beginning of the twentieth century, included Japan and the United States; the fall of the oldest pagan empire, China; the beginning of the reaction against imperialism in the oldest and largest of the empires, Britain; the new religions and pseudo-religions that penetrated western civilization; and the complex of antagonisms between the European nations that led finally to their reaping the whirlwind, the First World War. A special focus is concentrated on the Russian empire, the last major outpost of true Christianity in the world, and its titanic struggle with the liberal and socialist revolutions, which came to a first climax in the abortive revolution of 1905. The factors leading to the First World War and the Russian revolution are discussed in detail: the coming catastrophe is seen as God's judgement on nearly 900 years of West European apostasy, and over 300 years of East European toleration of the gradual corruption of their faith - that is, Orthodox Christianity - by the West.

Although the title of this book is *The Age of Imperialism*, several of the major empires claimed to be based, not on despotism, but on the will of the people. Of course, if the evil deeds of these empires were indeed carried out in accordance with the will of the people, it spread the guilt of their violence over the whole people. Only in one of the European empires, that of Russia, was there no claim to, or attempted justification by, "the will of the people": rejecting the democratic ideology, the Russian tsar took the whole responsibility for his empire's actions, both good and bad, upon himself, submitting to the will and judgement of God alone. For this effrontery, the western empires and the westernizing democrats and revolutionaries both within and outside Russia tore his empire to pieces in 1917; but in this book we stop before the catastrophe, concentrating on the last and most glittering phase of pre-war European imperialism, and in particular on the reign of the greatest of the tsars, Nicholas II, who tried, skilfully and courageously but ultimately unsuccessfully, to restrain the onset of the collective Antichrist that was to afflict the whole world after his death.

The three ideological offshoots of the French Revolution - liberalism, nationalism and socialism - simultaneously grew and prospered in the long nineteenth century. They were nourished and fed within the European empires - liberalism especially in the English. French and American empires, nationalism especially in the German empire and socialism especially in the Russian empire, where it was still a mainly underground counter-culture in opposition to the official ideology of Orthodox Autocracy...

All that glitters is not gold, and the superficial glitter of western civilization concealed its imminent general breakdown. The clearest sign of this was the descent of art into abstractionism and of music - into atonality. However, we see the same process not only in art and music, but, still more significantly and importantly, in religion, where the existence of a single truth was increasingly denied; in morality, where relativism denied a clear difference between good and evil. Again, in physics, relativity theory and quantum physics denied that time was directional or matter material; in politics, governments succeeded each other with bewildering speed and assassinations of leaders were commonplace; in psychology, the highest strivings of

man were reduced to the lowest instincts. Everywhere we look – with the partial exception of the Orthodox East, which, however, was influenced by the same processes - we see breakdown of old conceptions, chaos, the end of the line...

Through the prayers of our Holy Fathers, Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on us!

## *I. THE WEST: "LA BELLE EPOQUE"*

## 1. AMERICAN IMPERIALISM

The twentieth century has been called, with justice, the American century. After a slow start, when the impact and global potential of the new, vastly improved methods of communication was not yet fully felt by the sleeping giant, the Americans burst onto the international scene during the First World War, and proceeded to score major victories over their enemies in 1918, 1945 and 1991. Only just after the end of the century, on 9/11 (September 11, 2001) did the American colossus reveal itself to be vulnerable to external attack for the first time...

Russia and America were exceptional among the empires - Russia because until 1917 she rejected the democratic ethos of the others in favour of Autocracy, and America because she rejected the very idea of empire. In fact, she was so anti-imperial that "when Santo Domingo (the future Dominican Republic) effectively offered itself up for annexation in 1869, the proposal was defeated in Congress."<sup>1</sup> And yet George Washington had called America an "infant empire", and that is what she was in all but name. And in 1836 America supported Texas' secession from Mexico, and in 1846 defeated Mexico in her first imperialist war. In the treaty that followed, "the United States acquired half the territory of Mexico, composing the future states of New Mexico, Arizona, Nevada, Utah and California."<sup>2</sup>

America was an empire in all but name from the time she stepped into the shoes of the defeated Spanish Empire in the Caribbean and the Pacific. Andrew Roberts writes: "Under the terms of the Paris peace treaty that ended the Spanish-American War on 10 December 1898, the United States obtained Spain's colonies of Puerto Rico, Guam and the 7,107 islands of the Philippines. Cuba obtained her nominal independence, but was effectively a US protectorate. Although in 1897 President McKinley had stated that 'forcible annexation' of the Philippines 'cannot be thought of, by our code' and would amount to 'criminal aggression', twelve months later he was willing to pay Spain \$20 million for their cession to the United States. Two major factors had influenced his change of mind. One was the concept of Manifest Destiny, or, as he put it, the responsibilities 'which we must meet and discharge as becomes a great nation on whose growth and career from the beginning the Ruler of Nations has plainly written the command and pledge of civilisation'. The other factor was 'the commercial opportunity to which American statesmanship cannot be indifferent. It is just to use every legitimate means for the enlargement of American trade.'<sup>3</sup>

\*

**America and the British Empire.** American imperialism had only one serious potential rival in the Western hemisphere - Britain, which in 1900 still had by far the most powerful navy in the world. So successive American presidents (especially Theodore Roosevelt), worked with successive British prime ministers (especially Lord Salisbury) to set about removing the rivalry, while Roosevelt built a "great white fleet" to take American soldiers around the world. The result was "the special relationship", and America's propulsion into the ranks of the Great Powers...

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<sup>1</sup> Ferguson, *Colossus: The Rise and Fall of the American Empire*, London: Allen Lane, 2004, p. 41.

<sup>2</sup> M.J. Cohen and John Major, *History in Quotations*, London: Cassell, 2004, p. 616.

<sup>3</sup> Roberts, *A History of the English-Speaking Peoples since 1900*, London: Penguin, 2014, p. 22.

Essentially, America was the same type of liberal empire as the British, the world's major "anti-imperial empire", or "empire of good intentions" (Simon Schama). Like the British, the Americans' main motivation was commercial gain. But – again like the British – their leaders claimed, sincerely, to have no dreams of conquest, but only a mission to bring true civilization, the civilization of democracy, human rights and capitalism, to the non-western world. Some even believed that the bringing of a superior form of Christianity was a part of that mission – although religious motives became less important over time. Thus Ezra Stiles, president of Yale University, said as early as 1783: "Navigation will carry the American flag around the globe itself, and display the Thirteen Stripes and New Constellation at Bengal and Canton... and with commerce will import the wisdom and literature of the west... A time will come when six hundred millions of the human race shall be ready to drop their idolatry... should American missionaries be blessed to succeed in the work of Christianizing the heathen, in which the Romanists and foreign Protestants have very much failed..."<sup>4</sup>

By the later part of the nineteenth century the Americans had even overtaken the British in industry, thanks to the techniques of standardization of parts and mass production. "In 1870," writes Landes, "the United States had the largest economy in the world, and its best years still lay ahead. By 1913, American output was two and a half times that of the United Kingdom or Germany, four times that of France. Measured by person, American GDP surpassed that of the United Kingdom by 20 percent, France by 77, Germany by 86."<sup>5</sup>

The distribution of wealth in America was very unequal. "In its distribution of wealth and income," writes Robert Tombs, "Victorian England was probably comparable with Germany, but much less unequal than Russia and America, where both new and inherited wealth reached unique heights: in 1900 the richest American had at least twelve times as much money as the richest Englishman."<sup>6</sup>

The only major way in which the Americans differed from the British (apart from pretending that they didn't have an empire) was their refusal to accept the gospel of Free Trade. "Between 1846 and 1870," writes Martin Wolf, "liberalization spread from the United Kingdom to the rest of Europe. Protectionism, which had never waned in the United States, returned to continental Europe after 1878 and reached its peak in the 1930s."<sup>7</sup>

Only in Britain did the dogma of free trade still rule – although there was a furious debate over it in the early twentieth century, with the Conservative Colonial Secretary Joseph Chamberlain arguing that some protectionism was useful in order, first, to consolidate the empire in a single free trading block ("imperial preference"), and secondly to allow the income gained from tariffs to be spent on welfare. But he lost the argument, allowing the free-trader Liberals to gain a landslide victory in 1906.

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<sup>4</sup> Stiles, in Cohen and Major, *op. cit.*, p. 619.

<sup>5</sup> Landes, *The Wealth and Poverty of Nations*, London: Abacus, 1999, p. 307.

<sup>6</sup> Tombs, *The English and their History*, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2014, pp. 487-488.

<sup>7</sup> Wolf, "Will the Nation-State Survive Globalization?" *Foreign Affairs*, January/February, 2001, p. 183.

For their further development, however, it was essential that the Americans settle scores with the British; for the two nations had twice warred against each other in the past, and the British with their powerful navy remained the only power that could seriously contest American domination in the Western Hemisphere. In 1846 they agreed that their frontier in the disputed north-west should be the 49<sup>th</sup> parallel, which became the longest undefended border in the world. British non-intervention in the American Civil War had the important consequence of initiating a growing reconciliation between the two nations that had often warred against each other in the past, a process facilitated by marriages between American heiresses and English aristocrats (as between Winston Churchill's parents, and between Lord Curzon and his wife), and by the Anglophilia of great American writers such as Henry James.

"Until 1865," writes Dominic Lieven, "London believed with reason that it could defend its position in the Western Hemisphere by force if necessary and thereby sustain a balance of power in the region."<sup>8</sup>

Indeed, as late as 1890, writes Henry Kissinger, "the American army ranked fourteenth in the world, after Bulgaria's, and the American navy was smaller than Italy's, a country with one-thirteenth of America's industrial strength. As late as the presidential inaugural of 1885, President Grover Cleveland described American foreign policy in terms of detached neutrality and as entirely different from the self-interested policies pursued by older, less enlightened states. He rejected 'any departure from that foreign policy commended by the history, the traditions, and the prosperity of the Republic. It is the policy of independence, favored by our position and defended by our known love of justice and by our power. It is the policy of peace suitable to our interests. It is the policy of neutrality, rejecting any share in foreign broils and ambitions upon other continents and repelling their intrusion here.'"<sup>9</sup>

By the end of the century America was beginning to translate her economic power into military might and diplomatic clout. That clout was displayed in 1895, when, as David Cannadine writes, "President Grover Cleveland sent to Congress what was in effect an ultimatum to the British government concerning another long-standing border dispute in the western hemisphere, that between British Guiana and Venezuela. Invoking the Monroe Doctrine, which had declared that no European powers should intervene in the affairs of the Americas, Cleveland peremptorily insisted that a United States commission would decide on the contested boundary, and that their decision would be accepted and indeed imposed, by force if needs be, regardless of how the British government might respond. This was a serious challenge to the United Kingdom's transatlantic position and possessions. Cleveland duly appointed his commission, with which the Salisbury administration, having no alternative, deemed it prudent to co-operate. As on previous occasions, the issue was referred to international arbitration; and as it turned out, the principal British claims were confirmed when the award was finally promulgated in October 1899."<sup>10</sup>

In spite of that, the American Secretary of State was blunt in telling the British what the new balance of power in the Western Hemisphere was. "To-day the United States

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<sup>8</sup> Lieven, *Towards the Flame. Empire, War and the End of Tsarist Russia*, London: Allen Lane, 2015, p. 23.

<sup>9</sup> Kissinger, *World Order*, London: Penguin, 2015.

<sup>10</sup> Cannadine, *Victorious Century. The United Kingdom, 1800-1906*, London: Viking, 2017, p. 434.

is practically sovereign on this continent, and its fiat is law." America's "infinite resources combined with its isolated position render it master of the situation and practically invulnerable as against any or all other powers."

"America was now a major power, no longer a fledgling republic on the fringes of world affairs. American policy no longer limited itself to neutrality; it felt obliged to translate its long-proclaimed universal moral relevance into a broader geopolitical role. When, later that year, the Spanish Empire's colonial subjects in Cuba rose in revolt, a reluctance to see an imperial rebellion crushed on America's doorstep mingled with the conviction that the time had come for the United States to demonstrate its ability and will to act as a great power, at a time when the importance of European nations was in part judged by the extent of their overseas empires..."<sup>11</sup>

As a result of the Spanish-American War that then took place, America vaulted herself into the ranks of the major powers. The British chose not to contest this. Indeed, in 1899, on the occasion of the Americans' annexation of the Philippines, Rudyard Kipling wrote a famous poem, "passing on the baton", as it were, from one liberal empire to another:

*Take up the White Man's burden –  
Send forth the best ye breed –  
Go bind your sons to exile  
To serve your captives' need...*

Britain was glad to pass on "the White Man's burden", not only because it was heavy in itself, but also because, as Lieven writes, by 1900 "Britain faced an increasing number of competitors at a time when it had long ceased to be the only industrial economy in the world. In these circumstances, any confrontation with the United States would be a disaster. In the twenty years around the turn of the century, Britain conceded hegemony in the Western Hemisphere to the United States, appeasing the Americans by giving way on a series of issues concerning competing interests in Brazil, Venezuela, and Panama. German observers noted sourly but correctly that the British tolerated behavior and rhetoric from the Americans that would have led to furious protests and even war had they come from continental Europeans. Although British wooing of the Americans was by no means always reciprocated on the other side of the Atlantic, the Germans knew that in a competition for American goodwill the English had many advantages, beginning but by no means ending with their shared language.

"The Anglo-American alliance in the twentieth century was indeed never simply a matter of Realpolitik and shared geographical interests. On the contrary, what gave this alliance its strength was that common strategic interests were intertwined with ethnic and ideological solidarity. It was precisely around the turn of the century that the English-Speaking Union and a number of similar organizations were created to emphasize the deep cultural bonds that spanned the North Atlantic. The steamship and intermarriage brought East Coast and British elites closer together. When Britain's survival in 1940 depended on American support, it helped that its leader, Winston Churchill, had a famous American mother, Jennie Jerome. So too did the whole

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<sup>11</sup> Kissinger, op. cit., pp. 245-246.

ideology of Anglo-Saxonism, which drew on increasingly widespread and fashionable racial and biological interpretations of human society and historical progress. In the first two-thirds of the nineteenth century, British elites had compared their 'mixed constitution' to unstable, irrational, and aggressively expansionist American democracy. By the 1890s, however, Britain itself had evolved towards a full-scale democracy. London and Washington could celebrate ideological solidarity while often feeling in their hearts that only male, Anglo-Saxon Protestants had the self-discipline and the rationality to make democracy viable. Lord Salisbury had sometimes regretted the United States' arrival, but for Arthur Balfour, his nephew and successor as Conservative prime minister, Anglo-American solidarity became the key to sustaining global order and Western civilization."<sup>12</sup>

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**McKinley's Imperialism.** Let us look more closely at the Spanish-American war and its consequences... "In February 1895," writes Protopresbyter James Thornton, "Cubans began an insurrection against Spain's control of the island. Over the next several years this struggle for independence became ever more harsh and bloody, so that by early January 1898 the American consul-general in Havana, Fitzhugh Lee, came to believe that American lives and property were in danger. He therefore asked the United States to send a battleship to Havana Harbor as a show of force, to discourage any threats to American citizens. The battleship *Maine* was dispatched, arriving January 25. On February 15 the *Maine* mysteriously exploded and sank, killing 266 American sailors. An American Board of Inquiry determined that the ship was likely sunk by a mine, while Spain's investigatory commission determined that the explosion came from a malfunction inside the ship itself.

"In 1974, Admiral Hyman Rickover led an investigation of the sinking, concluding that a fire in the coal bunker caused an explosion in an adjacent ammunition magazine. Another investigation, this one financed by *National Geographic* magazine, was inconclusive and only demonstrated that either theory – internal coal fire or external mine – was possible. Whatever the case, which we may never know with certainty, it is highly improbable that the Spanish government or military would have authorized the deliberate sinking of an American warship and thereby sparked a war in which a Spanish defeat was a near certainty. At the same time, it is abundantly evident that elements within the American political establishment of that time desired war and thus seized the occasion of the sinking to rouse public opinion in favor of war. 'Remember the *Maine*' became their incendiary catchphrase.

"On March 30, 1898 the United States demanded that Spain grant Cuba immediate independence, a demand that Spain refused the following day. Consequently, on April 11, President McKinley asked Congress to authorize the deployment of U.S. troops to Cuba to end the strife there. Congress passed a joint resolution demanding Spain's immediate withdrawal from Cuba and authorizing McKinley to use whatever force necessary to gain Cuba's independence. An ultimatum was sent to Spain, and the United States initiated a blockade of the island. That brought a declaration of war by

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<sup>12</sup> Lieven, *op. cit.*, pp. 23-24.

Spain against the United States on April 23. On April 25, Congress declared war on Spain retroactive to April 21.

“At the Battle of Manila Bay, May 1, 1898, the U.S. Asiatic Squadron, led by Commodore George Dewey, defeated and destroyed a Spanish squadron and seized Manila. Subsequently, 11,000 U.S. troops landed on the Philippines, which then came under American tutelage. The Spanish-controlled island of Guam was captured without bloodshed on June 20. Puerto Rico was attacked by sea beginning May 12, and by land June 25. Armed conflict continued on that island until the end of the war. Victory in Cuba was achieved by joint naval and ground action. The U.S. Navy first took Guantánamo Bay in early June, and then Santiago de Cuba in early July. Ground troops were landed in the far south, just east of Santiago de Cuba. Over the next several weeks the United States fought and won a fiercely contested series of battles. After its string of defeats, especially at sea, Spain sued for peace. On August 12, an armistice was signed, halting all hostilities, followed by a peace treaty on December 10. As a result, Spain ceded control of the Philippines, Guam, and Puerto Rico to the United States, and also relinquished control of Cuba, which became a U.S. protectorate. Thus America gained several overseas possessions that, among other things, vastly enhanced its naval strength.”<sup>13</sup>

President McKinley had at first hesitated to intervene in Cuba. But then his political opponent Theodore Roosevelt mocked him, saying that he had "no more backbone than a chocolate éclair".<sup>14</sup> McKinley crumbled, therefore, not because he had rationally come to the conclusion that this intervention was in America's best interests, but because he feared being called a "sissy".

And so McKinley won his "splendid little war", as his secretary of State John Hay put it. But at great cost to America's reputation. For before, as John B. Judis writes: "the United States stood firmly against countries acquiring overseas colonies, just as American colonists once opposed Britain's attempt to rule them. But by taking over parts of the Spanish empire, the United States became the kind of imperial power it once denounced. It was now vying with Britain, France, Germany, Russia, and Japan for what future U.S. President Theodore Roosevelt called 'the domination of the world'."<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Thornton, "Partnering with Putin", *New American*, November 20, 2015, <http://www.thenewamerican.com/culture/history/item/21998-partnering-with-putin>. Indeed, it was the growth in America's naval power that more than anything else underpinned her growing power among the nations. For, as Ferguson writes, "until such times as the United States had a world-class navy, it could not really enforce its claim to what amounted to a hemispheric exclusion zone. In the 1880s the American fleet was still an insignificant entity, smaller even than the Swedish. However, inspired by Captain Alfred Thayer Mahan's hugely influential book *The Influence of Sea Power upon History*, the United States embarked on a navy-building program more ambitious even than Germany's. The achievement was astonishing: by 1907 the American fleet was second only to the Royal Navy. With this, the Monroe Doctrine belatedly acquired credibility. When Britain and Germany blockaded Venezuela in 1902, in response to attacks on European ships and defaults on European debts, it was Theodore Roosevelt's threat to send fifty-four American warships from Puerto Rico that persuaded them to accept international arbitration. By the early 1900s Great Britain recognized the United States as one of those rival empires serious enough to be worthy of appeasement." (*Colossus*, pp. 42-43)

<sup>14</sup> David Reynolds, *America, Empire of Liberty*, London: Penguin, 2010, p. 295.

<sup>15</sup> Judis, "Imperial Amnesia", *Foreign Policy*, July-August, 2004, p. 54.

In Cuba, writes Joseph Smith, "the military intervention of the United States transformed a struggle for national liberation into a war of American military conquest. Americans used their superior power to dictate the peace settlement and the future political status of the island. The pre-eminence of the United States in Cuba was symbolically demonstrated in Havana on 1 January 1899 when the American military authorities refused to allow armed rebel soldiers to participate in the ceremonies marking the formal evacuation of the Spanish army from the island. It was a historic moment ending almost four centuries of imperial rule by Spain... Cuba had finally become independent in 1902. But independence was more nominal than real. Overshadowed by 'the monster', Cuba entered the twentieth century as an American protectorate rather than a truly independent nation."<sup>16</sup>

In the Philippines it was a similar story. "McKinley's reported justification for annexing the [Philippines] was a masterpiece of presidential sanctimony, perfectly pitched for his audience of Methodist clergymen: 'I walked the floor of the White House night after night until midnight; and I am not ashamed to tell you... that I went down on my knees and prayed Almighty God for light and guidance more than one night. And one night late it came to me this way - I don't know how it was but it came... (1) That we could not give them back to Spain... (2) That we could not turn them over to France and Germany - our commercial rivals in the Orient... (3) that we could not leave them to themselves - they were unfit for government... (4) that there was nothing left for us to do but to take them all, and educate the Filipinos, and uplift and civilize and Christianize them, and by God's grace do the very best we could by them as our fellow-men for whom Christ also died.'

"As McKinley portrayed it, annexation was an onerous duty, thrust upon the United States by the will of Providence. Such religious appeals doubtless had considerable public resonance. The decisive arguments for the occupation with the American political elite were nevertheless more military and mercenary than missionary" - especially in view of the fact that the Philippines were Catholics."<sup>17</sup>

At the Treaty of Paris, the Philippines were ceded to the United States for \$20 million - a good price, it would seem. But the eventual cost was much greater, because the Filipinos decided not to accept the Americans as their new colonial masters. A war of national liberation broke out...

As a result, writes Judis, "the United States then waged a brutal war against the same Philippine independence movement it encouraged to fight against Spain. The war dragged on for 14 years. Before it ended, about 120,000 U.S. troops were deployed, more than 4,000 were killed, and more than 200,000 Filipino civilians and soldiers were killed."<sup>18</sup> According to another estimate, between half a million and 750,000 Filipinos died.<sup>19</sup> The war eventually cost \$600 million...<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Smith, "Heroes of the Cuban revolution: Marti, Maceo and Gomez", *Historian*, N 44, Winter, 1994, pp. 7-8.

<sup>17</sup> Smith, *op. cit.*

<sup>18</sup> Judis, *op. cit.*, p. 50.

<sup>19</sup> Christopher Clark, *The Sleepwalkers. How Europe Went to War in 1914*, London: Penguin, 2013, p. 152.

<sup>20</sup> Ferguson, *Colossus*, p. 50.

The Philippines did not attain their independence until 1946, when the Americans had spilled even more blood and treasure to drive out the Japanese...

American imperialism lost its innocence in the Philippines, where, as Ferguson writes, "seven characteristic phases of American engagement can be discerned:

Impressive initial military success  
A flawed assessment of indigenous sentiments  
A strategy of limited war and gradual escalation of forces  
Domestic disillusionment in the face of protracted and nasty conflict  
Premature democratisation  
The ascendancy of domestic economic considerations  
Ultimate withdrawal."<sup>21</sup>

American imperialism had not always been so violent: in 1898, after decades of interference, the Americans annexed Hawaii without bloodshed, and Puerto Rico was ceded to the United States by Spain - again without bloodshed - in the same year.

"The Kingdom of Hawaii," writes Thornton, "gained the recognition of the United States and the major European powers in the 1840s. In 1887, a constitutional monarchy was created, the constitution of which the king, Kalakaua, only reluctantly signed. When the king died in 1891, his sister, Lili'uokalani, succeeded him as monarch. Not liking the restrictions on monarchical power in the 1887 constitution, the queen began the process of adopting a new constitution, which would restore some of the rights of the throne. In 1893, men opposed to any constitutional revision overthrew the queen, proclaiming a provisional government. A petition was sent to the United States asking that it annex Hawaii. However, President Grover Cleveland, disapproving of the manner in which the queen's government was toppled, declined to annex the islands. An independent Republic of Hawaii was then formed and the idea of annexation by the United States was set aside until after the expiration of President Cleveland's term of office. The islands were formally annexed as the Territory of Hawaii in July 1898 during the administration of William McKinley."<sup>22</sup>

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**Theodore Roosevelt's Imperialism.** When McKinley was assassinated, his successor, Theodore Roosevelt, showed himself less bashful about imperial wars of acquisition. According to William Pfaff, he "simply liked war, which he thought brought out the best in a nation. Roosevelt would have preferred a war with Germany, but as he wrote to a friend, 'I am not particular, and I'd even take Spain if nothing better offered.' He was an expansionist and an imperialist. He did not argue that the United States had some peculiar benediction to confer on humanity. Imperialism was simply the work of civilizing the benighted races of the world, a white man's burden incumbent on all advanced societies."<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Ferguson, *Colossus*, p. 48.

<sup>22</sup> Thornton, *op. cit.*

<sup>23</sup> Pfaff, "The Question of Hegemony", *Foreign Affairs*, January/February, 2001, p. 225.

It was Congress, rather than the President, that tried to disavow American imperialism. Thus the Teller amendment on Cuba of April 16, 1898 declared: "The United States hereby disclaims any disposition or intention to exercise sovereignty over said Island except for the pacification thereof, and assert its domination, when that is accomplished, to leave the government and control of the Island to its people." However, the third provision of the Platt amendment of March 2, 1901, which was written into the Cuban constitution of 1903, effectively pawned that control to the United States: "The government of Cuba consents that the United States may exercise the right to intervene for the protection of Cuban independence [and] the maintenance of a government adequate for the protection of life, property and individual liberty."<sup>24</sup>

And yet Roosevelt was far from the only American who had imperial leanings. Thus, according to Diana Preston, "the American imperialist Albert Beveridge claimed, 'We are a conquering race, we must obey our blood and occupy new markets and if necessary new lands.' The Pacific was 'the true field of our operations. There Spain has an island empire in the Philippines. There the United States has a powerful squadron. The Philippines are logically our first target...'"<sup>25</sup> Again, the new imperial mood "was vividly caught in 1898 by one newspaper's observation that 'a new consciousness seems to have come upon us - the consciousness of strength - and with it a new appetite, the yearning to show our strength... whatever it may be, we are animated by a new sensation. We are face to face with a strange destiny. The taste of Empire is in the mouth of the people even as the taste of blood in the jungle. It means an Imperial policy...'"<sup>26</sup>

When Theodore Roosevelt became president in 1901, he proclaimed what Henry Kissinger has called "the 'Roosevelt Corollary' to the Monroe doctrine, to the effect that the United States had the right to intervene preemptively in the domestic affairs of other Western Hemisphere nations to remedy flagrant cases of 'wrongdoing or impotence'. Roosevelt described the principle as follows: 'All that this country desires is to see the neighboring countries stable, orderly, and prosperous. Any country whose people conduct themselves well can count upon our hearty friendship. If a nation shows that it knows how to act with reasonable efficiency and decency in social and political matters, if it keeps order and pays its obligations, it need fear no interference from the United States. Chronic wrongdoing, or an impotence which results in a general loosening of the ties of civilized society, may in America, as elsewhere, ultimately require intervention by some civilized nation, and in the Western Hemisphere the adherence of the United States to the Monroe Doctrine may force the United States, however reluctantly, in flagrant cases of such wrongdoing or impotence, to the exercise of an international police power.' As in the original Monroe Doctrine, no Latin American countries were consulted. The corollary amounted to a U.S. security umbrella for the Western Hemisphere. Henceforth no outside power would be able to use force to redress its grievances in the Americas; it would be obliged to work through the United States, which assigned itself the task of maintaining order.

"Backing up this ambitious concept was the new Panama Canal, which enabled the United States to shift its navy between the Atlantic and the Pacific oceans without the

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<sup>24</sup> Cohen and Major, *op. cit.*, pp. 617, 618.

<sup>25</sup> Preston, *The Boxer Rebellion*, London: Robinson, 2002, p. xxiii.

<sup>26</sup> Roberts, *History of the World*, Oxford: Helicon, 1992, pp. 102-103.

long circumnavigations of Cape Horn at the southern tip of South America. Begun in 1904 with American funds and engineering expertise on territory seized from Columbia by means of a local rebellion supported by the United States, and controlled by a long-term American lease of the Canal Zone, the Panama Canal, officially opened in 1914, would stimulate trade while affording the United States a decisive advantage in any military conflict in the region...."<sup>27</sup>

But the way in which the Canal Project was carried out incurred the lasting suspicions of the Latin Americans. And no wonder. Even the *New York Times* not inaccurately called the American engineered revolution that preceded it "an act of sordid conquest"<sup>28</sup>. After all, the project cost 5,600 mainly black lives...<sup>29</sup>

In time, however, Roosevelt's enthusiasm for overseas expansion waned. "Urged by imperialists to take over the Dominican Republic, he quipped, 'as for annexing the island, I have about the same desire to annex it as a gorged boa constrictor might have to swallow a porcupine wrong-end-to.'"<sup>30</sup> Under Roosevelt, U.S. colonial holding shrunk. And after the Russo-Japanese War in 1904-05, Roosevelt changed the United States' diplomatic posture from competitor with the other imperial powers to mediator in their growing conflicts."<sup>31</sup>

If, in relation to the Western Hemisphere, Roosevelt's foreign policy was ruthlessly hegemonic, in relation to the rest of the world he was more cautious, trying to preserve the balance of power in order to prevent the rise of a foreign hegemon. Here, as a strong Anglophile, he imitated Great Britain, and to some degree cooperated with her.

For, as Kissinger writes, "so long as Britain's naval power remained dominant, it would see to the equilibrium in Europe. During the Russo-Japanese conflict of 1904-5, Roosevelt demonstrated how he would apply his concept of diplomacy to the Asian equilibrium and, if necessary, globally. For Roosevelt, the issue was the balance of power in the Pacific, not flaws in Russia's czarist autocracy... Because the unchecked eastward advance into Manchuria and Korea of Russia – a country that, in Roosevelt's words, 'pursued a policy of consistent opposition to us in the East, and of literally fathomless mendacity' – was inimical to America's interests, Roosevelt at first welcomed the Japanese military victories. He described the total destruction of the

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<sup>27</sup> Kissinger, *op. cit.*, pp. 250-251. David Reynolds provides some more details of the coup: "In 1901, a treaty with the United States providing for the acquisition of a canal zone from Colombia was held up by the Colombian legislature. A revolution was more or less overtly engineered in Panama, the area of Colombia where the canal was to run, and the revolutionaries were given United States naval protection against the Colombian government. A new Panamanian republic duly emerged which gratefully bestowed upon the United States the necessary land together with the right to intervene in its affairs to maintain order. Work at last began in 1907 and the canal was duly opened in 1914 [more precisely, on August 3, 1914, the day Germany declared war on France], an outstanding engineering triumph. The capability it created to move warships swiftly from the Atlantic to the Pacific and back transformed American naval strategy. A deep distrust had been sown, too, in the minds of Latin Americans, about the ambitions and lack of scruple of American foreign policy." (*America, Empire of Liberty*, p. 301).

<sup>28</sup> See Anthony Delano, "America's Devious Dream", *BBC History Magazine*, vol. 7, no. 11, November, 2006, pp. 21-25.

<sup>29</sup> Reynolds, *op. cit.*, p. 301.

<sup>30</sup> This did not prevent the Americans from taking financial control of the country, however. "The same thing happened in Nicaragua in 1909 (with military backing in 1912)." (Ferguson, *op. cit.*, p. 55 (V.M.)

<sup>31</sup> Judis, "Imperial Amnesia", *Foreign Policy*, July-August, 2004, p. 54.

Russian fleet, which had sailed around the world to its demise in the Battle of Tsushima, as Japan 'playing our game'. But when the scale of Japan's victories threatened to overwhelm the Russian position in Asia entirely, Roosevelt had second thoughts. Though he admired Japan's modernization – and perhaps because of it – he began to treat an expansionist Japanese Empire as a potential threat to the American position in Southeast Asia and concluded that it might someday 'make demands on [the] Hawaiian islands'.

"Roosevelt, though in essence a partisan of Russia, undertook a mediation of a conflict in distant Asia underlining America's role as an Asian power. The Treaty of Portsmouth in 1905 was a quintessential expression of Roosevelt's balance-of-power diplomacy. It limited Japanese expansion, prevented a Russian collapse, and achieved an outcome in which Russia, as he described it, 'should be left face to face with Japan so that each may have a moderative action on the other'. For his mediation, Roosevelt was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize, the first American to be so honored..."<sup>32</sup>

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**Woodrow Wilson's Imperialism.** When the next-but-one-president, Woodrow Wilson, gave his inauguration speech on March 4, 1913, there was no word in it about international affairs. "It would be an irony of fate,' Wilson had commented to Princeton biologist Edward Grant Cocklin, a few days after his election, 'if my administration had to deal chiefly with foreign problems, for all my preparation has been in domestic matters'."<sup>33</sup>

Irony there was indeed. For in 1916-17 it would be Wilson who led America almost by the scruff of her neck back into the politics of the old continent, from which her Founding Fathers, and so many millions of her immigrants, had fled in disgust. In 1913, however, his priorities were entirely domestic: "tariffs on imported goods were to be removed; a national banking system was to be created that would ease access to credit and remove power from overweening holders of capital; an industrial system which restricted competition and wasted the nation's natural resources was to be reformed; the health of the nation's workers was to be protected by law."<sup>34</sup>

In general with regard to foreign affairs, Wilson was less openly belligerent than Roosevelt, but more ambitious about what America could do. He apologized to Colombia for seizing Panama, but boasted "that he could 'teach the South American republics to elect good men.' After Mexican Gen. Victoriano Huerta arranged the assassination of the democratically elected President Francisco Madero and seized power in February 1913, Wilson promised to unseat the unpopular dictator, using a flimsy pretext to dispatch troops across the border. But instead of being greeted as liberators, the U.S. forces encountered stiff resistance and inspired riots and demonstrations, uniting Huerta with his political opponents. In Mexico City, schoolchildren chanted, 'Death to the Gringos'. U.S.-owned stores and businesses in

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<sup>32</sup> Kissinger, *op. cit.* pp. 251-252. In order further to limit Japanese expansion, Roosevelt sent a fleet of sixteen battle-ships around the world. It was painted in white to denote peace. He thereby hoped to show how America could "speak softly and carry a big stick" (Kissinger, *op. cit.*, p. 253).

<sup>33</sup> Charles Emmerson, 1913. *The World before the Great War*, London: Vintage, 2013, p. 146.

<sup>34</sup> Emmerson, *op. cit.*, p. 146.

Mexico had to close. The Mexico City newspaper *El Imparcial* declared, in a decidedly partial manner, 'The soil of the *patria* is defiled by foreign invasion! We may die, but let us kill!' Wilson learned the hard way that attempts to instill U.S.-style constitutional democracy and capitalism through force were destined to fail."<sup>35</sup>

In May, 1914, having already seized the port of Veracruz the previous month, Wilson declared: "My ideal is an orderly and righteous government in Mexico; but my passion is for the submerged 85 per cent of the people of that republic who are now struggling toward liberty."<sup>36</sup>

The problem was: while Wilson thought he was giving liberty to the Mexicans, the Mexicans thought he was taking it away! It was a conundrum that would bedevil American foreign policy for most of the century...

While American power might look old-fashionedly imperialist from a Mexican or Filipino perspective, there were in fact subtle but important differences between America and the European colonial powers. As Adam Tooze writes, "Having formed itself as a nation state of global reach through a process of expansion that was aggressive and continental in scope but had avoided conflict with other major powers, America's strategic outlook was different from either that of the old power states like Britain and France or their newly arrived competitors – Germany, Japan and Italy. As it emerged onto the world stage at the end of the nineteenth century, America quickly realized its interest in ending the intense international rivalry which since the 1870s had defined a new age of global imperialism. True, in 1898 the American political class thrilled to its own foray into overseas expansion in the Spanish-American War. But, confronted with the reality of imperial rule in the Philippines, the enthusiasm soon waned and a more fundamental strategic logic asserted itself. America could not remain detached from the twentieth-century world. The push for a big navy would be the principal axis of American military strategy until the advent of strategic air power. America would see to it that its neighbours in the Caribbean and Central America were 'orderly' and that the Monroe Doctrine, the bar against external intervention in the western hemisphere, was upheld. Access must be denied to other powers. America could accumulate bases and staging posts for the projection of its power. But one thing that the US could well do without was a ragbag of ill-assorted, troublesome colonial possessions. On this simple but essential point there was a fundamental difference between the Continental United States and the so-called 'liberal imperialism' of Great Britain.

"The true logic of American power was articulated between 1899 and 1902 in the three 'Notes' in which Secretary of State John Hay first outlined the so-called 'Open Door' policy. As the basis for a new international order these 'Notes' proposed one deceptively simple but far-reaching principle: equality of access for goods and capital. It is important to be clear what this was not. The Open Door was not an appeal for free trade. Amongst the large economies, the United States was the most protectionist. Nor

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<sup>35</sup> Judis, *op. cit.*, p. 54. "Wilson," writes Ferguson, "claimed to deplore the 'dollar diplomacy' and the 'big stick'; but it was he who sent the marines to take over Haiti in 1915 and the Dominican Republic in 1916" (*The Pity of War*, London: Penguin, 1999, p. 55). In March, 1916 he sent in troops into Mexico to punish "Pancho" Villa for a raid on New Mexico.

<sup>36</sup> Wilson, in Cohen and Major, *op. cit.*, p. 619.

did the US welcome competition for its own sake. Once the door was opened, it confidently expected American exporters and bankers to sweep all their rivals aside. In the long run the Open Door would thus undermine the Europeans' exclusive imperial domains. But the US had no interest in unsettling the imperial racial hierarchy or the global colour-line. Commerce and investment demanded order not revolution. What American strategy *was* emphatically directed towards suppressing was imperialism, understood not as productive colonial expansion nor the racial rule of white over coloured people, but as the 'selfish' and violent rivalry of France, Britain, Germany, Italy, Russia and Japan that threatened to divide one world into segmented spheres of interest."<sup>37</sup>

And yet the Americans were deluding themselves if they thought that their "Open Door" policy was different in kind from the "selfish" and "violent" rivalry of the European powers. As Hugh Brogan writes, "In its mixture of high-mindedness, low attention to the main chance (Hay, like many of his contemporaries, thought that the China trade was much more lucrative, and more open to American capture, than was really the case) and total inattention to the actualities of power, it was a characteristic American diplomatic initiative of the pre-Pearl Harbour type. Like the Monroe Doctrine, it had better luck than it deserved. None of the other powers felt itself strong enough to make a grab for the sole rule in China (though that too would change in due course); so all were happy to acquiesce in Hay's suggestion. China would remain formally independent; in reality she would be exposed to simultaneous robbery from all quarters. Only the robbers would not try to swipe each other's loot..."<sup>38</sup>

"The war would make a global celebrity of President Woodrow Wilson, who was hailed as a great path-breaking prophet of liberal internationalism. But the basic elements of his programme were predictable extensions of the Open Door logic of American power. Wilson wanted international arbitration, freedom of the seas and non-discrimination in trade policy. He wanted the League of Nations to put an end to inter-imperialist rivalry. It was an anti-militarist, post-imperialist agenda for a country convinced of the global influence that it would exercise at arm's length through the means of soft power – economics and ideology. What is not sufficiently appreciated, however, is how far Wilson was willing to push this agenda of American hegemony against all shades of European and Japanese imperialism.... As Wilson drove America to the forefront of world politics in 1916, his mission was to ensure not that the 'right' side won in World War I, but that no side did. He refused any overt association with the Entente and did all he could to suppress the escalation of the war that London and Paris were pursuing and which they hoped would draw America onto their side..."<sup>39</sup>

Thus America's foreign policy until 1916-17 can be summarized as follows: in relation to the East, especially China – acquisitive, if not openly imperialist; in relation to the South, to Central and South America – frankly interventionist, if not openly imperialist; in relation to the West – isolationist. The history of the world would depend to a large extent on whether America could maintain her isolationist, non-interventionist stance in the face of the increasingly threatening situation in Europe...

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<sup>37</sup> Tooze, *The Deluge*, London: Penguin, 2015, pp. 15-16.

<sup>38</sup> Brogan, *The Penguin History of the USA*, London: Penguin, 2019, pp. 438-439.

<sup>39</sup> Tooze, *op. cit.*, p. 16.



## 2. THE DREYFUS AFFAIR

In 1877 France became a republic again, which intensified the already long-drawn-out conflict between the Catholic Church and the Masonic State. Immediately a struggle broke out over who could be buried in the Pantheon: only Catholics (for it had been a church), or atheist revolutionaries. The matter was settled when Victor Hugo, a major champion of the Left, died in 1885 and was accompanied to his burial in the Pantheon by vast crowds of his supporters.<sup>40</sup>

The conflict between Catholicism and Freemasonry came to a head over the notorious Dreyfus affair... On 5 January 1895 Captain Alfred Dreyfus, the only Jew serving in the French army general staff, was publicly degraded on what subsequently turned out to be fabricated evidence of handing secrets to the Germans. "Watching the ceremony," writes Paul Johnson, "was Theodore Herzl (1860-1904), the Paris correspondent of the Vienna liberal daily, *Neue Freie Presse*. Two weeks before he had attended the courtroom and heard Dreyfus pronounced guilty. Now he stood by as Dreyfus was brought before General Darras, who shouted: 'Alfred Dreyfus, you are unworthy to bear arms. In the name of the French people we degrade you!' Immediately, in a loud voice, Dreyfus shouted: 'Soldiers! An innocent man is being degraded! Soldiers! An innocent is dishonoured. Long live France - long live the Army!' A senior non-commissioned officer cut off Dreyfus' badges and buttons. He took out his sword and broke it across his knee. The prisoner was marched round the courtyard, still shouting that he was innocent. An immense and excited crowd, waiting outside, heard his cries and began to whistle and chant slogans. When Herzl left the building, it was beginning to scream 'Death to Dreyfus! Death to the Jews!'"<sup>41</sup>

Masonry, republicanism and antichristianity in general were given an enormous boost by the Dreyfus affair, which had enormous implications for France, splitting the country into two ideological camps that continued long after his eventual acquittal. The Jew Bernard Lazare and the left-wing politician Georges Clemenceau led the Dreyfusards, while the writer Charles Maurras and many Catholics and intellectuals sided with their opponents. In 1898 the Catholic monarchist nationalist association *Action Française* was founded, and in the same year the novelist Emile Zola entered the lists on the side of the Dreyfusards, publishing his newspaper article *J'accuse* against the French president Faure.

"*J'accuse*," writes Alistair Horne, "dramatically crystallized opinion in Paris [and] was, in the words of Léon Blum, a future prime minister and a Jew himself, then in his twenties, 'a human crisis, less extended and less prolonged in time but no less violent than the French Revolution.' To an English visitor, 'Paris palpitated', and the same man sensed a lust for blood in the air. Divisions created by *l'affaire* ran all through Parisian society. At cafés 'Nationalists' and 'Revisionists' sat at different tables on opposite sides of the terraces; salons became polarized; Monet and Degas didn't speak for years; Clemenceau fought a duel with an outspoken anti-Semite; six out of seven Ministers of Defence resigned in the course of the scandal."<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Orlando Figes, *The Europeans*, London: Penguin, 2020, pp. 424-427.

<sup>41</sup> Johnson, *A History of the Jews*, London: Phoenix, 1995, pp. 379-380.

<sup>42</sup> Horne, *Seven Ages of Paris*, London: Pan, 2002, pp. 324-325.

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“The repercussions of the Dreyfus case,” writes Sir Llewellyn Woodward, “went far beyond the wrongs done to one man. The whole of ‘political’ France became involved in it, and for a time the republic, which had been considerably tarnished by previous financial scandals, was seriously shaken. The monarchists and the clergy, with few exceptions, took Dreyfus’ guilt for granted and regarded the case as another example of the inherent corruption of the republican regime and the sinister influence of Jews in the higher regions of the administration. Anti-semitism hardly existed in France, except in Alsace, before 1870. The number of French Jews was small; most of them were assimilated Portuguese in the south. There was a considerable Jewish influx from Alsace in 1871 and a larger immigration of eastern European Jews after the Russian persecution... Even so the total Jewish population about 1900 was only some 200,000. Anti-Jewish feeling was directed chiefly against a very few rich capitalists. The collapse of the Union Générale bank in 1882 had stirred up this resentment. The Union Générale, like the Crédit Foncier over twenty years earlier, had been founded largely by Catholics to break the Jewish and protestant quasi-monopoly of high finance. The shares of 500 francs (123 paid up) had risen above 3,000 francs, but within a short time the enterprise collapsed; the Rothschilds were said to be responsible for bringing about the collapse. The socialist leader Jules Guesde had anticipated the supposed Rothschild domination, but the first anti-semitic book in France with a really big circulation was *La France Juive*, published in 1886 by a clever, unscrupulous journalist named Drumont. The attack was continued in certain quarters, notably in the catholic *La Croix* controlled by the Assumptionist order. The failure of the Panama Company, in which small investors lost their money, had already added to the discredit of Jewish financial adventurers.

“After the truth of the Dreyfus case became known, the Republicans directed their vengeance – one can use no lighter term – on the anti-Dreyfusards primarily against the Church. The Government wanted as far as possible to spare the high military chiefs who were ultimately responsible for the scandal; the easiest way of diverting public indignation from the army was to turn it against the Catholics and primarily against the already unpopular religious congregations. The Assumptionists, whose journalistic activities made them an obvious target, were dissolved in January 1900. The attack might have stopped at this point or after the suppression of the Jesuits, but the parliamentary majority was determined to get rid of the clerical control of secondary education. In a law of April 1901 dealing with associations, all the so-called ‘non-authorized’ religious congregations, i.e. orders or religious congregations existing before 1815, were required to obtain authorization from the State’ even those which received this authorization were put under strict control and could be dissolved by official decree. Over 600 out of some 753 ancient religious houses in France, for example, the Benedictines of Solesmes, knew that their applications were unlikely to be granted and left the country.

“The long list of applications had not been fully examined when the anti-clerical majority was increased at a general election. Emile Combes, the new Prime Minister, was a former seminarist who had begun his career with a thesis on St. Thomas Aquinas. He had become violently hostile to the Church and attacked it with a certain

high-minded fanaticism, oddly combined with methods of petty, underhand persecution. He refused authorization to a number of congregations and then proposed to deprive the old congregation of the right to teach; in other words, he planned to shut down some 8,200 Catholic schools and teaching establishments. In spite of a good deal of opposition from his own supporters and some popular violence when the closures were enforced, the anti-clerical majority accepted these measures.

"The logical consequence was the denunciation of the Concordat and the complete separation of Church and State. The left-wing republicans demanded this separation, but there was considerable opposition to it even among anti-clericals owing to the unpopularity which it would bring to the Government in Catholic areas and because it would deprive the State of its control over the clergy. Combes himself wanted to keep this control while cutting off the clergy from their obedience to the Holy See. It is possible, though unlikely, that a compromise might have been reached, but Pope Pius X, who succeeded Leo XIII in 1903, was as tactless and narrow as Combes and, although Combes had resigned (mainly over the discovery that the Freemasons' lodges were sending the Minister of War secret dossiers on the political opinions of officers), the Concordat was officially denounced and payments to the bishops and clergy discontinued. There was still a chance that the Catholics, like the Protestants and Jews who accepted the conditions laid down for all cultural associations, might have kept their churches, furnishing, seminaries and other properties. Many Catholics would have agreed to the new conditions, but Pius X rejected them on grounds of principle and through fear that the governments of other Catholic countries might follow the French example. Finally, in spite of the obstinate refusal of Pope Pius X to ask for any concessions, the Government decided to allow the Catholics the use of the churches; all other ecclesiastical buildings were taken over by the State..."<sup>43</sup>

"The dispersion of the congregations," writes Jean Comby, "gave rise to some painful scenes, such as the expulsion of the Carthusians. Men and women belonging to religious orders had to shut their schools and return to the lay state, or else go into exile. It was a traumatic experience for them to live in the secular world when they were old and had no resources.

"Anti-clericalism broke out to an unprecedented degree. Outcasts in the administration, teaching and the army, practising Catholics had files opened on them and were kept under surveillance. Processions were attacked, sometimes with loss of life. Saints who had given their names to streets had to make way for heroes of the Republic and of science.

"The Concordat existed, but what did it mean in such a context? A great many small things led to the breaking off of diplomatic relations between France and the Vatican in July 1904. Everything was pointing towards separation. Catholics observed the Concordat for doctrinal and financial reasons. Some supporters of separation wanted to make de-Christianization a machine. Others, in particular the law reporter Aristide Briand, wanted a moderate separation which would burst the abscess of anti-clericalism. The Law of Separation was promulgated on 9 December 1905. It recognized freedom of worship. It recognized freedom of conscience and abolished

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<sup>43</sup> Woodward, *Prelude to Modern Europe*, London: Methuen, 1972, pp. 96-99.

the budget for worship. The churches' possessions were handed over to administrative religious associations formed by the faithful of the various denominations.

"The Concordat of 1901 was abolished in a unilateral manner because the other signatory, the pope, had not been consulted. Pius X condemned the law for a first time in the encyclical *Vehementer* (February 1906), and for a second time (August 1906) when forbidding the formation of administrative religious organizations which took no account of the hierarchical organization of the church. Meanwhile, the survey of the churches' possessions had led to violent incidents in some places. Because of its association with them, the church had to abandon seminaries, presbyteries, bishoprics, which were handed over to the community. However, in order not to inflame the situation, the churches and many of the presbyteries were allowed to use the buildings as before and the community was responsible for their upkeep."<sup>44</sup>

According to John Cornwell, "the French government attempted to control Church property by setting up joint lay-clerical administrative bodies (originally, these were to have included non-Catholic laity). In order to free the Church of any such secular influence, Pius X voluntarily handed over all Church property to the State in France, putting the *good* of the Church, as he expressed it, before her *goods*. The French responded by evicting the clergy and religious from their houses and monasteries. The government was determined to exert jurisdictional control over the Church it had set adrift from the State; Pius X was determined to exert untrammelled primacy over the Church as a spiritual, doctrinal, legal, and administrative entity. This was the clear-eyed papal vision of total separation of sovereignties; the Church with the Pope unquestioningly at its head, and the world mediated through the papal diplomatic service and the bishops."<sup>45</sup>

The Separation between Church and State in France "had several important consequences. It meant that Church and State were rudely torn apart and this fed bitterness on both sides. In education there had always been, in France, a dual system of Church and state schools, but now the latter schools were strengthened through the completion of a network of free, compulsory, and secular primary and secondary schools. By 1925 over four times as many children went to state schools as attended the schools of the Church. The result was much strife and bitterness between the two systems, especially on the local level. The teachers in the state schools, facing hostility

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<sup>44</sup> Comby, *How to Read Church History*, London: SCM Press, 1989, pp. 160-162. Comby quotes two opposing views. First, that of the socialist deputy Maurice Allard (10 April 1905): "It has to be said very loudly that the Church, Catholicism or even Christianity is incompatible with any republican regime. Christianity is an outrage to reason, an outrage to nature. I also declare very clearly that I wish to pursue the idea of the Convention and to complete the work of de-Christianizing France which was taking place in utter calm and as happily as could be imagined until the day when Napoleon concluded his Concordat. And why do we Republicans and above all we socialists want to de-Christianize this country? Why are we fighting against religion? We are fighting against religion because we believe - and I say this again - that it is a permanent obstacle to progress and civilization." On the other hand, the Pope in his encyclical *Vehementer* (11 February 1906) wrote: "This theory of separation is the clearest negation of the supernatural order. In fact it limits the action of the state to the pursuit of public prosperity in this life, though that is only a secondary matter for religious societies; and as though such a thing were alien to it, it is in no way concerned with the ultimate reason for their existence, which is eternal bliss." (Comby, *op. cit.*, p. 161) (V.M.)

<sup>45</sup> Cornwell, *Hitler's Pope*, London: Penguin, 2000, p. 46.

and pressure from the Church, tended to become ever more anticlerical and indeed left-wing. They became the constant furtherers of anticlericalism in France.

“On the political level the Church was linked to violently pro-Catholic movements which were also anti-Republic and authoritarian. The anti-Dreyfusard atmosphere was kept alive here as many of the bishops and clergy supported groups like the *Action Française* of Charles Maurras. It has been pointed out quite correctly that the separation between Church and state meant the end of the Gallican liberties which had given the state a say in the appointment of bishops. From now on the pope alone controlled the Church in France. But even those popes who wanted the Church to be reconciled to the Republic could not stem the tide of bitterness which remained. When in 1925 the *Action Française* was put on the *Index* many clergy changed their support to even more radical rightist movements...”<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Mosse, *op. cit.*, p. 258.

### 3. THE FOUNDING OF ZIONISM

“In the second half of the nineteenth century,” writes Peter Mansfield, “there was a steady movement of Jews from eastern Europe to settle in Palestine. Supported by Jewish [especially Rothschild] philanthropy, they went mainly to found colonies to work the land. They were the pioneers of ‘practical Zionism’. They were very much fewer than those who went to western Europe and the United States, but by 1914 there were about 80,000 Jews (including the indigenous communities) in Palestine, compared with about 650,000 Arabs.

“‘Political Zionism’, or the concept of turning Palestine into a national Jewish state, was founded by Theodor Herzl...”<sup>47</sup>

Herzl, writes Daniel Barenboim, was a successful Austrian journalist who, "confronted by the increasing anti-Semitism in Austria and France, was initially in favor of complete assimilation of the Jews. Interestingly, Herzl's choice of words was not fundamentally different from that of Wagner's in describing the situation of Jews in German society. In 1893 he wrote that 'to cure the evil' the Jews would have to 'rid themselves of the peculiarities for which they are rightly reproached.' One would have to 'baptize the Jewboys' in order to spare them excessively difficult lives. 'Untertauchen im Volk!': go underground amongst the people was his appeal to the Jewish population. Richard Wagner also spoke of the 'Untergang,' the sinking: 'consider that only one thing can be the deliverance from the curse that weighs on you: the deliverance of Ahasuerus -- sinking! (der Untergang)'. Wagner's conclusion about the Jewish problem was not only verbally similar to Herzl's; both Wagner and Herzl favored the emigration of the German Jews. It was Herzl's preoccupation with European anti-Semitism that spurred him on to try and found a Jewish state. His vision of a Jewish state was influenced by the tradition of European liberalism. In the novel *Altneuland* (1903), he describes what the settled Jewish community in Palestine might look like; Arabic residents and other non-Jews would have equal political rights."<sup>48</sup>

Herzl, as we have seen, had witnessed the degradation of Dreyfus, which had an enormous influence on him. Less than six months later, he had completed the draft of the book which would set in motion modern Zionism, *Der Judenstaat*.<sup>49</sup> The affair demonstrated to Herzl that for various reasons - envy at Jewish success, the influx of Jews from Eastern Europe, the increase of racialist theories - the Jews would never be assimilated into the existing system of European statehood, and would have to seek a homeland, a territorial State, of their own if they were to survive. "It was against this

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<sup>47</sup> Mansfield, *A History of the Middle East*, London: Penguin, 2003, p. 160.

<sup>48</sup> Barenboim, "Wagner, Israel and the Palestinians", <http://www.danielbarenboim.com/index.php?id=72>.

<sup>49</sup> Johnson, *op. cit.*, p. 380. As he admitted to the Royal Commission on Alien Immigration in London in 1902: "Seven years ago, when I was living in Paris, I was so impressed with the state of Jewry throughout Europe that I turned my attention to the Jewish question and published a pamphlet which I called 'A Jewish State'. I may say that it was not my original intention to publish the pamphlet or to take part in a political movement. But, after placing before a number of influential Jews my views upon the Jewish question, and finding that they were utterly oblivious of the danger which I then foresaw - that they could not see the large black cloud gathering in the East - I published the pamphlet which resulted in the establishment of the Zionist movement." (David Vital, *A People Apart: The Jews in Europe 1789-1939*, Oxford University Press, 1999, p. 439).

threatening background that Herzl began to abandon his assimilationist position. He had previously considered all kinds of wild ideas to get the Jews accepted. One was a huge programme of social re-education for Jews, to endow them with what he termed 'a delicate, *extremely sensitive* feeling for honour and the like'. Another was a pact with the Pope, whereby he would lead a campaign against anti-Semitism in return for 'a great mass movement for the free and honourable conversion of all Jews to Christianity'. But all these schemes soon seemed hopeless in face of the relentless rise of anti-Semitic hatred..."<sup>50</sup>

In 1895 the anti-Semite Karl Lueger became Mayor of Vienna. Now Vienna at this time was the locus of an extraordinary flourishing of German Jewish culture. "Perhaps it is not wholly surprising," writes Niall Ferguson, "that a disproportionate number of the principal contributors to... the extraordinary ferment of new ideas which ushered in the new century - were Jews or the children of Jews from Central and Eastern Europe. The physics of Albert Einstein, the psychoanalysis of Sigmund Freud, the poetry of Hugo von Hofmabbstal, the novels of Franz Kafka, the short stories of Joseph Kraus, the symphonies of Gustav Mahler, the plays of Arthur Schnitzler, even the philosophy of Ludwig Wittgenstein - all owed a debt, not so much to Judaism as a faith, as to the specific milieu of a highly numerate and literate but rapidly assimilating ethnic minority permitted by the times and circumstances to give reign to their thoughts, but also aware of the fragility of their own individual and collective predicament. Each in his different way was a beneficiary of the *fin-de-siècle* combination of global integration and the dissolution of confessional barriers..."<sup>51</sup>

However, Lueger launched into a ferocious invective against this efflorescence of Jewish culture and its bearers. He "once referred to the Jews as 'beasts of prey in human form', said that 'wolves, leopards and tigers were closer to humans than Jews, and agreed that a good solution to the 'Jewish problem' would be to put them all on a big ship and sink them at sea."<sup>52</sup> In view of this invective, it is not surprising that Herzl was alarmed and feared the impact Lueger might have (a certain Adolf Hitler came to Vienna in 1908, while Lueger was still Mayor). He was therefore determined, as Johnson writes, "to devise an alternative refuge for the Jews, who might soon be expelled from all over Europe, seemed an urgent necessity. The Jews must have a country of their own!

"Herzl completed the text of his book, *Der Judenstaat*, outlining his aims, in the winter of 1895-6. The first extracts were published in the London *Jewish Chronicle*, 17 January 1896. The book was not long, eighty-six pages, and its appeal was simple. 'We are *a people, one people*. We have everywhere tried honestly to integrate with the national communities surrounding us and to retain only our faith. We are not permitted to do so... In vain do we exert ourselves to increase the glory of our fatherlands by achievements in art and in science and their wealth by our contributions to commerce... We are denounced as strangers... If only they would leave us in peace... But I do not think they will...' So Herzl proposed that sovereignty be conceded to the Jews over a tract of land large enough to accommodate their people. It did not matter

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<sup>50</sup> Johnson, *op. cit.*, pp. 395.

<sup>51</sup> Ferguson, *The War of the World*, London: Penguin, 2006, pp. 41-42.

<sup>52</sup> Simon Winder, *Danubia*, London: Picador, 2013, p. 408.

where. It could be in Argentina, where the millionaire Baron Maurice de Hirsch (1831-96) had set up 6,000 Jews in a series of agricultural colonies. Or it could be Palestine, where similar Rothschild-financed colonies were in being. What mattered was the sanction of Jewish opinion; and they would take what was offered...

"Herzl began by assuming that a Jewish state would be created in the way things had always been done throughout the Exile; by wealthy Jews at the top deciding what was the best solution for the rest of Jewry, and imposing it. But he found this impossible. Everywhere in civilized Europe the Jewish establishments were against his idea. Orthodox rabbis denounced or ignored him...

"Nevertheless, what Herzl quickly discovered was that the dynamic of Judaism would not come from the westernised elites but from the poor, huddled masses of the *Ostjuden*, a people of whom he knew nothing when he began his campaign. He discovered this first when he addressed an audience of poor Jews, of refugee stock, in the East End of London. They called him 'the man of the little people', and 'As I sat on the platform... I experienced strange sensations. I saw and heard my legend being born.' In Eastern Europe, he quickly became a myth-like figure among the poor. David Ben-Gurion (1886-1973) recalled that, as a ten-year-old boy in Russian Poland, he heard a rumour: 'The Messiah had arrived, a tall, handsome man, a learned man of Vienna, a doctor no less.'<sup>53</sup> Unlike the sophisticated middle-class Jews of the West, the eastern Jews could not toy with alternatives, and see themselves as Russians, or even as Poles. They knew they were Jews and nothing but Jews... and what Herzl now seemed to be offering was their only chance of becoming a real citizen anywhere. To Chaim Weizmann (1874-1952), then a second-year student in Berlin, Herzl's proposals 'came like a bolt from the blue'. In Sofia, the Chief Rabbi actually proclaimed him the Messiah. As the news got around, Herzl found himself visited by shabby, excitable Jews from distant parts, to the dismay of his fashionable wife, who grew to detest the very word Zionism. Yet these were the men who became the foot soldiers, indeed the NCOs and officers, in the Zionist legion; Herzl called them his 'army of *schmorrers*'.<sup>54</sup>

In spite of the importance of the *Ostjuden*, the Zionist movement remained, as Bernard Simms notes, "not only secular but very much German in character and orientation. Herzl himself was a fervent admirer of Bismarck, German was the working language of the Zionist movement, and Berlin soon became the informal capital of the World Zionist Executive. Zionists did not expect to be able to achieve their state on their own: they would need a great-power sponsor, and Herzl expected and hoped that that would be what he regarded as the most progressive polity in late-nineteenth-century Europe, Imperial Germany. 'The character of the Jewish people,' Herzl wrote, 'can only become healthier under the protectorate of the great, powerful, moral Germany, with its practical administration and strict organization. Zionism will enable the Jews once more to love Germany, to which, despite everything, our hearts belong. 'We owe it to the German in us that we are Jews again,' the German Zionist

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<sup>53</sup> When Herzl ascended the podium at the first Zionist conference, "he looked like 'a man of the House of David, risen all of a sudden from his grave in all his legendary glory,' recalled Mordechai Ben-Ami, the delegate from Odessa. 'It seemed as if the dream cherished by our people for two thousand years had come true at last and Messiah the Son of David was standing before us.'" (Karen Armstrong, *A History of Jerusalem*, London: HarperCollins, 1997, p. 365). (V.M.).

<sup>54</sup> Johnson, *op. cit.*, pp. 396-397, 397-398, 398-399.

Moses Calvary wrote. 'Here,' Calvary concluded, 'is the living proof of the extent of Germany's nurturing of our own creative being: political Zionism is Europe's gift to Judaism.'"55

However, Herzl was quick to change his orientation from the West European Jews to the *Ostjuden*, who were much more interested in Zionism. Thus he paid heed to the Russian Jewish doctor Lev Pinsker's *Autoemancipation* (1882), which, in view of the pogroms of the previous year, appealed to Russian and German Jewry to abandon the failed idea of emancipation and the last gleams of hope in the brotherhood of peoples. "For the living," he wrote, "the Jew is a dead man; for the natives, an alien and a vagrant; for property holders, a beggar; for the poor, an exploiter and a millionaire; for the patriot, a man without a country; for all classes a hated rival."

Another important East European Zionist was Usher Ginzberg, or Ahad-Gaam ("one of the people"). Solzhenitsyn writes: "He sharply criticised practical Palestinophilia as it then was. His position was: 'Before directing our efforts at "redemption on the land", it is necessary to care about "redemption of hearts", about the intellectual and moral perfection of the people'. 'To place in the centre of Jewry a living spiritual striving for the unification of the nation, its stirring up and free development in the national spirit, but on pan-human foundations'. This point of view later received the name of 'spiritual Zionism' (but not 'religious', this is important).

"In the same 1889 Ahad-Gaam, for the unification of those who were devoted to the redemption of Jewish national feelings, created a league - or order, as he called it, 'Bnei Moshe' ('the Sons of Moses'). Its constitution 'was in many ways like the constitutions of Masonic lodges: the entrant gave a promise on oath to fulfil exactly all the demands of the constitution; new members were initiated by a master, an 'elder brother'... The entering 'brother' bound himself selflessly to serve the idea of national redemption, even if he were sure that there was no hope for the speedy realisation of the ideal'. In the manifesto of the order it was proclaimed that 'the national consciousness has primacy over religious [consciousness], and individual interests are subject to national [interests]', and it was demanded that he deepen his feeling of selfless love for Jewry above every other aim of the movement. The order prepared 'the ground for the reception of the political Zionism' of Herzl, which Ahad-Gaam did not want at all.

"In 1891, 1893 and 1900 Ahad-Gaam also travelled to Palestine - and reproached the lack of organisation and rootlessness of the Palestinian colonisation of that time, 'he subjected to severe criticism the dictatorial behaviour of those serving Baron' E. Rothschild.

"Thus in Europe Zionism was born a decade later than in Russia...

"At the first Congress the representatives of Russian Zionism 'constituted a third of the participants... 66 out of 197 delegates' - in spite of the fact that for some this might look like an oppositional move in relation to the Russian government... In this way 'Zionism drew its strength... from the circles of oppressed Eastern Jewry, which found only a limited support amongst the Jews of Western Europe'. But for this reason the Russian Zionists represented for Herzl the most serious opposition. Ahad-Gaam

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<sup>55</sup> Simms, *Europe: The Struggle for Supremacy*, London: Allen Lane, 2013, pp. 264-265.

conducted a stubborn struggle with the political Zionism of Herzl (on whose side, however, there rose the majority of the old Palestinophiles). He sharply criticised the pragmatism of Herzl and Nordau and, as he thought, '[their] alienation from the spiritual values of Jewish culture and tradition'. He 'found political Zionism's hope of founding a Jewish autonomous State in *the near future* chimerical; he considered the whole of this movement to be exceptionally harmful for the work of the spiritual regeneration of the nation... Not to care about saving perishing *Judaism*, that is, not to care about spiritual-national and cultural-historical attainments, to strive not for the *regeneration* of the ancient people, but for the *creation* of a new one from the scattered particles of the old matter'. He used and even emphasised the word 'Judaism', but evidently not in a religious sense, but as an inherited spiritual system...

"The quarrels shook the Zionists. Ahad-Gaam sharply criticised Herzl, and in support of the latter Nordau accused Ahad-Gaam of 'secret Zionism'. Every year there took place Zionist World Congresses, and in 1902 there took place a Congress of Russian Zionists in Minsk, whither the quarrels crossed over...

"At the beginning of the century the poet N. Minsky expressed the following thought: 'that Zionism is the loss of the pan-human measure, that it reduces the universal cosmopolitan dimensions of Jewry [!] to the level of ordinary nationalism. 'The Zionists, while talking about nationalism, in fact turn away from the genuine national face of Jewry and are zealous only that they should be like everyone, and become no worse than others.'

"It is interesting to compare this with the remark of the Orthodox [Christian] thinker S. Bulgakov, which was also made before the revolution: 'The greatest difficulty for Zionism consists now in the fact that it is not able to return the faith of the fathers that is being lost, and is forced to base itself on the national or cultural-ethnographic principle, on which no truly great nationality can establish itself.'<sup>56</sup>

So Herzl had considerable opposition from within Jewry: most assimilated Jews, the Jews who already had their own plans for Jewry in Palestine (like Baron Edmund Rothschild) and the religious Jews who rejected the idea of a secular Jewish nationalism, were against Zionism.

Moreover, there were several major questions about the Zionist project in Palestine for which there were as yet no clear answers. "Did a Jewish homeland entail a majority of Jews within a particular geographical area, or could Jewish security be obtained without Jews being in a demographic majority? Should religion play a strong role in such a homeland, or should it rather be defined by a progressive secular identity, centred more around the university and the opera house than around the synagogue? What should be its language - Hebrew or German, or perhaps both, perhaps many? Should Jews learn Arabic, partly in order to assuage the fears of local Arabs in Palestine, and partly to more easily negotiate the purchase of land? Should only Jews be employed to work the land of Jewish-owned settlements in Palestine, or should Arabs also be employed, thus allowing for a greater degree of economic interdependence and social assimilation? And after all this, would Arabs be the

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<sup>56</sup> Solzhenitsyn, *Dvesti Let Vmeste* (Two Hundred Years Together), Moscow, 2001, pp. 257-258, 260-261, 262, 263.

contented political equals of Jews in such a homeland, benefitting, as many Zionists saw it, from the economic investment and technical expertise that Jewish migration would bring to Palestine? Or would they be its sullen rivals, either slowly migrating to other parts of the Ottoman Empire or, more worryingly, remaining entrenched on the land? In the broader political context, what degree of autonomy could or should a Jewish homeland aspire to in the Ottoman Empire, and, as a matter of practical politics, did the route to the establishment of a Jewish Homeland lie through Constantinople or rather through Berlin, Paris, Vienna and London?"<sup>57</sup>

Herzl found unexpected support from some Gentile leaders, who were in favour of Zionism as a means of reducing the Jewish population of Europe. Thus the Russian interior minister, V.K. Plehve, said to him in August, 1903: "You are preaching to a convert..., we would very much like to see the creation of an independent Jewish State capable of absorbing several million Jews."<sup>58</sup> However, little came of his promise because in July, 1904 Herzl died and Plehve himself was assassinated by the Social Revolutionaries.

Again, the Kaiser said: "I am all in favour of the kikes going to Palestine. The sooner they take off the better..."<sup>59</sup>

Herzl even had support from Gentile Christians. "In fact," writes Walter Russell Mead, "American Protestant Zionism is significantly older than the modern Jewish version; in the nineteenth century, evangelicals repeatedly petitioned U.S. officials to establish a refuge in the Holy Land for persecuted Jews from Europe and the Ottoman Empire.

"U.S. evangelical theology takes a unique view of the role of the Jewish people in the modern world. On the one hand, evangelicals share the widespread Christian view that Christians represent the new and true children of Israel, inheritors of God's promises to the ancient Hebrews. Yet unlike many other Christians, evangelicals also believe that the Jewish people have a continuing role in God's plan. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, close study of biblical prophecies convinced evangelical scholars and believers that the Jews would return to the Holy Land before the triumphant return of Christ."<sup>60</sup>

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However, more important than the Americans at this stage were the British, who, as Karen Armstrong writes, had "developed a form of gentile Zionism. Their reading of the Bible convinced them that Palestine belonged to the Jews, and already in the 1870s sober British observers looked forward to the establishment of a Jewish homeland in Palestine under the protection of Great Britain."<sup>61</sup> Thus, as Geoffrey Hanks writes, "Herzl was actively assisted by an Anglican clergyman, William

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<sup>57</sup> Emerson, *op. cit.*, pp. 336-337.

<sup>58</sup> According to Vital (*op. cit.*, p. 468), Plehve's memorandum to Herzl was approved beforehand by the Tsar.

<sup>59</sup> In 1879 William Marr had written: "The Jewish idea of colonizing Palestine could be wholesome for both sides [Jews and Germans]" (in Pipes, *op. cit.*, p. 28).

<sup>60</sup> Mead, "God's Country?" *Foreign Affairs*, September/October, 2006, p. 39.

<sup>61</sup> Armstrong, *op. cit.*, p. 360.

Hechler, whose motivation was quite different to that of Herzl. For Hechler, his reading of prophecy had led him to conclude that the Jews would be returned to their homeland which would be followed by the Second Coming. After reading Herzl's book, *The Jewish State*, he joined forces with the author to promote the Zionist cause by persuading the Sultan of Turkey to allow Jewish immigration to Palestine. He was able to arrange a meeting in 1898 between Herzl and the Kaiser in Jerusalem. When he failed to secure German support for the cause he next looked to England for help, which came in the form of the Balfour Declaration [of 1917].<sup>62</sup>

In exchange for their supporting the Zionist project, Herzl usually offered the Great Powers "all kinds of monetary advantages, from a university to long-term credits". Typical was his approach to the Turkish Sultan Abdul Hamid. But the Sultan replied: "I cannot agree to vivisection... my people fought for this land and fertilized it with their blood... let the Jews keep their millions..."<sup>63</sup>

But it was in Britain that the Zionists "could act most freely and where, according to Herzl, there was least anti-Semitism".<sup>64</sup> As Paul Johnson writes, "Herzl rightly called it 'the Archimedean point' on which to rest the lever of Zionism. There was considerable goodwill among the political elite. A lot had read *Tancred*; even more *Daniel Deronda*. Moreover, there had been a vast influx of Russian Jewish refugees into Britain, raising fears of anti-Semitism and threats of immigrant quotas. A Royal Commission on Alien Immigration was appointed (1902), with Lord Rothschild one of its members. Herzl was asked to give evidence, and Rothschild now at last agreed to see him, privately, a few days before, to ensure Herzl said nothing which would strengthen the cry for Jewish refugees to be refused entry. Rothschild's change from active hostility to friendly neutrality was an important victory for Herzl and he was happy, in exchange, to tell the Commission (7 July 1902) that further Jewish immigration to Britain should be accepted but that the ultimate solution to the refugee problem was 'the recognition of the Jews as a people and the finding by them of a legally recognized home'.

"This appearance brought Herzl into contact with senior members of the government, especially Joe Chamberlain, the Colonial Secretary, and the Marquess of Lansdowne, Foreign Secretary. Both were favourable to a Jewish home in principle. But where? Cyprus was discussed, then El Arish on the Egyptian border. Herzl thought it could be 'a rallying-point for the Jewish people in the vicinity of Palestine' and he wrote a paper for the British cabinet bringing up, for the first time, a powerful if dangerous argument: 'At one stroke England will get ten million secret but loyal subjects active in all walks of life all over the world.' But the Egyptians objected and a survey proved unsatisfactory. Then Chamberlain, back from East Africa, had a new idea, Uganda. 'When I saw it,' he said, 'I thought, "That is a land for Dr. Herzl. But of course he is sentimental and wants to go to Palestine or thereabouts.' In fact Herzl would have settled for Uganda. So Lansdowne produced a letter: 'If a site can be found which the [Jewish Colonial] Trust and His Majesty's Commission consider suitable and which commends itself to HM Government, Lord Lansdowne will be prepared to entertain favourable proposals for the establishment of a Jewish colony

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<sup>62</sup> Hanks, *Great Events in the History of the Church*, Tain, 2004, pp. 294, 295.

<sup>63</sup> Alfred Lilienthal, *The Zionist Connection*, New York: Dodd, Mead & co., 1987, p. 11.

<sup>64</sup> Mansfield, *op. cit.*, p. 161.

of settlement, on conditions which will enable the members to observe their national customs.' This was a breakthrough. It amounted to diplomatic recognition for a proto-Zionist state. In a shrewd move, Herzl aroused the interest of the rising young Liberal politician, David Lloyd George, by getting his firm of solicitors to draft a proposed charter for the colony. He read Lansdowne's letter to the Sixth Zionist Congress, where it aroused 'amazement [at] the magnanimity of the British offer'. But many delegates saw it as a betrayal of Zionism; the Russians walked out. Herzl concluded: 'Palestine is the only land where our people can come to rest.' At the Seventh Congress (1905), Uganda was formally rejected."<sup>65</sup>

At the Sixth Congress Herzl had been forced to stand before the delegates, raise his right hand and quote the words of the psalmist: 'If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, may my right hand wither!'<sup>66</sup> But to outsiders the Zionists asked only for: "not a Jewish state, but a home in the ancient land of our forefathers where we can live a Jewish life without oppression of persecution". And to critics they said: "Only those suffering from gross ignorance or actuated by malice could accuse us of a desire of establishing an independent Jewish Kingdom."<sup>67</sup>

After Herzl's death in 1904, the leadership of the Zionist movement passed to Chaim Weizmann, who, as Johnson writes, "was just as skilful as Herzl in handling world statesmen but in addition he could speak for the *Ostjuden* rank and file - he was one"<sup>68</sup> "He was born," writes A.N. Wilson, "in a ghetto, in poverty, in southern Russia in 1874 at a time when Zionism was little more than a dream, when spoken Hebrew was unknown outside rarified rabbinic circles, and when Judaea was part of the Ottoman Empire, an under-populated, picturesque but decayed region. When he died in 1952 in Rehovot, he was the president of the state of Israel. He had been the key figure in bringing that state into being.

"He came to England from Russia - via Switzerland - becoming a demonstrator in chemistry at Victoria University, Manchester, in 1904. Winston Churchill, electioneering in Oldham, approached the Jewish leaders in Manchester, hoping for their support of the Liberal party. On the eve of the 1906 election, Weizmann met the Tory Prime Minister, Arthur Balfour, and they had the conversation which passed into legend.

"Weizmann was concerned that many British assimilated Jews were extremely dubious about the Zionist idea.

"I began to sweat blood to make my meaning clear through my English. At the very end I made an effort, I had an idea. I said, "Mr. Balfour, if you were offered Paris instead of London, would you take it?" He looked surprised, "But London is our own!" He leaned back, continued to stare at me, and said two things which I remember vividly. The first was: "Are there many Jews who think like you?" I answered, "I believe I speak the mind of millions of Jews whom you will never see and who cannot speak for themselves, but with whom I could pave the streets of the country I come

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<sup>65</sup> Johnson, *op. cit.*, pp. 400-402.

<sup>66</sup> Armstrong, *op. cit.*, p. 366.

<sup>67</sup> Lilienthal, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

<sup>68</sup> Johnson, *op. cit.*, p. 424.

from." To this he said, "If this is so, you will one day be a force." Shortly before I withdrew, Balfour said, "It is curious. The Jews I meet are quite different." I answered: "Mr. Balfour, you meet the wrong kind of Jews."

"It was Weizmann's conviction that 'England will understand the Zionists better than anyone else.' The models used by Weizmann, who was neither a prophet like Herzl, not an historian, but a chemist, were, consciously or not, anachronistically contemporary. In seeking to 'recreate' the ancient homeland of the Jews, it was no accident that he found that England understood the idea 'better than anyone else. Although the Ugandan proposal was ditched, Weizmann went on thinking of the new country as a colony on the British model. Soon after Turkey entered the First World War, he wrote:

"Don't you think that the chance for the Jewish people is now within the limits of a discussion at least?... Should Palestine fall within the sphere of British influence and should Britain encourage a Jewish settlement there as a British dependency, we could have in 25-30 years about a million Jews out there, perhaps more; they would develop the country, bring back civilization to it.'

"In just the same way, Europeans appropriating African or Asian or South American territory considered themselves to be thereby bringing 'civilization'. Though he was always careful in his public utterances to express his respect for the rights of the indigenous population of Palestine - 'There is an Arab nation with a glorious past' - he was candidly colonialist in his language. He spoke of the Jewish settlers as 'colonialists' following his first visit to Palestine in 1907, the Arabs were 'primitive people'. The Jewish incomers would be 'bearers of the torch and the preparers of civilization'. It is true that as his thinking developed Weizmann categorically stated and patently wished that '600,000 Arabs have just as much right to their life in Palestine as we have to our National Home'. It was an optimistic expectation. Like the British in India, the Zionists of Weizmann's generation could not entirely shake off the sense that when a European man set foot on non-European soil he did so as the superior of the native population. He came to conquer and to improve. In his more unguarded moments he suggested, in his thinking about the settlement of Palestine, that the fate of 'several hundred thousand negroes' was 'a matter of no consequence'. Just as the British in South Africa could dehumanize the Indians by referring to them as coolies, so Weizmann could see the indigenous population of the Middle East as negroes..."<sup>69</sup>

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Even with the Zionist movement formally committed to Palestine as its only possible homeland, there was still strong opposition to the idea from within Jewry. Religious opposition to secular Zionism was already present in the nineteenth century in the works of Samuel Hirsch and "the Forerunners of Zionism" - the Serbian Rabbi Alkalai and the Polish Rabbi Kalischer. Now the Orthodox, writes Johnson, "argued that Satan, having despaired of seducing Israel by persecution, had been given permission to try it by even more subtle methods, involving the Holy Land in his wicked and idolatrous scheme, as well as all the evils of the enlightenment. Zionism

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<sup>69</sup> Wilson, *After the Victorians*, London: Hutchinson, 2005, pp. 103-104.

was thus infinitely worse than a false messiah - it was an entire false, Satanic religion. Others added that the secular state would conjure up the godless spirit of the *demos* and was contrary to God's command to Moses to follow the path of oligarchy: 'Go and collect the elders of Israel'; 'Heaven forbid', wrote two Kovno sages, 'that the masses and the women should chatter about meetings or opinions concerning the general needs of the public.' In Katowice on 22 May 1912 the Orthodox sages founded the Agudist movement to coordinate opposition to Zionist claims. It is true that some Orthodox Jews believed Zionism could be exploited for religious purposes. Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook (1865-1935) argued that the new 'national spirit of Israel' could be used to appeal to Jews on patriotic grounds to observe and preach the Torah. With Zionist support he was eventually made Chief Rabbi of Jerusalem. But most of the religious Jews already in Eretz Israel heard of Zionism with horror. 'There is great dismay in the Holy Land,' wrote Rabbi Joseph Hayyim Sonnenfeld (1848-1932), 'that these evil men who deny the Unique One of the world and his Holy Torah have proclaimed with so much publicity that it is in their power to hasten redemption for the people of Israel and gather the dispersed from all the ends of the earth.' When Herzl entered the Holy Land, he added, 'evil entered with him, and we do not yet know what we have to do against the destroyers of the totality of Israel, may the Lord have mercy'. This wide, though by no means universal opposition of pious Jews to the Zionist programme inevitably tended to push it more firmly into the hands of the secular radicals..."<sup>70</sup>

But the reverse process was also seen: the conversion of secular radicals to an almost mystical love of the land of Israel, a factor that makes Zionism more than just a form of secular nationalism. For, as Karen Armstrong writes, "Jerusalem was still a symbol that had power to inspire these secular Zionists as they struggled to create a new world, even if they had little time for the city as an earthly reality. Yitzhak Ben-Zvi, who would become the second President of the State of Israel, was converted to Zionism while speaking at a revolutionary rally in Russia. Suddenly he felt dissociated from his surroundings and in the wrong place. 'Why am I here and not there?' he asked himself. Then he had a vision. There arose 'in my mind's eye the living image of Jerusalem, the holy city, with its ruins, desolate of its sons'. From that moment he thought no more of revolution in Russia but only of 'our Jerusalem'. 'That very hour I reached the absolute decision that our place is the Land of Israel, and that I must go there, dedicate my life to its upbuilding, and as soon as possible.'...

"The trouble was that Jerusalem was not 'desolate of its sons'. It already had sons, a people who had lived there for centuries and who had their own plans for the city. Nor was the city a ruin, as Ben-Zvi imagined... [Moreover,] its Arab residents had come to resent the Turkish occupation and were alarmed by the Zionist settlers. In 1891 a number of Jerusalem notables sent a petition to Istanbul, asking the government to prevent a further immigration of Jews and the sale of land to Zionists. The last known political act of Yusuf al-Khalidi had been to write a letter to Rabbi Zadok Kahn, the friend of Herzl, begging him to leave Palestine alone: for centuries, Jews, Christians, and Muslims had managed to live together in Jerusalem, and this Zionist project would end such coexistence. After the Young Turk revolt in 1908, Arab nationalists of Palestine began to dream of a state of their own, free of Turkish control. When the first Arab Congress met in Paris in 1913, a telegram of support was signed

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<sup>70</sup> Johnson, *op. cit.*, pp. 403-404.

by 387 Arabs from the Near East, 130 of them Palestinians. In 1915, Ben-Gurion became aware of these Arab aspirations for Palestine and found them profoundly disturbing. 'It hit me like a bomb,' he said later. 'I was utterly confounded.' Yet, the Israeli writer Amos Elon tells us, despite this bombshell, Ben-Gurion continued to ignore the existence of the Palestinian Arabs. Only two years later, he made the astonishing suggestion that in a 'historical and moral sense,' Palestine was a country 'without inhabitants.' Because the Jews felt at home there, all other inhabitants of the country were merely the ethnic descendants of various conquerors. Ben-Gurion wished the Arabs well as individuals but was convinced that they had no rights at all..."<sup>71</sup>

And so most of the elements necessary for the creation of the most insoluble political problem of modern times were already in place: Jewish Zionism, the "Christian Zionism" of the Anglo-Saxon nations, and Arab nationalism. The chief difference, according to Johnson, between the Jewish and Arab nationalisms "was that they [the Arabs] started to organize themselves two decades later. Jewish nationalism, or Zionism, was part of the European nationalist movement, which was a nineteenth-century phenomenon. The Arabs, by contrast, were part of the Afro-Arab nationalism of the twentieth century..."<sup>72</sup>

"The awakening of the Arab nation," wrote Neguib Azoury in 1905, "and the growing Jewish efforts at rebuilding the ancient monarchy of Israel on a very large scale - these two movements are destined to fight each other continually, until one of them triumphs over the other..."<sup>73</sup>

These were prescient words... Only one element was lacking (or rather: dormant) in this toxic mix: fundamentalist Islam. And yet this, too, was already present in embryo in Saudi Wahhabism; and in 1914 the Turkish sultan, following German suggestions, proclaimed a religious war, or *jihād*, against Britain...

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<sup>71</sup> Armstrong, *op. cit.*, pp. 367-369. Ironically, in 1918, Ben Gurion and Ben-Zvi wrote a book entitled *Eretz Israel*, which argued, as Shlomo Sand writes, that "the population that survived [in Palestine] since the seventh century had originated from the Judean farming class that the Muslim conqueror had found when they reached the country" (*The Invention of the Jewish People*, London: Verso, 2009, p. 186). So the Muslim fellahin, or farming class of Palestine, were in fact Jewish by race!

<sup>72</sup> Johnson, *op. cit.*, p. 434.

<sup>73</sup> Azour, in Cohen and Major, *op. cit.*, p. 634.

## 4. THEOSOPHY, SPIRITUALISM, SYMBOLISM

Being an aristocrat still counted for something in the last decades before the First World War. But political and economic power had already slipped away from the landed aristocracy to the middle classes – to the bankers and industrialists, the lawyers, the accountants and the doctors, who bought up the aristocrats' country estates when they fell into debt and whose numbers increased rapidly in the great cities of "the second industrial revolution".

"Over the decades," writes Sir Richard Evans, "political systems everywhere, even in reluctant tsarist Russia, had adjusted to the new role of the middle classes. Yet there was also a sense in some quarters that their heyday was over by 1900. In the first year of the new century the German writer Thomas Mann (1875-1955) published his great novel of upper-middle-class life, *Buddenbrooks*, in which a mercantile family gradually falls apart over the decades as its members abandon their core values and sink into self-indulgence and decadence in a process symbolized in the progressively worsening tooth decay suffered by the men of each generation."<sup>74</sup>

The slide into self-indulgence portended the end of the era of Victorian morality that had so dominated European and American upper-class life in the nineteenth century, which set its tone from Queen Victoria herself, her devotion to her husband, Prince Albert, and her stern disapproval of the sexual foibles of her eldest son and heir, the future King Edward VII. However, the idea of the emancipation of women was in the air – and not only sexual, but also political emancipation, as in the suffragette movement, which claimed its first martyrs just before the First World War.

The conflict between the morality of the older and younger generations, and between the moralities of different cultures, was, of course, not new; we see it even in third century Rome: "Dio Cassius records a story of how Julia Domna, wife of the emperor Septimius Severus (AD 193-211), was shocked by the apparent openness with which Celtic women chose their husbands and lovers. She declared that it showed a complete lack of moral scruple.

"The wife of the British chieftain to whom she uttered this opinion responded with some spirit: 'We Celtic women obey the demands of Nature in a more moral way than the women of Rome. We consort openly with the best of men but you, of Rome, allow yourselves to be debauched in secret by the vilest.'<sup>75</sup>

Of course, the matter was less complicated in third-century Rome than in nineteenth-century Europe, where centuries of Christianity made it impossible simply to "go back to nature" and identify morality with the unfettered expression of passion. Nevertheless, the Enlightenment and Darwinism, together with the romantic novel, were busily undermining the foundations of contemporary morality. And the new science of psychoanalysis (see next chapter) would further undermine in the not-so-distant future...

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<sup>74</sup> Evans, *The Pursuit of Power. Europe 1815-1914*, London: Penguin, 2017, p. 326.

<sup>75</sup> Terry Jones and Alan Ereira, *Barbarians*, London: BBC Books, 2006, p. 51.

Moral instability was compounded by religious uncertainty. "The malaise of the late nineteenth century," writes A.N. Wilson, "was not primarily a political or an economic one, though subsequent historians might choose to interpret it thus. Men and women looked at the world which Western capitalism had brought to pass since Queen Victoria had been on the throne - over forty years now! - and they sensed that something had gone hideously awry.

"Gladstone bellowing on the windswept moorlands of Midlothian; Wagner in the new-built Bayreuth Festival Theatre watching the citadel of the Gods go down in flames; world-weary Trollope scribbling himself to death in the London clubs; Dostoyevsky coughing blood, and thrusting, as he did, his New Testament into the hands of his son - these could hardly be more different individuals. Yet they all at roughly the same moment in history were seized with comparable misgiving. It is like one of these disconcerting moments in a crowd of chattering strangers when a silence suddenly falls; or when a sudden chill, spiritual more than atmospheric, causes an individual to shiver and to exclaim 'I feel as if a man has just walked over my grave.'"<sup>76</sup>

Christianity "had, by the time of the nineteenth century, begun to stare at its own apocalypse. The biblical scholars of Tübingen had undermined the faith of the Protestant North in the infallibility of Scripture; while the painstaking lifetime of botanical and biological observations of Charles Darwin had shaken the faith of intellectuals in the Creator himself. By the end of the Victorian century, atheism had become the religion of the suburbs, as G.K. Chesterton observed.

"There is no doubt that, as the career and popularity of H.G. Wells demonstrates, unbelief was rife among the masses..."<sup>77</sup>

Nevertheless, according to Wilson, "the nineteenth century was an era of faith quite as much as it was one of doubt. While sophisticates abandoned the old Bible, new bibles were in the making. An angel called Moroni directed Joseph Smith, a teen-aged labourer from New England, to find, in 1827, those Golden Plates which would contain the new gospel, *The New Mormon*. In 1875, Mary Baker Eddy (1821-1910) was to publish *Science and Health*, later named *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, which, as the eternal document of the new religion of Christian Science, was in effect to be a further testament, assuring believers that disease and indeed evil itself were illusory. Blavatsky's new Scripture, *Isis Unveiled* (1879), was written by invisible Spirit hands. Half a million words long, it began by denouncing the scientific materialism of Darwin and Huxley, and went on to expound its key doctrine, namely that all wisdom is One, that science is not opposed to religion, and that religious differences are man-made. Anyone who has nursed the thought that 'deep down all religions are saying the same thing' is more than halfway towards Theosophy..."<sup>78</sup>

Theosophy's most famous adept was the Irish poet W.B. Yeats. Yeats, writes Peter Watson, "would probably not have turned to the occult sciences with such alacrity had not a movement in that direction already been well under way. As Richard Ellmann

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<sup>76</sup> Wilson, *The Victorians*, London: Arrow, 2003, p. 417.

<sup>77</sup> Wilson, *After the Victorians*, London: Hutchinson, 2005, p. 80.

<sup>78</sup> Wilson, *The Victorians*, pp. 549-550.

describes it: 'All over Europe and America young men dropped like him, and usually without his caution, into the treacherous currents of semi-mystical thought... Since Christianity seemed to have been exploded, and since science offered to Western man little but proof of his own ignominiousness, a new doctrine purporting to be an ancient and non-European one was evolved by a strange Russian lady. The new movement called itself Theosophy and offered a "synthesis of science, religion, and philosophy" which opposed the contemporary developments of all three.'

"The 'strange lady' was Madame Helen Blavatsky, born in 1831 in Yekaterinoslav, who advanced 'with certainty' her theories that 'man has never been an ape' and that Herbert Spencer was in fundamental error and accused the Christian priesthood of modern materialism. Modern religion, she insisted, was but ancient thought *distorted*; and to uncover what such thought really was, she turned to comparative mythology, which, since about 1860, had been highly developed in books by such scholars as Max Müller, a German who taught at Oxford, and culminated in James Frazier's *The Golden Bough* (1890).

"In an early work of her own, Madame Blavatsky drew attention to what she saw as the similarity in the fundamental beliefs across all religions, and attributed this 'to the existence of a secret doctrine which was their common parent'. She claimed access to an oral tradition, for the true doctrine according to her had never been allowed to be set down. 'Now,' she said, 'an ancient brotherhood was keeping the secret wisdom high in the mountain fastnesses of Tibet.' The members of this brotherhood had no interest in spreading their wisdom, but should they choose to do so, she confided, they would 'astonish' the world. And they had at least shown certain things to Madame Blavatsky, for the onward transmission of their secret doctrine was the 'Theosophical Society'. 'As these mysteries were gradually revealed, the world would slowly progress towards the greater spirituality that had been prophesied for it.'

"One of the reasons the movement was popular – it was a 'magnet' for disaffected members of the educated public, says the Yeats scholar Margaret Mills Harper – was that it was both anti-atheist and anti-clerical. It attacked science but used scientific concepts where it suited the moment; it espoused fatalism, yet also offered hope of progress. 'Spiritual revolution restored the hope which natural evolution had removed.'

"And it was Blavatsky's *The Secret Doctrine*, her chief work, that drew Yeats to Theosophy, the first of several forms of occult reasoning that attracted him. Her doctrine proposed three main ideas. First, she said, there was an 'Omnipresent, Eternal, Boundless and Immutable Principle on which all speculation is impossible' – the Theosophists paid little attention to deity. Second, the world is essentially a conflict of polar opposites, contraries without which life cannot exist. Third, she proclaimed the fundamental identity of all souls with the 'Universal Oversoul' which carried the implication that any soul might, under proper conditions, partake of the Oversoul's power, a heady possibility. The soul had seven elements, or principles, and it evolved through these elements over time. Heaven and hell were to be considered as 'states', not actual places.

"During this spiritual evolution humankind progressed from a more intuitive way of thinking to a more intellectual style, growing more conscious. This is where the world is at present, she said, in the fourth stage. In future stages – five, six and seven – intuition, intelligence and consciousness will fuse into an intense spirituality that, at present we cannot imagine. When it suited them, the Theosophists reinforced their arguments with examples from Eastern religions – for instance, they espoused the idea of Nirvana."<sup>79</sup>

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Another popular antichristian religion was Spiritualism, part of the "epidemic of the occult" that swept the West. This, writes L.A. Tikhomirov, "was already abundant in the United States of America, and in 1852 there were up to 30,000 mediums and several million convinced spiritualists. From America spiritualism migrated in 1853 to England, and then to France and Germany, passing everywhere, as V. Bykov says, through one and the same developmental progression. That is, first it would manifest itself in knocks, then in table-levitation, then writing, and finally direct communications [with evil spirits]. This teaching was embraced in Europe even by noted scientists, such as Aragon, Faraday, Tyndal, Chevrel, Flammarion, Kruke, Wallace, Rimman, Tsolner, etc., who first approached spiritualist phenomena with scepticism, but then became ardent followers of spiritualism. In 1858 a certain Hippolyte Rivel, writing under the pseudonym Allan Kardek and with the help of spirits, composed a six-volumed work containing the spiritualist philosophy with a religious-mystical colouring. In the opinion of V. Bykov, it is not possible to establish exactly when spiritualism appeared in Russia, but in any case at the beginning of the 50s of the 19th century, that is, at the same time as the whole of Europe and, moreover, in its mature form (table-lifting, writing and speaking mediumism) and in 'such an epidemic force' that already in 1853 Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow considered it necessary to speak against it. In the 60s the spiritualist movement increased still more in strength. It was also joined here by several eminent scientists and social activists, such as Professor N. Wagner, Professor Yurkevich, Vladimir Dal', the academician Ostrogradsky, Professor Buglerov, etc. A.N. Aksakov was particularly involved in the popularisation of this movement. At the beginning of the 20th century a notable role in the development of our spiritualism was played by Vlad[imir] Pavl[ovich] Bykov, who later spoke out against it and became its untiring opponent.

"At the world congress in Belgium in 1910, the numbers of correctly organized spiritualists, having their own circles and meetings, were calculated at 14,000,000 people, and the numbers of sympathizers who had not yet managed to organize themselves correctly - at 10,000,000."<sup>80</sup>

Queen Victoria and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle were among the most famous adepts of spiritualism.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> Watson, *The Age of Atheists*, London: Simon & Schuster, 2014, pp. 167-169.

<sup>80</sup> Tikhomirov, *Religiozno-filosofskie Osnovy Istorii* (The Religio-Philosophical Foundations of History), Moscow, 1997, pp. 480-481.

<sup>81</sup> Douglas Smith, *Rasputin*, London: Pan Books, 2016, p. 90; Stefan Bechtel, Laurence Ray Stains, *Through a Glass Darkly*, London: St. Martins, 2017.

Bearing in mind that in the Old Testament Mosaic Law contact with demonic spirits was punishable by death, we should not wonder why from 1914 God unleashed His wrath so terribly on the so-called Christians of Europe...

## 5. THE COLLAPSE OF EUROPEAN CULTURE

By the end of the twentieth century, the French had recovered from the traumas of the Franco-Prussian war and the Paris Commune, and again saw themselves and their capital as the centre of the cultural universe. They had some right to this title. Throughout the nineteenth century they had been leaders in the arts. In the period 1870-1900, many great French artists reached their maturity: in painting – Monet, Cezanne, Renoir and Van Gogh; in sculpture – Rodin; in music – Bizet, Saint-Saëns and Debussy; in literature – Zola and Maupassant. By the 1900 *Exposition Universelle*, held in Paris, this pre-eminence was widely recognized; and many of the greats of the following generation, such as Picasso, Stravinsky, Hemingway and Joyce, chose to live in Paris.

As Charles Emmerson puts it, “Paris was now the quintessential city of seduction, sensation and spectacle, to be consumed without moderation, to be experienced rather than to be comprehended: the city of pleasure and occasionally the city of risk. This was a mythology to which Parisians themselves could subscribe, flattering, as it did, both their sophistication and their worldliness...”<sup>82</sup>

This nationalist pride was accompanied by an anti-realist movement in art and literature called symbolism. Although its spiritual home was France, it had important offshoots in several other countries. Symbolism was linked to subjectivist and pantheist trends in philosophy and religion.

“Symbolists believed that art should represent absolute truths that could only be described indirectly. Thus, they wrote in a very metaphorical and suggestive manner, endowing particular images or objects with symbolic meaning. Jean Moréas published the Symbolist Manifesto (“Le Symbolisme”) in *Le Figaro* on 18 September 1886, [naming] Charles Baudelaire, Stéphane Mallarmé, and Paul Verlaine as the three leading poets of the movement. Moréas announced that symbolism was hostile to ‘plain meanings, declamations, false sentimentality and matter-of-fact description’, and that its goal instead was to ‘clothe the Ideal in a perceptible form” whose “goal was not in itself, but whose sole purpose was to express the Ideal.”<sup>83</sup>

Symbolism was influenced not only by poets but also by philosophers such as Schopenhauer and Nietzsche and composers such as Wagner. “The search for a ‘new music’ by the Wagnerians,” writes Sir Richard Evans, “expressed a growing dissatisfaction with conventional cultural forms that could be found in many branches of the arts in the later decades of the nineteenth century. In painting the camera was beginning to subvert Realism and representation and forced artists to rethink the nature of their business. Sharing many of the basic features of Realism, above all its focus on the ordinary and the everyday, a group of Parisian artists led by Claude Monet, Pierre-Auguste Renoir (1841-1919), Alfred Sisley (1839-99) and Camille Pissarro (1830-1903), and influenced by Édouard Manet, broke free of the conventions of the Academy to paint not so much static, finished representations of reality as works recording its often fleeting impressions on the observer. They reacted the rejection of their work by the Academy’s annual Salon by forming a *Salon des Refusés* (Exhibition

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<sup>82</sup> Emmerson, 1913. *The World before the Great War*, London: Vintage, 2013, pp. 50-51.

<sup>83</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Symbolism\\_\(arts\)#Influence\\_in\\_English\\_literature](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Symbolism_(arts)#Influence_in_English_literature)

of Rejects) in 1863. Eventually known as the Impressionists, a term invented by a critic of Monet's *Impression, Sunrise* (1872), they used free brushstrokes and paintings created *en plein air* rather than in the studio to record the effects of light in bold colours. Monet even painted the same subject – haystacks, for example, or Waterloo Bridge, or Rouen Cathedral – scores of times in succession to show the impression it made on the viewer in different kinds of sunlight, mist, fog, or shade, at different times of the day or the year. The use of vivid and constantly changing colour offered the Impressionists a conscious alternative to photography, at a time when colour film has been invented only on an experimental scale without entering general circulation. Met initially with public ridicule, the Impressionists had gained widespread acceptance by the end of the nineteenth century.

“Impressionism found its way into music through the compositions of Claude Debussy (1862-1918), though he himself denied that his works were what ‘imbeciles call “impressionism” a term employed with the utmost inaccuracy’. Eschewing traditional musical form, he composed piano and orchestral pieces that used unconventional harmonies and subtle timbres to evoke the moods and emotions aroused by subjects such as mists, gardens in the rain, reflections on the water, a submerged cathedral, the hills of Anacapri or, in his most extended orchestral work, *La Mer* (1903-5), the play of the waves and their dialogue with the wind. His compatriot Maurice Ravel (1875-1937), who also rejected the categorization of his works as Impressionist, produced more abstract music, but several of his pieces, such as the piano suite *Miroirs* (1905), with its evocation of a boat on the waves or church bells in a valley, could fairly be described as belonging to the genre. A major influence on Debussy in particular was the French Symbolist movement in literature, which represented a significant move away from Realism and towards spirituality and the imagination. It was futile, argued a ‘Symbolist Manifesto’ published in 1886 by the Greek-born poet Jean Moréas (1856-1910), to attempt to represent reality in a direct way: what was required was, as in the work of the Impressionists, to depict ‘not the thing, but the effect it produces’. The three poets in the manifesto, Charles Baudelaire (1821-67), Paul Verlaine (1844-96) and Stéphane Mallarmé (1842-98), used the sounds of words as much as their meaning to convey the impression of their subject. Debussy and Ravel were inspired by the Symbolist poets to write a number of compositions, notably Debussy’s poem for orchestra, *Prélude à l’après-midi d’un faune* (1894) and Ravel’s *Trois Poèmes de Stéphane Mallarmé* (1914) for soprano and chamber ensemble.

“Symbolist painters such as the German Franz von Stuck (1863-1928), whose painting *Sin* (1893) showed a female nude emerging seductively from the shadows, the Norwegian Edvard Munch (1863-1944), best known for *The Scream* (1893), and the Austrian Gustav Klimt (1862-1918), whose *Judith and the Head of Holofernes* (1901) surrounded an erotically charged semi-nude with Byzantine-style gold, retained a figurative core to their work while placing it in a determinedly non-figurative context. The emphasis on surface decoration in Klimt’s painting paralleled the emergence of *Art Nouveau* or *Jugendstil* in the decorative arts in the 1890s, with its curves and parabolas and cursive scripts. The new style was evident, for example, in the architectural decoration of the Norwegian town of Ålesund, rebuilt in three years after its complete destruction by fire in 1904, and in many buildings of the newly constructed Hungarian city of Pest. In Russia writers such as Alexander Alexandrovich Blok (1880-1921) and Andrei Bely (pen-name of Boris Nikolaevich

Bugaev, 1880-1934) incorporated sound-pictures and experimental rhythms into their poetry. The Symbolists were rebelling against not only the notion of realistic representation but also the conscription of the arts into the service of nationalism, arguing instead that the arts were entirely autonomous from social or political life. The French writer Joris-Karl Huysmans (1848-1907) dealt in his novel *Against Nature* what Zola called a 'terrible blow' to Realism: the action, or rather inaction, of the novel takes place in a hallucinatory world in which the imagined becomes more real than the real. In Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1890) the ravages of the protagonist's dissolute life are visited upon his portrait, while his own physical appearance remains untouched by age or the consequences of sin. Art, argued Wilde and the other proponents of Aestheticism in the 1890s, should be pursued for art's sake, and for no other purpose."<sup>84</sup>

Under the influence of such hyper-Romantic geniuses as Wagner and Wilde, and such movements as aestheticism and symbolism, the last decades before the First World War witnessed a breakdown in the continuity of artistic styles.

Western civilization was distinguished from other, more static civilizations in the East precisely by its *dynamism*, its constant *changes* of style. Nevertheless, each new style had grown naturally out of its predecessors, and produced undoubted masters and masterpieces. This continuity broke down in the early twentieth century.

To take the example of music. The Renaissance produced Palestrina and Tallis, Byrd and Gibbon and Monteverdi; the Baroque produced Purcell, Vivaldi, J.S. Bach and Handel; the Classical produced C.P.E. Bach, Boccherini, Gluck, Haydn and Mozart; the early Romantic produced Beethoven and Schubert, Schumann, Chopin, Mendelssohn, Berlioz and Liszt; the late Romantic produced Wagner, Brahms, Bruckner, Tchaikovsky, Dvorak, Bizet, Debussy, Ravel, Borodin and Mussorgsky. However, from the beginning of the twentieth century we notice a change. There were still composers of genius producing Late Romantic masterpieces, such as Strauss and Puccini. But this style, in the opinion of many, was becoming "decadent", "Silver Age", "overblown" both in its need for ever larger orchestral and choral forces and in the sense that the emotions expressed were extravagant, grotesque and wild in the extreme. Gustav Mahler was perhaps most typical representative of this decadence. This produced a reaction in some of the same composers who had produced some of the finest of the Romantic masterpieces. Stravinsky and Sibelius, for example, turned on their Romanticism and tried to produce sparer, more restrained music – even if its Romantic roots could not be hidden. Others, such as Schoenberg entered the strange world of atonality.

However, the truth was that there was no new musical style. Atonality is not a style, nor does it grow out of the previous, late Romantic style, but is rather a denial of all styles, a leap into the dark of rootless stylelessness. The great composers of the twentieth century who – unlike the atonalists – actually had a following, were still exploring Romanticism. Thus Shostakovich and Prokofiev and Stravinsky, Messiaen, Janacek and Bartok, Britten, Tippett and Bernstein were all essentially Romantics – but with some added angst and astringency, harking back sometimes to the eighteenth century Baroque and Classical composers, and sometimes sideways to African jazz or

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<sup>84</sup> Evans, *The Pursuit of Power. Europe 1815-1914*, London: Penguin, 2017, pp. 530-532.

South American dance rhythms. Those who remained fixed in late romantic lushness, like Rachmaninov or Puccini, remained popular, but were not seen as being first rank composers.

It was not only unmusical people who saw something apocalyptic in the new developments in music. In 1909 the composer Saint-Saens wrote to the opera singer Pauline Viardot that the rise of Richard Strauss's art was "the precursor of the world's end: it is the Antichrist in music. When Elektra recognizes her brother, Orestes, *three tonalities* are heard simultaneously! The technique has been baptized, and named *heterophony*. There was no need for a new word: *cacophony* would have sufficed."<sup>85</sup> And yet the dissonances of *Elektra* or *The Rite of Spring* were beautiful by comparison with the atonality of Schoenberg or Webern that emerged after the First World War...

Something similar was happening in the visual arts. Atonality in music was paralleled by abstractionism in art, in which only *aficionados* could see real beauty. The well-known idea of the avant garde had metamorphosed into something beyond all "gardes". Cézanne and Picasso still had roots – just – in the old tradition of western representational art. But beyond them lay – the abyss...

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This was the collapse not only of individual artistic or musical traditions, but of the whole new idea of a single European culture that had emerged towards the end of the nineteenth century. For it was then, writes Orlando Figes, that "the idea of a 'European culture' – as a synthesis of artistic styles and works from across the continent and as an identity based on common values and ideas – began to emerge in the discourse. The term itself was seldom used before this time. People rarely spoke of a 'European culture' in the first three quarters of the nineteenth century. They spoke most commonly of 'European civilization', a Eurocentric term inherited from the Enlightenment, by which they meant Western reason, liberty; the classical artistic heritage and science, held up as universal values on which human progress was founded. This was a European ideology but not itself a marker of a distinct European *cultural* identity. You could believe in it wherever you came from.

"Notions of Europe as a cultural space – shared by Europeans and uniting them – first appeared in the early decades of the nineteenth century. Saint-Simon conceived of Europe as having a 'civilizing mission' defined by its secular spirit, in which the arts would take the place of religion, race or nation in uniting peoples on the Continent. Goethe thought that a hybrid type of European culture would be formed through the growth of cultural traffic and exchange between nations. But it was only in the final quarter of the century that such ideas gave way to the notion of a distinct European sensibility, or cultural identity: a sense of 'Europeanness' shared by Europe's citizens regardless of their nationality.

"Nietzsche was a pioneer of this notion. In *Human, All Too Human* (1878) he presented the idea that European nations would be weakened, and one day extinguished, by international 'trade and industry', and that the 'circulation of books and letters' would bring about a 'common high culture'. As a result of 'this unceasing

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<sup>85</sup> Saint Saens, in Figes, *The Europeans*, p. 480.

hybridization', Nietzsche argued, a 'mixed blood' would emerge, that of 'European man'. An enemy of nationalism, which he called the 'sickness of the century', Nietzsche advanced the idea of 'the good European' - the 'homeless citizen of Europe' - as an antidote to it. In his view, *Homo Europaicus* was already being formed...

"The arts played a central role in this evolving concept of a European cultural identity. More than religious or political beliefs, they were seen as uniting people across the continent. The Danish critic Georg Brandes argued, for example, that advances in transportation, communication and printing, and the growth of translations, had opened up the various literatures of Europe to a 'modern European sensibility'. This process did not have to mean the loss of nationality. But it did entail a greater openness on the part of each country, a recognition that any national culture is the result of a common dialogue across state boundaries and of the assimilation of separate artistic traditions into a larger European world..."<sup>86</sup>

However, a culture - any culture - in which the arts "more than religious or political beliefs, [are] seen as uniting people" is not pleasing to God and is bound to perish. The fact that the present European Union - a more atheist state than any in Europe's history - is apparently flourishing does not refute this conclusion. As for the European culture of the first decade of the twentieth century, it was already disintegrating before the European states began to destroy each other in 1914...

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<sup>86</sup> Figes, *The Europeans*, pp. 477-478.

## 6. THE NEW RELIGION OF PSYCHOLOGY

The first and most famous name in the new “science” of psychology was undoubtedly the Viennese Jew, Sigmund Freud. If Darwin defines the modern attitude to the physical and biological world, and Marx does the same in relation to the social world, while Schopenhauer gives to both a philosophical base, Freud defines it in relation to the inner world of the psyche. His theory, like theirs, is a doctrine of *will*, combining both the eros-will of the biological world as interpreted by Darwin and Schopenhauer and the thanatos-will of the social world as interpreted by Marx. But he internalizes them, as it were, within the individual human psyche and in particular within the unconscious, the “id”.

Great sea-changes in human thought are often accompanied by changes in the honour accorded to particular human faculties. The Renaissance, for example, exalted *reason*; hence the heretical mind-set that exaggerates the power of reason and which we know as *rationalism*. The Romantic era, on the other hand, tended to downgrade reason in favour of the irrational faculties of *will*, *imagination* and *emotion*, which in artistic geniuses like Shakespeare or Wagner were considered capable of attaining higher truths than those attained by philosophers and scientists. Another human faculty that came into prominence during the Romantic era was *memory*, both collective and individual. The nineteenth century therefore marks the heyday of *historiography* and *historicism* and the belief that the truth about a man, a nation or an epoch is to be discovered above all in his or its *history*: “In my beginning is my end”.

Freud inherited all three trends: rationalist, romantic-irrationalist and historicist. Thus he considered himself first and foremost a rationalist and a scientist. And if he had been able to read later assessments of his work, he would probably have been upset most by the fact that (in Anglo-Saxon countries, at any rate) he is not considered to have been a scientist at all insofar as his methods were not objectively empirical and quantitative. But even if he personally valued reason above all, he reveals his romantic heritage in his discovery (if it is truly that) of the enormous extent to which our apparently rational thinking is dominated by the *irrational*, by that huge, dark reservoir of repressed feelings, desires and memories which he called the unconscious and which is revealed especially in dreams.

Freud’s *Interpretation of Dreams* (1900), which A.N. Wilson calls “one of the most extraordinary and revolutionary texts ever to come from a human brain”, is sometimes seen as heralding the beginning of a truly modern consciousness. It “expounded the theory on which all subsequent psychoanalysis was based, even or especially those psychoanalytical theories which reacted most violently against it: namely, that the human mind consists of what might be described as two layers. With the outer layer, of our conscious mind, we reason and form judgements. In reasonable, well-balanced individuals, the pains and sorrows of childhood have been worked through, put behind them. With the unhealthy, however, neurotic or hysterical individuals, there is beneath the surface of life a swirling cauldron of suppressed memories in which lurk the traumas (the Greek word for wounds) of early experiences. Under hypnosis, or in dreams, we re-enter the world of the subconscious and with the care of a helpful analyst we can sometimes revisit the scenes of our early miseries and locate the origins of our psychological difficulties...

“On the publication of *Die Traumdeutung*, there were many people who, if not actually tempted to burn the book, must have found its contents shocking. ‘If *Oedipus the King* is able to move modern man no less deeply than the Greeks who were Sophocles’ contemporaries, the solution can only be that the effect of Greek tragedy does not depend on the contrast between fate and human will, but is to be sought in the distinctive nature of the subject-matter exemplifying this contrast. There must be a voice within us that is ready to acknowledge the compelling force of fate in *Oedipus*... His fate moves us only because it could have been our own as well, because at our birth the oracle pronounced the same curse upon us as it did on him. It was perhaps ordained that we should all of us turn our first sexual impulses towards our mother, our first hatred and violent wishes against our father. Our dreams convince us of it. King Oedipus, who killed his father Laius and married his mother Jocasta, is only the fulfillment of our childhood wish. But, more fortunate than he, we have since succeeded, at least insofar as we have not become psychoneurotics, in detaching our sexual impulses from our mothers, and forgetting our jealousy of our fathers.’ Dr. Freud, further, told his Vienna lecture audiences: ‘The dream of having sexual intercourse with the mother is dreamed by many today as it was then, and they recount it with the same indignation and amazement [as Oedipus].’”<sup>87</sup>

Freud called the conscious layer of the mind the “ego”, and the unconscious layer – the “id”. Later he added a third layer, that of the “super-ego”, a kind of internalized social conscience which forces the memories of childhood sexual experiences and conflicts into the “id”. The process whereby these memories are forced by the “super-ego” into the “id” is called *repression*. For Freud, the “super-ego”, is no less irrational in origin than the “id”. The task of psychoanalysis is to strengthen the “ego”, the sole outpost of rationality in the soul, against the irrational pressure of *both* the “id” *and* the “super-ego”. This was not to say that the “super-ego” was rejected completely – as Freud argued in *Civilization and its Discontents* (1930), submission to it, at least most of the time, is the price we pay for our deliverance from primitive savagery and our enjoyment of civilization. But it was recognized as being deprived of any higher or other-worldly origin. It was a faculty owing its origins to childhood conflicts and traumas and no more rational in itself than the “id” which it censored and repressed.

Another way in which Freud showed his romantic heritage was the significance he attached to art. Thus already in his early obituary on Charcot (1893), he clearly saw the relationship between “the poet’s eye” and the gift of clinical diagnosis.<sup>88</sup> He acknowledged his debt to the Greek tragedians, Goethe and Shakespeare; in his *Leonardo* he felt the need to forestall the criticism that he had merely written “a psycho-analytic novel”<sup>89</sup>; and he included literary history and literary criticism among the disciplines to be studied in the ideal Faculty of Psychoanalysis. Whether he owed anything to Dostoyevsky is a matter of debate, but when Ivan Karamazov in that drama of parricide, *The Brothers Karamazov* (XII, 5), says: “Who doesn’t wish his father dead?” he clearly anticipated one of Freud’s key theses.

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<sup>87</sup> Wilson, *After the Victorians*, pp. 3-4.

<sup>88</sup> Freud, S., “Charcot”, *Standard Edition*, London: Hogarth, vol. III, pp. 11-23.

<sup>89</sup> Freud, S., *Leonardo*, London: Penguin Books, 1957.

According to Philip Rieff, the fact that "Freud owed most to Sophocles and Shakespeare (cf. *The Interpretation of Dreams*, SE IV, Part I, 264) and least to the scientific psychology of his era shows us how dangerous scientific training can be to the mental life of the scientist when poetry is excluded from what is conceived as significant in his training. William James said this best, in the conclusion to his Gifford Lectures, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*: 'Humbug is humbug, even though it bear the scientific name, and the total expression of human experience, as I view it objectively, invincibly urges me beyond the narrow "scientific" bounds' (London, rev. ed., 1902, p. 519)."<sup>90</sup>

Norman Holland writes: "What Freud admires in the writer are his powers as a seer, his ability to grasp intuitively truths the psychologist gets at only by hard work. As early as 1895, he wrote, 'Local diagnosis and electrical reactions lead nowhere in the study of hysteria, whereas a detailed description of mental processes such as we are accustomed to find in the works of imaginative writers enables me, with the use of a few psychological formulas, to obtain at least some kind of insight'. 'Creative writers,' he wrote in *Delusions and Dreams*, 'are valuable allies and their evidence is to be prized highly, for they are apt to know a whole host of things between heaven and earth of which our philosophy has not yet let us dream'. Writers could see, for example, the 'necessary conditions for loving' before psychologists could. Shakespeare had understood the meaning of slips of the tongue long before Freud, and not only that, he had assumed that his audiences would understand, too, The writer, however, knows these things 'through intuition - really from a delicate self-observation', while Freud himself had to 'uncover' them through 'laborious work'. "<sup>91</sup>

Freud's most famous and important concept was that of the unconscious. He defined the difference between conscious and unconscious contents in terms of the element of *naming* or verbalization which belongs to the conscious content alone: "What we have permissibly called the conscious presentation of the object can now be split up into the presentation of the word and the presentation of the thing... We now seem to know all at once what the difference is between a conscious and an unconscious presentation. The two are not, as we supposed, different registrations of the same content in different psychical localities, nor yet different functional states of cathexis in the same locality; but the conscious presentation comprises the presentation of the thing plus the representation of the word belonging to it, while the unconscious presentation is the presentation of the thing alone...

"Now, too, we are in a position to state precisely what it is that repression denies to the rejected presentation in the transference neuroses: what it denies to the presentation is *translation into words* which shall remain attached to the object. A presentation which is not put into words, or a psychical act which is not hyper-cathected, remains thereafter in the Ucs in a state of repression."<sup>92</sup>

Dreams, according to Freud, are a kind of non-verbal language for repressed presentations; we are to read them as we read a poem, treating the techniques of "dream work" - displacement, condensation, symbolization, dramatization, etc. - as a

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<sup>90</sup> Rieff, *Freud: The Mind of the Moralist*, University of Chicago Press, 1979, p. 385, footnote.

<sup>91</sup> Holland, N., "Freud and the Poet's Eye", in Mannheim, L. & Mannheim, E., *Hidden Patterns: Studies in Psychoanalytic Literary Criticism*, New York: Macmillan, 1966, p. 153.

<sup>92</sup> Freud, S., "The Unconscious", 1915, *Standard Edition*, vol. XIV, pp. 201-202. My italics (V.M.).

critic might treat the devices of poetry, such as metaphor and allegory. According to the literary critic Lionel Trilling, Freud's greatest achievement was his discovery that "poetry is indigenous to the very constitution of the mind", which is "in the greater part of its tendency exactly a poetry-making organ". Thus psychoanalysis is, in effect, "a science of tropes, of metaphor and its variants, synecdoche and metonymy."<sup>93</sup>

Dreams are like the first draft of a poem, the expression of an unconscious content in a semi-conscious form. More work needs to be done on them in order to bring them into the full light of consciousness, work which the patient must carry out with help from the psychotherapist. In this way psychotherapy is a kind of artistic collaboration, with the therapist encouraging his patient to do as Shakespeare exhorted in his *Sonnet 77*:

*Look what thy memory cannot contain  
Commit to these waste blanks, and thou shalt find  
Those children nurs'd, deliver'd from thy brain,  
To take a new acquaintance of thy mind.*

The importance of memory in Freudianism brings us to its third major characteristic: historicism. The psychoanalyst's work in unearthing the unconscious can be compared to that of the historian or archaeologist. Just as the latter unearths and interprets old documents that cast light on the present, so the psychoanalyst unearths significant events and strata in the patient's life, especially his early sexual history, that have been repressed from his conscious memory but continue to colour and distort his present behaviour in a deterministic manner.

In his theory of the collective archetypes, Freud's most famous disciple, Karl Jung, extended the importance of memory in psychoanalysis still further into the past, not only of the individual, but also of the race. And Freud himself, in his later works such as *Moses and Monotheism*, pointed to certain hypothetical events in the history of the race or tribe, such as the killing of the tribal leader, that supposedly continue to influence all succeeding generations.

Just as Freud owed much to art, so his major impact was on artists. Freud's major impact on culture took place just after the First World War, and, as Paul Johnson writes, even more important than his impact on psychiatry was "the sudden discovery of Freud's works and ideas on intellectuals and artists. As Havelock Ellis said at the time, to the Master's indignation, Freud was not a scientist but a great artist. After eighty years' experience, his methods of therapy have proved, on the whole, costly failures, more suited to cosset the unhappy than cure the sick. We now know that many of the central ideas of psychoanalysis have no basis in biology... As Sir Peter Medawar has put it, psychoanalysis is akin to Mesmerism and phrenology: it contains isolated nuggets of truth, but the general theory is false. Moreover, as the young Karl Popper correctly noted at the time, Freud's attitude to scientific proof was very different from Einstein's and more akin to Marx's. Far from formulating his theories with a high degree of specific content which invited empirical testing and refutation, Freud made them all-embracing and difficult to test at all. And like Marx's followers, when evidence did turn up which appeared to refute them, he modified his theories

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<sup>93</sup> Trilling, L., "Freud and Literature", in *The Liberal Imagination*, New York: Doubleday, 1947.

to accommodate it. Thus the Freudian corpus of belief was subject to continual expansion and osmosis, like a religious system in its formative period. As one would expect, internal critics, like Jung, were treated as heretics; external ones, like Havelock Ellis, as infidels..."<sup>94</sup>

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In 1912 the International Association of Psychoanalysis published its journal *Imago*. It was to be edited, writes Peter Watson, "jointly by Freud himself and Otto Rank, a young Viennese psychoanalyst much influenced by Ibsen and Nietzsche..."

"In the first issue, Freud stressed the need to extend the scope of psychoanalytic research to fields such as language, customs, religion and the law, mythology, aesthetics, literature, the history of art, and philology; folklore, criminology and moral theory were also to be included. And the journal's ambitions grew still further with time – in the early thirties, Freud was writing that psychoanalysis could 'become indispensable to all the sciences which are concerned with the evolution of human civilization and its major institutions such as art, religion and the social order.'

"*Imago* published the first of four essays representing Freud's application of psychoanalysis to social and anthropological problems, and outlined nothing less than his view of how human society originated, in particular from where the religious beliefs of early man derive. *Totem and Taboo* was published in book form in 1913, though Freud had begun to air his views on religion a few years earlier. In 1907, he began his paper 'Obsessive Actions and Religious Practices' as follows: 'I am certainly not the first person to have been struck by the resemblance between what are called obsessive actions in sufferers from nervous afflictions and the observances by means of which believers give expression to their piety.' To him, he said, the resemblance seemed more than superficial, 'so that an insight into the origin of neurotic ceremonial may embolden us to draw inferences by analogy about the psychological processes of religious life.'

"All the same, Freud was careful at that point to stress the differences as much as the similarities between neurosis and religious practice, concluding that 'obsessional neurosis presents a travesty, half-comic and half-tragic, of a private religion.' At the same time, he went on to say that, just as many patients were unaware of the unconscious reasons for carrying out their obsessional actions, many religious people were unaware of the motives that impelled them to religious practices. He drew a further parallel in saying that both obsessional neurotics and the pious are motivated by an unconscious sense of guilt, and this sense of guilt 'has its source in certain early mental events, but it is constantly being revived by renewed temptations which arise whenever there is a contemporary provocation.'

"Religion, like obsessional neurosis, he said, was based on a suppression of instinct. In the neurotic, the instinct suppressed was invariably sexual, and though that wasn't quite so true of religion, that instinct was 'usually not without a sexual component'. 'Perhaps because of the admixture of sexual components, perhaps because of some general characteristics of the instincts, the suppression of instinct proves to be an

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<sup>94</sup> Johnson, *Modern Times*, New York: Harper Perennial, 1992, p. 6.

inadequate and interminable process in religious life also. Indeed, complete backsliding into sin is more common among pious people than among neurotics and... give[s] rise to a new form of religious activity, namely acts of penance, which have their counterparts in obsessional neurosis.' And he concluded: 'In view of these similarities and analogies one might venture to regard obsessional neurosis as a pathological counterpart of the formation of a religion, and to describe neurosis as an individual religiosity and religion as a universal obsessional neurosis.'

"Although he had begun by trying to sugarcoat the pill he was administering, by the end of his paper Freud had concluded with a message that was bound to be as unpopular as it was controversial: that, in effect, religion was the manifestation of a form of - emotionally equivalent to - mental illness. In the following years he widened the attack. In 1910, in 'Future Aspects of Psychoanalytic Therapy', he went so far as to link secularization with an increase in neurosis. 'You cannot exaggerate the intensity of man's inner resolution and craving for authority. The extraordinary increase in the neuroses since the power of religion has waned may give you some indication of it.' As he was to say later, 'Devout believers are safeguarded in a high degree against the risk of neurotic illness.'

"Freud's theory of faith was rooted in his theory of psychology. For him, the anxiety we feel as infants over our helplessness 'is the fundamental feeling which impels a person towards religious faith'. As he put it in a paper on Leonardo da Vinci, published in 1910, 'Biologically speaking, religiousness is to be traced to the small human child's long-drawn-out helplessness and need of help.' Freud discovered (if we set aside the criticisms for the moment) the profound effect of childhood experiences on adult emotional life, and he went on to argue that 'many people are unable to surmount the fear of loss of [parental] love; they never become sufficiently independent of other people's love and in this respect carry on their behavior as infants.' Freud thought that an efficacious religion 'helps the believer master the regressive anxiety that is stirred up by developmental danger-situations when they recur in adult life and become traumas.' 'The roots of the need for religion are in the parental complex; the almighty and just God, and kindly Nature, appear to us a grand sublimations of father and mother.'

"Social factors, unique to modernity, have reinforced this dependency. Childhood was extended by the abolition of child labor, while work could call fathers away from home for long periods. In addition, the breakdown of the extended family has tended to isolate the mother-child relationship. All this increases the dependency of the pre-oedipal child on the mother. Many find in religion what they once had in childhood.

"Freud went on to say that religion actually contributes to the resolution of the Oedipus complex, thereby protecting believers from neurosis: this is why secularization has been such a painful process for so many people. The religious are unaware of the psychological origins of their religious loyalties. Religion, being in part a substitute for the parents, radiates love and security to the believer -without, however, the anxiety that is usually aroused by intense libidinal ties to the parents. Thus religion helps keep the lid on erotic and aggressive instincts, thereby benefitting society.

“So far, Freud had equated religious feelings and behavior with neurotic behavior and symptoms, and had rooted religion in the psychodynamics of family life, in what has been called from the child’s viewpoint ‘the two-parent family love triangle’. Essentially, this subsumed religion as a subset phenomenon of psychology. In *Totem and Taboo*, which he began in the spring of 1911, Freud widened his horizons and sought the anthropological origins of religion in an evolutionary context. He surrounded himself, he told friends, with some ‘thick books’ that he wasn’t really interested in, ‘since I already know the results’. He wrote his own book in the Tyrol, well aware of the reception it was likely to provoke – it was ‘the most daring enterprise I have ever ventured,’ he told one friend, an attempt to ‘smuggle psychoanalysis into ethnopsychology’, as he told another.

“The book consisted of four essays: ‘The Horror of Incest’, ‘Taboo and Emotional Ambivalence’, ‘Animism, Magic and the Omnipotence of Thought’ and ‘The Return of Totemism in Childhood’. The fourth, which contains the nub of the argument, is of interest here. Freud’s hypothesis took as its starting point Darwin’s ‘primal horde’, by which Darwin meant little more than a small self-supporting group under the control of ‘the father’, who exercised absolute rule over other males in the group, retaining all the women for his own ‘use’. Freud argued that eventually the young men revolted, then murdered and consumed the father; and in atonement they forbade the slaughter of a totem animal (which substituted for the father). However, in order to prevent a recurrence of the original crime, under which ran rivalry for the women, marriage within the group was forbidden, as was killing. For Freud this neatly explained the only two crimes with which, he held, primitive society concerned itself – murder and incest.

“From our perspective, it doesn’t matter – for now, at least – that the anthropology on which Freud based his theories has been superseded, shown by more recent studies to have been off base by some distance... At the time, Freud’s attempts to marry psychology, anthropology and social institutions such as religion and art as advances in the *synthesis* of knowledge, such a symbiosis being itself regarded as evidence of advance. And Freud’s psycho-anthropological theories invited the view that religion was a natural phenomenon, that there was nothing ‘transcendental’ about it, that it was to be understood ultimately in anthropological terms. Moreover, since Freud drew attention to the similarities between neurosis and religious practice, it followed that religion was to be regarded, not exactly as a pathological aspect of society (since he acknowledged that some people were helped by it), but certainly as *subordinate* to psychology as a way for humankind to understand itself.”<sup>95</sup>

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But how can religion be a way for humankind to understand itself if it is *objectively false*?! Moreover, how can religion be said to be subordinate to psychology if those psychological ideas are, to put it gently, unproven? For, as has been pointed out, not only his anthropological ideas, but also most of Freud’s most purely psychological ideas, such as the Oedipus Complex, have *not* been confirmed by empirical research.

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<sup>95</sup> Watson, *op. cit.*, pp. 84-88.

Indeed: "Every particular idea [of Freud] is wrong," says psychiatrist Peter D. Kramer: "the universality of the Oedipus complex, penis envy, infantile sexuality..."<sup>96</sup> This is not to say that these Freudian phenomena are *never* found, only that they do not play that vast role in the life of the soul that Freud attributed to them.

An exception to this rule, according to C.S. Lewis, is the Freudian concept of *repression*, which is valid. But repression, says Lewis, must not be confused with *suppression*. "Psychology teaches us that 'repressed' sex is dangerous. But 'repressed' is here a technical term: it does not mean 'suppressed' in the sense of 'denied' or 'resisted'. A repressed desire or thought is one which has been thrust into the subconscious (usually at a very early age) and can now come before the mind only in a disguised and unrecognisable form. Repressed sexuality does not appear to the patient to be sexuality at all. When an adolescent or an adult is engaged in resisting a conscious desire, he is not dealing with a repression nor is he in the least danger of creating a repression. On the contrary, those who are seriously attempting chastity are more conscious, and soon know a great deal more about their own sexuality than anyone else..."<sup>97</sup>

Christians would therefore agree with Freud that repression is bad for the soul, just as any refusal to face up to the facts about oneself is bad. In this respect psychoanalysis has something in common with the Christian practice of the confession of sins. Insofar, then, as psychoanalysis helps one to unearth hidden traumas and shine the light of reason on the irrational depths of the soul, it should not be considered harmful. From this point of view it was beneficial for the "gentle men" of the Victorian era in revealing to them their not-so-gentle passions of aggression and lust.

However, Christianity cannot agree with the Freudian presupposition that the contents of the "id" are *morally neutral*, nor with the idea – which belongs less to Freud than to the Freudians and popular interpretations of his ideas – that the suppression (as opposed to the repression) of the "id" is harmful. Again, "conscience" for the Christian is by no means to be identified with the "super-ego" of the Freudians (which is not to say that something like the "super-ego" does not exist). In the true sense conscience is not the internalization of the social conscience of contemporary society, with all its pride and prejudice, but "the eye of God in the soul of man"; it is not another form of irrationality, but the super-rational revelation of God's will. As such its judgements, unlike those of the Freudian superego, cannot be ignored or rejected by reason, but must be accepted as having objective validity.

Freud has been accused of opening the floodgates to all kinds of immorality. He never preached free love in the manner of his contemporaries H.G. Wells and D.H. Lawrence, although Lawrence's exaltation of instinct over intellect was probably influenced by Freud.<sup>98</sup> Nevertheless, insofar as it encouraged the view that the contents of the unconscious should be *revealed* without being *judged* from a moral point of view, Freudianism is undoubtedly contrary to Christianity.

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<sup>96</sup> Kramer, in Jerry Adler, "Freud in our Midst", *Newsweek*, March 27, 2006, p. 37.

<sup>97</sup> Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, London: Fount Paperbacks, 1977, pp. 91-92.

<sup>98</sup> Jessie Chambers recounts how D.H. Lawrence once told her: "You know, Jessie, I've always loved mother." "I know you have," I replied. "I don't mean that," he answered, "I've loved her – like a lover – that's why I could never love you." (Wilson, *After the Victorians*, p. 73).

Psychoanalysis, according to Lewis, says nothing very useful about normal feelings, but does help to remove abnormal or perverted feelings. "Thus fear of things that are really dangerous would be an example of the first kind [of feelings]: an irrational fear of cats or spiders would be an example of the second kind. The desire of a man for a woman would be of the first kind: the perverted desire of a man for a man would be of the second... What psychoanalysis undertakes to do is to remove the abnormal feelings, that is, give the man better raw material for his acts of choice; morality is concerned with the acts of choice themselves."<sup>99</sup>

However, this optimistic view of the potential of psychoanalysis is unwarranted. On the one hand, as we have seen, many of its theoretical constructs have been rejected, and so the occasional successes of therapy may be attributable, not to the truth of the theory itself, but rather to other factors having nothing to do with psychoanalysis as such – for example, the love of the therapist for his patient. On the other hand, and still more fundamentally, there exists no criterion within Freudianism for distinguishing the normal from the abnormal. Homosexuality, for example, may have been judged abnormal by Freud and his contemporaries, as it has always been judged abnormal by Christians. But whereas Christianity possesses a detailed model of the normal man – that is, the saint, and believes in a God-given conscience, Freudianism possesses no such model, and does not believe in conscience (which, as we have seen, is not the same as the "super-ego"). It can have no reason for declaring a certain feeling or desire good or evil, normal or abnormal, so long as its presence does not create conflicts with other psychical processes. And this is another reason for concluding that while Freudianism may not actively encourage immorality, its attitude to life is essentially *amoral*.

Bishop Gregory (Grabbe) makes this point well: "The criterion of the norm for every person in psychoanalysis is the person himself with all his sins and inadequacies, in a condition of calm after the overcoming of all conflicts arising within his consciousness. In psychoanalysis they try to overcome and remove conflicts by putting the conscience to sleep and reconciling the person with the sin that lives in him. Therefore the very profound critic of psychoanalysis, Arved Runestam, in his book *Psychoanalysis and Christianity* (Augustiana Press, 1958) notes with reason that psychoanalysis in theory and practice is in general a powerful proclaimer of the right to a life directly ruled by instinct. 'One cannot say,' he writes, 'that this signifies the recognition of morality as an evil in itself. But morality is represented rather as an inescapable evil than a positive good' (p. 37)..."<sup>100</sup>

As for religion, Freud's attitude to it did not change in the post-war years – except that he took a darker view of it than before. Instead of seeing it as an illusion that might nevertheless help to avert neurosis, he saw it as an illusion that would be best confined to the dustbin of history. Judaism was an illusion based on the worship of the Father; Christianity – on the worship of the Son. Neither was true and therefore neither could be truly useful. Nevertheless, religion was an illusion that could never disappear entirely; for, as he wrote in 1928: "If you want to expel religion from our European

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<sup>99</sup> Lewis, *op. cit.*, p. 81.

<sup>100</sup> Grabbe, "Pravoslavnoe vospitanoe detej v nashi dni" (The Orthodox Upbringing of Children in our Days), <http://www.portal-credo.ru/site.print.php?act=lib&id=846>.

civilization, you can only do it by means of another system of doctrines; and such a system would from the outset take over all the psychological characteristics of religion – the same sanctity, rigidity and intolerance, the same prohibition of thought – for its own defence.”<sup>101</sup>

When we turn from the psychological theory of psychoanalysis to its philosophical foundations, then its incompatibility with Christianity becomes still more obvious. Thus Freud believed that human psychology is completely reflected in the activity of the brain, so that the sciences of the brain and of psychology should eventually merge.<sup>102</sup> This is simply *materialism*, the denial of the existence of the rational soul and its survival after the death of the body.

As Bishop Gregory writes: “Although psychoanalysis contains within its name the word ‘soul’, it concentrates its investigations on the functions of the brain. But we, of course, know that with the latter is mysteriously linked our invisible soul, which constitutes a part of our personality. We must suppose that much that the psychiatrists refer to as the workings of the subconscious sphere of the brain in fact belong not only, or not so much, to the brain, as to the soul.”<sup>103</sup>

Again, Freud believed that the roots, not only of man’s abnormal actions, but even of his higher activities, the things which are most characteristic of his humanity – politics, art and religion - are to be found in childhood traumas and conflicts. Of course, the phenomena of totalitarian politics, pornographic art and sectarian religion do manifest abnormal psychological traits, and as such may be illumined to some extent by psychoanalytic ideas. However, the higher we ascend in our study of these spheres, the more inadequate, crude and distorting of a true understanding will the theory of psychoanalysis appear.

Thus if politics is reduced by psychoanalysis to narcissism, or to the libidinal relations between the leader and his followers<sup>104</sup>, then there can be no higher politics of the kind that we find in the lives of the holy kings and princes of Orthodox Christian history. Again, if the psychoanalysts’ study of art consists in “the pursuit of the personal, the neurotic and the infantile in the work of artists”<sup>105</sup>, then we may justly wonder whether they understand art at all. And if religion is reduced to hatred and love for a repressed father-figure, then it is not difficult to see why psychoanalysis should be seen as one of the roots of contemporary atheism...

Freudianism on the one hand exposed the hypocrisy of the Victorian bourgeois class that pretended to deny its sexual and aggressive drives. And on the other hand, it had a limited explanatory power in showing how much the power that the totalitarian dictators exerted over their followers owed to the pathological resurgence of those repressed drives, making the age that began in 1914 unparalleled in its barbarism... But as an objective model of human nature it must be rejected...

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<sup>101</sup> Freud, *The Future of an Illusion*, New York, 1928, p. 84; quoted in Niall Ferguson, *Civilization*, London: Penguin, 2011, p. 271.

<sup>102</sup> Freud, *Project for a Scientific Psychology* (1895); Claudia Kalb, “The Therapist as Scientist”, *Newsweek*, March 27, 2006, p. 42.

<sup>103</sup> Grabbe, *op. cit.*

<sup>104</sup> Freud, *Group Psychology*, pp. 103, 94.

<sup>105</sup> Anthony Storr, *The Dynamics of Creation*, London: Secker & Warburg, 1972, p. 236.

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Fin-de-siècle intellectual life was not hostile to religion as such, only to organized religion in general and traditional Christianity in particular. Indeed, the discovery of strictly invisible forces with visible effects, such as electricity and gravity, seemed to refute the more naïve, materialist denials of spiritual phenomena. In 1927 the Serbian Bishop Nikolai Velimirovich met his fellow-Serbian scientist Nikolai Tesla. On being told by Tesla that electricity would never, ever be observed, Velimirovich pointed out that the same applied to God...

As we have seen, even Freud took a condescending view of religion (at any rate before the Great War); he conceded that it might help avert or ameliorate neurosis, but no more. Other leading psychologists took a similarly condescending view; some even conceded that it might be real – but only in the technical, philosophical sense, that since it “worked”, and since reality is that which “works”, which has an effect, religion must be agreed to be “real” in that sense. Such was the attitude of the American pragmatist philosopher and psychologist William James. Son of the Swedenborgian theologian Henry James Sr., and brother of the famous novelist Henry James, William James, as A.N. Wilson writes, was probing “the mystery of religious belief. Was it the case, as nineteenth-century literalists had believed, that Christianity depended upon the verifiability of a series of actual events or the provability – whatever that would mean – of the existence of God? Was there something in the human mind or personality which could explain why we are, or are not, religious? In his book, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, delivered as lectures at St. Andrews University in 1902, William James found all but no ‘evidence’ which could justify belief, but he refused to be reductionist and suggest that piety was simply a matter of temperament, still less that religious feeling was a substitute for other sorts of feeling. He maintained the legitimacy of faith, and he did so on the robust grounds that faith, for many, worked. He quoted with approval another American psychologist, Professor Leuga, as saying: ‘God is not known, he is not understood; he is used – sometimes as meat-purveyor; sometimes as moral support, sometimes as friend, sometimes as an object of love. If he proves himself useful, the religious impulse asks for no more than that. Does God really exist? How does he exist? What is he? are so many irrelevant questions. Not God, but life, more life, a larger, richer, more satisfying life, is, in the last analysis, the end of religion.’”<sup>106</sup>

“What James was advocating, then,” writes Watson, “was first the pragmatic argument that, for those who believe in God, he is real because he produces real effects; people believe they achieve a more satisfying life because of religion (and he examined many detailed first-person accounts of religious experiences, most of which, he said, were trustworthy). At the same time, with his aim to create a ‘science of religions’, he saw religion primarily as a psychological phenomenon, an entirely natural emotional response to the ‘misty’ ambiguity of life, to fear, and to the conflict within us between assertion and passive surrender as ways to face life, the ever present conflict between the ‘yes-function’ and the ‘no-function’; a response to the very real pragmatic predicament that, in life, lots of ideas negate other ideas. He claimed that many people suffer from what he called ‘over-belief’, too strong a faith state; that the religious life

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<sup>106</sup> Wilson, *op. cit.*, pp. 89-90.

always risks self-indulgence; and that any attempt to demonstrate the truthfulness of any one set of religious beliefs as 'hopeless'.

"In his Gifford Lectures, he was pointing out that religion is a natural phenomenon, rooted in our divided self; but he was also saying, indirectly, that advances in understanding the subconscious might well lead to a better understanding of the central uneasiness that we have within us."<sup>107</sup>

James experimented with drugs, went to séances, and was a member of the Theosophical Society. From an Orthodox Christian point of view, this dabbling in spirits – so typical of the age – would in itself have disqualified him from being capable of an objective view of religion since it placed him in bondage to the demons. But his relativistic pragmatic philosophy – again, so typical of this, the age of relativity – would in any case have prevented him from finding the truth.

Nevertheless, he and his brother, the novelist Henry James, can be counted among the subtlest observers of the fallen human psyche.

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Freud's most famous disciple, Carl Jung, modified and broadened Freudian psychoanalysis in three important ways. First, he criticized Freud's classification of the instincts into two categories: self-preservative and sexual, as being too limited, thereby broadening the scope of the interpretation of dreams and of the unconscious generally. Secondly, he suggested that the symbols in dreams may have a collective as well as a personal significance, being archetypal images common to human experience as a whole. Thirdly, he introduced the concepts of individuation and active imagination, which are processes directed towards the attainment of psychic integration and which are most clearly evident in the work of artistic geniuses; for Jung, like Freud, drew much of his inspiration from art and literature.

Jung was the most "religion-friendly" of the early psychologists. This would seem to be confirmed by the passage, quoted above, in which he appears to accept the reality of demon-possession. Unlike Freud, but like William James, Jung was also interested in the supernatural. This interest manifested itself early, writes Peter Watson, "in his fourth year of study [of psychiatry], when he attended a séance in which the subject was his fifteen-year-old cousin: in trance, she lost her Basel accent and spoke in High German, claiming she was controlled by spirits. An account of this episode formed the starting point of his first published work: his degree dissertation, *On the Psychology and Pathology of So-Called Occult Phenomena* (1902). This neatly encapsulates his lively interest in both the occult and the unconscious.

"His main disagreements with Freud lay in his rejection of the latter's insistence on the supreme importance of repressed sexuality in the etiology of neurosis, and his conviction that beneath consciousness and the (personal) unconscious there is a third, deeper level, the collective unconscious. Jung's rival view, derived from his clinical experience and his researches among myths, ethnography and animal behavior, he said, was based on observation, on the fact that, as he found it, 'psychic energy' was

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<sup>107</sup> Watson, *op. cit.*, p. 59.

more significant as a source of neurosis than was sexual repression. These researches showed, he claimed, that across the world – in myths, for example – there were many images and patterns that overlapped, causing him to conclude that they derive from very ancient experiences that have been incorporated into our nature ‘at the deepest levels’.

“To these patterns Jung attached the term ‘archetype’, of which he identified five as the most important: persona, anima and animus, extravert and introvert, shadow and self.

“Persona is the mask we present to the world, designed to mislead; anima is the female tendency in males and animus the male tendency in females; extravert and introvert are characteristic stances we have toward the world and represent perhaps Jung’s most widely accepted innovation. What most concerns us here is his idea that God is an archetype. That is to say, it is a disposition within us, a disposition to believe in God, though at this point Jung gets very ambiguous.

“An archetype cannot be known directly, he says, only inferred or intuited. Patterns observed – in mythology, for example – refer to ‘archetype-contents’, not to the actual ‘archetype-form’. This is – or appears to be – a little like [G.E.] Moore’s understanding of ‘the good’, which cannot be defined without corrupting and limiting the idea. Jung further complicates matters by arguing that the archetype of the self is very similar to – may even be identical with – the God-archetype. There are, within the collective unconscious, archetypes of ‘wholeness’ and ‘perfection’ (Jesus figures here); and the purpose of life, in the process of what he called ‘individuation’, is to bring the personal and collective unconscious into ‘balance’ so that the self-archetype and the God-archetype are in harmony...”<sup>108</sup>

Individuation has been defined by the Jungian-trained psychiatrist Antony Storr as "coming to terms with oneself by means of reconciling the opposing factors within". He continues: "We are all divided selves, and that is part of the human condition. Neurotics, because of a deficiency in the controlling apparatus (a weak ego), suffer from neurotic symptoms, as we all may do at times. Creative people may be more divided than most of us, but, unlike neurotics, have a strong ego; and, although they may periodically suffer from neurotic symptoms, have an especial power of integrating opposites within themselves without recourse to displacement, denial, repression and other mechanisms of defence. Creative people, and potentially creative people, therefore, may suffer and be unhappy because of the divisions within them, but do not necessarily display neurosis."<sup>109</sup>

"Creative people," continues Storr, "show a wider than usual division in the mind, an accentuation of opposites. It seems probable that when creative people produce a new work they are in fact attempting to reconcile opposites in exactly the way Jung describes. Many of Jung's patients drew and painted so-called mandalas, circular forms which express and symbolise the union of opposites and the formation of this new centre of personality..."

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<sup>108</sup> Watson, *op. cit.*, pp. 288-289.

<sup>109</sup> Storr, A., *The Dynamics of Creation*, London: Secker & Warburg, 1972, p. 229.

"Works of art have much in common with mandalas, just as mandalas can be regarded as primitive works of art. For the artist, the work of art serves the same purpose; that is, the union of opposites within himself, and the consequent integration of his own personality. Jung and his followers tend to describe the individuation process in terms of a once-for-all achievement, like maturity, or self-realisation, or self-actualisation, or genitality for that matter. But every experienced psychotherapist knows that personality development is a process which is never complete; and no sooner is a new integration achieved, a new mandala painted, than it is seen as inadequate. Another must follow which will include some other omitted element, or be a more perfect expression of the new insight."

"By identifying ourselves, however fleetingly, with the creator, we can participate in the integrating process which he has carried out for himself. The more universal the problem with which the artist is dealing, the more universal the appeal. That is why the pursuit of the personal, the neurotic and the infantile in the work of artists is ultimately unrewarding, although it will always have some interest... The great creators, because their tensions are of universal rather than personal import, can appeal to all of us when they find, in their work, a new path of reconciliation."<sup>110</sup>

If individuation is the process that brings "the personal and collective unconscious into 'balance' so that the self-archetype and the God-archetype are in harmony", then this sounds intriguingly close to the Christian idea that the self is the image of God in man. But is Jung in fact speaking the language of theology within the confines of a sophisticated atheism? Watson poses the critical question thus: "This is certainly radical (insofar as it is understandable) – but is it friendly to religion or blasphemous? This is the problem with Jung. He thought his concept of the collective unconscious was as important as quantum theory, but many people failed to grasp it. (No doubt many fail to follow quantum theory, but enough do to construct a technology based on it.) Critics point out that archetypes are as metaphysical as Plato's ideas and that although, after Jung, Claude Lévi-Strauss and Noam Chomsky found 'deep structures' in anthropology and linguistics, they have not produced a transformation in our understanding, as quantum theory has done.

"Jung was convinced that the modern world is in a spiritual crisis brought about by secularization, materialism and extraversion. But he did not seek a return to the church – he saw organized religion as 'spiritual death'. He thought we needed a 'massive reinvestment in spiritual life', to be achieved by reconnecting with the mythical world. 'Myths express life more precisely than science,' he said. 'Man cannot stand a meaningless life... meaning comes from an unequivocal affirmation of the self... The decisive question is: is man related to something infinite or not?... The cosmic questions is a fundamental requirement of the self.' As Anthony Stevens puts it, Jung himself had a reverence for the unconscious, the imagination, transcendence and gnosis (by which he meant knowledge through experience, not book-learning or belief), and he wanted others to experience the same. As Erich Fromm characterized it, Freud's unconscious contains mainly vices, Jung's contains man's wisdom.

"At the same time, Jung insisted that the existence of a God-archetype was a psychological truth, not a theological one: it said nothing about the existence or

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<sup>110</sup> Storr, *op. cit.*, pp. 233, 234-35. 236, 237.

otherwise of God or his/her/its form. This is why Jung has proved so controversial, and why his work so perplexes religious writers. His ideas are so ambiguous that we cannot be totally sure what he meant. At root he is saying – or seems to be saying – that man has an innate disposition to conceive of God (but not necessarily to believe in him), and that without coming to terms in some way with this disposition we can never feel whole or complete, or in balance; we cannot be spiritually healthy. We need to express the God-archetype to avoid neurosis.

“Jung said that he ‘abhorred metaphysics’, yet his own thinking is even more metaphysical, less grounded in empiricism, than Freud’s. And he finished by saying the exact opposite to Freud. Whereas Freud argued that religion was a form of collective neurosis, grounded in repressed sexual energy wrapped up in the oedipal dilemma, Jung said religious feelings helped cure neurosis. Whatever else it is, and however successful or unsuccessful his opaque theories may be, Jung’s is the most elaborate attempt yet to marry theology and psychology...”<sup>111</sup>

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This brief review of the giants of early twentieth-century psychology allows us to draw the following conclusions about the new science’s approach to religion:-

1. They all refused to consider the possibility that *some* religious faith *might* be true, assuming that modern science – specifically, Darwinism – had excluded that. And yet an objective approach to religion must first of all attempt to understand the religions in their own terms, as claimants to objective truth. Thus it is impossible to understand Christianity without attempting to answer the question: “Was Christ – God Himself, or a charlatan or madman?” Again, it is impossible to understand Islam without attempting to answer the question: “Did Mohammed really receive the Koran from the Archangel Gabriel?” And it is impossible to understand Hinduism without attempting to answer the question: “Do Krishna and Shiva really exist as spirits independent of their worshippers’ minds?”

2. In consequence, the psychologists (with the partial exception of William James) steadfastly ignored the vast differences and contradictions between religions, as if assenting to Blavatsky’s theory that all religions have a common origin. And yet for them, instead of all religion deriving from a common “secret doctrine”, as Blavatsky asserted, it all came from human needs – neurotic or “normal”, depending on your point of view – which in turn derived from biological evolution – in other words, from matter. Of course, at that time (unlike now), it was unfashionable to call oneself an atheist, and impolitic to alienate one’s readers, most of whom still believed in some kind of god. Therefore psychologists strove to hide (although Freud was more honest in this respect) their firm belief that all religion was an illusion, albeit a useful one (according to Jung and James), and that the origins of all “spirituality” were in fact base matter...

3. In spite of their common reverence for empirical science, the fathers of modern psychology hardly succeeded in carrying out any empirical study of their subject. This leads to a general observation on the nature of psychology: that it either ends up

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<sup>111</sup> Watson, *op. cit.*, pp. 289-290.

trivializing and falsifying its subject-matter by trying to force it into some other scientific subject (for example, physiology or zoology or brain science), or wanders into metaphysical clouds of nonsense and/or ambiguity that increase neither scientific nor any other kind of knowledge...

## 7. THE FALL OF THE CHINESE EMPIRE

Multi-national empires based on personal despotism have been with us since at least the time of Egypt and Babylon. The last and greatest of these, China, was on its last legs in 1900, crucified in that year by the combined invasion of the European and western-style empires.

The fall of the Chinese empire is – understandably from a western point of view – given less attention by historians than the fall of the Russian empire six years later. And yet there is no way that the end of the longest-lasting dynastic empire in history, presiding over the world’s most populous nation, could be anything except extremely important. One thing is clear: it marks the end of old-style, pagan despotism and imperialism. Moreover, looking back at the Russian and Chinese revolutions from a hundred years later, we can see that they were closely linked in the Providence of God: the democratic Chinese revolution of 1912 laid the foundations for the communist revolution of 1949, which was itself a child of the Russian revolution of 1917...

For much of the nineteenth century, China had been declining precipitously as a result of natural disasters (drought, floods, earthquakes, epidemics), internal rebellions and foreign encroachment on her territory. As Charles Emmerson writes, “So-called ‘Unequal Treaties’ had been signed which resulted in an ever-increasing foreign presence, and made it impossible for China to pursue an economic policy adapted to its needs. Traditional Chinese spheres of influence had been usurped at the fringes of its empire. The Russians took control over a slice of outer Manchuria in the 1860s, beating a pathway to the Pacific and establishing a Russian city at Vladivostok (which the Chinese claimed as their own in 2020), which subsequently became the terminus of the Trans-Siberian railway. Despite Chinese protests, France occupied the neighbouring cities of Hanoi and Haiphong in 1880. In 1884, a naval battle between China and France destroyed an entire Chinese fleet, within minutes, at the cost of just five French lives.”<sup>112</sup>

The aim of Japan’s westernization programme, “was not to subordinate Japan to the West, but precisely the opposite: to make Japan capable of resisting Western dominance. The new Meiji {literally ‘enlightened’} constitution might bear the stamp ‘made in Prussia’, just as the new navy looked British and the new schools looked French. The Emperor and his ministers might dance Western dances and even, in violation of traditional Japanese propriety, smile Western smiles. But their underlying and deadly earnest aim was always to wipe the smile off European faces. There was only certain means of doing so, and that was by winning wars...”<sup>113</sup>

For, having modernized itself on the western model, Japan quickly acquired the characteristic vice of the West: aggressive imperialism. And China’s greatest humiliation was its defeat at the hands of Japan, which it had considered a tributary nation... As Maria Hsia Chang writes, “Korea became the first target of Japan’s imperial ambition – but China stood in the way. Korea was a vassal of China, a relationship in which the former acceded to the latter’s will, especially over matters of foreign policy, in exchange for Chinese protection of the Korean monarch from

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<sup>112</sup> Emmerson, 1913. *The World before the Great War*, London: Vintage, 2013, pp. 151-152.

<sup>113</sup> Niall Ferguson, *The War of the World*, London: Penguin, 2006, p. 52.

external invaders and internal unrest. In 1876, China agreed in a treaty with Japan that Korea would be an independent state no longer under Chinese suzerainty. That treaty was put to the test in January 1894, when the Qing dynasty, responding to an appeal for help by the Korean monarch, dispatched 3,000 soldiers to suppress a rebellion by the Tonghak, a Korean secret society. Japan reacted to China's action with a force of 10,000 and, on August 1, 1894, declared war against China.

"To China's utter dismay and humiliation, the Imperial Japanese army quickly overran the Chinese forces, even the vaunted Beiyang naval fleet. The Sino-Japanese War ended in April 1895 with the Treaty of Shimonoseki, which declared Korea's independence (a condition that proved to be short-lived); required that China pay Japan an indemnity of 200 million silver dollars; opened four inland cities, including Chongqing (Chungking), to foreign trade; and ceded to Japan, in perpetuity, Taiwan (Formosa), Penghu (Pescadore Islands), and the Liaodong Peninsula in Chinese Manchuria.

"It was one thing for China to be defeated in the Opium War by the greatest power in the world. It was quite another matter for China to be overcome by its small neighbor across the sea - the same Japan that once looked to China as its mentor, whose inhabitants Chinese had traditionally dismissed as the 'dwarfs to the east'. Defeat in the Sino-Japanese War not only humiliated the Chinese, it thoroughly exposed to the world the hollowness of the once mighty Middle Kingdom. More damaging, still worse the reverberations that rippled from the defeat.

"The significance of the 1894 Sino-Japanese War transcended the defeat of China - it signaled the end of the great Chinese Empire. China lost not only Korea but all its other tributary states (*fanshu*) as well, which promptly became the targets of acquisition by the imperialist powers.

"There were other reverberations still. By this time, the Qing dynasty was bankrupt - its treasury depleted by wars and indemnities, internal rebellions, and efforts at reform. For its indemnity to Japan, the dynasty turned to borrowing from the Western powers: from France and Russia a combined loan of 400 million francs; from Britain, two loans totaling 20 million pounds; and from Germany, two loans totaling 17 million pounds. In return for the loans, each lender obtained special concessions from a supine China. Between 1895 to 1898, the Western powers carved out their respective 'spheres of influence': areas in China that were proto-colonies in intention and effect, in which the lending country enjoyed exclusive economic rights and privileges, including those of trade, mining, and railroad construction. France obtained Yunnan province as a sphere, as well as a 99-year lease of Guangzhouwan (harbor) in southern Guangdong; northern Manchuria became Russia's sphere of influence through the extension of the trans-Siberian railway to Vladivostok (Haisanwei) and a 25-year lease of Port Arthur (Luda or Dairen) and Dairen Bay; Germany acquired a 99-year lease over Shandong peninsula; and Britain obtained as its sphere the lower Yangzi River area, as well as a 99-year lease of the New Territories.

"Were it not for the diplomatic initiative of the United States - its proposal in 1899-1900 to the Great Powers to maintain an 'open door' to China by preserving its 'territorial and administrative integrity' - China would probably have been

partitioned among the colonial powers like a lamb before the slaughter. A Chinese official at the time described the imperialist powers as 'glaring at China like tigers', seeking 'to find a plump spot to bite into us'. The U.S. Open Door policy succeeded in convincing the Great Powers in China to refrain from actual colonization<sup>114</sup>, so that China was saved from political extinction. Aside from that, little else that was good came from the Open Door initiative. Once again, the moribund Qing dynasty was preserved, too weak either to reform itself or resist imperialist predations.

"The 1894 Sino-Japanese War was a turning point: From there, China rapidly descended into disarray. In 1898, a last-gasp effort at reform by constitutional monarchists around young Emperor Guangxu (born in 1871, he reigned from 1875 to his death in 1908) was sabotaged by the aged Dowager Empress Cixi and court conservatives. As it turned out, the aborted Hundred Days' Reform was China's last chance at peaceful change.

"Though not an actual colony, China had become instead a 'hypocolony': a country that suffered from all the ills and disabilities of colonialism without being formally colonized. By the beginning of the twentieth century, not only had China lost all its vassal states, it had ceded to the various imperialist powers Macao, Hong Kong, Taiwan, and the Penghu Islands; leased off Kowloon, New Territories, Jiazhou Bay, Lushun, Dalian, Weihaiwei, and Guangzhou Bay; opened 82 coastal and inland ports to foreign trade; and marked off areas in 16 cities as concessions. Through their spheres of influence, the Great Powers in China enjoyed all the privileges and perquisites of colonizers without any of the attendant obligations and responsibilities, setting up instead 'a many-tiered structure of exploitation to fleece the Chinese people.'

"As expressed by Zeng Guofan in 1867: 'Since the hostilities, the Chinese people have been for a long time in deep suffering, and as if immersed in water or fire.' The treaty ports along the coast and the Yangzi River had made their livelihood more and more difficult. 'The common people are impoverished, have no one to appeal to, and are as oppressed as if they were hanging upside down.' As V.G. Kiernan put it, 'China's misery was great,' and although some of it had been self-inflicted, Western imperialism significantly contributed to the fact that far more Chinese than ever before in history were struggling for bare existence. To assuage themselves of complicity in China's emiseration, Westerners advanced the curious notion that the Chinese were a unique people impervious to pain. Just as 'Anglers like to suppose that fish have no feelings,' Westerners managed to convince themselves that Chinese people's physical sensations were 'mercifully blunted' because they had been 'schooled by aeons of suffering', their 'absence of nerves' accounting for their indifference to comfort and convenience.

"Anticipated as early as 1867 by Zeng, who predicted that 'millions of the common people of China when pushed to extremity would think of revolt and would regard [foreigners] as enemies,' the emiseration of the Chinese masses exploded in 1900 in xenophobic violence against Westerners, particularly missionaries and their Chinese converts. Originating in Shandong Province, the Boxer Rebellion rapidly advanced upon Beijing, setting fire to churches and the British legation, and killing Christians

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<sup>114</sup> The policy proposed the principle of equality of access for goods and capital but without annexation of territory. (V.M.)

[including 222 Chinese Orthodox Christians of the Russian Spiritual Mission in Peking] and foreign diplomats. The Great Powers retaliated with an allied force that eventually suppressed the uprising. Beijing was sacked<sup>115</sup> and a severely punitive settlement forced upon the Qing government.<sup>116</sup> The Boxer Protocol of September 1901 demanded China's apology and expiation, banned the importation of arms and ammunition into China for five years, razed all forts from Beijing to the coast, and required that China pay an indemnity of 67 million pounds over a period of 39 years. The amortization of the indemnity and its accrued interest came to 20 million pounds a year. Until the indemnity was fully paid, the Powers would hold as collateral China's maritime and internal customs, together with the revenue generated from its salt tax. The Qing government sought recourse to usurious taxation, almost quadrupling its revenue from 1901 to 1910. New taxes were piled on old under a variety of names, promoting corruption by provincial officials, who increased taxes at every level until they were ten or more times what the government itself had authorized.

"Japan's defeat of China and the aborted Hundred Days' Reform made it clear to some of China's most enlightened intellectuals that unless drastic changes were undertaken, the very survival of the country was in peril..."<sup>117</sup>

However, writes Evans, "the long-predicted carve-up of China never happened. The European powers had received a severe shock from the uprising. If this was the reaction provoked by the existence of mere treaty ports, what might happened if they tried to take over the whole country? Any further territorial advances seemed ill-advised in the circumstances. In addition, two of the powers involved, Russia and Japan, were serious rivals for territorial gains in Manchuria, where more than a quarter of foreign investments were held, and a peaceful agreement between the two of them over partition was out of the question: indeed, the two states went to war over the issue in 1904. Ultimately, the Chinese government had held together, and it was more profitable to continue lending it money at high interest rates than to invest large sums in trying to defeat it and take over its business. The imperial tax collection service seemed a cheaper and more acceptable vehicle for assembling the debt repayments than a European tax collection service such as had been run by the old British East India Company. So the United States proposed an open-door policy, which everyone apart from the Russians accepted, and in the meantime the powers concluded a series of bilateral treaties promising not to acquire any further territory in China. In 1902 the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, which committed Britain to remaining neutral if Japan was attacked by another power or to joining with the Japanese if two other powers were involved, was widely celebrated in the United Kingdom and presented to the electorate as a classic example of the wisdom of Conservative foreign policy. For the Chinese the humiliation of all this was too much to bear; in 1911 the Qing dynasty was overthrown in a revolution and on 1 January 1912 a Chinese Republic was declared."<sup>118</sup>

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<sup>115</sup> "The victorious troops of all armies looted and pillaged on a massive scale, and there were said to have been mass rapes of Chinese women in the occupied city. Boxers or men thought to be Boxers were summarily executed, especially if they fell into the hands of the Japanese" (Evans, *The Pursuit of Power. Europe 1815-1914*, London: Penguin, 2017, p. 651). (V.M.)

<sup>116</sup> "The recently signed Hague Convention, which established the laws of war, was not considered applicable. As far as most Westerners were concerned, it was a case of putting down a semi-colonial revolt, rather than a war between civilized nations." (Emmerson, 1913, p. 386). (V.M.)

<sup>117</sup> Chang, *Return of the Dragon*, Boulder, Co.: Westview Press, 2001,

<sup>118</sup> Evans, pp. 651-652.

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What did the opponents of the imperial regime envisage as replacing it? Some believed in democracy. Others believed China still had to be ruled by some kind of one-man sovereign.

Lian Qichao was an advisor to the Emperor who knew the West well. Comparing China unfavourably with the West, he argued that “China’s history had made the Chinese into ‘clansmen, rather than citizens’, with the mentality of the village rather than that of the nation – indeed the very word ‘nation’ was an innovation, first appearing in Chinese in 1899 – able to accept despotism but not to enjoy freedom, lacking the ability to set their own national objectives. These fundamental differences – entrenched by millennia of imperial history – inhibited China’s political development, and her ability to defend herself. In order to become a respected member of the family of nation-states, China would first have to herself become a nation: a group of individuals linked, as French political theorist Ernest Renan had put it in the 1880s, by ‘a common will in the present, to have done great things in the past and to wish to do more’. Qichao was well placed to help the process along, writing as a journalist at a time, at the turn of the twentieth century, when newspapers were multiplying across China and communications improving between the country’s far-flung provinces.

“But it would take what would amount to a cultural revolution before China could truly be democratic, argued Qichao. (Amongst his admirers was Mao Zedong, then a child in southern China, later the country’s first communist leader – he claimed to have learnt the master’s essays off by heart.) As Qichao put it: ‘If we were to adopt a democratic system of government now, it would be nothing less than committing national suicide. Freedom, constitutionalism, and republicanism would be like hempen clothes in winter or furs in summer; it is not that they are not beautiful, they are just not suitable for us. We should not be bedazzled by empty glitter now; we should not yearn for beautiful dreams. To put it in a word, the Chinese people of today can only be governed autocratically; they cannot enjoy freedom. I pray and yearn, I pray only that our country can have a Guanzi [medieval autocratic reformer], a Shang Yan, a Lycurgus, a Cromwell alive today to carry out harsh rule, and with iron and fire to forge and temper our countrymen for twenty, thirty, even fifty years. After that we can give them the books of Rousseau, and tell them about the deeds of Washington.’”<sup>119</sup>

However, others disagreed with Qichao. Sun Yat-sen (1866-1925) was a believer in science and westernization, and in the three principles of nationalism, socialism and democracy. In 1894 he “petitioned the Qing authorities for reform, but was rebuffed. Losing all hope for peaceful change, he turned to revolution and established his first revolutionary organization, the Society to Revive China (*Xingzhong hui*) in Honolulu, with overseas Chinese expatriates his first supporters. Beginning in 1894, Sun’s followers martyred themselves in a series of failed uprisings in China.”<sup>120</sup>

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<sup>119</sup> Emerson, 1913, pp. 390-391.

<sup>120</sup> Chang, op. cit., pp. 75-79.

In 1905, writes Emmerson, “Sun Yat-Sen brought all the anti-Qing movements into a single umbrella organization, the Revolutionary Alliance. Between 1906 and 1908 the Revolutionary Alliance launched a number of uprisings against the Qing dynasty in the south of China.

“Under pressure abroad and at home the Qing regime undertook a series of dramatic reforms – many of which had been proposed in 1898, but shelved after the Dowager Empress reasserted her authority over Emperor Guangxu. In line with demands made as part of the Boxer Convention, a formal Qing Foreign Ministry was established in 1901. (As a result Chinese diplomats – a class which had previously been publicly scorned, engaged in an occupation traditionally viewed as shameful – were more present internationally. This implied acceptance of China’s place in a foreign-run world order, but also an understanding of the need for China to actively defend her interests in that order.) The old *finshi* system, a grueling and classically focused set of exams which had formed the basis of entry into state service since time immemorial, was abolished in 1905 – in principle to allow for a wider intake into state service. A Qing ministry for commerce was founded, and another for post and communications. The army underwent a slow process of reform, incorporating Western uniforms and salutes. Some traditional punishments were done away with, at least in principle. A Supreme Court was established in 1906, in the hope that reform of the system of law in China would undercut the foreign powers’ traditional argument that the inadequacies of the Chinese system made it imperative for their citizens to be subject only to their own foreign systems of justice.

‘These administrative reforms were radical enough in themselves, establishing the basis of China as a modern state. But they were accompanied by political reforms which were potentially more far-reaching. Partly to deflect demands for a republic, and partly to reassert central control over processes of political reform already underway in the provinces, the Qing dynasty assembled a high-ranking study group to investigate options for constitutional reform. In January 1906 – after having escaped an attempt to assassinate them at Peking railway station a few months earlier – the study group travelled to the United States. They returned with suggestions for constitutional government which were subsequently accepted by the Dowager Empress [almost simultaneously with Tsar Nicholas II’s acceptance of some constitutional limitations on his power] and the court. In 1908 it was announced that full constitutional government would be in place by 1917. When the Dowager Emress Cixi died later that year – one day after the long-suffering Emperor Guangxu, still under effective house arrest – power passed to the Manchu regents surrounding the new child Emperor Puyi, ensuring an extended period of jockeying for position at court. In October 1909 provincial assemblies, elected according to a franchise that ensured elite dominance, assemble across the country. In 1910 they forced the Qing court to bring forward the timetable for constitutional government: a provisional national assembly was to gather in Peking before the end of the year...’<sup>121</sup>

Like Lenin, Sun was abroad at the time of the revolution. Again, like Lenin, he was able to profit from the abdication of an emperor. Unlike Lenin, however, he did not have the power to impose himself upon the subsequent course of events, showing himself to be closer to Kerensky than to Lenin...

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<sup>121</sup> Emmerson, 1913, pp. 392-393.

“When 2,000 years of Chinese empire ended it was with a bang – and with a whimper. The bang took place in October 1911 in the Russian quarter of Hankou [the headquarters of the revolution], where the casual disposal of a cigarette in a Chinese revolutionary bomb factory caused an accidental explosion, bringing the Qing authorities running, and forcing local army units – who had been heavily infiltrated by revolutionaries – to accelerate a planned revolution. In Peking, the whimper came in February 1912, when the formal abdication of six-year-old Emperor Puyi [on 12 February 1912] was announced, in return for a promise of continued ownership of the treasures of the Manchu court, continued residence in the Forbidden City and an annual subsidy of \$4 million to keep the court in the style in which it had, through centuries, become accustomed.

“News of the explosion in Wuhan and the uprising which followed reached Sun Yat-Sen via an American newspaper, over breakfast, in Denver, Colorado. Rather than hurrying back, he went first to Europe to persuade Britain and France not to intervene militarily or to continue financial support for the Qing regime should there be any clash. He made it back to Shanghai, which in November had declared its secession from the Qing dynasty, on Christmas Day 1911. The revolutionary flag flew from the rooftops of the city. Pigtailed were ceremonially cut. Foreign warships lay at anchor. A week later Sun Yat-Sen travelled by train to Nanjing, the old capital of China and which for over a decade in the middle of the last century had been the headquarters of the anti-Qing Taiping rebellion. There, on 1 January 1912, he was proclaimed Provisional President of the Chinese Republic by a meeting of delegates from sixteen provincial assemblies.

“For several weeks China had both an Emperor and a President. In the end, the dynasty’s fate was sealed by a note from leading commanders of the most effective military unit of the Chinese forces, the Beiyang army, in which the newly appointed Qing premier Yuan Shikai was highly influential. The commanders recommended a republican course for the future government of China. By prior arrangement, Sun Yat-Sen himself now abdicated the presidency in favour of Yuan Shikai, advising the Nanking assembly of his ‘personal opinion’ that Yuan Shikai would prove himself a ‘loyal servant of the state’ and urging them that ‘the happiness of our country depends on your choice’...

“But Yuan Shikai’s modus operandi was that of a strongman not a democrat, a fact which became clearer as China prepared for the 1912 parliamentary elections. American Ambassador Paul Reinsch later recalled having been told by Wu Tingfang, a former Chinese Ambassador in Washington, that Yuan Shikai ‘has no conception of free government [and] is entirely a man of personal authority’. ‘Beware, when you go behind those high walls of Peking,’ Wu Tingfang warned Reinsch: ‘The atmosphere is stagnant. It seems to overcome men and make them reactionary. Nobody seems to resist that power!’ His judgement proved accurate. In 1913 the new Provisional President successfully resisted a pre-agreed move of the capital from Peking to Nanjing – on the basis that the north of the country was not yet sufficiently pacified. Traditionalist that he was at heart, Yuan Shikai felt that Peking was a city he could trust – unlike Nanjing, where Sun Yat-Sen had been elected China’s first Provisional President, and still less Shanghai, that capital of sedition, metropolis of modernity.

“To fight the parliamentary elections at the end of 1912, Sun Yat-Sen formed a new political party, the Kuomintang (commonly referred to as the KNT) under the leadership of the thirty-year-old Song Jiaoren. (Liang Qichau, former advisor to Emperor Guangxu and publicist for the idea of Chinese nationhood, led another grouping: the Progressive Party.) When the result began to be announced in January 1913, it was clear that the Kuomintang had won the bulk of support of China’s forty million electors. In the end, the party took 269 out of 596 seats in the new National Assembly. China had, it appeared, taken a giant step towards popular democracy...”<sup>122</sup>

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However appearances can be deceptive, just as they deceived in Russia in 1917. As Chang writes, “Sun enjoyed very little more in the way of success. He discovered that neither he nor the fledgling government commanded the authority and power to rule over the country. Without an army, the revolutionaries lacked the coercive means for credible power; lacking a national consensus on its ideological program, the new government could not wield effective authority...”<sup>123</sup>

Real power lay with the army and Yuan Shikai. In September, 1913 “forces loyal to Yuan Shikai entered Nanjing and, despite undertakings ahead of time, followed their conquest with ‘wanton murder, looting, rape... the unchecked amusements of the victorious soldiery.’ The death of a small number of Japanese civilians and the destruction of Japanese property in the so-called ‘Nanking incident’ – to be repeated a hundred thousandfold by Japanese forces in 1937 – led to demands for reprisals in Tokyo, and a flurry of concern in other capitals that Japan would intervene more directly in favour of the Kuomintang, some of whose leaders had been educated in Japan. But the Japanese government was restrained, even if the crowds in Tokyo were not.

“The Kuomintang routed, in October Yuan Shikai forced the National Assembly, after several rounds of voting, to elect him to a five-year term as President, running until 1918. The Kuomintang party was banned the following month, and the National Assembly effectively shut down. Sun Yat-Sen fled to Japan. The message was clear: authority was to replace experimentation, order was to replace revolution...”<sup>124</sup>

According to Paul Johnson, “General Yuan would almost certainly have made himself emperor, and founded a new dynasty – as had many Chinese strong men in the past. But in 1916 he died, he cause of monarchy was lost, and China embarked on what Charles de Gaulle was later to call *les delices de l’anarchie*.

“The object of overthrowing the monarchy was to restore China’s possessions according to the 1840 frontiers, unify the country and curb the foreigner. It did the opposite in each case. In Outer Mongolia the Hutuktu of Urga declared himself independent and made a secret treaty with Russia (1912), a realignment never since

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<sup>122</sup> Emmerson, 1913, pp. 401-403.

<sup>123</sup> Chang, *Return of the Dragon*, Boulder, Co.: Westview Press, 2001, pp. 75-79.

<sup>124</sup> Emmerson, 1913, pp. 408-409.

reversed. By 1916 five other provinces had opted for home rule. Japan moved into Manchuria and the North, and many coastal areas. The other great powers settled their 'spheres of influence' at meeting from which China was excluded. The only dependable source of revenue possessed by the Chinese Republican government (when it had one) was what remained of the old Imperial Maritime Customs, created by the Irishmen Sir Robert Hart and manned by Europeans, mainly from the United Kingdom, which controlled the coasts and navigable rivers, maintained buoys, lighthouses and charts and collected duties. The rest of the government's taxation system dissolve into a moras of corruption. As there was no money, there could be no central army.

"Moreover, the destruction of the monarchy struck a fatal blow at the old Chinese landed gentry. They lost their privileges in law, and immediately sought to erect a system of bastard feudalism (as in Japan) to restore them in fact. Hitherto, their factions and clans had operated within the rules of the court. Without the court there was nothing. Traditional cosmology had gone with throne. So had religion, for Confucianism revolved round monarchy. Taoism, a private cult, was no substitute as a creed of public morals. Some took refuge in Buddhism, others in Christianity. But most of the gentry aligned themselves with whatever local source of military authority they could find, becoming, with their dependents, its clients. Confronted with the state of dissolution so graphically described by Hobbes, they chose Leviathan, in the shape of the war-lord. Alas, there was not one monster but many: by 1920 four major war-lords held sway, and scores of minor ones. China entered a hateful period reminiscent of the Thirty Years' War in Europe..."<sup>125</sup>

Once more, the overthrow of monarchy did not lead to utopia, but anarchy, poverty and large numbers of deaths. Europeans had failed to learn the lessons of the bloody English and French revolutions, and the destruction of the major monarchies during the First World War would generate still worse anarchy, poverty, death - and despotism. But no country, not even Russia, would suffer as much from the collapse of monarchical order as China, which in 1949 became what was to become the most powerful despotism in history...

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<sup>125</sup> Johnson, *Modern Times*, New York: Harper Perennial, 1990, p. 192.

## 8. THE BOER WAR AND THE CRISIS OF BRITISH IMPERIALISM

“In the nineteenth century,” writes Margaret Macmillan, “Britain had the world’s largest empire and dominated the seas and world trade. Understandably, perhaps, it showed little sympathy for the aspirations and concerns of other nations. As Winston Churchill, always a statesman with a strong sense of history, wrote shortly before the Great War: ‘We have engrossed in ourselves, in a time when other powerful nations were paralysed by barbarism or internal war, an altogether disproportionate share of the wealth and traffic of the world. We have got all we want in territory, and our claim to be left in the unmolested enjoyment of vast and splendid possessions, mainly acquired by violence, largely maintained by violence, often seems less reasonable to others than to us.’”

“Moreover, Britain frequently irritated the other European powers with its confident assumption of superiority, for example, to the institutions and politics on the Continent, by its reluctance to uphold the Concert of Europe, and the way in which it carefully intervened in conflicts only when it saw a clear gain for itself. In the scramble for colonies, British statesmen tended to claim that they were taking on more territory merely for the security of their existing possession or perhaps out of benevolence towards the subject people, while other nations were motivated entirely by greed.”<sup>126</sup>

Disraeli had tied the identity of the British nation to the British empire; it was he who gave Victoria the title “Empress of India”, and more or less invented “jingoism”. This imperialist mood continued into the 1890s. Thus in 1894 Lord Curzon, Viceroy of India and future Foreign Minister, dedicated a book called *Problems of the Far East* “to those who believe that the British Empire is, under Providence, the greatest instrument for good the world has seen”.<sup>127</sup>

In this context, the constitutional innovation of the White Dominions of Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa – conscious bearers of British ethnicity and civilization, but to all intents and purposes completely independent – was a stroke of genius, as David Starkey has noted. They compensated for the probably inevitable loss of the American colonies. And their loyalty to Britain, their support during the Boer War and voluntary entrance into both world wars on Britain’s side both strengthened the empire and confirmed the racists in their belief in the superiority of the Anglo-Saxon race. As long as the British of all classes believed this, they were prepared to continue the massive effort which sustaining the empire involved.

But for how long would God tolerate such self-deceiving *hubris*? British leaders were showing sign of addiction: acquisitions were made, but reluctantly, against the will of the leaders, to create defensive buffers against potential enemies rather than out of messianic conviction or even commercial greed. Germany was catching up fast, and, although sometimes counted as an honorary member of the Anglo-Saxon race, would not forever be pacified with compliments or bribes... Moreover, the time was fast approaching when the will of the imperialists to keep their empires in being would become weaker than the will of the subject peoples to liberate themselves...

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<sup>126</sup> Macmillan, *The War that Ended the Peace*, London: Profile, 2014, p. 54.

<sup>127</sup> A.N. Wilson, *After the Victorians*, London: Hutchinson, 2005, p. 25.

Briefly put, the British Empire was beginning to experience what we would now call “over-reach”, an expansion beyond the bounds of its military and administrative resources, not to mention its moral perception of itself...

A clear illustration of this was the British intrusion into Tibet, one of the most remote parts of the world, untouched by European colonialists heretofore. In 1899-1902 the Tibetan capital, Lhasa, was visited by a Buddhist Buryat from the Russian empire, Gombozhab Tsybikov.<sup>128</sup> The British could not allow the Russians to steal a march on them in the “Great Game”. So in 1904 a British expedition from India advanced into Tibet under Colonel Francis Younghusband. He was authorized to obtain reparation for a trivial border incident and then withdraw immediately. However, when the Tibetans resisted the British advance, there took place what Younghusband himself called “a wretched affair – a pure massacre” of perhaps 2,500 ill-equipped Tibetans (only 35 British died). When the British reached Lhasa, “a treaty was signed in the Potala giving the British Government in India control of Tibet’s Chumbi Valley for seventy-five years and the right to have a representative in Lhasa – terms that the British government immediately repudiated. Younghusband returned to England to be feted as a hero but in political disgrace both for disobeying orders and exceeding his instructions.”<sup>129</sup>

This inglorious episode marks the limits of British imperial expansion, if we exclude the semi-imperial Mandates awarded to Britain in the Middle East in 1919. From the peaks of the Himalayas the way ahead for British imperialism could only be downhill... The 1906 general election “was a decisive defeat for [Chamberlain’s] vision of imperial federation, proof of the political weakness of imperialism at its apogee. Moreover, the white colonies had been given increasing self-government since the 1840s and saw no reason to give it up. The six Australian colonies federated in 1901, and those of South Africa in 1909. An enthusiast, Lord Meath, campaigned for an ‘Empire Day’ (adopted in 1902), but he had to pay for it from his own pocket, and many teachers and local councils disliked introducing it into schools. The suggestion of a school flag-raising ceremony was dismissed as un-English. Respectable workers despised soldiers, and, though patriotic, their love of England stopped at Dover...”<sup>130</sup>

The problem was not simply one of “over-reach”, too many new colonies. Some of the old colonies were becoming difficult to handle. The oldest of all was Ireland. “Eighteenth-century Ireland’s British rulers had known that they were hated by the native Irish. Having destroyed the old Catholic landowning class and replaced it with a Protestant Anglo-Irish elite, London was nevertheless confident that nothing short of a major French invasion could shake its hold on Ireland. In the nineteenth century, the modernization of Ireland’s economy and the emergence of a vibrant Irish civil society transformed the situation. British policy in nineteenth-century Ireland often combined repression and concession in intelligent fashion. It never attempted to simply ignore and repress the political implications of modernization. It compromised with the Catholic Church, handed over local government to the new Catholic middle

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<sup>128</sup> Aleksej Makeev, “Russkij podannij GTs.”, RusskijMir.ru, <https://rusmir.media/2019/10/31/zibikov?fbclid=IwAR1q0ob9mwA5XKLk9XAUF4nTwV6pK-w98UgyDy83P-Ixg-zCKQeo0utWAP>.

<sup>129</sup> Charles Allen, “The Myth of Chumik Shenko”, *History Today*, April, 2004, p. 17.

<sup>130</sup> Tombs, *op. cit.*, pp. 594.

classes, and bought out the Protestant landowning class, which was only possible because in that era Britain had the richest taxpayers in the world. But British policy could not head off ever-growing demands for Irish autonomy ["Home Rule"]. From the mid-1880s, the two main British parties – Liberals and Conservatives – were divided on how to respond to this demand. Liberals argued that 'home rule' would satisfy Irish aspirations, not least because most Catholic Irishmen of the professional classes welcomed Ireland's connection to the world's greatest empire; their Conservative and Unionist opponents insisted that it would give power, confidence, and patronage in Ireland to a movement that was driven by deep cultural and historical enmity toward England and that would never be satisfied with anything less than independence. Similar debates about whether devolution and federalism would strengthen or weaken imperial unity were to occur in other empires in the twentieth century..."<sup>131</sup>

The other major problem for British imperialism was South Africa, where the Dutch-speaking Boers had established an autonomous South African Republic (ZAR) to which the discovery of gold and diamonds had attracted many adventurers from around the world. According to J.M. Roberts, the Boers were struggling, not so much for their freedom from the British, as "for the right to oppress others, principally their black servant-slaves, but also the large non-Afrikaans white Uitlander ('foreigner') population of the Transvaal who worked their mines, paid 80% of the taxes and yet had no vote..."

"The Transvaal was in no sense a democracy in 1899; no black, Briton, Catholic or Jew was allowed either to vote or to hold office. Every Boer was compelled to own a rifle, no non-Boer was authorized to. The business centre, Johannesburg, with 50,000 mainly British inhabitants, was not even permitted a municipal council. The English language was specifically banned in all official proceedings. Judges were appointed by the Boer President, Paul Kruger, who controlled all the government monopolies from the manufacture of jam to that of dynamite. No open-air public meetings were permitted, newspapers were closed down arbitrarily and full citizenship was almost impossible to gain for non-Boers. Kruger ran a tight, tough, quasi-police state from his state capital, Pretoria."<sup>132</sup>

The "Uitlanders" had genuine grievances, and after a British subject was shot dead in a brawl by a drunken Boer policeman in March, 1899, 21,684 uitlanders signed a petition demanding justice to Queen Victoria. This provided an opportunity for what Tombs calls "a new breed of ideological imperialists" in Capetown and London who were "convinced that the future prosperity and security of Britain and the 'race' depended on unifying the empire. Their leader was the popular former radical Joseph Chamberlain, now Conservative Colonial Secretary. He was seconded by Cecil Rhodes, a ruthlessly successful diamond millionaire with megalomaniac political ambitions who had become prime minister of Cape Colony, and Alfred Milner, a partly German and highly educated social reformer and imperialist, who was High Commissioner. For them the challenge was fundamental: 'What is now at stake is the position of Great Britain in South Africa,' Chamberlain told the Cabinet in September

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<sup>131</sup> Lieven, *op. cit.*, pp. 20-21.

<sup>132</sup> Roberts, *op. cit.*, pp. 27-28.

1899, 'and with it the estimate of our power and influence in our colonies and throughout the world'.

"Their first plan had been to foment an uprising among the foreign population of the ZAR, who had no political rights, by secretly encouraging the 'Jameson Raid' into the Transvaal by an armed group in December 1895. The raiders were immediately rounded up by the Boers, and no uprising ensued. This fiasco drew world attention. Kaiser Wilhelm II sent a telegram of congratulation to the ZAR president, Paul Kruger. When Britain began to build up forces in the Cape, the Boers declared war in October 1899 in a self-proclaimed 'struggle against the new world tyranny of Capitalism'. This may seem in retrospect a remarkably bold or reckless act, but the Boers hoped that early successes would force the British to compromise, as after [the Boer victory at] Majuba in 1881. Britain and the world were respectively shocked and delighted when a weak British invasion force was repulsed, and border garrisons at Ladysmith and Mafeking (commanded by Colonel Robert Baden-Powell) were besieged. Relief forces were badly mauled during the 'Black Week' of December 1899. This provided a thrilling saga for newspaper readers at home and a new roll-call of heroes. When the sieges were finally lifted in 1900, uninhibited popular rejoicing - 'mafficking' - shocked progressives.

"Opinion at home was divided. Mainstream Liberals held to the belief that war in general was immoral and expensive, especially this one, which many believed had been brought about by the machinations of capitalists and Jews. Some ultra-conservatives agreed. So did some socialists, tinged with anti-Semitism. But others, including the Fabian Society, supported British imperialism as progressive while the popular socialist writer Robert Blatchford robustly declared that 'England's enemies are my enemies'. This was the majority view, and it led to a Conservative victory in the 'khaki election' of October 1900. But the war required more effort than anyone had imagined, and it became the most difficult since the Crimea and at £270m the most expensive since that against Napoleon.<sup>133</sup> Not for the first time, the British had underestimated their enemy, who were highly mobile, familiar with the country, skilled marksmen, better armed and more numerous. British soldiers were picked off by a concealed enemy with Mauer rifles and smokeless ammunition...

"The Boer cause enthused all who loathed the English, especially if they also hated capitalists and/or Jews. At the 1900 Paris Exposition, one of the most popular exhibits was a Boer farmhouse. Volunteers from across Europe and from Ireland went to fight for Boer freedom. Facing them, British regulars and volunteers were joined by men from Canada, Australia and New Zealand, eventually totaling 250,000, now competently commanded by a veteran of the Indian Mutiny and Afghanistan, Lord Roberts of Kandahar, and the conqueror of the Sudan, Sir Herbert Kitchener. Once these forces could be supplied and moved - which required the assistance of large numbers of Africans, who preferred a future under the British than the [racist] Boers - the ZAR was invaded, and by June 1900 had fallen. But some Boer 'commandos', small

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<sup>133</sup> "Around 22,000 British soldiers lost their lives while the Boers suffered 6,189 military casualties. There were also more than 46,000 civilian casualties, including the women and children who perished in the concentration camps. More than 20,000 indigenous people interned in separate concentration camps, also died" (Gordon Kerr, *A Short History of the Victorian Era*, Harpenden: Oldcastle Books, 2019, p. 240). (V.M.)

groups of mounted infantry, continued a guerrilla war, their exploits applauded across the white world.

“Kitchener countered the guerrillas by a scorched-earth policy, burning 30,000 farms, and criss-crossing the country with barbed-wire fences protected by blockhouses and armoured trains.<sup>134</sup> Civilians were compulsorily evacuated to ‘concentration camps’, where dirt and overcrowding led to some 40,000 deaths and international outrage, in which the ‘pro-Boer’ minority in England joined. Leading Liberal politicians such as Campbell-Bannerman and Lloyd George denounced these ‘methods of barbarism’. Barbarism worked, however, and the Boers surrendered in 1902. The empire had rallied to an unprecedented extent. Other countries, especially France and Germany had been indignant but impotent in the face of the Royal Navy. The Boers accepted British sovereignty and the ZAR formed a federation with the British colonies of the Cape and Natal. The main British strategic object – control of the Cape and overlordship of southern Africa – had been preserved, and was to last through two world wars. However, the Boers, having lost the war, largely won the peace, for the British, as in all settler colonies, gradually conceded self-government, formally established in 1909. The losers were the Africans within the union, left under a racist government. Swaziland, Bechuanaland and Basutoland had the relative good fortune of remaining under imperial protection.

“The war had profound effects. Chamberlain, convinced that this was the historic opportunity to consolidate the empire, launched a campaign for Imperial Federation based on ‘preference’ in trade, and which would he hoped move towards a true political federation under an imperial Parliament in which all the white colonies would be represented. But Britain could give no ‘preference’ as long as it practiced unconditional free trade with everyone. So Chamberlain campaigned for import tariffs, arguing that they would also create ‘free trade’ by protecting British industry against (protected) German and American competition, as well as raising revenue for welfare. For Chamberlain’s supporters, this fiscal revolution would solve economic, social and strategic problems at a stroke. But free trade, seen by most voters as meaning cheap food, was too deeply ingrained in British political culture, and the Conservative government was crushed by a Liberal-Labour landslide in 1906. The second consequence of the war was to convince many that the empire needed a friend. It was, in Chamberlain’s phrase, a ‘weary titan’, the ‘object of envy and greed to all the other Powers,’ lamented the Secretary of State for India. Lord Salisbury, Prime Minister until 1902, refused to panic: ‘We know that we shall maintain against all comers that which we possess, and we know, in spite of the jargon about isolation, that we are amply competent to do so.’ His successors were less sanguine, and pessimism about the future became a dangerously pervasive characteristic of official thinking...”<sup>135</sup>

Having won the peace, the Boers made South Africa into what was in effect an apartheid state. And they were supported by the British High Commissioner in South Africa, Sir Arthur Milner, who “was under no illusions about what needed to be done to begin to bind up the wounds of white South Africa, remarking ‘You only have to sacrifice “the nigger” and the game is easy.’ In 1903, in a speech in Johannesburg,

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<sup>134</sup> In accordance with the peace treaty of Vereeniging in 1902, the British paid three million pounds in compensation for this policy. (V.M.)

<sup>135</sup> Tombs, *op. cit.*, pp. 584-586.

Milner blatantly asserted that 'the white man must rule, because he is elevated by many, many steps above the black man, steps which will take the latter many centuries to climb, and which it is quite possible that the vast bulk of the black population will never be able to climb at all.'<sup>136</sup>

"The black population of South Africa," writes Emmerson, "had always been central to the politics of white South Africa, long before the Union of South Africa itself was forged. That black Africans were a numerical majority was obvious, a fact which caused white workers to fear that the price of their labour could be undercut were blacks to enter the skilled workforce, and which caused other whites to fear the possibility of black rule, perhaps brought about by violent rebellion. Unlike in Australia, that blacks had in effect been dispossessed of the lands of their ancestors was broadly admitted by whites in South Africa. But there was disagreement as to the extent of white responsibility for the black population of South Africa, the form this responsibility should take, and the extent to which it might include political rights. In the Cape, if a black farm-owner were wealthy enough and well-educated enough, he might vote in provincial elections. In other part of South Africa, this was unthinkable. Blacks might be farmhands, maybe even proprietors, but not voters.

"The Anglo-Boer War had been fought, at least as the British presented it, to enforce British interests and British principles in South Africa, including protection of native rights. In making the peace, however, the British accepted that the question of the franchise, and therefore the possibility of a colour bar, would be left to a future South African government, subject only to a special exemption for existing voters in the Cape. When the Union of South Africa was formed in 1910, therefore, London had not insisted upon a colour-blind franchise. 'Union without honour is the greatest danger any nation can incur,' thundered William Schreiner, a former Prime Minister of the Cape, urging that non-Europeans should not be denied the vote in national elections, provided they fulfilled the same other criteria as might apply to Europeans. Outvoted at home, and outmanoeuvred in London, however, Schreiner failed in his appeals. The Union of South Africa entered the world of states as a constitutionally unequal state, a democracy for some and a tyranny for others..."<sup>137</sup>

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If some British imperialists were beginning to have doubts about the long-term viability of the British empire, this did not mean that imperialism in general was retreating. On the contrary. The imperialists continued to expand and build up their power, reached their frenetic peak by 1914.

One reason for this continued expansionism was insecurity: the European great powers felt threatened by new empires outside the European heartland - Russia in the East (for Germany) and the United States in the West (for all of them). For "it was clear to all observers," writes Dominic Lieven, "that no purely European could hope to match [the United States'] potential power, though Russia and Britain might do so in the future if they could consolidate and develop their existing empires. For other European countries that sought to remain great powers, there was the even more

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<sup>136</sup> Dennis Judd, "The Price of Peace", *BBC History Magazine*, June, 2002, p. 20.

<sup>137</sup> Emmerson, 1913, p. 305.

daunting challenge to create new empires. This was the most geopolitical factor underpinning the 'age of imperialism', but it was not the only one. Technology, and especially the railway, now made possible the penetration, colonization, and economic exploitation of continental heartlands, huge regions that until now had been too remote to be of much value. It was above all the impact of the railway that persuaded the father of British geopolitics, Halford Mackinder, to prophesy in 1904 that the Columbian age, in which sea power had dominated the globe, was coming to an end.

"The scramble for empire was also spurred by the fact that many great powers were now in on the game. In the first half of the nineteenth century, Britain had not only by far the greatest overseas empire but also the world's only industrialized economy. By 1900, this was no longer true. Russia, France, Germany, and even Japan, Italy, and the United States had now entered the competition for empire. As a result, 'empty' territory was fast disappearing. Roughly one-quarter of the world's land surface changed hands between 1876 and 1915, as the rival imperialist great powers grabbed 'unoccupied' corners of the globe. One incentive to do so was that with the major exception of Britain the great powers were moving away from free trade and toward protectionism. In that contest, it made sense to seize direct control over territories, raw materials, and markets before being shut out by a rival power. The British foreign secretary, the Earl of Rosebery, described this in 1893 as pegging out stakes for the future. When one first pegged out these stakes, it was often impossible to know whether the effort would be worthwhile, but great powers could not afford to take chances, because the rapid development of technology was fundamentally altering geopolitical realities by turning many regions previously of little interest to anyone into potentially crucial sources of wealth and power."<sup>138</sup>

Imperialist rivalries played their part in the build-up to world war insofar as they exacerbated ethnic nationalisms and rivalries within and between the European powers. Indeed, as Dominic Lieven writes, they "played a big role in undermining all the great empires that existed in 1900 both inside and outside Europe." For by 1900, "nationalism had become a nearly universal phenomenon in Europe. Nationalist movements spread to subject peoples of the Russian, Austrian and Ottoman empires, including not just 'historical' people such as the Poles but also groups such as the Armenians, Bulgarians, Ukrainians and Czechs who had not enjoyed independent statehood for centuries, if at all. Irish nationalism was the precursor of these movements, drawing on historical myths and memories, hatred of the rule of alien landlords and governments, and questions of religion, language, and ethnicity. In Ireland as elsewhere, the sense of commitment, sacrifice, and intransigence that these issues evoked made many observers equate nationalism with a new form of religion. To short and humdrum individual lives, the nationalist faith could add a touch of the heroic and a sense that one belonged not to just to a community but also in meaningful terms to the sweep of history. To be sure, in much of Europe even in 1900 nationalism had little hold beyond the educated classes. Nor was intelligentsia nationalism by any means always committed to independent statehood in Ireland or elsewhere. Nevertheless, the Irish example was telling. The hold of nationalism appeared to

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<sup>138</sup> Lieven, *Towards the Flame. Empire, War and the End of Tsarist Russia*, London: Allen Lane, 2015, pp. 18-19.

strengthen as societies modernized. It was the product of civil society, mass literacy, and urbanization..."<sup>139</sup>

Moreover, by 1900 sensitive observers were seriously doubting whether the European empires, even if they had once had "good intentions", were in any real sense a force for good any longer. Thus Wilfrid Seawen Blunt wrote: "The old century is very nearly out, and leaves the world in a pretty pass, and the British Empire is playing the devil in it as never an empire before on so large a scale. We may live to see its fall. All the nations of Europe are making the same hell upon earth in China, massacring and pillaging and raping in the capture cities as outrageously as in the Middle Ages. The Emperor of Germany gives the word for slaughter and the Pope looks on and approves. In South Africa our troops are burning farms under Kitchener's command, and the Queen and the two Houses of Parliament, and the bench of bishops, thank God publicly and vote money for the work. The Americans are spending fifty millions a year on slaughtering the Filipinos; the King of the Belgians has invested his whole fortune on the Congo, where he is brutalizing the Negroes to fill his pockets. The French and Italians for the moment are playing a less prominent part in the slaughter; but their inactivity grieves them. The whole white race is reveling openly in violence, as though it had never pretended to be Christian. God's curse be on them all! So ends the famous nineteenth century in which we were so proud to be born!"<sup>140</sup>

Only fourteen years later God's curse would fall on them all...

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<sup>139</sup> Lieven, *op. cit.*, pp. 8, 20.

<sup>140</sup> Blunt, in Cohen and Major, *op. cit.*, pp. 683-684.

## 9. AFRICAN GENOCIDE

The racist attitudes of the European imperialists, who often thought of the native peoples as sub-human, not unnaturally elicited anti-imperial reactions from the natives. Thus in January, 1904 the Herero of South-West Africa rose up against their German colonial masters, who had been forcing the Herero into reservations to make way for 4,500 German settlers. They were crushed, and in October the governor of the colony, General Lothar von Troth chillingly declared: "I, the Great General of the German soldiers, address this letter to the Herero people. The Herero are no longer considered German subjects. They have murdered, stolen, cut off ears, noses and other parts from wounded soldiers, and now refuse to fight on out of cowardice. I have this to say to them: Whoever turns over one of the captains to one of my garrisons as a prisoner will receive 1,000 Marks and he who hands over Samuel Maharero will be entitled to a reward of 5,000 Marks. The Herero people will have to leave the country. Otherwise I shall force them to do so by means of guns. Within the German boundaries, every Herero, whether found armed or unarmed, with or without cattle, I shall drive them back to their people - otherwise I shall order shots to be fired at them. These are my words to Herero people."

Von Trotha justified his policies on the Darwinian grounds that the Herero were lower on the evolutionary scale of races... This proved that Darwinism is a barbaric creed. As St. Barsanuphius of Optina (+1912) said: "Darwin created an entire system according to which life is a struggle for existence, a struggle for the strong against the weak, where those that are conquered are doomed to destruction. This is already the beginning of a bestial philosophy, and those who come to believe in it wouldn't think twice about killing a man, assaulting a woman, or robbing their closest friend - and they would do all this calmly, with a full recognition of their right to commit their crimes."<sup>141</sup>

"So began," writes Daniel Jonah Goldhagen, "the twentieth century, a century of mass slaughter, with 'the Great General of the Mighty Kaiser, von Trotha', declaring unabashedly a policy that has since been so frequently enacted elsewhere, though rarely proclaimed openly: a program of violent elimination, including mass slaughter. The Germans' aim here was total elimination..."

"... Von Trotha's infamous 'Extermination Order' came after the Herero, already defeated, were suing for peace. He wanted to finish them off. Seven years later, the Germans had annihilated 80 per cent of the eighty thousand Herero. Having decided that the 'Herero cease to exist as a tribe', the Germans appropriated the Herero's land and cattle, and subjected surviving Herero to a kind of apartheid..."<sup>142</sup>

Nor was von Trotha exceptional in his cruelty. Significantly, the leaders of the German army and state did not resist his plans on moral grounds even when, like von Schlieffen, the author of the famous pincer plan put into operation in 1914, they thought them impractical. "He wrote to Chancellor Bernard von Bülow, 'One can agree

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<sup>141</sup> Victor Afanasyev, *Elder Barsanuphius of Optina*, Platina: St. Herman of Alaska Brotherhood, 2000, p. 488.

<sup>142</sup> Goldhagen, *Worse than War. Genocide, Eliminationism, and the Ongoing Assault on Humanity*, London: Abacus, 2009, pp. 33-34, 3-36.

with [von Trotha's] plan of annihilating the whole people or driving them from the land... The intention of General von Trotha can therefore be approved. The only problem is that he does not have the power to carry it out.' So von Schlieffen recommended to von Bülow, who viewed the annihilation as un-Christian, economically injurious, and harmful to Germans' reputation among Europeans, that von Trotha's annihilation plan be rescinded. Kaiser Wilhelm II, who himself had declared Christian principles invalid for dealing with heathen and savages, after weeks of foot dragging, finally did so. The eliminationist means changed from total annihilation, but not in favour of expulsion (the Herero, according to von Schlieffen, 'would present a constant threat'). Instead, they settled for another of the interchangeable eliminationist options: chaining and turning those surrendering into slaves, including by branding each one's body with a *GH* for *gefangne Herero*, 'captured Herero'. The Germans' formal halt of mass killing, because it was born of practicality, was only partial. They continued their annihilationist practices against the rebellious Nama, slaughtering an estimated 75 percent of them and depositing most of the rest in camps as forced laborers.."143

Although contemporary Darwinists have tried to deny the fact, Social Darwinism is a direct and logical consequence of Biological Darwinism. The connection would be proved again by the Darwinist Austro-German politicians in World War One...

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But the greatest slaughter took place under the rule of Leopold II, king of the Belgians, in the Congo Free State - a state 96 times the size of Belgium, which, as Montefiore writes, "was free only in name. It was not even a Belgian colony, but rather Leopold's personal property, from which he squeezed profits as he plundered the area's rich natural resources, notably rubber and ivory.

"Order in the Congo Free State was maintained by the Force Publique, a notoriously cruel mercenary army of 20,000 men, officered by Europeans but relying on badly paid Africans as foot soldiers. The Force Publique was charged with the collection of the rubber tax, an oppressive levy that effectively required forced labour. Leopold's agents seized the women and children and refused to release them until the men went into the rainforest and brought back the required quantity of rubber, which was then sold on, all the time swelling Leopold's coffers.

"In order to stop them wasting ammunition on hunting wild animals, the Force Publique were ordered to account for every bullet they fired bringing back the right hand of their victim. The hands of thousands of innocent Congolese were cut off by the mercenaries, whether they were dead or alive. Villages were burned down, inhabitants tortured and some reports even suggested that members of the Force Publique engaged in cannibalism. The headquarters of Leon Rom, the barbaric Belgian soldier in charge of the Force Publique, was surrounded by hundreds of severed heads.

"These atrocities caused the deaths of an estimated 10 million people, half the population of the Congo, either at the hands of the Force Publique or through hunger and deprivation. Meanwhile, Leopold presented himself to the rest of Europe as a

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<sup>143</sup> Goldhagen, *op. cit.*, pp. 220-221.

humanitarian, determined to liberate the area from the scourge of the Arab slave trade, and spreading European 'civilisation'. But the Christian missionaries who penetrated into the heart of the Congo told a very different story, and reports of awful abuses began to filter back to Europe.

"In the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century there were a number of tribal rebellions. These were brutally suppressed, but they did serve to provoke further scrutiny into conditions in the Congo Free State. In 1900 Edmund Dene Morel, an English trader, began to campaign against the horrific conditions in the territory, and in 1903 the British Foreign Office commissioned the diplomat Roger Casement to go to the Congo to find out what was going on. Casement's detailed eyewitness report did much to stir up international outrage, and writers such as Arthur Conan Doyle, Joseph Conrad and Mark Twain joined in the campaign. In 1908 the Belgian Parliament finally voted to annex the Congo from their own king, ending his control of the region."<sup>144</sup>

"The state administrators," writes Sir Richard Evans, "began to replace wild-rubber collecting with the planting of rubber trees. However, the campaign against the atrocities in the Congo did not touch the French Congo, where similar outrages took place. A study of one French trading post showed that the fluctuations in rubber production correlated statistically with the number of bullets used by company police between 1904 and 1907, and one estimate puts the population loss in the French Congolese rainforest area at 50 per cent as well. Inequality was built into the French colonies, with rare exceptions. Apart from Algeria, where European settlement was on a large scale in the north, this meant that the colonies were run in an authoritarian fashion by local administrators. Earlier in the century the French had still believed in the 'civilizing mission', or in other words spreading the benefits of the French Revolution, liberty, equality and fraternity, across the globe, but despite the continuing power of this ideology, the experience of colonization forced a partial retreat from this lofty principle. When indigenous kingdoms like Dahomey, whose female soldiers and customs of mass human sacrifice fascinated and horrified Europeans, were taken over, it was thought that their inhabitants could not be turned into French men and women; it would simply cost too much in money and lives. As a book by the French doctor and explorer Jules Harmand (1845-1921), *Domination and Colonization*, concluded in 1910, it was necessary to 'better the lot of the aborigine in all ways, but only in directions that are profitable to him - by letting him evolve in his own way... by *indirect rule*, with a conservation... of the institutions of the subject people....'"<sup>145</sup>

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<sup>144</sup> Montefiore, *op. cit.*, pp. 402-403. Leopold had been the single shareholder in the philanthropic organisation 'Association Internationale Africaine' (International African Association) which he founded in 1876. As Andre C. James writes, Leopold, "Under the guise of missionary work and westernisation of African peoples, used the Association to further his ambitions of empire building in the hope of bringing international prestige to relatively small Belgium. In reality, the International African Association was a vehicle to enslave the people of the Congo River Basin and enrich Leopold II." ("The Butcher of Congo. King Leopold II of Belgium", April 4, 2011, <http://www.digitaljournal.com/blog/11297>)

<sup>145</sup> Evans, *op. cit.*, pp. 664-665.

## 10. THE DECLINE OF THE BRITISH ARISTOCRACY

In parallel with the crisis in British imperialism came a crisis in British aristocratism. This was important because the aristocratism of the British empire, and the self-confidence it engendered in its colonial governors, was perhaps the key to its durability. For “aristocrats,” writes Henry Kissinger, “legitimize themselves by a notion of *quality* which runs counter to the despotism of egalitarian democracy”.<sup>146</sup>

After the very dangerous decade of the 1840s, the hierarchical principle had been strengthened not only in Britain but throughout Europe. In spite of revolutionary rumblings, and the occasional explosion, like the Paris Commune, the culture of deference and obedience and moral respectability extended from the highest to the lowest levels of society. As many novels, plays and TV series (notably *Downton Abbey*) have shown, the servants often absorbed these values even more deeply than their masters.

Economically, however, the land-owning aristocracy was in decline. “The old landed system of traditional gentry agriculture,” writes Paul Johnson, “had been in deep trouble since the arrival of transatlantic grain in the 1870s and was now [after 1918] on its last legs. Pre-war legislation had been designed to protect tenant-farmers against landlords. Lloyd George, who hated the landed aristocracy, capped the system with his Agriculture Act (1920), which brought in secure tenancy; and a further act in 1923 destroyed restrictive tenancy agreements and legalized ‘freedom of cropping’. The result was the break-up of thousands of estates, big and small. ‘England is changing hands,’ wrote *The Times*, 19 May 1920. ‘From 1910 onwards,’ H.J. Massingham claimed, ‘a vindictive, demagogic and purely urban legislation has crippled [the landlord], good, bad or indifferent, responsible or irresponsible.’”<sup>147</sup>

The political power of the aristocrats also declined. Until the turn of the century, all British governments, both conservative and liberal, had been dominated by aristocrats. Thus when Lord Salisbury became Prime Minister in 1895 there were nineteen ministers in the Cabinet, of whom ten were peers.<sup>148</sup> But in 1906 the Liberals won a landslide victory at the elections, and the new Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Welsh commoner David Lloyd George wanted to introduce several welfare provisions that were to be paid for by a graduated income tax. His friend, the young MP Winston Churchill, though an aristocrat by birth, supported the idea of the “safety net” for the poor: “I do not want to impair the vigour of competition, but we can do much to mitigate the causes of failure. We want to draw a line below which we will not allow persons to live and labour, yet above which they may compete with all the strength of their manhood. We do not want to pull down the structure of science and civilization – but to spread a net above the abyss...”<sup>149</sup>

But the House of Lords rejected these welfare provisions... And so the Liberals began to say of the Lords: “Mend Them or End Them...”<sup>150</sup>

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<sup>146</sup> Kissinger, in Niall Ferguson, *Kissinger. 1923-1964: The Idealist*, New York: Penguin, 2016, p. 458.

<sup>147</sup> Johnson, *Modern Times*, New York: Harper Perennial, 1990, p. 163.

<sup>148</sup> Kerr, *op. cit.*, p. 233.

<sup>149</sup> Churchill, in Cohen and Major, *op. cit.*, pp. 652-653.

<sup>150</sup> Cohen and Major, *op. cit.*, p. 651.

As Rebecca Fraser writes, the Liberals “had had enough of their smart new twentieth-century legislation being destroyed by a group of people whom Lloyd George daringly described as being ‘five hundred ordinary men, chosen accidentally from among the unemployed’. Should they, he asked, ‘override the judgement - the deliberate judgement - of millions of people engaged in the industry which makes the wealth of this country?’ Hereditary privilege was beginning look absurd. Lloyd George decided to get rid of the powers of the Lords once and for all. He would raise the immense funds he needed by a method almost guaranteed to arouse the wrath of the Lords: a super-tax on top of income tax for higher incomes, plus a higher rate of death duty for the wealthier estates. Most interesting of all was a tax on any unearned increase in the value of land, to be paid whenever land changed hands.

“It was a tradition that only the House of Commons could alter money bills. If the Lords rejected the budget, it would be in breach of a constitutional convention. The People’s Budget would be the test, as Lloyd George put it, of ‘whether the country was to be governed by the King and the Peers of the King and the People’. But the House of Lords was so enraged by the budget, and by the idea of the state preparing to value every field in the country to estimate its unearned increment, that it completely lost its head. In 1909 the greatest landowners in the country were still, as they had been for centuries, the aristocracy and the landed gentry, whose relatives represented them in the House of Lords. Lloyd George’s tax seemed aimed at them, the 1 per cent of the population who owned 70 per cent of the country.

“Lloyd George’s budget passed the Liberal House of Commons, but was thrown out by the House of Lords. The chancellor’s response was to cry, ‘We have got them at last!’ [Prime Minister] Asquith dissolved Parliament and called a general election for January 1910 on the ground that the rights of the Commons had been usurped. The election was bitterly fought. The peers made the great mistake of taking part...

“The election, the second of Edward VII’s reign, returned the Liberals to power, but the result was disappointing. The landslide had vanished. The Liberals had only three MPs more than the [Conservatives and] Unionists. To push their measures through, the Liberals were dependent on the votes of the Labour Party and the Irish Nationalists. A new Home Rule Bill would be the payment demanded for the Irish Nationalists’ co-operation.

“The Conservative Lords suddenly agreed to pass the budget. But Asquith and Lloyd George were not put off. Asquith introduced the Parliament Bill, which strictly limited the House of Lords’ powers: it should no longer be able to change or throw out a money bill; any bill which was passed by the House of Commons in three successive sessions, even if it was rejected by the Lords each time, should become law...”<sup>151</sup>

The Liberal government’s Parliament Bill of 1911, writes E.P. Thompson, “permanently removed the Lords’ control over money bills and reduced their power over other bills to a mere capacity to delay them for two years. The merit of death duties, income tax, and supertax in the eyes of radicals and socialists - and their

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<sup>151</sup> Fraser, *A People’s History of Britain*, London: Chatto & Windus, 2003, pp. 635- 636.

infamy in the eyes of conservatives and more moderate liberals - was that once accepted in principle they were capable of yielding an ever greater return by a simple tightening of the screw. The screw was, in fact, repeatedly tightened throughout the following half century."<sup>152</sup>

Nevertheless, neither the wealth nor the influence of the aristocracy was yet completely broken in England: it would take two world wars to do that. The continuing self-confidence - but also nagging worry that the age was passing - is wonderfully expressed in the great orchestral works of Sir Edward Elgar's in the Edwardian decade: the two symphonies and the violin concerto. Elgar was not born into the nobility, but he absorbed its ideals, and word "*nobilmente*" that he used to describe several of his most famous musical moments also expressed his devotion to "*the principle of High Toryism - in adherence to chivalric ideals, a belief in a hierarchical ordering of society informed by the assumption of noblesse oblige, a belief in paternalistic community rather than the atomized society of evolving capitalism.*"<sup>153</sup>

However, a certain Rubicon had been crossed. And the new democratism was not merely political. Looking back over the period since the Liberal landslide of 1906, Virginia Woolf would later write in her essay "Mr. Bennett and Mrs. Brown" (1924): "Human character has changed." "Masters and servants, husbands and wives, parents and children" were behaving in different ways towards each other and, she went on, "when human relationships change, there is at the same time a change in religion, conduct, politics and literature..."<sup>154</sup>

Britain had entered the democratic age...

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<sup>152</sup> Thompson, *Europe since Napoleon*, London: Penguin Books, 1966,

<sup>153</sup> Keith Alldritt, *England Resounding*, Ramsbury: Robert Hale, 2019, p. 45.

<sup>154</sup> Woolf, in Cannadine, *op. cit.*, p. 474.

## 11. THE ENTENTE CORDIALE AND THE FIRST MOROCCAN CRISIS

The international furore over the Boer War, and the increasing threat posed by Germany's *Weltpolitik*, led the British gradually to abandon their policy of "splendid isolation" and seek allies on the continent – including (especially) states such as France and Russia, which hitherto had been their traditional enemies.

German aggression was directed at the beginning, not inside Europe, but to the other side of the Atlantic "After he came to the throne," writes Sara Moore, the militaristic Kaiser Wilhelm "was seldom out of uniform. Wildly jealous of the British and encouraged by the shipbuilding industry, he decided that the path to glory for the German Empire was to build a great navy and attack America, whose defences he believed to be weak. Wilhelm elevated a man with steely ambition and a magnificent two-pronged beard, called Alfred Tirpitz, to become State Secretary of the Imperial Navy Office and Tirpitz was soon given the coveted title 'von' to elevate him into the nobility. The plan was not to conquer the US physically: Operational Plan Three called for a deliberate attack on the international systems of trade, wealth and insurance with the goal of bringing America to its knees by killing capitalism.

"Tirpitz toured the US on his way back from the Far East. He reported that America was filled with societies of German origin and organizer of pan-German sentiment. By early 1898 Naval Lieutenant (and later General) Eberhard von Mantey had drawn up his first plan. It called for a great German fleet to cross the Atlantic and destroy the Norfolk Naval Shipyard and the Newport News Shipbuilding Center, with another attack aimed at 'the most sensitive point of American defences, Portsmouth Naval Shipyard at the junction of Maine and New Hampshire. But the Kaiser found the funding for the project difficult and the Spanish-American War broke out in 1898.

"Then the Kaiser had the idea of tempting Britain into forming a naval coalition with Germany and France against America during the Spanish War, but Arthur Balfour, who commanded the world's most powerful navy, defended America, saying: 'No: if the British fleet takes any part in this war, it will be to put itself between the American fleet and those of your coalition.'

"So the Kaiser reverted to his previous schemes. In 1899 he changed his plan to an attack on America's Eastern Seaboard by sixty warships, with 100,000 soldiers and a large artillery force, but the designer of the famous Schlieffen Plan, General von Schlieffen, poured cold water on all his projects.

"Von Tirpitz and his Kaiser were frustrated but another opportunity presented itself in the New World. The Venezuelans had refused to pay their debts to the Kaiser persuaded Britain and Italy to join him in blockading the Venezuelan coast until they paid them. After a while he threatened to bombard the coastal towns with a view to occupying them if he did not get satisfaction.

“Ebullient extravert Theodore Roosevelt became US President in 1901. He had no illusions about what the Kaiser’s threat to occupy the Venezuelan coastal towns would mean. If a German regiment managed to obtain a base within striking distance of the projected Panama Canal, Venezuela would be powerless to drive it out. So Roosevelt decided to kill the Kaiser’s initiative. Having sounded out Italy and Britain, he warned the German ambassador, Dr. von Holleben, that unless the Kaiser accepted arbitration over the debts within a strict timetable, the American fleet under Admiral Dewey would appear off the Venezuelan coast and defend it from German attack.

“Dr. von Holleben was aghast. ‘Blind obedience’ was not only expected of soldiers serving the German Office Corps but also of civil servants serving their imperial master. Dr. von Holleben declared that when his imperial master, the Kaiser, refused to accept arbitration that was the end of the matter. He asked Roosevelt if he realized what his words meant. President Roosevelt declared that it meant war. A week went by without any communication from Berlin. Then von Holleben called at the White House again. The President asked him if he had heard anything from Berlin. ‘No,’ said von Holleben. ‘Of course His Majesty cannot arbitrate.’

“‘Very well,’ replied President Roosevelt. ‘You may think it worthwhile to cable to Berlin that I have changed my mind. I am sending instructions to Admiral Dewey to take our fleet to Venezuela next Monday instead of Tuesday.’

“Von Holleben shot out of the door and returned less than thirty-six hours later with the news: ‘His Imperial Majesty consents to arbitration.’....”<sup>155</sup>

It was the threatened actions of the German vessels against poor, virtually defenceless Venezuelans that seemed especially repellent to the Americans. Thus in New York the *Evening Post* sneered: “As a method of maintaining German prestige the attack upon a mud fort and a collection of naked fishermen must be regarded as a failure.” Chancellor Bernhardt von Bülow claimed that “no American or British admiral would have done otherwise.” But the damage to German prestige was done; and resentment against the Anglo-Saxons was aroused. As Anthony Delano writes, “after the Venezuela adventure, the Kaiser was later to say, relations between Britain and Germany were never the same.”<sup>156</sup>

In 1898 the Kaiser visited Palestine and Syria and proclaimed himself the protector of all Muslims – a direct threat to the British in India, where there were many millions of Muslims. Moreover, the Sultan granted Germany a concession to build a railway from Constantinople to Baghdad, which threatened both Russia, whose main outlet for her exports was the Bosphorus and the Straits, and Britain, in that a railway ending in Baghdad threatened both the British oilfields in Persia and a passage to India that did not go through British-controlled Suez. Meanwhile, the Kaiser, supported by the great industrialist Krupp, decided to build a number of modern battleships with the ultimate aim of rivalling Britain’s supremacy on the high seas.

For this reason, Britain began to contemplate an alliance with the old enemy, France. The prospects for friendship between Britain and France must have seemed very

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<sup>155</sup> Moore, *The Fourth Reich?* Jollies Publishing, 2016, pp. 34-36.

<sup>156</sup> Delano, “Crisis in Caracas”, *BBC History Magazine*, vol. 7, N 1, January, 2006, p. 31.

unpromising in view of their long-term rivalry and many wars. Nevertheless, according to John Julius Norwich, in recent times the British “viewed the steady French expansion [in Africa, particularly] with equanimity and perhaps a moderate degree of admiration. Even when Napoleon III had built fifteen powerful new propeller-driven battlecruisers, the French navy remained smaller and palpably inferior to their own; and besides, the two spheres of influence seldom seriously overlapped. Perhaps the most dangerous moment came in 1898, when a French expedition to Fashoda on the White Nile tried to gain control of the whole river basin, blocking Britain from the Sudan. On the spot the British – ostensibly acting in the interests of the Khedive of Egypt – outnumbered the French by about ten to one, and the two sides remained perfectly friendly; but in London and Paris tempers ran high. At last the French backed down, realizing just in time that Germany was growing ever more powerful and that in the always possible event of another war they would be lost without British friendship; but they could not conceal the fact that they had been publicly humiliated, and it was to be several years before the ‘Fashoda affair’ was forgotten.”<sup>157</sup>

But it was forgotten, and the two nations grew closer... “Already in 1896, Lord Salisbury had found that concessions to France along the Mekong valley in the borderlands between British Burma and French Indochina produced the welcome side effect of drawing the French in and temporarily loosening the cohesion of the Franco-Russian Alliance. The Entente Cordiale of 1904 was, by the same token, not primarily an anti-German agreement (at least not from Whitehall’s perspective) but one that was intended to mute colonial tensions with France, while at the same time generating some measure of indirect leverage on Russia. [Foreign Minister] Déclassé had encouraged the speculation by suggesting that if an Entente were to come into being, France would exercise a restraining influence on Russia and even make it clear to St. Petersburg that French support would not be forthcoming if Russia were to pick a fight with Britain. There was thus good reason to hope, as Lord Lansdowne put it, that ‘a good understanding with France would not improbably be the precursor of a better understanding with Russia.’”<sup>158</sup>

In the Entente, “France recognized Britain’s claims to Egypt and the Nile, while Britain accepted France’s possession of Morocco and Madagascar, and further settlements were reached concerning Newfoundland, West Africa, the New Hebrides and Siam. Meanwhile, the British government also sought to lessen tensions with Russia (and also with China), and to rein in further imperial adventures in Asia, by repudiating the unauthorized efforts made by Sir Francis Younghusband to acquire Tibet for Britain.”<sup>159</sup>

The Entente had been facilitated above all by King Edward VII, whose “great gifts as a sociable king”, writes Barbara Tuchman, “had proved invaluable to his country. In the nine short years of his reign England’s splendid isolation had given way, under pressure, to a series of ‘understandings’ or attachments, but not quite alliances – for England dislikes the definitive – with two old enemies, France and Russia, and one promising new power, Japan. The resulting shift in balance registered itself around the

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<sup>157</sup> Norwich, *France. From Gaul to DeGaulle*, London: John Murray, 2019 p. 327.

<sup>158</sup> Clark, *The Sleepwalkers*, pp. 138-139.

<sup>159</sup> Cannadine, *The Victorious Century*, pp. 479-471.

world, and affected every state's relationship with every other. Though Edward neither initiated nor influenced his country's policy, his personal diplomacy helped to make the change possible."<sup>160</sup>

The Entente was not a military alliance, but it did offer the prospect of cooperation between the two nations against Germany. The British were not as anti-German as the French<sup>161</sup>, but, according to Tombs, "British politicians, diplomats, service chiefs and public came to see Germany as a potential threat... and France as a potential ally although plans were still being considered for the possibility of war against France and Russia. Tentative military 'conversations' took place between British and French generals. The Foreign Secretary, Sir Edward Grey, tried to explain it all in 1911 to the Prime Minister, Herbert Asquith: 'Early in 1906 the French said to us 'will you help us if there is a war with Germany?' We said 'we can't promise, our hands must be free'. The French then urged that the Military Authorities should be allowed to exchange views - ours to say what they should do - the French to say how they would like it done, if we did side with the French. Otherwise, as the French urged, even if we decided to support France, on the outbreak of war we shouldn't be able to do it effectively. We agreed to this.'"<sup>162</sup>

The question whether the British would help the French militarily if the Germans invaded France became a vital matter in July 1914...

Germany, in accordance with her new *Weltpolitik*, decided to challenge this deal - in Morocco. The independence of Morocco had been guaranteed by an international convention of 1880. However, writes Moore, "the French, 'with blissful disregard for international agreements' had set about turning Morocco into a protectorate over which they would have a trade monopoly. The British were torn because they believed in free trade. The Kaiser made a state visit [on 31 March 1905] and declared his support for a sovereign and independent Morocco, suggesting a conference to decide the matter.

"When French Foreign Minister Theophile Delcasse opposed the idea of Moroccan independence, German Chancellor Bernhard von Bulow threatened war and Delcasse was forced to resign. The delighted Kaiser elevated von Bulow to the rank of Prince. Yet the 1906 conference at Algeciras was not a success for the German Reich. Theodore Roosevelt had been alarmed by the threat to the Panama Canal if a German garrison was stationed in neighbouring Venezuela; the British were equally disturbed by the threat to the Strait of Gibraltar if German troops became entrenched in Tangier. The Kaiser's sudden arrival in Tangier and his procession through the city of horseback, was treated with the greatest suspicion by the whole of Europe."<sup>163</sup>

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<sup>160</sup> Tuchman, *The Guns of August*, New York: Ballantine, 1962, p. 5.

<sup>161</sup> There were considerable cultural links between Britain and Germany, especially in music. And "no fewer than 335 German students matriculated at Oxford between 1899 and 1914, including thirty-three Rhodes scholar. Among the German Oxonians were the sons of the Prussian minister Prince Hohenlohe, Vice-Admiral Moritz von Heeringen and Chancellor Bethmann Hollweg (Balliol, class of 1908)." (Niall Ferguson, *The Pity of War 1914-1918*, London: Penguin, 2012, p. 24).

<sup>162</sup> Tombs, op. cit., p. 605.

<sup>163</sup> Moore, op. cit., p. 38.

The Russians supported France as against Germany in the Moroccan dispute not least because the French offered the Russians a vitally important loan. The Anglo-French Entente was now stronger than ever; and the “encirclement” by France and Russia that German diplomats feared appeared closer to reality.

“After Algeciras,” writes Miranda Carter, “the German government seemed to be pulled in two directions: on the one hand, there were those who accepted that sabre-rattling hadn’t worked, and that something needed to be done to defuse the tensions the conference had produced; and on the other, there was a feeling that Germany hadn’t played hard enough, that the government had pusillanimously shied away from the logical consequence of its policy – war with France. [Most senior ministers] were in the first camp; many of the German officer class were in the second. After fifteen years under the command of General Alfred von Schlieffen, the senior army staff consisted of a small Junker elite obsessed with its own privileges and superiority, fearing and fending off dilution by the middle classes, utterly opposed to socialism which it regarded as degenerate, saturated in the ideas of the nationalist historian Treitschke – who saw Europe as a Hobbesian battlefield where might was everything and the Slav the enemy – actively welcoming war as a force that would cleanse Germany inside out. Wilhelm had just replaced the retiring Schlieffen – the appointment was entirely in his gift – with Helmuth von Moltke, who was the nephew of the elder Moltke who had delivered the Prussian victories of the 1860s. Within the army Moltke was regarded as a controversial choice: not quite tough enough, and a little too arty – he played the cello, liked to paint and read Goethe. In other respects he was absolutely a product of the solipsistic world of the German General Staff; different only in that he didn’t welcome the European war that he thought was inevitable.”<sup>164</sup>

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<sup>164</sup> Carter, *The Three Emperors*, London: Penguin, 2010, pp. 331-332.

## 12. THE SECOND MOROCCAN CRISIS

“On 17 April 1911 the French pushed troops into Morocco, ostensibly to police Fez, where riots had been directed against the Sultan. Under the terms of the Algeçiras conference, hammered out in 1906 after the first Moroccan crisis, France should not have acted without consulting the other signatories, including Germany. The French prime minister was Joseph Cailloux, the man whose wife did so much to distract the French in the key days of the July crisis [in 1914]: he was sufficiently conscious of the weakness of the French position to encourage the German Foreign Ministry to believe that Germany might be recompensed with concessions elsewhere in Africa. On 1 July 1911 a German warship, the *Panther*, appeared in the Atlantic port of Agadir.”<sup>165</sup>

“With the *Panther*... positioned threateningly on the coast, the Germany Foreign Office demanded the French hand over the whole of the French Congo, adding that if they did not respond positively Germany might be forced to extreme measures.”<sup>166</sup> The British saw this as a threat to their naval supremacy, and reacted strongly.

As a result of the negotiations, writes Fritz Fischer, “instead of receiving the French Congo as the corner-stone of the future great, continuous colonial empire in Africa, Germany was fobbed off with the meagre strips of land on the Congo and Uliangi. Germany had felt confident of worsting France, and her wrath at the failure was directed primarily against Britain, whose support had alone saved France from defeat. Both sides were ready to fight. A jotting by the Chief of the German General Staff, which is instinct equally with excitement and disappointment, shows how feeling was running in Germany after the interruption of the diplomatic negotiations in mid-August 1911 (when, on the other side, military conversations were going on between the British, French and Russians). Moltke, Chief of the German General Staff from 1908 to 1914, wrote: ‘I am thoroughly fed up with the wretched Morocco business. If we slink out of the affair again, as in 1908, with our tail between our legs, if we cannot pluck up the courage to make an energetic demand which we are prepared *to enforce with the sword*, then I despair of the future of the German Reich. Then I shall go.’”<sup>167</sup>

The only direct casualty of this crisis was the German colonial minister, who resigned.<sup>168</sup> But the blow to German pride was considerable, especially the Kaiser’s, who resolved not to back down again... Moreover, Germany was by now completely isolated diplomatically. Even Austria’s Foreign Minister Graf von Aehrenthattl, while vowing loyalty to the Triple Alliance (Germany, Austria and Italy), “pointed out that Germany could count on Austria’s support only when questions of European importance were at stake.”<sup>169</sup> Thus when Italy invaded Libya in 1911, Germany supported the move, but the Austrians did not, fearing that the invasion would stir up irredentist feeling among the Balkan nations – which it did, since they began their wars of liberation from Turkey the very next year...

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<sup>165</sup> Strachan, *The First World War*, London: Pocket Books, 2006, pp. 36-37, 40.

<sup>166</sup> Carter, *op. cit.*, p. 392.

<sup>167</sup> Fischer, *Germany’s Aims in the First World War*, New York: W.W. Norton, 1967, p. 25.

<sup>168</sup> Carter, *op. cit.*, p. 393.

<sup>169</sup> Moore, *op. cit.*, p. 39.

Also in 1913, writes J.M. Roberts, "the Kaiser confided to the Austrian chief of staff that he was no longer against a great war (by which he meant one between several powers) in principle. One of his ministers even felt able to talk to members of parliament of the 'coming world War'. In an atmosphere of excited patriotism (it was the centenary of the so-called 'War of Liberation' with Napoleonic France) a special army bill was introduced that year into the Reichstag. The Russian modernization and rearmament programme (to be completed by 1917) had certainly alarmed the German soldiers. But by itself this can hardly explain the psychological deterioration in Germany that had brought about so dangerous a transformation of German policy as the acceptance of the inevitability of conflict with Russia - and therefore with France - if Germany's due weight in Europe was to be assured.

"Many Germans felt that 'encirclement' frustrated the exercise of German power, and should be broken, if only for reasons of prestige, and that such a step must involve a confrontation - though not necessarily war - with Great Britain. But this was not all that was happening in Germany in the decade before 1914. There had been a major inflammation of nationalist (and conservative) thinking and agitation in those years. It showed in the growth of societies and pressure-groups with different aims - safeguarding of the social hierarchy, anti-Semitism, patriotic support for armaments - but all contributing to a xenophobic and authoritarian atmosphere. Some Germans thought positively of possible territorial and material gains in the east and brooded on a supposed historic mission of Teuton to dominate over Slavs. Some were troubled by the colonial questions that had been so contentious and prickly before 1900 (yet colonies had proved disappointing and colonial rivalry played virtually no part in the final approach to war). Germany was dangerously ready psychologically for conflict, even if, when war came at last, it was to find its detonator in the South Slav lands..."<sup>170</sup>

Lieven points out that "whereas German discussions of American or British power were expressed in the coolly rational language of political economy and academic history, where Russia was concerned a much more vivid and sometimes even an apocalyptic tone was often present. This derived partly from a long-standing German sense of cultural superiority but also fear about a more primitive people who were often defined as semi-European at best. Most western Europeans shared the cultural arrogance but were less fearful than the Germans for the simple reason that Russian power lay further from their borders.

"Dislike of Russia was reinforced in the nineteenth century by liberal and socialist Germany's distaste for the tsarist regime. The German Jews had a particular dislike for the land of the pogrom, but German émigrés in Berlin from Russia's Baltic Provinces (today's Estonia and Latvia) probably had a bigger overall impact on German perceptions of Russia. They brought to Germany a vision of racial conflict between Slavs and Germans that could then be applied to struggles between the German and the Slav peoples of the Austrian monarchy as well. This played a big role in pan-German thinking but had an influence beyond their ranks. Paul Rohrbach was a key 'public intellectual' of Baltic origin who strongly influenced German opinion about international relations and Russia. He disliked both tsarism and Russians. He stressed the glaring weaknesses of the Russian economy and society and argued that an aggressive foreign policy was almost the only means for the regime to cling to its

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<sup>170</sup> Roberts, *The Penguin History of the Twentieth Century*, London: Penguin, 2000, pp. 205-206.

fading legitimacy. But although he expected major convulsions in the near future in Russia, he did not doubt that in the longer run the country would be a formidable world power, noting that on current projections by the second half of the twentieth century Germany would face an eastern neighbour with a population of more than 300 million..."<sup>171</sup>

In the spring of 1914 Germany's Chief of Staff Moltke held talks with the Foreign Minister, Gottlieb von Jagow. "Jagow noted that Moltke told him that in two or three years the 'military superiority of our enemies would... so great that he did not know how he could overcome them. Today we would still be a match for them. In his opinion there was no alternative to making preventive war in order to defeat the enemy while there was still a chance of victory. The Chief of the General Staff therefore proposed that it should conduct of policy with the aim of provoking a war in the near future...."<sup>172</sup>

Critical here was the suicidal attitude of the Germany military, who not only saw war as inevitable, but seemed to prefer the prospect of a ruinous war to that of continuing peace, a Wagnerian attitude that did not augur well for the future.

"A vein of fatalism," writes Clark, "underlay the bellicism of the German military. When they spoke of war, the German military tended to speak less of victory than of the 'twin threats of defeat and annihilation' ...

"As for the Kaiser, though prone to outbursts of belligerent rhetoric, he panicked and counseled caution whenever a real conflict seemed likely, to the endless frustration of the generals. Wilhelm remained hopeful of a long-term accommodation with Britain. His remarks during 1913 suggest that he continued to regard an Anglo-German war as 'unthinkable'. He also remained confident that German military prowess would deter Russia from an armed intervention in a conflict between Austria and Serbia. This complacency prompted the hawkish General Falkenhayn, soon to become minister of war, to observe in a letter of January 1913 that the deluded faith of the political leadership - including Wilhelm - in the possibility of a lasting peace left Moltke 'standing alone' in his 'struggle' with the Kaiser for a more aggressive foreign policy."<sup>173</sup>

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<sup>171</sup> Lieven, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

<sup>172</sup> Fromkin, *Europe's Last Summer*, p. 110.

<sup>173</sup> Clark, *op. cit.*, pp. 333, 334.

### 13. WALL STREET, THE FEDERAL RESERVE ACT AND THE PRESIDENCY

America in the first decade of the twentieth century was booming as never before. However, her system of finance capitalism was subject to periodic shocks that required, it was felt, far greater supervision and capital injection by the federal government. The creation of a central bank turned out to be important not only for the regulation of domestic finance but also in financing the huge international loans that to a great extent determined the outcome of the First World War...

The Federal Reserve Bank of America was created by the administration of President Woodrow Wilson and Congress on December 23, 1913. However, as Hugh Brogan writes, the shock that propelled the creation of the Fed, as it is called, took place in October, 1907, when "a team of New York bankers, led by Pierpoint Morgan, struggled heroically against a crisis which threatened to bring down the whole American financial and economic structure; and they prevailed. But it had been a close-run thing, and victory would probably have eluded them if it had not been for Morgan's unique personal authority (at one moment he locked a couple of dozen of America's richest men into his library on Madison Avenue and there forced them to pledge their millions to the salvation of Wall Street).<sup>174</sup> As he himself remarked later, it was not healthy that economic security should rely so much on one man. But the panic also demonstrated to those with eyes to see, three even more important points.

"First, it had been brought on by an all-too-familiar combination of speculative greed and dishonest or incompetent management. In other words, the conditions which had led to panics in the past - in 1837, for instance, or 1873 - were not correcting themselves as American capitalism matured: they were getting worse.

"Secondly, the general economic effect of panics and crashes was getting greater all the time. Even though the 1907 panic was quickly brought under control and then halted in its course, it plunged America into depression for the next year, and the smooth and rapid growth of the years since 1897 was not renewed, even after confidence was restored. Prosperity was at best patchy and uncertain until the outbreak of the First World War.

"Finally, it was apparent that the only agency big enough to control events in future was the federal government. The Secretary of the Treasury had come to Morgan's aid in 1907 with deposits of thirty-five dollars from the federal surplus, which was fortunately just then a healthy one; on another occasion a much larger operation might be necessary, since the government's obligation to protect American prosperity was now acknowledged. Clearly it would be better if another crisis could be prevented by a steady application of government policy; *ad hoc* contrivances like those adopted in 1907 were not enough; in short, a federal law was necessary.

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<sup>174</sup> Something very similar happened a hundred years later, when US Treasury Secretary Henry Paulson and Chair of the Federal Reserve Ben Bernanke (both ex-Goldman Sachs bankers) knocked heads together to avert a collapse of the whole international financial system ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Financial\\_crisis\\_of\\_2007%E2%80%932008](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Financial_crisis_of_2007%E2%80%932008)). (V.M.)

“This was the reason for the Federal Reserve Act. It was the first episode in the process by which Washington has since become the determining factor in the US economy; but it was a very modest first step. The problem which the business world saw as the result of 1907 was the unsatisfactory state of the currency. Even allowing for the increased production of gold and the fantastic profitability of the American economy, there was simply not enough money available to the national banks for use in emergency – such an emergency as that in 1907 when the failure of two leading finance houses, for lack of ready cash, nearly brought the whole structure of finance capitalism tumbling. New forms of credit would have to be devised, and they would have to be backed by the federal government, precisely as Alexander Hamilton had argued when he founded the First Bank of the United States.

“Popular hostility to Wall Street was so deep, and the dissensions among the bankers themselves so sharp, that it proved impossible to get a new bank act through Congress under either Roosevelt or Taft; but it soon became one of the Wilson administration’s chief projects, and was duly achieved in the autumn of 1913... The reserve system reflected political and geographical realities by being a federation of twelve districts or regimes, the two most important being those centred on New York and Chicago; but it was directed from Washington by a Federal Reserve Board, consisting of the Secretary of the Treasury, the Comptroller of the Currency and five other members, all appointed by the President. (This arrangement was not particularly welcome to the bankers, who would rather have appointed the board themselves: but Wilson saw no reason for allowing the poachers to elect the gamekeepers.) The Board was and is substantially independent of the President, but by placing its headquarters in Washington, and by controlling appointments to it the authors of the Act (Congressmen Carter Glass of Virginia chief among them) made sure that it would be a national body, with a strong sense of political obligations as well as its commercial ones. In return for conceding this measure of political interference the capitalists got a flexible and dependable currency administered by the equivalent of a central bank.”<sup>175</sup>

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<sup>175</sup> Brogan, *The Penguin History of the USA*, London: Penguin, 2019, pp. 462-463. The Encyclopaedia Britannica describes the Fed’s present stage of development: “The system... consists of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, the 12 Federal Reserve banks, the Federal Open Market Committee, and the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB), which was authorized in 2010 by the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act (the CFPB assumed some functions of the former Consumer Advisory Council, which existed from 1976 to 2011). There are several thousand member banks.

“The seven-member Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System determines the reserve requirements of the member banks within statutory limits, reviews and determines the discount rates established by the 12 Federal Reserve banks, and reviews the budgets of the reserve banks. The Chairman of the Board of Governors is appointed to a four-year term by the president of the United States.

“A Federal Reserve bank is a privately owned corporation established pursuant to the Federal Reserve Act to serve the public interest; it is governed by a board of nine directors, six of whom are elected by the member banks and three of whom are appointed by the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System. The 12 Federal Reserve banks are located in Atlanta; Boston; Chicago; Cleveland; Dallas; Kansas City, Missouri; Minneapolis, Minnesota; New York City; Philadelphia; Richmond, Virginia; St. Louis, Missouri; and San Francisco.

“The 12-member Federal Open Market Committee, consisting of the seven members of the Board of Governors, the president of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, and four members elected by the Federal Reserve banks, is responsible for setting Federal Reserve bank policy to encourage the long-term objectives of price stability (i.e., controlling inflation through the adjustment of interest rates) and

Nevertheless, Congressman Lindberg called the Fed “the biggest trust on earth”, whereby “an invisible government through the power of money is legalized.”<sup>176</sup> And in the opinion of many, since it was a *privately* owned corporation, albeit designed to pursue the public interest, and since the law was composed with the active participation of leading members of the Jewish banks Cohn, Loeb & Co. and J.P. Morgan, its creation placed the finances of the USA into the hands of Jewish-American bankers – the Rothschilds and their associates. Already the power of bankers like Morgan was colossal. This was demonstrated by the fact that when he died in 1913, the flags on Wall Street were flying a half-mast, an honour usually reserved only for heads of state. And while his body passed through New York the Stock Exchange closed for two hours...<sup>177</sup>

In spite of that, the president retained considerable control over the policies of the Fed. Thus soon after Wilson’s re-election as president in 1916, as Alan Tooze writes, “Wilson instructed the Federal Reserve Board, the coordinating centre of the American system that he had established in 1913 in Washington, to curb Wall Street lending to London, Paris, Petrograd and Rome.”<sup>178</sup> It is unlikely that he could have curbed Wall Street in this way if American banking had still been as disorganized as it was before 1913 – or if the Jewish bankers were completely in control.

The Act was therefore significant as embodying an important increase in the power of the executive branch of the American government. As President of Princeton University, Wilson had already foreshadowed this in his book *Constitutional Government of the United States* (1908), when, writing of the then-President of the United States, Theodore Roosevelt, he noted that he “can dominate his party by being spokesman for the real sentiment and purpose of the country, by giving direction to opinion, by giving the country at once the information and the statements of policy which will enable it to form its judgements alike of parties and of men... Let him once win the admiration and confidence of the country, and no other single force can withstand him, no combination of forces will easily overpower him. His position takes the imagination of the country. He is the representative of no constituency, but of the whole people. When he speaks in his true character, he is irresistible; and the country never finds the zest of action so much as when its President is of such insight and caliber... A President whom it trusts can not only lead it, but form it to his own views...”<sup>179</sup>

A remarkably monarchist-in-spirit thesis by the man who has gone down in history as the apostle of democracy! Moreover, it reflected the real history of his presidency until 1919, when Wilson’s vision for the war and the subsequent peace carried all before it. After that, however, he lost the trust of the people, and Congress reasserted its power...

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maximum sustainable employment. The Federal Advisory Council, whose role is purely advisory, consists of one representative from each of the 12 Federal Reserve districts.”

<sup>176</sup> O.A. Platonov, *Ternovij Venets Rossii* (Russia’s Crown of Thorns), Moscow, 1998, p. 333.

<sup>177</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/J.\\_P.\\_Morgan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/J._P._Morgan).

<sup>178</sup> Tooze, “365 Days that Shook the World”, *Prospect*, January, 2017, p. 23.

<sup>179</sup> Wilson, in Brogan, *op. cit.*, p. 452.

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There was another, international aspect to the creation of the Fed. Paul Gilbert writes: “Simultaneously with the discussion of the creation of the League of Nations at the beginning of the 20th century, proposals were raised for the establishment of an international financial body. Its functions were to include the regulation of financial disputes between different countries. It was then that the proposal to create the US Federal Reserve appeared. From the earliest days of its existence, this financial institution was essentially an international private bank, which was required to have its own authorized capital, denominated in gold. Today, the US dollar is not backed by either gold or the mass of commodities in the United States. But in 1913 everything was different. At the time when the FRS was created, the dollar, like the ruble, was obliged, if necessary, to be exchanged for an equivalent in gold. Not surprisingly, the US Federal Reserve had large reserves of gold as its charter capital.

“Under US law, however, American banks involved in the creation of the FRS, could not utilize their gold as authorized capital. It was assumed that it would be provided by those countries, for the settlement of financial disputes between which the FRS was created. The major world powers showed little interest in the proposal to finance the authorized capital of the FRS with their own gold and foreign exchange reserves. This was done only by Emperor Nicholas II from [Russia's vast gold reserves](#). The contribution of the Russian Empire to the US Federal Reserve amounted to 88.8% of its authorized capital in gold! At the same time, Russia was supposed to receive 4% of the invested funds annually, as dividends. However, soon after the establishment of the FRS, the 1917 Russian Revolution broke out, and then the Imperial Family were murdered by order of the new Bolshevik regime.

“The USSR, refused to recognize the debts of Tsarist Russia, and, accordingly, did not have any rights to its income from foreign assets...”<sup>180</sup>

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<sup>180</sup> Gilbert, “How Nicholas II Created the World’s Largest Bank”, November 25, 2021, <https://tsarnicholas.org/2021/11/25/how-nicholas-ii-created-the-worlds-largest-bank/#like-8390>

## 14. GLOBALIZATION AND ANTI-GLOBALIZATION

“By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century,” writes S. S. Oldenburg, “the growth in material prosperity and external education was accelerating. Technology went from invention to invention, science – from discovery to discovery. Railroads and steamships had already made possible ‘a journey of round the world in 80 days’; threads of telephone lines had already followed after the erection of telegraph wires around the whole world. Electric lighting quickly took the place of gas lighting. But in 1894 the clumsy first automobiles were not yet able to compete with elegant carriages and coaches; ‘live photography’ was still at the stage of preliminary experiments; directed balloons were only a dream; machines heavier than air had not yet been heard of. Radio had not been invented, radium had not yet been discovered...”

“In almost all states the same political process could be observed: the growth in the influence of electoral law, and the transfer of authority to more leftist circles. Against this tendency, which seemed at that time to be the elemental march of ‘historical progress’, nobody in the West was really waging war...”<sup>181</sup>

Christine Lagarde, head of the IMF, writes: “The 50 years leading up to the Great War were a period of remarkable technological advances such as steamships, locomotion, electrification, and telecommunications. It was this period that shaped the contours of our modern world. It was also a period of previously unprecedented global integration – what many refer to as the first era of globalization, where goods, money, and people could move across borders with relatively minimal impediments. Between 1870 and 1913 we saw large gains in exports as a share of GDP in many economies – a sign of increasing openness.”<sup>182</sup>

The zenith of imperialism created the first economic globalization since Roman times. Thus Dani Rodrik writes: “Heights of integration were reached at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century that make that earlier period [at the beginning of the century], in many ways, comparable to today. Under the Gold Standard regime, national currencies could be freely converted into fixed quantities of gold, and capital flowed without hindrance across borders. The regime not only encouraged capital flows but also trade, by removing currency risk: merchants could safely take payment from anywhere in the system without worrying about exchange rates shifting about. By 1880, the Gold Standard and free capital mobility were the norm. People were free to move, too, which they did in large numbers from Europe to the New World.<sup>183</sup> Just as today,

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<sup>181</sup> Oldenburg, *Tsarstovovanie Imperatora Nikolaia II* (The Reign of Emperor Nicholas II), Belgrade, 1939, vol. 1, pp. 10-11.

<sup>182</sup> Lagarde, “When History Rhymes” *IMP Blog*, November 5, 2018. [https://blogs.imf.org/2018/11/05/when-history-rhymes/?fbclid=IwAR0egUtXILw5H1BwC6g8oU6frvNzD\\_piNgd2Smsr-iSF6mKElQJ7SvphJVA](https://blogs.imf.org/2018/11/05/when-history-rhymes/?fbclid=IwAR0egUtXILw5H1BwC6g8oU6frvNzD_piNgd2Smsr-iSF6mKElQJ7SvphJVA).

<sup>183</sup> “According to economists Paul Hirst and Grahame Thompson, ‘the greatest era for recorded voluntary migration was the century after 1815. Around 60 million people left Europe for the Americas, Oceania, and South and East Africa. An estimated ten million voluntarily migrated from Russia to Central Asia and Siberia. A million went from Southern Europe to North America. About 12 million Chinese and 6 million Japanese left their homelands and emigrated to eastern and southern Asia. One and a half million left India for Southeast Asia and Southwest Africa.’

“Population movement peaked during the 1890s.” (Martin Wolf, “Will the Nation-State Survive Globalization”, *Foreign Affairs*, January/February, 2001, p. 281)

improvements in transport and communication technologies – the steamship, railroad, telegraph – greatly facilitated the movement of goods, capital, and workers.

“A backlash was not long in coming. As early as the 1870s, a decline in world agricultural prices produced pressure for a resumption of import protection. With the exception of Britain, all European countries raised agricultural tariffs towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In many cases agricultural protectionism also spread to manufactured goods. Immigration limits also began to appear in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. In 1882, the United States Congress passed the infamous Chinese Exclusion Act, and restricted Japanese immigration in 1907. Later, in the 1920s, the US established a more general system of immigration quotas...”<sup>184</sup>

Moreover, globalization did not distribute its benefits equally to all. In 1910 in the United Kingdom the top 1% controlled nearly 70% of the nation’s wealth—a disparity never reached before or after...”<sup>185</sup> This vast inequality prevailed even in the richest and the most democratic country in the world – the United States.

“The Chicago World’s Fair of 1893,” writes David Reynolds, “was intended to celebrate four centuries of American achievement since Christopher Columbus. Its ‘White City’ of gleaming stucco and electric lights was a wonder modernity and during the six months the fair was open 27 million people – equivalent to two-fifths of the US population – came to marvel. But by the time it closed in the autumn of 1893, the United States was in the grip of the worst depression it had yet experienced.

“Like most economic crises, the depression started with a stock market collapse and a rash of bank failures, but confidence did not recover. For five consecutive years unemployment soared above 10 per cent. Those workers who kept their job faced savage wage cuts, while farmers watched the value of their crops fall precipitously. The depression of the 1890s brought to a head the mounting antagonism between the beneficiaries and the victims of America’s frenzied industrial revolution.

“America’s farmers lurched from one side of this divide to the other. The opening up of the Great Plains after the Civil War produced a new wheat and cattle frontier, in the cities there were now millions of people who could not feed themselves, and the railroad revolution made it possible to move food quickly to satisfy urban demand. The result was massive growth in American agriculture – between 1870 and 1890 the number of farms doubled to 5.7 million, wheat production more than doubled to 600 million bushels, and the number of cattle virtually tripled to 68 million. Yet America’s farmers were now even more dependent on the vicissitudes of the market – not just in the nearby town or city but across the country and on the other side of the world. They also at the mercy of middlemen, having to accept whatever the cotton factor or the grain elevator manager offered and being obliged to pay the rates the railroad charged. And they were chronically in debt – long term to buy land and short term to survive from planting to harvest – at a time when America’s money supply did not keep pace with growth. Moreover, banking remained localized – unlike commerce – without an

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Emigration from the British Isles reached its peak in the years from 1900 to 1914, when 6.7 million people left, the majority to the colonies (Cannadine, *op. cit.*, p. 481). (V.M.)

<sup>184</sup> Rodrik, “The Great Globalisation Lie”, *Prospect*, January, 2018, pp. 30-31.

<sup>185</sup> Lagarde, *op. cit.*

effective nationwide system to move funds around easily to where they were needed. The result was crippling interest rates – often 10 per cent, sometimes up to 40.

“So in good years, farm income soared; in depressions like that of the 1890s the situation was grim. By 1900 a third of America’s farmers were working as tenants – hardly Jefferson’s vision of liberty. The farmers formed sales cooperatives in an effort to cut out the middlemen and boost their profit. These local Farmers’ Alliances were not just marketing organizations: Masonic-like, their lodges provided fraternal support and regular mass picnics drew hundred of families into something like revivalist meetings. Above all, through their newspapers and lecturers, the Alliances became instruments of political education in the backwaters of rural America. ‘People commenced to think who had never thought before, and people talked who had seldom spoken,’ noted the write Elizabeth Higgins. ‘On mild days they gathered on the street corners, on cold days they congregated in shops and offices. Everyone was talking and everyone was thinking.’ Thoughts and theories sprouted, she said, ‘like weeds after a May shower’.

“By 1890 the National Farmers’ Alliance had more than a million members. Despairing of Republicans and Democrats alike, it went political – creating the People’s Party, commonly known as the Populists. This was a genuinely radical movement that reached out to black sharecroppers in the South and also gave a prominent role to women. A leading Kansas Populist was Mary Elizabeth Lease – variously known as ‘Queen Mary’ and the ‘Pythoness of the Plains’ – a tall, spare farm mother of four but also a lawyer with a hot Irish tongue. ‘What you farmers need to do is raise less corn and more Hell’, she chastised them. ‘Wall Street owns the country. It is no longer a government of the people, by the people, and for the people, but a government of Wall Street, by Wall Street, and for Wall Street. The great common people of this country are slaves, and monopoly is the master. The West and South are bound and prostrate before the manufacturing East. Money rules.’

“The Populists came up with various far-reaching demands, including a graduated income tax and government ownership of the railroads, but by 1896 one issue predominated: the gold standard. This, above all, critics claimed, had constricted the money supply; in its place they advocated a bimetallic currency with silver coins as readily available as gold. (It was no coincidence that America’s silver was mined in Rocky Mountain states that were Populist strongholds.)

“In 1896 the silver lobby seized control of the Democratic Party from the bosses, nominating as candidate for the presidency William Jennings Bryan, a thirty-six-year-old lawyer from Nebraska. Bryan was a devout evangelical who believed liquor and gambling were sins; like many Populists, he treated silver as a mixture of political campaign and religious crusade: ‘It is the issue of 1776 over again. Our ancestors, when by three million, had the courage to declare their political independence of every other nation upon earth. Shall we, their descendants, when we have grown to seventy million, declare that we are less independent than our forefathers? No, my friends, it will never be the judgement of this people.’ Bryan challenged the ‘gold bugs’: ‘If they dare to come out in the open field and defend the gold standard as a good thing, we shall fight them to the uttermost, having behind us the producing masses of the nation and the world.’ The Democrats would, he said, ‘answer their demands for a gold

standard by saying no to them, you shall not press down upon the brow of labour this crown of thorns. You shall not crucify mankind upon a cross of gold.'

"Bryan's 'cross of gold' speech was one of the classics of American political oratory, but his silver crusade and evangelical style played into the hands of the Republicans. Fanning business fears, they accumulated an unprecedented campaign chest in 1896, enabling them to outspend the Democrats by ten to one and ensuring a landslide for the Republican candidate, William McKinley. The 1896 election proved a landmark in American politics. Not only did it bury the Populists as a radical third-party alternative, it tarnished the Democrats as economically unsound and established the Republicans as the dominant party for a generation. Apart from Woodrow Wilson's presidency (1913-21) – made possible by a split within the Republican Party in 1912 – the Republicans dominated the White House and Congress from 1897 to 1933..."<sup>186</sup>

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So the first major political challenge to globalization, at any rate in the New World, was crushed. But whenever globalization falters and leads to depression – as in 1929 and 2008 – similar causes are revealed, and similar prescriptions proposed. Like the eternal dialectic between democracy and despotism, the closely related dialectic between globalization and anti-globalization crops up anew in each generation. Nevertheless, the general trend was (and is) towards ever-increasing globalization and the breaking down of barriers of all kinds, aided by the vast increase in global population and the huge flows of people from one continent to another.

"As a result," writes Evans, "the world balance of population was beginning to change. At mid-century the population of the USA was not much larger than that of Britain, the same as that of France, and a little less than the area covered by the future German Empire. By the end of the First World War the USA was well ahead, with a total population of more than 92 million. Yet Europe's share of world population actually increased over most of this period, from 12 per cent in 1850 to around 25 per cent in 1900 (for comparison, its share by the early twenty-first century was around 10 per cent). Overall the population of Europe increased from 188 million in 1800 to 458 million in 1914, and this increase forced the major driving force behind the massive emigration waves of this century. Within this global figure, there were marked contrasts between different areas and different countries. Russia's population expanded by 300 per cent, partly because of the conquest and incorporation under the tsar's rule of large areas of Central Asia, the Caucasus and Siberia. The population of Great Britain grew by a remarkable 400 per cent, that of Italy and Spain by nearly 100 per cent. France's population, by contrast, grew slowly, by only 50 per cent.

"This vast human replenishing of the earth was the social dimension of a process of globalization that reached its peak in the years immediately preceding the outbreak of the First World War, as capital, goods, people and ideas began to flow with increasing rapidity and intensity from continent to continent. More rapid communications boosted trade and reduced the price gaps of commodities between Europe and the USA as well as Europe and Asia by a half or three-quarters in the period 1870-1914. Investment overseas, dominated by Europe during this period, accounted for 32 per

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<sup>186</sup> Reynolds, *America, Empire of Liberty*, London: Penguin, 2010, pp. 260-263.

cent of the net national wealth of Britain in 1913. Foreign investment reached nearly 20 per cent of domestic savings in France by 1900. Much of this was in other European countries (60 per cent in the French case, 53 per cent in the German) but capital also flowed overseas, with 21 per cent of British foreign investment going to America in the period 1870-1913 and 16 per cent of German foreign investment (the same figure as for German investment in Latin America, only slightly below the British figure). Technology transfer took place on every level and in virtually every industry, with America increasingly the innovator in new industries such as motor manufacture. This was the first age of globalization, one in which Europe remained the dominant force. This fact was reflected in the particular intensity with which European countries developed ties with their formal and informal colonies in Africa, Asia, Australasia and Latin America..."<sup>187</sup>

However, there was much more to globalization in this period than simply the multiplication and internationalization of trade, fuelled by technological innovation and vast increases and transfers of funds and populations. Globalization represented *the domination of economic interests over all others, the "mammonization" of mankind*. John Ralston Saul defines it as "an inevitable form of internationalism in which civilization is reformed from the perspective of economic leadership. The leadership here is provided not by people, but by the innate force of economic at work; that is, the marketplace." He then cites many further definitions and concludes: "The general tenor of these dozens of definitions is that 'international finance has become so interdependent and so interwoven with trade and industry that ... political and military power can in reality do nothing.' But of course that was written in 1911, just before political and military power destroyed the reigning economic order..."<sup>188</sup>

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<sup>187</sup> Evans, *op. cit.*, p. 352.

<sup>188</sup> Saul, *The Collapse of Globalism*, London: Atlantic Books, 2018, pp. 19, 20.

## 15. IMPERIALISM, MARXISM AND DIVINE PROVIDENCE

The Boer War engendered an important anti-imperial reaction in Britain in the years leading up to the First World War. In 1899 the future Liberal Prime Minister Campbell-Bannermann “had deplored the vulgar and bastard imperialism of... provocation and aggression... of grabbing everything even if we have no use for it ourselves’. Sir Charles Dilke reaffirmed the need to recall ‘the true as against the bastard imperialism’, by which he meant the doctrine of self-government rather than that of authoritarianism and annexation. F.W. Hirst, journalist and editor of *The Economist*, denounced British aggression on the North-West frontier of India; the reconquest of the Sudan; and the conflict with the Boers as ‘unjust and uncalled-for wars, the product of crude, boyish ambitions and unworthy policy’.”<sup>189</sup>

In 1901, another future prime minister, the liberal firebrand David Lloyd George (himself from the “colonized” Celtic fringe of Great Britain), as Adam Tooze writes, “demanded that the empire must free itself of ‘racial arrogance’. It must reshape itself as a realm of ‘fearless justice’ held together by a common commitment to national freedom. ‘We ought,’ Lloyd George insisted, ‘to give freedom everywhere – freedom in Canada, freedom in the antipodes, in Africa, in Ireland, in Wales, and in India. We will never govern India as it ought to be governed until we have given it freedom.’”<sup>190</sup>

But giving freedom to the subject peoples meant, of course, the dissolution of the empire. However, this was unacceptable to the vast majority of the British ruling class (not least a rising star whom Lloyd George befriended, Winston Churchill, the last truly imperialist British leader). So it was necessary to return to the question: what was the purpose and justification of the empire?

Paul Johnson writes: “Classical economists like Adam Smith, Bentham and Ricardo saw colonies as a vicious excuse to exercise monopoly, and therefore as contrary to the general economic interest. Edward Gibbon Wakefield, in his *View of the Art of Colonization* (1849), thought the object was to provide living-space for overcrowded European populations. This was likewise the view of the greatest colonizer of all, Cecil Rhodes – without it, the unemployed would destroy social order: ‘The Empire... is a bread and butter question: if you want to avoid civil war, you must become imperialists.’ On the other hand, protectionists like Joe Chamberlain argued that colonies existed to provide safe markets for exports, a return to pre-industrial mercantilism.

“It was Robert Torrens in *The Colonization of South Australia* (1815), who first put forward the view that colonies should be seen primarily as a place to invest capital. The notion of surplus capital was taken up by John Stuart Mill: ‘Colonization in the present state of the world is the best affair of business in which the capital of an old and wealthy country can engage.’...

“In 1902 however the capital-export argument was turned into a conspiracy theory by J.A. Hobson, a Hampstead intellectual, classical schoolmaster and *Manchester Guardian* journalist. Hobson’s ideas were to have an important twentieth-century

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<sup>189</sup> Cannadine, *op. cit.*, pp. 482-483.

<sup>190</sup> Tooze, *The Deluge*, London: Penguin, 2014, p. 179.

reverberance. In 1889 he had developed a theory of under-consumption: industry produced too much, the rich could not consume it all, the poor could not afford it, and therefore capital had to be exported. Keynes later acknowledged that Hobson's theory had a decisive influence on his *General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money* (1933), and Hobson's solutions – steeply progressive taxation, vast welfare services and nationalization – became the conventional wisdom of West European social democracy. But Hobson was also an anti-Semite, and in the 1890s he was so angered by the 'scramble' for Africa, the forcible extraction of concessions from China and, above all, by the events leading up to the Boer War, that he produced a wild book, *Imperialism* (1902), in which the process was presented as a concerted and deliberate act of wickedness by 'finance-capital', often Jewish. Imperialism was the direct consequence of under-consumption and the need to export capital to secure higher returns. In two crucial chapters, 'The Parasites' and 'The Economic Taproom of Imperialism', he presented this conspiracy theory in highly moralistic and emotional terms, arguing that the only people to gain anything from empires were the 'finance-capitalists'<sup>191</sup>: the natives suffered, the colonizing nations as a whole suffered and, just as the Boer War was a plot to seize control of the Rand gold mines, so the practice of imperialism and particularly competitive imperialism would tend to produce war.

"The actual idea of imperialism had only entered the socio-economic vocabulary about 1900. Hobson's book, which defined it as 'the use of the machinery of government by private interests, mainly capitalists, to secure for them economic gains outside the country', instantly made the evil conspiracy aspect immensely attractive to Marxists and other determinists. The Austrian economists, Otto Bauer and Rudolf Hilferding, argued in 1910 that imperialism made war absolutely inevitable. In 1916 Lenin put the capstone on this shaky edifice by producing his *Imperialism: the Highest Stage of Capitalism*, which fitted the concept neatly into the basic structure of Marxist theory. Hitherto, colonial empires had been approached in an empirical spirit. Colonies were judged on their merits. Colonial powers were benevolent or exploitative or a mixture of both. The process was seen as having advantages and drawbacks for all the parties concerned and, above all, as complicated and changing. Now it was all reduced to slogans, made simple, in both economic and moral terms, and certified, everywhere and always, as intrinsically evil. The process whereby this crude and implausible theory became the conventional wisdom of most of the world, over the half-century which followed the Versailles Treaty, is one of the central developments of modern times, second only in importance to the spread of political violence.

"The actual historical and economic reality did not fit any of the theories, the Hobson-Lenin one perhaps least of all. If empires were created because of over-saving and under-consumption, if they represented the final stage of capitalism, how did one explain the empires of antiquity? Joseph Schumpeter, in *Zur Sociologie des*

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<sup>191</sup> Hobson "argued that Europe's recent expansion into Africa notoriously exemplified by British attacks on the Boers, was largely motivated by greed for profit. Finance, he insisted, was the governor of the imperial engine. This was an over-simplification, but what Hobson lacked in evidential conviction he more than made up for in moral courage, harking back to the free trade and anti-imperial rhetoric of Cobden and Bright. Hobson assailed the bankers; financiers and capitalists who he believed manipulated the new imperialism, and also the parasitic interests who were their hangers-on: among them the military, arms manufacturers, bondholders, aristocrats and missionaries; all of whom had again succumbed to the 'primitive lusts of struggle, domination and acquisitiveness'" (Cannadine, *op. cit.*, p. 483) (V.M.).

*Imperialismus (On the Sociology of Imperialism)* appeared in Germany in 1919, was closer to the truth when he argued that modern imperialism was 'atavistic'. Capitalism, he pointed out, usually flourished on peace and free trade, rather than war and protectionism. Colonies often represented 'an objectless disposition... to unlimited frontier expansion'. They seemed to be acquired at a certain critical stage of national and social development, reflecting the real or imagined interests of the ruling class. But was too glib also. As a matter of fact, the rise of the Japanese Empire... came closest to the model of a deliberately will development by an all-powerful ruling establishment. But the Japanese model was scarcely ever considered by the European theorists. And in any case Japanese expansion was often dictated by assertive military commanders on the spot, who exceeded or even disobeyed the orders of the ruling group. That was the French pattern too. Algeria was acquired as a result of army insubordination; Indo-China had been entered by overweening naval commanders; it was the marines who got France involved in West Africa...

"There were a great many other anomalies which did not fit into Hobson-Lenin. Why, in Latin America, did the phase of capitalist investment follow, rather than precede or accompany, Spanish colonialism? Why, in this vast area, were the capitalists in league with the political liberators? Then again, some of the 'exploited' in colonized countries were themselves residual empires. China was the creation of a whole series of imperial dynasties, without benefit of 'finance-capital'. India was a product of Mughal imperialism. Turkey had been expanded from Ottoman Anatolia. Egypt was an old imperial power which, after its breakaway from Turkey, sought to be one again in the Sudan. There were half a dozen empires south of the Sahara run by groups and movements such as the Ashanti, Fulani, Bornu, Al-Haji Umar, Futa Foro. Ethiopia was an empire competing with the European empires in the Horn of Africa, before succumbing to one of them in 1935. Burma was a kind of empire. Persia, like China, was an imperial survivor from antiquity. Colonialism itself created empires of the anomalous type. The Congo (later Zaire) was put together by the Berlin Conference of 1884-5, and survived decolonization without benefit of any of the factors which theory said created empires. So did Indonesia, a product of Dutch tidy-mindedness, assembled from scores of quite different territories. Conspiracy theory shed no light on any of these cases.

"What is decisive, however, is that the theory broke down at its very core - the need for colonies to provide high-return settlement areas for capital. Indeed, the closer the actual fact are studied, the clearer it becomes that any notion of 'finance-capital' desperately looking for colonies as places to invest its huge surpluses of capital is preposterous. There was never any such thing as 'surplus' capital. Investment capital was always hard to come by, but especially in the colonies. The tropics did not yield big returns until the very end of the colonial era. There were a few big success stories. In West Africa, Lever Brothers made huge investments in communications, social services and plantation which by the 1950s employed 40,000 Africans: the company owned 350,000 hectares and actively worked 60,000. There were also heavy investments and occasional high profits (but also some large-scale failures) in Malaya, whose rubber and tin made it probably the richest colony between the wars. Capital did not follow the flag. The British were at least as likely to put their money in independent Latin-American states as in crown colonies. They often lost it too. Argentina, which attracted more British money than any other 'developing' territory,

taught all investors a fearful lesson during its 1890-1 financial crisis. Taking the nineteenth century as a whole, British investors in Argentina showed a net loss. The Germans and Italians were keener than anyone to possess colonies but were most reluctant to sink any money in them. The French preferred Russia – or the Dutch East Indies – to their ‘twenty chambermaids’. The British, too, favoured Java and Sumatra over their innumerable African territories. Conspiracy theory demands the existence of a small number of very clever people making a highly rational appreciation and coordinating their efforts. In fact the number of investors, in France and Britain alone, was very large and their behaviour emotional, inconsistent, ill-informed and prejudiced. The City of London was incapable of planning anything, let alone a world-wide conspiracy; it simply followed what it imagined (often wrongly) to be its short-term interests on a day-to-day basis. The most consistent single characteristics of European investors throughout the colonial period was ignorance, based on laziness...”<sup>192</sup>

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If the Marxist theory of Hobson and Lenin fails, the same can be said of almost all rival theories of imperialism, which even if they restrict the objects of their study to the European empires of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, founder upon the sheer complexity of the subject-matter.

Perhaps the only safe generalization that can be made is that, from the earliest times, God has allowed empires to rise and fall, with individual nations acquiring dominion over others, from the most varied of motivations, in a huge variety of institutional forms, and with a great variety of outcomes for both the imperialists and their subjects.

In relation to the people of God, we can see, albeit “through a glass, darkly” at times, a providential purpose in the building of empires. Ancient Israel, for example, was not only permitted, but commanded by God to conquer the peoples of Canaan, making them “an inheritance for Israel, His servant” (Psalm 135.22). On the other hand, He allowed them, for purposes of punishment, correction and chastisement, to be conquered by the ancient empires of Babylon and Egypt, Greece and Rome. However, the Roman empire was transformed into a Christian empire that served as the cradle of the God-saving Christian civilization of Byzantium, which not only nurtured its own people in the true faith, and defended them against anti-Christian oppressors, but also served as a power-house of missionary activity to the people around.

Russia, which with justice was called the New Israel and the Third Rome, served a similar purpose from Renaissance times right up to 1914, serving as the main defender and spreader of God’s truth until she in turn was cut down for her sins, among which were a turn towards European-style imperialism in Asia...

The purposes of the West European, American and Japanese empires of modern times are more difficult to discern. Unable to provide education in the true faith or entrance into the true Church, they nevertheless cut down some of the grosser forms of paganism, and introduced a civilization which had both its good and its bad aspects, both material and spiritual. The motives of the colonizers were sometimes good, but

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<sup>192</sup> Johnson, *Modern Times*, New York: Harper Perennial, 1990, pp. 151-155.

more often bad; there is no evidence that, in contrast with ancient Israel, God commanded, as opposed to permitted, their global conquests; and, as we have seen, some of the worst genocides of history before the age of communism and fascism were committed by European powers against their colonial subjects – for example, the Spanish in Central and South America, the United States in North America, the Belgians in the Congo and the Germans in South-West Africa.

However, by the first decade of the twentieth century, the feeling was becoming prevalent – and it was not a false intuition – that the usefulness of the European empires in the Divine plan, whatever that was, was coming to an end. God said of one of the greatest empires of antiquity: “Shall the axe boast itself against him who chops with it? Or shall the saw exalt itself against him who saws with it?” (Isaiah 10.15). The European empires were now clearly boasting about themselves and their supposedly enlightened civilization, becoming purveyors of atheism and antichristian values in sharp contrast with the faith of their Orthodox ancestors before the Great Schism of 1054. The time was fast approaching when the Lord would cast them away as having outlived their purpose...

## *II. THE EAST: SOWING THE WIND*

## 16. THE BOLSHEVIK/MENSHEVIK SCHISM

The revolutionary Russian Social Democratic Party was founded in 1898 in Minsk; it was immediately joined by Lenin. In 1900 he and Martov (Tsederbaum) created a political journal called *Iskra* (Spark). However, at the congress of the SDs held in 1903 the SDs in Brussels and London, they split into two groups, the Bolsheviks led by Lenin and the Mensheviks by Martov. Trotsky (Bronstein) belonged to the Mensheviks at that time, but changed sides in time for the 1905 revolution. The difference between the two parties was that the Bolsheviks wanted a more tightly organized and centralized party, whereas the Mensheviks wanted a more loosely organized party on the western model that could, however, attract more people. "It would be broadly true to say," writes S.A. Smith, "that the Bolsheviks were tougher, more disciplined, more intolerant, more self-confident, more amoral, and less squeamish about using violence and undemocratic means than their rivals, who were more cautious, more circumspect, more inclined to waver, more committed to democracy, more intolerant of primitive sloganizing."<sup>193</sup>

"Not until 1912," writes Alan Bullock, "did Lenin force a final break with the Mensheviks. The basic issue, however, on which all attempts at unity broke down remained the same as in 1903.

"Both groups accepted Marx's scheme of historical development and believed that Russia must go through the stage of capitalism as a necessary condition for a socialist revolution. But they could not agree on what followed after that. The Mensheviks believed that, in view of Russia's economic backwardness, it would take a long time before such a revolution would take place, and that the immediate task was to work for a middle class liberal revolution. This would get rid of the autocratic Tsarist regime, clear the way for capitalism to fulfil its historic role of industrialization and at the same time secure constitutional reforms allowing the legal growth of a mass working class on the lines of the German Social Democrats.

"Lenin was not prepared to wait or leave it to historical processes by themselves to produce the socialist revolution on which all his thoughts were concentrated. To Mensheviks this was an anti-Marxist heresy, a conspiratorial reliance on 'subjective factors' such as the revolutionary will, instead of on Marx's 'objective factors, the laws of social development, which he had worked out and which could not be artificially speeded up..."<sup>194</sup>

But the real issue was Lenin's dictatorial nature. All the leading socialists - Plekhanov and Trotsky in Russia, Luxemburg in Germany - saw the problem in Lenin's dictatorial character and attempt to concentrate all power in his hands. As Trotsky put it: "The party organization is substituted for the party, the Central Committee is substituted for the party organization, and finally a 'dictator' is substituted for the Central Committee."<sup>195</sup>

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<sup>193</sup> Smith, *Russia and the Revolution*, p. 73.

<sup>194</sup> Bullock, *Hitler and Stalin. Parallel Lives*, London: HarperCollins, 1991, p. 11.

<sup>195</sup> Trotsky, *Our Political Tasks*, 1904, in M.S. Cohen and John Major, *History in Quotations*, London: Cassel, 2004, p. 679.

“Lenin had never been tolerant of dissent within his party’s ranks. Bukharin complained that he ‘didn’t give a damn for the opinions of others’. Lunacharsky claimed that Lenin deliberately ‘surrounded himself with fools’ who would not dare question him. During Lenin’s struggle for the April Theses this domineering attitude was magnified to almost megalomaniac proportions. Krupskaya called it his ‘rage’ – the frenzied state of her husband when engaged in clashes with his political rivals – and it was an enraged Lenin whom she had to live with for the next five years. During these fits Lenin acted like a man possessed by hatred and anger. His entire body was seized with extreme nervous tension, and he could neither sleep nor eat. His outward manner became vulgar and coarse. It was hard to believe that this was a cultivated man. He mocked his opponents, both inside and outside the party, in crude and violent language. They were ‘blockheads’, ‘bastards’, ‘dirty scum’, ‘prostitutes’, ‘cunts’, ‘shits’, ‘cretins’, ‘Russian fools’, ‘windbags’, ‘stupid hens’ and ‘silly old maids’. When the rage subsided Lenin would collapse in a state of exhaustion, listlessness and depression, until the rage erupted again. This manic alteration of mood was characteristic of Lenin’s psychological make-up. It continued almost unrelentingly between 1917 and 1922, and must have contributed to the brain haemorrhage from which he eventually died.

“Much of Lenin’s success in 1917 was no doubt explained by his towering domination over the party. No other political party had ever been so closely tied to the personality of a single man. Lenin was the first modern party leader to achieve the status of a god: Stalin, Mussolini, Hitler and Mao Zedong were all his successors in this sense. Being a Bolshevik had come to imply an oath of allegiance to Lenin as both the ‘leader’ and the ‘teacher’ of the party. It was this, above all, which distinguished the Bolsheviks from the Mensheviks (who had no comparably dominant leader of their own)...”<sup>196</sup>

By this time, writes Hosking, the cells of the SD revolutionaries “had become the object of concerted police attention. Among the measures taken by the regime in the aftermath of the assassination [of Alexander II in 1881] was a thorough overhaul of the security police. The old Third Department was wound up and replaced by a new and much larger Department of Police, among whose tasks was the protection of senior officials and the thorough investigation of terrorist organizations. It has its own security bureaus (*okhrannye otdelenia*), first in Moscow, St. Petersburg and Paris (to keep watch over émigrés), then in some twenty other major cities. Sergei Zubatov, head of the Moscow *okhrana*, sponsored the promotion of a new generation of specially trained security officers, their operations backed up by systematic records. Lenin accorded them the ultimate accolade when he recommended that the revolutionary party should be run by a ‘few professionals, as highly trained and experienced as our security police’.

“By now the revolutionary parties had perfected their conspiratorial techniques, and to gain the information they required about them the police had little alternative but to deploy secret agents within their ranks. To sustain their credibility, those agents had to take their share in the tracking, the bombmaking, and the secret communications which were part and parcel of the terrorist’s life. In that way the agent provocateur emerged, the double agent working for both the police and the

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<sup>196</sup> Figes, *A People’s Tragedy*, London: Pimlico, 1997, pp. 389, 390, 391.

revolutionaries. Opposition parties cut off from the public and a secret police accountable to nobody held out intoxicating opportunities to individuals attracted by the exercise of power for its own sake. They were extremely difficult for either side to detect and could orchestrate alternating betrayals and terrorist acts at their own convenience. Here the *fiscal* and the revolutionary, both descendants of Peter the Great, amalgamated in one sinister figure.

“The Socialist Revolutionaries, anxious this time not to be hijacked by the practitioners of assassination, created a separate ‘fighting detachment’ (*boevoi otriad*) to concentrate on terrorism, so that other party members could devote themselves to propaganda and other peaceful activities. Ironically, however, the isolation of the terrorists meant their final emancipation from normal moral and political considerations. The fighting detachment fell into the hands of a police agent, Evno Azef, under whose command it conducted a concerted campaign against officials of the very regime which had hired him. From 1902 to 1906 its victims included the governor-general of Moscow, number of ministers – including two ministers of the Interior, Dmitrii Sipiagin and Viacheslav Pleve, Azef’s own employers – and some 4,000 central and local officials, killed or wounded. Rarely, if ever, has any regime sanctioned such an onslaught of terror. When Azef’s duplicity was finally revealed, the disclosure discredited the police and permanently undermined the moral standing of the Social Revolutionary Party. It contributed in no small part to the public’s disillusionment with politics of all kinds in the final years of tsarism...”<sup>197</sup>

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<sup>197</sup> Hosking, *Russia and the Russians*, pp. 359-360.

## 17. THREE RUSSIAS: PETERSBURG, KISHINEV AND SAROV

Russia at the turn of the century was a country of enormous size, population and contrasting nationalities and social classes. Three of the most important were the nobility, the Jews and the Russian Orthodox peasantry. All three drew attention to themselves in the year 1903.

The nobility, writes Douglas Smith, "comprised almost 1.9 million people, about 1.5 percent of the entire population of the Russian Empire. They were a diverse group, divided by nationality (Russians, Poles, Georgians, Baltic Germans [and Tatars]), religion (Russian Orthodoxy, Catholicism, Lutheranism), education and wealth (from a great deal of both to little of either), and political outlook (from reactionaries to revolutionaries). There were hereditary nobles, whose privileged status passed to their offspring, and personal nobles, whose did not. So great was the diversity among the empire's nobility that historians continue to debate whether it even deserves to be considered a distinct social class. If there was one thing that defined a noble, it was, as a commentator wrote in 'The Tasks of the Nobility' in 1895, a certain quality 'of being among the chosen, of being privileged, of not being the same as all other people'. The Russian nobility was never, however, a class of idle rich. Rather, it had always been a service class that initially derived its privileges and then increasingly its own identity from serving the grand princes of Muscovy and later the tsars of imperial Russia whether at court, in the military, or in the administration.

"At the top of the nobility was the aristocratic elite, roughly a hundred or so families with great landed wealth dating back to at least the eighteenth century. These nobles often held high positions at court or in the government. The aristocracy was typically old, titled, and rich. It intermarried and had a sense of itself as a self-defined group. Aristocrats belonged to the same clubs and salons, and the young men served in the elite imperial guards regiments like the Chevaliers Gardes, the Horse Guard, and the Emperor's Life Guard Hussars. Part of the aristocracy (including the Golitsyns, Gagarins, Dolgorukys, and Volkonskys) descended from the ancient princely dynasties of Riurik and Gedymin; others came from the nontitled boyar families of the Muscovite court, most notably the Naryshkins and the Sheremetevs, a branch of which acquired the title of count under Peter the Great; or from other old noble families that had served in the cavalry units, such as the Shuvalovs, Vorontsovs, and Orlovs."<sup>198</sup>

"'Petersburg society' was not as important as it liked to think it was. This was the beginning of the Silver Age of poetry and art (following the Golden Age earlier in the century) in which, dissatisfied by Orthodox religion, Victorian morality and scientific rationalism, and exhilarated by the rush of the modern, the avant-garde tested the meaning of art, faith and pleasure by experimenting with imagery, language and dance, as well as sexual adventurism, necromancy and narcotics. While a powerful mercantile class of textile and railway tycoons emerged in the cities, the nobility was mortgaging its estates, a retreat before the energy of the merchants as played out in Anton Chekhov's *The Cherry Orchard*."<sup>199</sup>

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<sup>198</sup> Smith, *Former People: The Last Days of the Russian Aristocracy*, London: Macmillan, 2012, p. 25.

<sup>199</sup> Montefiore, *The Romanovs*, London: Vintage, 2016, pp. 502-503.

The aristocratic elite displayed itself particularly during pre-lenten balls in the Winter Palace. "The Ball of 1903," writes Smith, "was to be imperial Russia's last great ball. What made it so spectacular and unusual was in large part its special theme. Although held on the two-hundredth-year anniversary of the capital's founding by Peter the Great, [Tsar] Nicholas chose as the theme for the ball the reign of Peter's father, Tsar Alexei Mikhailovich, and all the guests were instructed to come in costumes from the seventeenth century. Such was the excitement that vast sums of money were spent on designers and the finest tailors to create exquisite outfits of fancy brocades, silks, and satin decorated with gold, pearls, and diamonds. The men came attired as boyars, gunners, falconers, and Cossack hetmans; the ladies, as boyarinas, peasants (elaborately costumed ones anyway), and Muscovite ladies of the court. Some dressed as concrete historical figures. Count Sergei Sheremetev, for example, came as Field Marshal Count Boris Sheremetev, his great-great-grandfather. The emperor came as Tsar Alexei Mikhailovich, and Empress Alexandra, wearing a costume estimated at a million rubles, as Tsaritsa Maria Ilinichna. So enormous was its effect that the ball was repeated shortly thereafter at the home of Count Alexander Sheremetev."

The ball left Grand Duke Alexander "with a bad feeling. He recalled an evening like it some twenty-five years earlier under Alexander II, but the times had changed. 'A new and hostile Russia glared through the large windows of the palace,' he wrote. 'This magnificent pageant of the seventeenth century must have made a strange impression on the foreign ambassadors; while we danced, the workers were striking and the clouds in the Far East were hanging dangerously low...'"<sup>200</sup>

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The contrast between the world of the aristocratic elite and that of the striking workers and their Jewish revolutionary leaders could hardly have been greater. The Jews were murdering thousands of government officials – these were the worst "pogroms" of the period. And it was these murders, together with the familiar complaints against Jewish money-lenders, that excited "counter-pogroms" on the part of the Orthodox Christian peasantry.

Alexander Solzhenitsyn writes: "Jewish pogroms were stirred up at all times and only in the South-West of Russia (as also was the case in 1881)."<sup>201</sup> And on April 6, 1903 – the last day of the Jewish Pascha and the first day of the Orthodox Pascha – a pogrom broke out in Kishinev, capital of the province of Moldavia in South-West Russia. According to the official figures drawn up in the indictment by the procurator of the local court, V.N. Goremykin, it began with "the usual clashes between Jews and Christians which have always taken place in recent years at Pascha" and with "the hostility of the local Christian population towards the Jews". And then "two weeks before Pascha... rumours began to circulate in Kishinev that there would be a slaughter of Jews in the forthcoming feast".

A particularly inflammatory role was played here by the newspaper *Bessarabets*, whose editor, Pavolachi Krushevan, also published *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. The *Protocols* purported to be the minutes of a meeting of Jewish elders somewhere in

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<sup>200</sup> Smith, *op. cit.*, pp. 52-53.

<sup>201</sup> Solzhenitsyn, *Dvesti Let Vmeste* (Two Hundred Years Together), Moscow, 2001, p. 321.

the West plotting to take over the world. In fact, they were largely plagiarized from Maurice Joly's *Dialogue aux Enfers entre Montesquieu et Machiavel*, a debate between a supporter of liberalism (Montesquieu) and a supporter of despotism (Machiavel), published in 1864 in France, supplemented with a lot of anti-Semitic material. They were created in Paris and brought to Russia in about 1894, probably with the help of the Okhrana chief in Paris, Rachkovsky.

When the forgery was demonstrated to Tsar Nicholas II, he said: "Drop the *Protocols*. One cannot defend a pure cause by dirty methods."<sup>202</sup> Unfortunately, the Tsar's advice was not followed, and the forgery became accepted as genuine by very many in many countries. It became popular especially during the Russian Civil War, and White Russian officers were instrumental in taking it to Germany, where it made a profound impression on Hitler.<sup>203</sup>

Krushevan's *Bessarabets* printed "from day to day sharp articles of an anti-Jewish tendency, which did not fail to leave a trace... among the salesmen and petty scribes, etc. of the uneducated people of Bessarabia. The latest provocative articles of *Bessarabets* contained communications about the murder in Dubossary of a Christian child supposedly carried out by Jews by ritual means..."<sup>204</sup>

The pogrom began after the murder of a Russian man and the death of a Russian girl in the local Jewish hospital.<sup>205</sup> According to the indictment, 42 people were killed, including 38 Jews, and about 500 Jewish shop fronts were destroyed. By April 9, 816 people had been arrested, of whom 664 were charged with crimes.

"The conclusion of the indictment was: the disorders 'grew to the indicated proportions only thanks to the incompetence of the police, who did not have the required leadership... The preliminary investigation has not unearthed any evidence that would indicate that the above-mentioned disorders were prepared beforehand.'

"And they were not unearthed by any subsequent investigation.

"But in spite of this, the Jewish 'Bureau of Defence' (with the participation of the very influential M. Vinaver, G. Sliozberg, L. Bramson, M. Kulisher, A. Braudo, S. Pozner and M. Krol), had no sooner heard about the pogrom in Petersburg than they excluded from the beginning any other causes of it than a tsarist plot: 'Who gave the order for the organization of the pogrom, who directed the dark forces that carried it out?' - 'Immediately we learned under what circumstances the Kishinev slaughter took place, it became clear for us that this diabolic undertaking would never have taken place... if it had not been thought up in the Department of Police and carried out in fulfilment of orders from there'. Although, of course, writes the same M. Krol in the

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<sup>202</sup> Norman Cohn, *Warrant for Genocide*, London: Serif, 1996, pp. 126, 285-289. Cf. Paul Johnson, *A History of the Jews*, London: Pimlico, 1995, p. 456.

<sup>203</sup> Hieromonk Tikhon Kazushin writes: "In late 90's it has been very nearly irrefutably shown by computer-aided linguistic analysis of the *Protocols* as having been written by a certain Matvey Golovinsky (1865-1920), born in Simbirsk gubernia, who was stylistically inspired by the popular book by Maurice Joly, the *Dialogue*, very probably having been commissioned to write it by Petr Rachkovsky, a high-ranked police officer in Russia." (*Facebook*, May 7, 2020).

<sup>204</sup> Solzhenitsyn, *op. cit.*, p. 322.

<sup>205</sup> Montefiore, *op. cit.*, pp. 510-511.

40s of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, 'the scoundrels organized the Kishinev pogrom in strict secrecy, we are profoundly convinced that the Kishinev slaughter was organized from above, with the knowledge, and perhaps even on the initiative of Plehve. Only if we had the most indisputable evidence against them could we tear the mask from these highly-placed murderers and place them in a fitting light before the whole world. Therefore we decided to send the well-known lawyer Zarudny to Kishinev.' 'He was the most suitable person to carry out the mission that we had laid on him', he 'took it upon himself to discover the hidden springs of the Kishinev slaughter', after which the police 'to make a diversion arrested some tens of robbers and thieves'. (Let us recall that on the day after the pogrom 816 were arrested.) – Zarudny collected and took away from Kishinev 'exceptionally important material', that is to say: 'that the main culprit and organizer of the pogrom was the chief of the Kishinev garrison Levendal'."<sup>206</sup>

This "exceptionally important material" was never published anywhere. Goremykin looked into the accusations against Levendal and found them baseless. But Krushevan, whose inflammatory articles had indeed helped the pogrom on arriving in Petersburg two months later, was attacked and wounded with a knife by Pinkhas Dashevsky... The government sacked the governor of Bessarabia, while Plehve issued a circular to all governors, city bosses and heads of police expressing disturbance at the inactivity of the Kishinev authorities and calling for decisive action to cut violence. Nor was the Orthodox Church silent. The Holy Synod issued a circular ordering the clergy to take measures to root out hatred of the Jews. Fr. John of Kronstadt said: "Instead of a Christian feast they have arranged a disgustingly murderous feast to Satan." And Bishop Anthony (Khrapovitsky) said: "The terrible punishment of God will attain those evil-doers who shed blood asking for that of the God-man, His Most Pure Mother, the Apostles and Prophets'; 'that they should know that the Jewish race, which has been rejected up to now, is dear to the Spirit of God, and that every one who would want to offend it will anger the Lord.'"<sup>207</sup>

The Jews and radicals inside Russia, and the European and American press outside Russia, were loud in their accusations that the Russian government was responsible for the Kishinev pogrom. The newspaper magnate William Hurst even used the fateful word "holocaust"...<sup>208</sup> On May 18 *The Times* of London published a letter of a "completely secret letter" of Plehve to the Kishinev governor von Raaben in which Plehve supposedly asked the governor not to put down any disturbances against the Jews but only to inform him about them.<sup>209</sup> The letter turned out to be a forgery, as even pro-Semite sources accept.<sup>210</sup> However, this did not prevent the 1996 edition of *The Jewish Encyclopaedia* from reiterating the accusation as if it were fact...<sup>211</sup>

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<sup>206</sup> Solzhenitsyn, *op. cit.*, pp. 327-328.

<sup>207</sup> Solzhenitsyn, *op. cit.*, p. 329.

<sup>208</sup> Solzhenitsyn, *op. cit.*, p. 332.

<sup>209</sup> Solzhenitsyn, *op. cit.*, p. 333.

<sup>210</sup> Vital, *A People Apart. The Jews in Europe, 1789-1939*, Oxford University Press, 1999, p. 513.

<sup>211</sup> Solzhenitsyn, *op. cit.*, p. 335.

Far from the superficial glitter of Petersburg, and the bloody violence of Kishinev, a truly holy feast was celebrated in August, 1903 in the monastery of Sarov, deep in patriarchal Russia. The occasion was the glorification – on the initiative of the Tsar – of St. Seraphim of Sarov (+1832), perhaps the greatest saint of the Petersburg period of Russian history.

The Russian Church had undertaken few glorifications of saints during the St. Petersburg period of her history. However, early in his reign Tsar Nicholas II initiated no less than six.

As Tikhon Sisoiev writes, the most important of these was that of St. Seraphim on July 19, 1903: “The question of the canonization of the Sarov ascetic was first raised in 1883. At that time the leader of the Moscow women gymnasiums, Viktorov, wrote a letter to the over-procurator, Konstantin Pobedonostsev, suggesting that ‘the beginning of the reign of the emperor [Alexander III] should be marked by the uncovering of the relics of the pious God-pleaser who was honoured throughout Russia. However, there was no reply. Later other private suggestions were rejected.

“In 1894 on the initiative of Igumen Raphael (Trukhin), the superior of the Sarov monastery, a detailed life of Seraphim of Sarov was composed in which confirmed testimonies of 94 miracles from the life of the ascetic were documented. The Synod acted in an ambiguous way: they refused the canonization, but continued to gather information. Thus the just-started process of glorification hung in the air, and it is not known how long the silence of the Synod would have continued if it had not been for the ‘cunning’ of Archimandrite Seraphim (Chichagov).

“... Archimandrite Seraphim was an energetic man. Having obtained access to the archives of the Diveyevo monastery, he assembled a whole complex of various information about the life and miracles of Seraphim of Sarov, which he systematized in chronological order. As a result of this investigation, a book was published, *The Chronicle of the Seraphimo-Diveyevo Monastery*, which the archimandrite, bypassing the Synod, handed to Nicholas II after a personal audience with his Majesty. We find evidence of this in the diary entries of General Alexander Kireev, who points out that the procurator Pobedonostsev afterwards called Archimandrite Seraphim ‘a great scoundrel and rogue’. The question of the canonization began to get moving.

“In the spring of 1902 the over-procurator was invited by the emperor to a family breakfast at which Nicholas II suggested providing – already within a few days – a decree on the glorification of Seraphim of Sarov. Pobedonostsev objected that such haste seemed to him inappropriate when it was a matter of glorifying a man. The empress cut in: ‘His Majesty can do anything.’ The suggestion became an order.

“Why did the Royal Family adopt such unbending determination? There were various reasons for this. The Sarov ascetic had already been venerated for a long time in the Romanov family. Thanks to the prayers of Seraphim of Sarov, it was thought, the seven-year-old daughter of Alexander II had been healed. Empress Alexandra Fyodorovna believed that it was precisely through his prayers that a boy – the future heir to the throne – would finally be born in the family. But apart from his personal veneration for the saint, Nicholas II was seeking in the canonization of Seraphim the

resolution of profound internal political problems. In the opinion of many historians, his Majesty in the course of the first half of his reign was trying to come closer to the people. "Noble Russia" since 1861 [the emancipation of the serfs] had been inexorably falling apart,' writes G.P. Fedorov, the Russian historian and philosopher. 'The Autocracy did not have the strength to tear itself away from its noble roots and would perish together with it. Russia, which had been frozen for twenty years by Pobedonostsev, was clearly rotting under the snow.' It was precisely the widespread veneration of Seraphim of Sarov among the people that, in the eyes of the emperor himself, provided an opportunity to find a point of contact between the simple people, the intelligentsia and the nobility.

"One way or another, Pobedonostsev submitted, and the *Church Gazette* of July, 1902 announced the beginning of the preparation of the official canonization. In the same month the empress sent gifts to Sarov Desert: a lampada and church vestments. It seemed that the glorification of Seraphim of Sarov was an accomplished fact. But new hindrances arose...

"On January 11, 1903, a commission headed by Metropolitan Vladimir of Moscow arrived in Sarov to unearth and examine the relics of Seraphim of Sarov. Metropolitan Benjamin (Fedchenko) remembered: "The body of the saint had been subject to corruption, but the bones, which were in a perfect state of preservation, were laid out correctly. The hairs of the head and beard had also been preserved; they were of a grayish-ginger colour. The results of the commission were handed to the Most Holy Synod. 'Why did they go off into some wood to find only some bones?' said one of the members of the Synod. Everybody was disturbed – if the body had been corrupted, it meant that Seraphim was not a saint.

"The point was that during the Synodal period the idea had become embedded in the people's and clergy's consciousness that the holiness of a reposed man was witnessed not only by his life and miracles, but also by the incorruption of his relics. In order to refute this non-obligatory condition of canonization, a whole theological investigation was required. Its results were published in the declaration of Metropolitan Anthony (Vadkovsky): 'Incorruption of relics is by no means considered to be a sign of the glorification of the holy God-pleasers. When there is incorruption of relics, this is a miracle, but only in addition to those miracles which are worked through their mediation.' The doubts had been dispelled.

"After this the Synod declared themselves satisfied with the results of the inspection of the relics and prepared a report for the emperor in which they expressed their agreement with the canonization of Seraphim of Sarov. Having read the report, Nicholas II placed the following resolution on it: 'I have read this with a feeling of true joy and deep emotion'.

"A colossal amount of work was carried out in connection with the organization of the coming festivity in the short period from the beginning of 1903: special 'missionary' trains were sent to Sarov, new hotels were built, medical care points were organized. By July [17/]30 about 300,000 pilgrims and more than 500 clergy had arrived in the town. That evening his Majesty himself arrived. Prince Vladimir Volkonsky, who also came to Sarov, recalled: 'There was a real unity. Not seeming, but sincere and

complete, involving the whole assembled people, every person, of whatever class he was. Such a tenderness and kindness reigned over the whole of Sarov and over all who had come under its shade.' We find the same impression in the diary of Nicholas II: 'A huge exaltation of spirit both from the triumphal event and from the amazing mood of the people.'"<sup>212</sup>

"The Royal Family," writes Archpriest Lev Lebedev, "had known about the great Wonderworker of the Russian Land for a long time. But a particular impression was made on the Tsar and Tsarina by the book *A Chronicle of the Seraphimo-Diveyevo Women's Monastery*, written and given personally to Nicholas II by Archimandrite Seraphim (Chichagov) - a scion of a noble family, one of the most educated and talented representatives of the nobility, who wanted to exchange a military career for monastic asceticism... In the *Chronicle* there were so many teachings, words of the holy elder of Sarov, prophecies, information about his miracles that the Royal Family was inspired with great faith in him! The triumphant glorification of Seraphim of Sarov, who had already been widely venerated in the people for a long time, was appointed from July 17 to 20, 1903. The Tsar came to Sarov with his whole family, his mother, the widowed Empress Maria Fyodorovna, his brothers, the Great Princes, other members of the Imperial House, and his suite. The Royal Family had never undertaken such a pilgrimage before. It was unlike any of the other journeys undertaken by the Tsar and Tsaritsa to holy places. Up to 300,000 worshippers from every corner of Russia assembled in Sarov for those days. Nicholas II tried to be present at all the long, almost unending services. The peak of the festivities was the transfer of the relics of St. Seraphim from the monastery's hospital church of SS. Zosimas and Sabbatius, where he had been buried, into the Dormition cathedral of the Sarov community on July 18. The coffin with the relics was borne on their shoulders by the Tsar, the Great Princes and the hierarchs, tightly surrounded by a sea of people."<sup>213</sup>

The festivities were truly an icon of Holy Russia: the Royal Family and the Great Princes mixed with thousands of peasants in a natural union that only the true worship of God and the veneration of His saints can produce. Many miracles of healing took place, and those who were present witnessed to the extraordinary spiritual peace and joy that was granted the worshippers. The Royal Family were praying for their own miracle - the birth of a male child, and their prayer was answered...

"Something unseen and unheard took place. The Russian Tsar and his Family were for several days in immediate prayerful union with hundreds of thousands of Russian people, praying together with them, in their very heart. The secret police were as it were dissolved in this mass; in fact, there was essentially no need for its presence! It was truly 'with one heart and one mouth' that the Orthodox people glorified God, the God-pleaser Seraphim and God's Anointed, Tsar Nicholas II!... *Such* a meeting with Holy Russia, represented by *such a multitude of the people* and with the breathing of *the special grace of God*, bound up with the glorification of St. Seraphim of Sarov, turned out to be *the first* for the Royal Couple and... *the last*...

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<sup>212</sup> Sisoiev, "Trudnosti kanonizatsii" (Difficulties of canonization), *Foma.ru*, July 30, 2016, <http://www.pravoslavie.ru/95782.html>.

<sup>213</sup> Lebedev, *Velikorossia* (Great Russia), St. Petersburg, 1999, pp. 388-389.

“The Sarov days of 1903 became a *key event in the whole reign*. During the festivities the Tsar received from the widow of P.A. Motovilov a letter of St. Seraphim of Sarov addressed *precisely to him*, Nicholas II [‘to the Tsar in whose reign I shall be glorified’], sealed (but never opened!) with the soft part of a piece of bread. The Tsar read the letter and his face changed, and after reading it... he wept... To this day nobody knows what was in the letter. We can guess that it contained some kind of prophecy about his destiny, or the destiny of Russia. In the same period Nicholas II visited the fool-for-Christ Pasha of Sarov... She symbolically (by means of a doll) foretold to the Tsar *the birth of a son*, and spoke much with him in figurative language. The Tsar left amazed and joyful: ‘I have travelled across the whole of Russia and have not met such a saint. Everyone has received me as Tsar, but she as a simple person,’ he said. Pasha placed the portrait of Nicholas II in her prayer corner and made many prostrations to the earth in front of it, which greatly exhausted her cell-attendants who used to lift and lower Pasha since she could not make prostrations herself because of illness. ‘Matushka, why are you praying to the Tsar?!’ they asked. ‘You know nothing,’ replied the blessed one. ‘He will be higher than all the Tsars.’ When war began in 1914 Pasha, covered in tears, began to kiss the feet of the Tsar on the portrait, saying: ‘Dear one, it is already near the end,’ and sent him the message: ‘*Your Majesty, come down from the Throne yourself*’...

“The visit to Sarov quickly produced results: On July 30 / August 12, 1904 the Heir to the Throne Alexis Nikolayevich was born! We can imagine the joy of the Crown-Bearing Parents! In the first months of the life of the new-born it was still not known what a terrible disease nestled in him. He looked completely healthy, he was simply a beautiful child...”<sup>214</sup> But for those who knew the prophecies the child’s name itself ominous: according to a seventeenth-century prophecy, the Romanov dynasty would end with an Alexis as heir...<sup>215</sup>

The Sarov days were like a last warm glow from the fading fire of Holy Rus’. They demonstrated that the ideal of a nation united by the Orthodox faith and in submission to a benevolent Tsar-Father was still a living reality. And indeed, there were many great saints still living in Russia at that time, such as the Optina Elders and St. John of Kronstadt, and many hundreds of thousands more who would suffer martyrdom during the Soviet period. These holy people were the fruit of Holy Russia, and its justification. And this holy fruit ripened under the protection of the tsarist regime and with its active support, the proof of which would be the holiness of the Tsar-Martyr himself and his martyred family...

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The joy of the Sarov days was quickly followed by sorrow and tragedy. And it struck the Royal Family itself.

Dominic Lieven writes: "Between 1895 and 1901 the Empress had given birth to four daughters: Olga, Tatiana, Marie and Anastasia. The four little girls were beautiful, healthy and lively children who were greatly loved by their parents. Nicholas was a fine father and the family circle was full of love, warmth and trust. If the Emperor had a favourite it was probably Tatiana, whose personality came closest to that of her

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<sup>214</sup> Lebedev, *op. cit.*, p. 390.

<sup>215</sup> Helen Rapoport, *Ekaterinburg*, London: Windmill Books, 2009, p. 88.

mother. Olga, his eldest daughter, was the most thoughtful, sensitive and intelligent of the four. Marie, the third, with huge grey eyes and a warm-hearted, simple, friendly manner, was always the easiest to get on with at first acquaintance. Anastasia, born in 1901, was notorious as the family's comedian. Under Russian law, however, no woman could inherit the crown. Had Nicholas died before 1904, the throne would have gone to his kind-hearted but weak-willed younger brother, the Grand Duke Michael. Since Michael was a bachelor in 1904 and subsequently contracted an illegal and morganatic marriage, the Romanov inheritance would then have passed to a younger brother of Alexander III, the Grand Duke Vladimir, and his descendants. Tension and mutual dislike between the 'Vladimir branch' and the imperial couple were never far below the surface in the twentieth century. Much therefore hung on the life of the little boy born in August, 1904. All the more horrifying was the discovery that the child had haemophilia.

"In the Edwardian era there was no treatment for haemophilia and little way of alleviating the terrible pain it periodically caused. The chances were against a haemophiliac living into middle age, let alone being able to pursue a normal life. For any parents who loved their children as intensely as the imperial couple did, the physical and emotional strain of a haemophiliac son was bound to be great. In the case of Nicholas and Alexandra, however, matters were made worse by the fact that it was considered unthinkable to admit that the future autocrat of all the Russias was incurably ill and quite possibly doomed to an early death. The natural sympathy and understanding which might have flowed to the parents had therefore to be foregone. Moreover, however harrowing one of Aleksei's periodic illnesses might be, a monarch - let alone a Russian autocrat - had always to keep up appearances. It says something for Nicholas's extraordinary self-control that, adoring Aleksei as he did, he nevertheless never let the mask slip. As Alexandra herself once wrote to him, 'you will always keep a cheery face and carry all hidden inside.'

"Inevitably, however, it was the mother who bore the greater burden during her son's illnesses, not to mention the incessant worry even when he was relatively healthy. Nor could she escape the guilt born of the knowledge that she was the cause of her son's suffering [for the haemophiliac gene was transmitted through the maternal line] and of the extra burden of worry about his dynasty's future that had been placed on her husband's shoulders. Physically frail and always very highly strung, the Empress poured her last drop of energy into watching over her son and nursing him during his attacks... The effort cost the Empress dear. She was often too ill and exhausted to play the role of a monarch's consort, incurring great odium as a result. Moreover, the strain of Alexis' illness pushed his mother close to nervous collapse. As the Grand Duchess Olga commented, 'the birth of a son, which should have been the happiest event in the lives of Nicky and Alicky, became their heaviest cross...'<sup>216</sup>

In spite of the joyous Sarov Days, which demonstrated the survival of true faith among the people, the fact was that *on the whole* the Russian people were falling away from the Orthodox faith and their loyalty to the Autocracy. And not only the westernized educated classes. The peasants, too - that class that the tsars believed was most devoted to Altar and Throne - were losing their zeal.

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<sup>216</sup> Lieven, *Nicholas II*, London: Pimlico, 1993, pp. 34-35.

For the time being, however, this was hidden from the consciousness of the tsar himself. He was not to know that the rapturous expressions of devotion he received from peasant delegations in many parts of the country, and most strikingly in Sarov, came from an ever-dwindling proportion of the common people. He was not to know that Sarov, 1903 marked the high point of his reign, after which it would be a steady descent into anarchy...

## 18. PROTO-ECUMENISM AND THE ORTHODOX CHURCHES

Greece after its liberation from the Turks was in a sorry state spiritually speaking. As Sotos Chondropoulos writes, "the new Bavarian king's court corrupted the traditional Orthodox values. This confusion greatly affected the priests, who struggled to lead the nation in its newly found freedom, just as they had during the hard years of Turkish oppression. Now, however, their values were steadily becoming more secular. The priesthood had become, in fact, nothing more than a routine vocation with many despots. The laity, in its instinctive wisdom, was aware of this but could do nothing since it was bound by politicians, scholars, and demagogues. So it turned satirical towards everything, including the church. Indeed, what a sad state of affairs it is when people mock their religious leaders."<sup>217</sup>

Men arose from within the Church who combatted these tendencies. However, they were not all of the same quality. Perhaps the finest was St. Nektarios of Pentapolis, who by his holy life and God-inspired writings showed that the great hierarchs of the patristic period had found a worthy successor. But he was little understood by his fellow hierarchs, and ended his earthly life in 1920 in virtual exile on the island of Aegina.

Another striking figure was the layman Apostolos Makrakis. He wrote openly against Freemasonry, which won him the approval of the hierarchy, and then against simony - which did not. Although he spoke eloquently against foreign influences and heresies, he was himself not pure in his teaching, and in 1878 the Holy Synod of the Church of Greece condemned him for teaching the tripartite composition of the soul and that Christ was perfected at His Baptism in the Jordan.

No less concerned about westernizing tendencies in the Church was the famous novelist Alexandros Papadiamandis, sometimes known as "Greece's Dostoyevsky". But he believed that the Church's condemnation of Makrakis should be obeyed, and he was critical of the religious brotherhoods that grew up in the wake of Makrakis' "School of the Word". "In the first place," as Anestis Keselopoulos interprets his thought, "the brotherhoods transfer the center of the Church's life and worship from the parish and the church to the auditorium. Secondly, the lay theologians in the brotherhoods of his day present an easy, fashionable Christianity. In their sermons, they hesitate or are ashamed to speak of the Saints and miracles, of fasting and asceticism, of the battle against the passions and evil spirits. Thirdly, Papadiamandis takes issue with the type of religious man that the piety of the brotherhoods fashions and the pride and hypocrisy that the moralistic one-sidedness of the religious unions cultivate."<sup>218</sup>

Papadiamandis entered into conflict with the Makrakians, and called Makrakis himself a "dangerous and much more unremitting opponent" than even "the cosmopolitan modernists and the atheist Kleona Ragavis."<sup>219</sup>

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<sup>217</sup> Chondropoulos. *Saint Nektarios: The Saint of Our Century*, Athens, 1997. p. 48.

<sup>218</sup> Keselopoulos, *Greece's Dostoyevsky*, Protecting Veil, [www.ProtectingVeil.com](http://www.ProtectingVeil.com), 2011, p. 86.

<sup>219</sup> Keselopoulos, *op. cit.*, p. 88.

While closer to the hierarchy than Makrakis, Papadiamandis was not afraid to criticise the hierarchs, especially in their too-close relationship with the State. "Papadiamandis believes that 'the Church should be far from every governmental dependence and imposition'. He argues that 'the Church is victorious in the world without the slightest cooperation of the State; in fact, on the contrary, the Church has been much persecuted and exhausted by the State. Today, the Church can be victorious over every persecution when its leaders, having the consciousness of their high calling, seek the good of the Church in every way. Papadiamandis insists that the Church must not only distance itself from politics but also from the State in general. The Church must be particularly strict when a corrupt State asks Her, not only for small compromises but to commit sins on its behalf. He believes that the Church must be managed by the faithful themselves and not from the outside. In particular, the election and ordination of clergy must take place according to purely ecclesiastical criteria and procedures, and the Church should not be forced to accept the 'swarm of priests, boors and philistines that corrupt politics have many times imposed upon the eminent hierarchs to ordain.'"<sup>220</sup>

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If we compare Free Greece with Greece under the Turks - that is, to the Ecumenical Patriarchate, we see that piety was in general higher in the patriarchate, especially in the country districts of Anatolia, where holy priests such as St. Arsenius of Cappadocia (+1924) struggled. However, the capital suffered from various heterodox influences - not only the Islam of the Ottoman rulers, but also, more seriously, the Catholicism and Protestantism of the western powers.

Also beginning at this time were ecumenical relations between the Ecumenical Patriarchate and the other major Christian confession in the Turkish empire, the Armenians. Hieromonk Enoch writes: "The heresy of ecumenism extends back into the mid 19th century. The Ecumenical Patriarchate engaged in negotiations with the Armenian Monophysite Church in the 19th century, and, in the documents for establishment of a 'communion agreement', state that they 'recognize' the priesthood and mysteries of the Armenian Monophysites. This eventually led to a decision, sometime in between 1879-1885, by the Ecumenical Patriarchate, apparently, allowing Armenian Monophysites to take Communion from Orthodox priests if they didn't have access to their own clergy! As always, it seems the Protestant English Establishment (Anglicans), were involved in this somewhere."<sup>221</sup>

They were indeed. In fact, both the Catholics and the Anglicans were adopting a more "eirenical", ecumenist approach to inter-Church relations at this time. Pope Leo XIII had already shown himself a liberal in political terms, striving to come closer to the republican government of France, the Kaiser's Germany and even the revolutionary movement. He brought the Vatican into the world of stock-market speculation, and founded the first Vatican bank. Then, on June 20, 1894, he issued an

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<sup>220</sup> Keselopoulos, *op. cit.*, p. 91.

<sup>221</sup> Enoch, "Constantinople Attempted Union with Armenian Monophysites in 19th Century; Allowed Armenians to Take Communion in 1879", *NFTU News*, July 21, 2016. See more at: <http://nftu.net/constantinople-attempted-union-with-armenian-monophysites-in-19th-century-allowed-armenians-to-take-communion-in-1879/#sthash.n5swfeqK.dpuf>.

encyclical on the union of the Churches "addressed," in the words of Patriarch Anthimus' encyclical in reply dated August, 1895, "to the sovereigns and peoples of the whole world, in which he also called on our Orthodox, Catholic and Apostolic Church of Christ to unite with the throne of the Pope, understanding this union in the sense that we should recognize him as the supreme pontiff and the highest spiritual and secular head of the whole Church scattered throughout the earth and the only deputy of Christ on earth and distributor of all grace".

The patriarch replied, listing all the heresies of the papacy and called on it to return to the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic church. For "truly," continued the encyclical, "every Christian heart must be filled with the desire for the union of the Churches, especially the union of the whole Orthodox world... Therefore in her public prayers [the Orthodox Church] prays for the union of all those who are dispersed and for the return of all those who erred to the correct path of the truth, which alone can lead to the Life of all that exists, the Only-Begotten Son and Word of God, our Lord Jesus Christ...

"Reverting, then, to that teaching which was common to the Churches of the East and of the West until the separation, we ought, with a sincere desire to know the truth, to search what the One Holy, Catholic and Orthodox Apostolic Church of Christ, being then 'of the same body,' throughout the East and West believed, and to hold this fact, entire, and unaltered. But whatsoever has in later times been added or taken away, every one has a sacred and indispensable duty, if he sincerely seeks for the glory of God more than for his own glory, that in a spirit of piety he should correct it, considering that by arrogantly continuing in the perversion of the truth he is liable to a heavy account before the impartial judgment-seat of Christ. In saying this we do not at all refer to the differences regarding the ritual of the sacred services and the hymns, or the sacred vestments, and the like, which matters, even though they still vary, as they did of old, do not in the least injure the substance and unity of the faith; but we refer to those essential differences which have reference to the divinely transmitted doctrines of the faith, and the divinely instituted canonical constitution of the administration of the Churches. 'In cases where the thing disregarded is not the faith (says also the holy Photius), and is no falling away from any general and catholic decree, different rites and customs being observed among different people, a man who knows how to judge rightly would decide that neither do those who observe them act wrongly, nor do those who have not received them break the law.'<sup>222</sup>

The Catholic writer Adrian Fortescue finds this worthy reply "unpardonably offensive". In revenge, as it were, he mocks the internal divisions within the patriarchate in a manner that is tendentious but which nevertheless is worth quoting as demonstrating how the undeniably scandalous state of the patriarchate was perceived by the outside world: "In 1894 [Ecumenical Patriarch] Lord Neophytos VIII occupied the see. He was a prelate who really cared for the dignity and independence of his Church, and by way of restoring them he ventured on a feeble attempt at resisting the tyranny of the Porte [the Ottoman government] in canonical matters. But when he asked the other Orthodox Churches to help him (Russia could have claimed almost anything as the acknowledged protector of all Orthodox Rayahs), their jealousy of the

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<sup>222</sup> "A Reply to the Papal Encyclical of Pope Leo XIII, on Reunion". [http://orthodoxinfo.com/ecumenism/encyc\\_1895.aspx](http://orthodoxinfo.com/ecumenism/encyc_1895.aspx)

Phanar was so much greater than their zeal for ecclesiastical independence that no one would do anything. The Bulgarian trouble, to which of course he could not put an end, alienated his own friends - they always seem to accuse the perfectly helpless Patriarch when the Bulgars become specially unbearable - so the Porte had no difficulty in making them depose him. On October 25 (O.S.), 1894, the synod and the mixed council agreed that he must resign, and a deputation of five members waited on him to inform him of their unanimous decision. So Neophytos VIII had to go back to private life in his house on the Antigone island. Having got rid of the Patriarch, the synod and the mixed council quarrelled so badly about his successor that their members excommunicated each other, and things came to an absolute block, till the Minister of Religions, Riza Pasha, wrote to say that he had annulled all their acts, and that they were to elect a new Patriarch at once. In defiance of the law the Porte struck off seven names from the first list of twenty-eight candidates which was sent up; one of these names was that of Germanos of Heraclea, who would otherwise almost certainly have been chosen. The popular candidate was the ex-Patriarch, Joachim III (1878-1884), but (it was said at the time) Germanos managed to get his name struck off too; so at last Anthimos VII (Metropolitan of Leros and Kalymnos) was elected. There was a tumult at his enthronement; the people wanted Joachim, and would cry 'Unworthy' (Ανθιμος ἀνάξιτος) instead of the proper form. Germanos had prudently retired to Vienna. However, Lord Anthimos began the reign in which he chiefly distinguished himself by his unpardonably offensive answer to the Encyclical of Pope Leo XIII. In two years the popular party succeeded in having him deposed. The immediate reason was the affair of Ambrose of Uskub [Skopje], in which he was accused of betraying the cause of Hellas. No accusation could have been more unjust. The cause of Hellas is the one thing no Ecumenical Patriarch ever betrays; he was only helpless before the Porte and the Russians. He did his best to keep his see. As soon as he heard that the synod wanted him to retire he suspended the leaders of the opposition and ordered them to go back to their dioceses. Of course they refused to obey. Poor Anthimos did all a man could. He went to the Yildiz-Kiosk and implored the Sultan to protect him, but the Sultan had other things to think about, and, on February 8, 1897, he went to swell the number of ex-Patriarchs, who wait in hope of being some day re-elected. There were now three - Joachim III, Neophytos VIII, and Anthimos VII. Constantine V (Valiades) was elected Patriarch in April. Lord Constantine seems to have been one of the best of all the later Ecumenical Patriarchs. He set about reforming the education of priests, insisted that the services of the Church should be celebrated with proper reverence, and modified some of the incredibly pretentious etiquette which his court had inherited from the days of the Old Empire. There seemed no possible reason why he should be deposed, except that the parties of the ex-Patriarchs wanted their candidates to have another chance. In the spring of 1901 it was first rumoured that Lord Constantine V was shaking on his throne. Twelve metropolitans of his synod and six laymen in the mixed council voted for his resignation. The rich bankers and merchants of the Phanar were all in favour of Germanos Karavangelis, of Pera. Constantine tried to remove that danger by sending him to be Metropolitan of Kastoria, a long way off in Macedonia. Nevertheless, on April 9th, Constantine's resignation was demanded by both synod and mixed council. But he did not want to resign, and for a time the Porte supported him. The Greek paper *Anatolia*, strongly partisan of the ex-Patriarch, Joachim III, all too hurriedly announced that Constantine had ceased to reign. It was immediately suppressed by the Government, and its proprietor was put in prison. The free Greeks of the kingdom were also all for Constantine. But in Holy Week his metropolitans

again waited on him with the demand that he should resign. He was naturally indignant that they should disturb him during these august days, and he declared that his health was perfectly good and that he intended to go on presiding over the Orthodox Church. Four metropolitans were on his side. He celebrated the services of Holy Week surrounded by these four, but boycotted by all the rest of his synod. The opposition then sent an order to the four, forbidding them to communicate with the deposed one, and they besieged the Minister of Religions, Abdurrahman, with petitions for his removal. The Porte tried to save him as long as it could, but the opposition was too strong. Again there was an absolute block at the Phanar. The synod refused to sit under Constantine; and so he fell. He retired to Chalki, and Joachim III was re-elected. Lord Joachim, the reigning Patriarch, had already occupied the throne of Constantinople from 1878 to 1884. Since then he had been an ex-Patriarch with a strong party demanding his re-election. On Friday, June 7 (O.S.), 1901, after the fall of Constantine V, he was chosen by eight-three votes, and the Porte then gave him his *berat*." <sup>223</sup>

Joachim III introduced a period of relative stability into the patriarchate. But it was precisely in this period that the influence of Anglican ecumenism came most strongly to bear. This may have had something to do with the fact that Joachim himself was a Freemason... Thus according to the leading organ of the patriarchate, "the first impulse towards official communion between the two Churches (Orthodox and Protestant) was provided by the Lambeth conference of July, 1897, in which 194 bishops from the whole Anglican communion came together and unanimously voted for action aimed at the union of the Churches... After this, in February, 1898, Archbishop Friedrich of Canterbury sent letters to the Patriarchs of the East and the Archbishop of Cyprus with copies of the decisions of the conference with regard to the union of the Churches... He asked the Orthodox Church to accept the baptism of the Anglicans and allow her priests to give the Divine Gifts to dying Anglicans in places where they did not have their own priests... In September, 1899, in a letter to Patriarch Constantine V the Archbishop of Canterbury expressed the burning desire of the English for clearer understanding and the establishment of closer relations, declaring that it would be difficult to set out the details of such a course and that the longed-for communion should proceed with ever-increasing depth insofar as the determination of some kind of programme towards this end had been shown to be difficult... He pointed out that the communion of the two Churches would become surer through the cessation of proselytism, through visits of Orthodox clergy to London and of the Archbishop of Canterbury and English priests to the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Constantinople on the great feasts and other official days, and through each Church telling the other of important changes taking place in her... On the basis of an agreement on these points by both sides, mutual correspondence began in December, 1900 and continued. After this various other events took place demonstrating the friendly relations between the two Churches..." <sup>224</sup>

The first such "demonstration" was Patriarch Joachim's declaring, in 1902, that Papism and Protestantism were "great ramifications (*αναδενδραδας*) of Christianity". However, before embarking on an ecumenist course, he wisely decided to issue an

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<sup>223</sup> Fortescue, *The Orthodox Eastern Church*, London: Catholic Truth Society, 1920, pp. 342-345.

<sup>224</sup> *Ekklesiastiki Alitheia* (Ecclesiastical Truth), 1920; in Monk Pavlos, *Neoimerologitismos Oikoumenismos* (Newcalendarism Ecumenism), Athens, 1982, pp. 17-19

encyclical asking all the other Orthodox Churches (except Antioch and Bulgaria, whose hierarchies, for different reasons, he did not recognise) to express their opinions on union with the western churches.

He also asked their opinion on the proposed change to the new, Gregorian calendar. This was related to the ecumenical venture, because the difference between the old, Julian calendar used in the Orthodox East and the new, Gregorian calendar used in the Catholic-Protestant West was the first obstacle to the practical implementation of ecumenism - celebrating the major Christian feasts together. The issue had already arisen at the state level because, as Pavel Kuzenkov points out, "it was not easy to answer the question as to why Russia should stick to its own, special calendar while Europe and America followed the unified calendar system. Weighty arguments were needed. By the twentieth century Russia had become an integral part of the civilized world, and very many stood for the adoption of the Gregorian calendar. However, Tsar Nicholas II, who in 1899 set up a committee to review the calendar, decided not to rush things. In my view, the voice of our great Church historian Vasily Vasilievich Bolotov played a crucial role. He provided a well-substantiated explanation for why Russia should continue to observe the Julian calendar: because the Orthodox Paschalia is based on it. If we introduce the Gregorian calendar, our Paschalia will cease to function as a mathematical system.

"The fact is that the Alexandrian Paschalia, which was worked out in the fourth century, is quite a refined mathematical instrument intended to make two astronomical cycles—the solar and lunar cycles, along with the week cycle—agree with one another. As a result 532 years make up a complete cycle of Pascha and the movable Church feasts that are related to it. But the main thing about this cycle is that it is interwoven with the Julian year of 365 and one-quarter day. If we replace the Julian year with the Gregorian year underhand, the cycle will collapse. That is why there is no Gregorian Paschalia. Pascha according to "the new style" is calculated by means of manipulations with the traditional Alexandrian Paschalia, involving complex corrections to it. For the Paschalia is at the heart of the liturgical Church calendar. In effect, the following question arises: either the new calendar or the Paschalia. And it is impossible to combine both.

"Bolotov's arguments produced an effect, and it was decided at the state level that this process should be examined further and not speeded up, while the country's tradition should be maintained. Among the favorable circumstances was the fact that many other countries of that time, such as the Ottoman Empire and the Balkan States, lived by the same calendar. That is, it was not an exclusively Russian peculiarity but a distinctive characteristic in a number of countries of the former Byzantine world.

"The Julian calendar became a symbol of old Russia."<sup>225</sup>

In any case, the Local Orthodox Churches all rejected the new calendar (Alexandria and strife-torn Cyprus did not reply). Their replies were summarized by the Catholic writer Adrian Fortescue as follows: "His Holiness [Joachim III] speaks of the Latins with every possible charity, moderation, and courtesy, and hopes for reunion with us.

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<sup>225</sup> Kuzenkov and Pushchaev, "The Rudiments of an Ultra-Ecumenical Project, or Why Constantinople Needed to Introduce the New Calendar", *Pravoslavie.ru*, February 20, 2019.

Which hope may God fulfill. The difference of his tone from that of Anthimos VII, in the famous answer to Pope Leo XIII, is very remarkable. The answers of the sister-Churches, however, show how little they are disposed to listen to the voice of their honorary chief...

"Jerusalem answered cordially and sympathetically. Patriarch Damianos said that it is unhappily hopeless to think of reunion with Latins or Protestants as long as they go on proselytising in the East. But union with the Anglicans is possible and very desirable... Athens answered that no union is possible, least of all with the Old Catholics, who will not give a plain account of what they do or do not believe. Bucharest said that the only union possible would be the conversion of the Latin and Protestant heretics to the one true Orthodox Church; the Old Catholics are specially hopeless, because they have given up confession and fasting, try to unite with the Anglicans, and do not know what they themselves believe. Belgrade likes the idea of union with the Old Catholics especially. Russia answered at great length and very offensively [*sic*]. What, said the Holy Russian Synod, is the good of talking about reunion with other bodies when we are in such a state of disorder ourselves? It went on to draw up a list of their domestic quarrels, and hinted plainly that they were all the fault of the Phanar. For the rest, union with the Latins is impossible, because of the unquenchable ambitions of the See of Rome, which long ago led her to her fall. As for the Anglicans, the Church of Russia has always been well disposed towards them: 'We show every possible condescension to their perplexities, which are only natural after so long a separation. But we must loudly proclaim the truth of our Church and her office as the one and only heir of Christ, and the only ark of salvation left to men by God's grace.'"<sup>226</sup>

Having received all the replies, the patriarch published a second encyclical in 1904 which expressed his own opinions, both about ecumenism and about the first step necessary in order to implement ecumenism - the change from the traditional Orthodox Julian calendar to the papal Gregorian calendar that was in use throughout the West: "The Church is one, in identity of faith and similarity of habits and customs, in accordance with the decisions of the Seven Ecumenical Councils; and one it must be, and not many and diverse, differing from each other both in dogmas and in the basic principles of Church government.

"This is our opinion concerning the calendar: the Paschalion is venerable and immovable, having been fixed already centuries ago and sanctioned by the constant practice of the Church. In accordance with it, we have been taught to celebrate the radiant Resurrection of the Lord on the first Sunday after the full moon of the spring equinox, or on the Sunday following; and we are not allowed to make innovations in this. And it is mindless and pointless for those who are lying in wait to ambush our immovable Julian calendar by jumping only 13 days, so that our menologia and those of the followers of the other calendar should coincide. On the one hand, there is no compelling reason to omit all these days; such an act has no ecclesiastical or scientific justification. And on the other hand, the coincidence of the menologia will be only

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<sup>226</sup> Fortescue, *op. cit.*, pp. 345-347. See also Eleutherios Goutzides, *Ekklesiologika Themata* (Ecclesiological Themes), Athens, 1980, vol. I, pp. 64-67.

temporary, viz., until the year 2100, when there will again begin to be a difference of one day."<sup>227</sup>

This epistle was followed by a further bout of infighting among the hierarchs, according to Fortescue: "So far then Lord Joachim III has shown himself a wise and admirable Patriarch. Alas! He has one fault, and that is an unpardonable one. He has already reigned five years, and the rival parties think it is quite time for him to retire, so as to give their favourites another chance. Already the opposition to him in his synod has declared itself. In January, 1905, there was a scene. Lord Prokopios of Durazzo led the anti-Joachimite side, and in a long speech attacked a number of the Patriarch's actions. 'Holy man of Durazzo,' said Joachim angrily, 'thou hast learnt thy lesson well. These are the plots brewed in the conventicles of the holy man of Ephesus.' 'All holy one,' said Joachim of Ephesus, 'there are no conventicles held in my house.' Then he, too, made a list of accusations, and eight metropolitans ranged themselves on his side. The Patriarch tried the old and always hopeless expedient of forbidding Prokopios to attend the meetings of the synod. That only brought matters to a climax. The eight members at once deposed Joachim and telegraphed the news to Petersburg, Bucharest, Athens, Belgrade, etc. Then, as usual, both sides appealed to the Sultan. Abdulhamid once more had the exquisite pleasure of lecturing them all on charity and concord. 'Patriarch Effendi,' says he, 'you are breaking the laws of the Church. You have no right to exclude Prokopios, and you must make it up with the eight metropolitans.' Then he sent for the eight. 'My metropolitans, what right have you to depose the Patriarch? It is not right. You must make it up with Lord Joachim.' He further hinted that if the precepts of their own Prophet are not enough to control their passions and to make them live in peace, he would have to refer the matter to the invincible Ottoman Police. Eventually the Minister of Religions, our inimitable friend Abdurrahman, last November, sent a note to Joachim, telling him his duty and the Canons of the Orthodox Church, and exhorting him to be a good Patriarch; but so far the Porte is for him and he still reigns. However, the opposition is by no means dead, and we may hear any day that he has gone the weary way to Chalki once more, and that a new bishop rules over the Great Church."<sup>228</sup>

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The Russian Church had been under pressure from the Tsars for some time to indulge in what we may call "proto-ecumenism". Thus in 1847 Emperor Nicholas I concluded a concordat with Pope Gregory XVI which envisaged that the Russian Orthodox Church would carry out all the sacraments and needs for those who turned to her with such requests from the Catholics exiled for their participation in the Polish rebellions against Russia, if they were living in places where there were no Catholic churches or Catholic clergy. In accordance with the meaning of this concordat and the order of the Emperor, the Synod then issued the corresponding command, which was obligatory for the Russian Orthodox clergy, to satisfy the requests of exiled Catholics, if such requests came from them. Again, as the Russian empire had expanded, so had the number of subjects of other, non-Orthodox faiths, to the extent that by the late imperial period, as Igor Smolich says, it was no longer a "confessionally united

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<sup>227</sup> *Agios Agathangelos Esphigmenites* (St. Agathangelos of Esphigmenou), N 124, March-April, 1990, pp. 17-19.

<sup>228</sup> Fortescue, *op. cit.*, pp. 347-348.

kingdom”, but an “interconfessional empire”. Thus, as Archimandrite Makary (Veretennikov) writes, commenting on Smolich’s work, “Tsar Alexander III, for example, visited Buddhist temples and attended their services; [and] Tsar Nicholas II also (for example, during the world war) visited Catholic churches, Jewish synagogues and Muslim mosques, attended their services, and kissed the Catholic cross. From a purely ecclesiastical-formal point of view the Orthodox tsar should not have done that, but as the head of a super-confessional empire, as emperor, he was forced to it.”<sup>229</sup>

The most active ecumenists were the Anglicans, and the “High Church” branch of the Anglicans that took particular interest in the Russian Church, whose highly traditional ethos and status as a local national Church seemed to them to be a model of what the Anglican Church should be.

Unfortunately, the sincere interest of some Anglicans in Russian Orthodoxy did not go so far as to allow them to see in Orthodoxy the One True Church; and the *rapprochement* between the two Churches turned out to be more of a danger to the Russians than an opportunity to the Anglicans. In 1908 the Anglican Bishop of Gibraltar reported that a recent synod of the Anglican Church had decided that the Anglican Churches could baptize the children of Orthodox coming to Anglican priests in places where there were no Orthodox priests, but only on condition that this baptism was not repeated by Orthodox clergy. Then, in 1910, the first “World Missionary Conference” was convened in Edinburgh. This is considered by some to mark the historical beginning of the ecumenical movement. Its president, John Mott, was the first to introduce the terms “Ecumenism” and “ecumenical” into common currency.<sup>230</sup>

In 1900, Bishop Tikhon of Alaska and the Aleutian Islands, the future Martyr-Patriarch, attended the consecration of Reginald Weller as Episcopalian Bishop Coadjutor of the Diocese of Fond du Lac, Wisconsin.<sup>231</sup> In his diary under December 16/29, 1900, Archbishop Nicholas (Kasatkin) of Japan mentions this fact with some annoyance: “Why did Tikhon worm himself in there in a hierarchical mantia?”

The problem was that many of the Orthodox Churches were indulging in “proto-ecumenism”, including the Ecumenical Patriarchate and some of the Slavic Churches. Thus the famous Serbian theologian Fr. Nikolai Velimirovich, who had studied both in Russia and for several postgraduate degrees in western universities, served with Anglicans in London after the outbreak of war in 1914. Later, however, he later turned away from ecumenism, and became a great confessor against both ecumenism and communism before his death in exile in 1956.<sup>232</sup>)

Although for the time being the Lord “winked” at these violations of Orthodox canon law, the time was coming when He would no longer be so indulgent... In 1914 the “World Congress for International Friendship through the Churches” met. This led

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<sup>229</sup> Veretennikov, “K Voprosu Periodizatsii Istorii Russkoj Tserkvi” (Towards the Question of the Periodicisation of the History of the Russian Church), <http://ao.orthodoxy.ru/arch/017/017-smol.htm>, pp. 6, 11 (footnote 17). The construction of a Buddhist temple in St. Petersburg in Nicholas’ reign elicited strong criticism from hierarchs.

<sup>230</sup> Monk Pavlos, *op. cit.*, pp. 19-20.

<sup>231</sup> *The Living Church*, November 17, 1900.

<sup>232</sup> See Muriel Heppell, *George Bell and Nikolai Velimirovich*, Birmingham: Lazarica Press, 2001.

to the creation of the “Life and Work” Movement, which later combined with the “Faith and Order” Movement to form the World Council of Churches in 1948. However, the outbreak of the First World War put a temporary halt to these developments...

The official service-books of the Russian Church reveal an unclear attitude towards the sacraments of the heterodox. Thus in the *Book of Needs*, we read: “Know this also, that a schismatic baptism, and a heretical one, by those who believe in the Holy Indivisible Trinity, in the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, the Holy Orthodox-Catholic Church determines to be ultimately acceptable in every way.”

Again, Bulgakov’s *Handbook for Clergy*, explains that Roman Catholics, if they have been baptised and confirmed, should be received by the “Third Rite”, that is, renunciation of heresies and repentance. If they have not been confirmed, they must be chrismated. They must *never* be baptised. “Recognising Baptism as a requirement for becoming a member of her, [the Russian Orthodox Church] accepts Jews, Muslims, pagans and those sectarians who distort the fundamental dogmas of the Orthodox Church through Baptism; Protestants are accepted through Chrismation; and those Catholics, Armenians and members of the Anglican Church who have not received Chrismation or Confirmation, and also those who have fallen away from Orthodoxy, she accepts through the Third Rite, through Repentance, repudiation of errors and Communion of the Holy Mysteries.”<sup>233</sup>

The 1903 Epistle of the Holy Synod of the Russian Church to the Patriarch of Constantinople expressed firm opposition to union with the heretics. The hierarchs were “unchangeably convinced... that our Eastern Orthodox Church, which has inviolably preserved the complete deposit of Christ, is alone at the present time the Oecumenical Church”. “As regards our relations with the two great ramifications of Christianity, the Latins and the Protestants, the Russian Church, together with all the autocephalous Churches, ever prays, awaits, and fervently desires that those who in times of old were children of Mother Church and sheep of the one flock of Christ, but who now have been torn away by the envy of the foe and are wandering astray, ‘should repent and come to the knowledge of the truth’, that they should once more return to the bosom of the Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church, to their one Shepherd. We believe in the sincerity of their faith in the All-Holy and Life-Originating Trinity, and on that account we accept the baptism of both the one and the other. We respect the Apostolic Succession of the Latin hierarchy, and those of their clergy who join our Church we accept in the Orders which they then possess, just as we do in the case of Armenians, Copts, Nestorians and other bodies that have not lost Apostolic Succession. ‘Our heart is enlarged’ (II Corinthians 6.11), and we are ready to do all that is possible in order to promote the establishment upon earth of the unity which we so

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<sup>233</sup> S.V. Bulgakov, *Nastol’naia Kniga sviaschenno-tserkovno-sluzhitelej* (Handbook for Church Servers), Kharkov, 1900, p. 928. In a footnote Bulgakov writes: “Accepting confirmed Anglicans [and Catholics] by the ‘Third Rite’ could be permitted only under the condition of recognition that the Anglican Church has a completely legitimate hierarchy, truly having preserved the grace of the priesthood in unbroken succession from the Apostles.”

With regard to the Syro-Chaldean Nestorians, the position of the Church of Russia was expressed in a Synodal ukaz dated March 17-21, 1898, N 1017, which stated that in accordance with the 95th Canon of the Sixth Ecumenical Council they were to be received according to the Third Rite, and that their clergy had be received in full ecclesiastical rank, with no re-ordination.

much desire. But, to our great regret and to the common grief of all true children of the Church, at the present time we are obliged to think, not so much of softening our relations towards Western Christians, and of a love-abounding drawing of their communities into union with us, as of the unwearying and ever-watchful defence of the rational sheep committed to our charge from unceasing attacks and multiform seducements on the part of the Latins and the Protestants."<sup>234</sup>

As Archbishop Anthony (Khrapovitsky) explained, the refusal to rebaptise or reordain a heretic, and reception of him by the "Third Rite", did not entail the belief that the heretic was inside the Church. It was rather an acceptance that the *form* of these rites was correct and did not have to be repeated; so that this form became as it were a cup receiving the grace that is imparted only in the Orthodox Church.<sup>235</sup>

Unfortunately, however, the widespread practice of "economy" in the reception of heretics led to frequent misunderstandings in the ecumenical era that began after the First World War...

With regard to the Latins, Archbishop Anthony wrote: "The Church is one and has never been divided, but heretics and schismatics fell away from her in the first age, have fallen away since, and will fall away until the Lord's Second Coming. Therefore, there can be no question of Union with heretics and schismatics, but only of their restoration to union with the Church from which they fell away.

"If the Roman Catholics should renounce their imaginings, then their restoration to union with the Church would be a matter for the greatest joy to the faithful and to the Holy Angels, not only for the sake of their souls' salvation but for the realization of the restored fullness of the Church's life to which our brethren of the West would bring that corporate ecclesiastical activity which is characteristic to them. In the circumstance of the renunciation by the Roman Catholics of their pseudo-dogmas, and

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<sup>234</sup> A translation of the whole Epistle is to be found in Athelstan Riley, *Birkbeck and the Russian Church*, London: Macmillan, 1917, pp. 247-257.

<sup>235</sup> . Khrapovitsky clarified the meaning of baptism and Apostolic Succession found in his article "The Basis on which Economy may be used in the Reception of Converts" : "those among heretics, whether clerical or lay, baptized and anointed (with chrism) by heretics, had only the empty sign (or outward form) of the mystery, and it receives the complement of grace only through that mystery which unites them with the holy Church (chrismation or penance). Moreover, in confirmation of this principle, should be added the custom, established in the Church, that the reception of heretics and schismatics, "in their existing orders," may be performed only by a bishop; if a priest receive them, then they enter the Church as simple laymen. This means that a schismatic priest united to the Church receives true priesthood only through episcopal reception; but a priest cannot bestow this grace on the one received. It is only on such a conception of the mysteries of the Church that her regulations as to the applicability to heretics and schismatics of one or the other rite of reception can be accepted; only on such a conception can the decisions of the holy apostles about the baptism of heretics and schismatics be reconciled with the further canons of the Councils about not baptizing them, and about their reception by the second, or even by the third rite ... As a condition of their reception in their existing orders, the existence among schismatics, before their conversion to the Church, of hierarchical succession, is usually insisted upon; but from the canonical rule of Basil the Great already quoted, we see that no schismatics have any succession and cannot have any; a hierarchy falling away from the Church 'become laymen and cannot confer the grace of the Holy Spirit, of which they are themselves devoid.' ... (This *economia* or accepting of the outward form of baptism in heterodox communities) depends on ecclesiastical economy, on the judgment of the local bishops and the Councils, and on the existence of the outward form of the mysteries of baptism, chrismation and orders in the communities from which the applicants come."

in particular of that absurd one of them which ascribes Infallibility to the Pope in matters, of Faith, the Holy Church, in restoring them to union with herself, would not only certainly restore to the Roman Primate that primacy which was assigned to him before his falling away into schism, but would probably invest him with such an authority in the Ecumenical Church as had never hitherto been assigned to him—inasmuch as that which he formerly possessed was confined to Western Europe and North-West Africa.

“But such authority, assumed as being given to the Pope after his return to Orthodoxy, would be based, not on Roman fables about the Apostle Peter as chief over all the Apostles, about the succession of the Popes to the fullness of his imaginary authority, about indulgences, purgatory, etc., but in the practical need of ecclesiastical life by the force of which that life was gradually centralized: first, in the metropolitanates (from the third century) and then in the patriarchates (from the fourth and fifth centuries) with the result that the authority of the metropolitans and patriarchs in their areas was continually and gradually strengthened in proportion to the assimilation of the people to Christian culture. We admit for the future the conception of a single personal supremacy of the Church in consonance with the broadest preservation of the conciliar principle and on the condition that that supremacy does not pretend to be based on such invented traditions as the above, but only on the practical need of ecclesiastical life.”<sup>236</sup>

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<sup>236</sup> *The Christian East*, February, 1924, no. 1, 24-25

## 19. TOLSTOY VERSUS ST. JOHN OF KRONSTADT

The first decade of the twentieth century witnessed a fierce struggle for the soul of the Russian Church. The traditional mainstays of Tsarist Russia had been the peasantry and the Church. Now the Church in turn gained much from the support of the State, but it was increasingly accepted that while the Church should be *supported* by the State, she should not *depend* on it, financially and administratively, to the degree imposed on her by Peter the Great's *Spiritual Regulation*, which had abolished the patriarchate and made the Church almost a department of the State. Indeed, by the turn of the century it had become almost an article of faith among the Church and near-Church intelligentsia that Church-State relations needed a thorough overhaul in order to bring them closer to the "symphonic" ideal inherited from Byzantium.

However, this movement was opposed by Pobedonostsev, who feared that a reform of Church-State relations, even if desirable in itself from a canonical point of view, might lead to Church-State *separation* and the gradual dechristianisation of society. Sergei Firsov writes: "Pobedonostsev saw and understood better than many that the demolishing of the Petrine Synodal system in Russian conditions would not lead to the recreation of correct mutual relations between the Church and the State, but would only strengthen anti-government forces. To represent the Church and the kingdom as existing in isolation from each other was psychologically impossible, while any changes in the ecclesiastical structure could be understood by 'the simple people' only as the abolition of the previous Church-State relationship [because 'for our peasant form is everything']. It was not by chance that Pobedonostsev, while talking with General A.A. Kireev about Church problems and 'about learning', declared that what he feared above all was a new schism: 'It's fine for you, but where shall we go with our darkness, with the peasant. I fear a schism, that's what I fear!'"<sup>237</sup> It is not clear whether he meant a Church schism, or a schism between the peasants and the State. In either case, the peasant uprisings of 1905 showed that the venerable old man had a point... However, there was a contradiction in Pobedonostsev's position. On the one hand, he sincerely believed that the Church was the soul of the State and the people, and should be its teacher, corrector and inspirer. On the other hand, he acted as if he did not believe this, but rather that the Church should be tutored and disciplined by the State, and that he himself, as the representative of the State, should act as the taskmaster of the Church hierarchy...

Tsar Nicholas, with his deep love of pre-Petrine Russia, took a close interest in this question. He believed in giving the Church more freedom, and that that freeing the Church from the dead hand of the State would ultimately be to the benefit of both Church and State. But, perhaps under the influence of his former tutor, Pobedonostsev, he acted cautiously. Nevertheless, one of the most important measures of his reign was his removal from the Constitution in 1901 of the phrase describing him as "Supreme Judge" of the Church. And, as we shall see, if political events had not intervened, it is likely that this would have been only the first step in a far-ranging reform of Church-State relations, bringing them back to true "symphony".

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<sup>237</sup> Firsov, *Russkaia Tserkoo' nakanune peremen (konets 1890-kh – 1918 g.)* (The Russian Church on the Eve of the Changes (the end of the 1890s to 1918), Moscow, 2002, p. 47.

The movement for Church reform first manifested itself publicly in 1901, when, somewhat reluctantly, Pobedonostsev allowed the convening of a series of religio-philosophical meetings between the “God-searching” intelligentsia and the clergy in St. Petersburg. These meetings - the idea of D.S. Merezhkovsky, V.V. Rozanov and a Synodal official, V.A. Ternavtsev - were an attempt to respond to a definite turning away of a part of the intelligentsia from sixties-style positivism to some kind of religion. Unfortunately, however, the conversion was, as often as not, not to Orthodoxy but to some vague kind of mysticism or theosophy. For Russia at that time was teeming with false teachers and prophets: revolutionaries such as Lenin and Trotsky; various Protestant sectarians such as the Baptists, Stundists and Adventists; more “mystical” sectarians such as the *khlysty*, the *beguny*, the *Dukhobory*, the *molokany*, the *prygany* and the *skoptsy*; free thinkers and heretics such as the novelist Lev Tolstoy or the philosopher Vladimir Soloviev; theosophists such as Blavatsky and the “silver age” poets such as Andrei Bely, and a huge army of masons, liberals, nihilists, anti-monarchists and ecumenists who were busy undermining the foundations of Church and State.<sup>238</sup>

Even when the *intelligenty* did convert to Orthodoxy, as when the philosophers Bulgakov, Berdiaev, Frank and Struve converted from Marxism, it was not to a pure, patristic Orthodoxy, as is proved by the “renovationist Orthodoxy” of Bulgakov and Berdiaev after the revolution. Nevertheless, if these “God-seekers” were ever to acquire true Orthodoxy, they needed to encounter the Church in her more learned representatives. Hence the significance of the religio-philosophical meetings, which were chaired by a rising star of the Russian Church, Bishop Sergei (Stragorodsky).

“Sergei,” writes G.M. Soldatov, “was popular in circles waiting for the introduction of ‘democratic’ reforms in the State. In his sermons and speeches he criticized the relationship between the ecclesiastical and state authorities in the Russian Empire.”<sup>239</sup> This would have been a risky subject to raise only ten years earlier; but times were changing rapidly, and Sergius, as his future career proved, was always sensitive to how the times were changing, and accommodated himself to them accordingly...

In the third and fourth meetings, Sergei espoused the cause of the novelist Leo Tolstoy... Tolstoy was in essence a radical Protestant, who stood for a Christianity reduced to “pure” morality without the Church, dogmas, miracles or sacraments. His teaching became very popular both at home and abroad (especially in England, where his novels had been popular for decades), among both the educated and the peasants. Soon his followers, although not organized into any “Church”, were rivalling other sects such as the Baptists, the Stundists, the Molokans and the Dukhobors in numbers and influence.

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<sup>238</sup> Madame Blavatsky wrote that “that which the clergy of every dogmatic religion – pre-eminently the Christian – points out as Satan, the enemy of God, is in reality, the highest divine Spirit – (occult Wisdom on Earth) – in its naturally antagonistic character to every worldly, evanescent illusion, dogmatic or ecclesiastical religions included.” (*The Secret Doctrine*, London, 1888, vol. 2, p. 377; quoted in Maria Carlson, *No Religion Higher than Truth*, Princeton University Press, 1993, p. 124). Theosophy influenced many Russian intelligentsy, as was recognised by such philosophers as Vladimir Soloviev and Nicholas Berdiaev (L. Perepelkina, *Ecumenism: A Path to Perdition*, St. Petersburg, 1999, chapter 9).

<sup>239</sup> Soldatov, “Tolstoj i Sergij: Iude Podobnie” (Tolstoy and Sergius: Images of Judas), *Nasha Strana* (Our Country), N 2786; *Vernost’* (Fidelity), N 32, January 1/14, 2006.

L. Solonevich points out that for centuries the Russian Empire had lived out of necessity in the conditions of a military camp. Such conditions required obedience and discipline, but “this obedience and this discipline were not particularly sweet. In the last one hundred years Russia has experienced, so to speak, a permanent revolution. A permanent rebellion against the authorities and against discipline. This rebellion took the most various forms – from Pugachevshchina to Tolstoyism. And if we take our greatest writer as an example, we can now, after our ‘great and bloodless’ [revolution of 1917], value his deeds more or less in accordance with their merits. The Tolstoyan rebellion did very much both for the undermining of the Russian monarchy (‘I cannot keep silent’) and for the undermining of Russian Orthodoxy (‘The Gospel of Tolstoy’) and for the undermining of the Russian family (‘The Kreutzer Sonata’), and even for the undermining of the Russian courts, which in *Resurrection* are portrayed as a talentless and feelingless machine – while the Russian courts were the most merciful and conscientious in the world.”<sup>240</sup>

It was the publication of Tolstoy’s novel *Resurrection* in 1899 that was the last straw for the Church. The novel, which sold more copies than any of his earlier works, portrayed a society so rotten and oppressive that revolution was inevitable. It also subjected the teaching and sacraments of the Orthodox Church to ridicule. If the government felt that it could not censor Tolstoy and thereby make a political martyr out of him, the Church, spurred on by Pobedonostsev, felt otherwise...

On February 24, 1901, to the outrage of all the liberals, the Holy Synod anathematised Tolstoy, declaring: “Well known to the world as a writer, Russian by birth, Orthodox by baptism and education, Count Lev Nikolayevich Tolstoy, seduced by intellectual pride, has arrogantly risen against the Lord and His Christ and His holy heritage, and has plainly in the sight of all repudiated his Orthodox Mother Church which reared and educated him and has dedicated his literary activity and the talent given to him by God to disseminating among the people teachings opposed to Christ and the Church, and to destroying in the minds and hearts of people their national faith, that Orthodox faith which has been confirmed by the Universe and in which our forefathers lived and were saved, and to which Holy Russia until now has clung and in which it has been strong...

“In his writings Count Lev Tolstoy has blasphemed against the holy sacraments, denying their grace-filled character, has not venerated the Orthodox Church as his Church, has spoken evil of the clergy, has said that he considers that to venerate Christ and worship Him as God is blasphemy, while saying of himself, by contrast: ‘I am in God, and God in me’. It is not the Church that has rejected him, casting him off from herself, but he himself has rejected the Church: Lev himself has of his own will fallen away from the Church and is no longer a son of the Church, but is hostile to her. All attempts of the clergy to admonish the prodigal have failed to produce the desired fruits: in his pride he has considered himself cleverer than all, less fallible than all and the judge of all, and the Church has made a declaration about the falling away of Count Lev Tolstoy from the Russian Orthodox Church.”

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<sup>240</sup> Solonevich, “Etiudy Optimizma” (Studies in Optimism), in *Rossia i Revoliutsia* (Russia and the Revolution), Moscow, 2007, p. 59.

Tolstoy influenced many people, as did his enemy and polar opposite, the extraordinary priest St. John of Kronstadt, who demonstrated by his wonderful life abounding in good works and extraordinary miracles, that Christianity “does not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God” (I Corinthians 2.5). As an example let us cite just one of his very many miracles: “Once I happened to witness the following. Two ladies came to see Father John of Kronstadt. You could tell that one of them was well-to-do, while the other was dressed simply. When the father entered the room, both ladies fell to their knees, and both handed him envelopes.

“Father John took the envelopes, and held them for a second. Then he handed those envelopes back to the ladies so that each lady got the other lady’s envelope. The wealthy lady exclaimed: ‘Father, what are you doing? There are three thousand roubles in the envelope. The money is for you!’ The father replied: ‘If it is for me, why would you care what I am going to do with it? You know that I want nothing for myself. Let’s see what is in the envelope I gave to you.’

“There was a letter there written by the other lady’s son. It read that some three thousand roubles were missing from his department (he worked in a public office). He had to find the missing money. Otherwise, he would have no choice but to commit suicide. He begged his mother to save him...

“‘You see,’ Father John told the wealthy lady when she finished reading the letter, ‘you have just saved a soul! How happy you are!’”<sup>241</sup>

He wrote of Tolstoy that he had “made himself into a complete savage with regards to the faith and the Church.” He called him not only a heretic, but also an antichrist, and refused to receive honorary membership of Yuriev university if Tolstoy was to receive the same honour.<sup>242</sup> St. John lamented that “the Church of God on earth, the beloved bride, is impoverished, she suffers from the savage attacks on her from the atheist Leo Tolstoy...” He prophesied a terrible death for him.<sup>243</sup>

In a way, Russian society towards the end of the century could be divided into those who believed in Tolstoy and those who believed in John of Kronstadt. Some believed, first in one, and then in the other. The latter included the future hieromartyr-bishop and organizer of the Catacomb Church, Michael Alexandrovich Novoselov. In 1886 he graduated from the historical-philological faculty of Moscow Imperial University. During this period he got to know Tolstoy, who often visited his father when he lived in Tula, and became a close friend and disciple of his. There exists a copious correspondence between them from the period 1886-1901. Michael Alexandrovich was arrested on December 27, 1887, together with some young friends who had been infected with the ideas of the "People's Will" movement, for possessing some literature of this movement as well as Tolstoy's brochure "Nicholas Palkin", and might well have been sent to Siberia if it had not been for the intervention of Tolstoy himself.

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<sup>241</sup> From the memoirs of Olga Malchenko, an inhabitant of Kronstadt.

<sup>242</sup> V.F. Ivanov, *Russkaia Intelligentsia i Masonstvo ot Petra I do nashikh dnei* (The Russian Intelligentsia from Peter I to our days), Moscow, 1997, p. 379.

<sup>243</sup> See the documentary film of Tolstoy’s last ten years in Natalia Goncharova, “Tri Zhizni | (Three Lives), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QkH12-FVw5>.

In February, 1888, Michael Alexandrovich was released but forbidden to live in the capitals. Abandoning any thought of a career in teaching, Michael Alexandrovich bought some land in the village of Dugino, Tver province, and created one of the first Tolstoyan land communes in Russia. However, the peasants' refusal to accept the commune, and their patient endurance of their hard life, gradually led Michael Alexandrovich to question his own beliefs and pay more attention to the world-view of the peasants - Orthodoxy. Moreover, on one point he could never agree with Tolstoy - his rejection of the Divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ, and of the element of mystery in human life. Finally, he broke with him, and spoke against his teachings for the rest of his life, while acknowledging the very significant influence he had had on him. Tolstoy's last letter, written in Optina Desert, was addressed to Novoselov. Michael Alexandrovich did not succeed in replying to it, but much later said that if he had been able, he probably would not have replied. After the break with Tolstoy, he became very close to St. John of Kronstadt and the Optina and Zosima Desert elders...

For Tolstoy, wrote St. John, "there is no supreme spiritual perfection in the sense of the achievements of Christian virtues - simplicity, humility, purity of heart, chastity, repentance, faith, hope, love in the Christian sense; he does not recognize Christian endeavours; he laughs at holiness and sacred things - it is himself he adores, and he bows down before himself, like an idol, like a superman; I, and no one else but me, muses Tolstoy. You are all wrong; I have revealed the truth and am teaching everyone the truth! The Gospel according to Tolstoy is an invention and a fairy tale. So, Orthodox people, who is Lev Tolstoy? He is a lion roaring [*Lev rykayushchy*], looking for someone to devour [I Peter 5.8]. And how many he has devoured with his flattering pages! Watch out for him."<sup>244</sup>

St. John was a fervent monarchist. "With all our heart," he said, "we shall thank God that He gave and up to the present day still gives us autocratic and monarchical tsars in accordance with His heart, preserving the succession of the Romanov dynasty and the spirit of Orthodoxy in them, for the magnification of the Faith and the Church of the Orthodox and of the Russian state. Our Tsar is a righteous man of pious life. God has sent him a heavy cross of sufferings as to His chosen one and beloved child. Remember: if there will be no monarchy, there will be no Russia. Only the monarchical order gives stability to Russia; under a constitution it will all split up into pieces."

And he foretold cruel overseers and terrible sufferings for the people if the autocracy were to be overthrown...

St. John was opposed not only to Tolstoy, but also to the whole "proto-renovationist" current in the Church led by Bishop Sergei. "These people," he wrote, "are rejecting the Church, the sacraments, the authority of the clergy and they have even thought up a journal *The New Way* [which published published reports on the religio-philosophical meetings in St. Petersburg]. This journal has undertaken to search for God, as if the Lord had not appeared to people and had not revealed the true way. They will find no other way than in Christ Jesus, our Lord. [...] It is Satan who reveals all of these new ways and stupid people who don't understand what they

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<sup>244</sup> St. John, in Rosamund Bartlett, *Tolstoy. A Russian Life*, Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2011, p. 397.

are doing and are driving themselves and their nation to ruin by spreading their satanic ideas among the nation.”<sup>245</sup>

St. John especially bemoaned Tolstoy’s influence on youth: “Our *intelligent* youths have subverted the social and educational order, they have taken politics and the law-courts upon themselves without being called to do so by anyone; they have taken to judging their masters, their teachers, the government and all but kings themselves; together with their head, Leo Tolstoy, they have judged and condemned the universal and fearful Judge Himself... Verily, the day of the dread Judgement is near, for the deviation from God which was foretold has already occurred and the forerunner of the antichrist has already revealed himself, the son of perdition, who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped.”<sup>246</sup>

Fr. John was supported by the better clergy, such as the future metropolitan and hieromartyr Fr. Joseph (Petrovykh), who wrote: “Lack of faith, impiety and all kinds of harmful tendencies are now pouring over Holy Rus’ in a still more swollen river. They were restrained by this powerful personality [Fr. John], who was put forward by the Providence of God to oppose the heretic Tolstoy.”<sup>247</sup>

Fr. John had great influence with the royal family, and the tsar visited him secretly. This influence was noted and feared by a new player in church and court circles – the false elder Gregory Rasputin. As Archbishop Theophan (Bystrov), at that time inspector of the St. Petersburg Theological Academy, witnessed: “Rasputin indicated with unusual skill that he had reservations [about Fr. John]... Rasputin... said of Fr. John of Kronstadt... that he was a saint but, like a child, lacked experience and judgement... As a result Fr. John’s influence at court began to wane...”

This was a great tragedy for Russia, for St. John may have been the only person who could have weaned the Royal Couple away from the destructive influence of Rasputin...

Nevertheless, Fr. John continued to speak out boldly against the liberals, “those monsters of cruelty, those people whose aim is to live for themselves and for their own pleasure, not for the cause – those egotists, who do not empathize with their brethren... The mind works in them without the heart. Their hearts are not warmed by love for God and man, and they deny the existence of God, the foundations and bases of our common holy life, the rules of morality. Here is your education, students! This is because of your stupid education, Messrs. Pedagogues!”<sup>248</sup>

Rarely in history has the struggle between good and evil crystallized so clearly as in the struggle between Lev Tolstoy and St. John of Kronstadt for the soul of the Russian people. N. Menshikov, who knew St. John well, wrote just after his death:

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<sup>245</sup> St. John, in Vladimir Tsurikov (ed.), *Philaret, Metropolitan of Moscow 1782-1867*, The Variable Press, USA, 2003, p. 25.

<sup>246</sup> Soldatov, *op. cit.*; Nadieszda Kizenko, *A Prodigal Saint: Father John of Kronstadt and the Russian People*, Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000, p. 249.

<sup>247</sup> St. Joseph of Petrograd, *In the Father’s Bosom: A Monk’s Diary*, 3864; in M.S. Sakharov and L.E. Sikorskaia, *Sviaschennomuchenik Iosif Mitropolit Petrogradskij* (Hieromartyr Joseph, Metropolitan of Petrograd), St. Petersburg, 2006, p. 254.

<sup>248</sup> Kizenko, *op. cit.*, p. 88.

“‘Woe unto you,’ said Christ, ‘when all men shall speak well of you, for so did their fathers to the false prophets’ (Luke 6.26). No one but Pharisees and hypocrites succeed in having no enemies and in being generally honoured. The just man of Kronstadt could not escape having enemies. Nihilists and the godless intellectual classes spoke of him with ridicule and contempt; his own attitude towards them was that of humorous disdain. And a considerable number of the clergy, especially of the higher ranks, maintained towards him an attitude of offended envy. The third, the coarsest and basest enemy of the great priest was the Jewish press. Profiting from the relaxation of censorship after the reforms of 17 October, the Jewish press, in the course of three years, made a laughing-stock of the righteousness of this aged man, jeering at his miracles, his charities, and the veneration of his admirers. Slandorous legends about him were invented; dirt was thrown at the pure devotion of women; and the national impetus was spat upon.

“As it is known, Father John courageously stood out against the revolution, and in his sermons reminded the authorities of their duty to repress the disorders. He recommended both the masses and the authorities to comply with the thirteenth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans: ‘For he (the ruler) beareth not the sword in vain; for he is the minister of God, an avenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.’ Hence the authorities learned, to their surprise, that the use of the sword in advised by the Apostle. The Jews never forgave Father John for this. Having taken Count Leo Tolstoy, who denies both the Church and the State, under their patronage, they came down like a ton of bricks upon Father John, who rose to the defence of the Church and the State...”<sup>249</sup>

At the eighth of the religio-philosophical meetings, devoted to the theme of freedom of conscience, Bishop Sergei argued that only if the State ceased to use the Church as a weapon would it become possible “to raise the question of freedom of conscience. Otherwise it will be only by virtue of indifferentism that the State can give freedom to the sects along with the Church”. But “Russian State power cannot be indifferent or atheist if it does not want to renounce itself”.<sup>250</sup> In other words: if the State was truly the defender of Orthodoxy, as it claimed, it should free the Church from political tasks that were alien to her nature. Otherwise, freedom would simply help the sectarians and atheists to fight against the Church, while she remained unable to defend herself freely. Thus the questions of Church reform and freedom were inescapably linked...

It was not only liberals like Sergei who favoured Church reform. The former revolutionary-turned-monarchist L.A. Tikhomirov published an article arguing that the State should “give the Church independence and the possibility of being the kind of organization she must be in accordance with *her own* laws, while remaining in union with her”.<sup>251</sup> The problem was that both conservatives and liberals could argue for Church reform, but for completely different motives. Tikhomirov wrote as one who had seen the revolution from within, and turned away from it with all his heart, acknowledging the only true defence against it to be the strengthening of Church consciousness among the people. The liberals, on the other hand, were motivated, not

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<sup>249</sup> Menshikov, *Russian Orthodox American Messenger*, January, 1909.

<sup>250</sup> Firsov, *op. cit.*, p. 117.

<sup>251</sup> Tikhomirov, “Gosudarstvennost’ i religia” (Statehood and religion), *Moskovskie Vedomosti* (Moscow Gazette), March, 1903, p. 3; in Firsov, *op. cit.*, p. 137.

by a desire to see the Church free and therefore able to exert a more powerful influence on society, but rather the opposite: a desire to humble the State and destroy the Church's influence once and for all. As for the liberal *bishops* such as Sergei, they leapt onto the band-wagon of the reform of Church-State relations, and of what later came to be called *renovationism*, in order to further their own careers...

The religio-philosophical meetings were brought to an end by Pobedonostsev in the April, 1903. Just before that, Zinaida Hippus, the wife of Merezhkovsky, wrote in her diary: "This is what our teaching Orthodox Church consists of. Of believers: such as Father John of Kronstadt, who blindly and in a childlike manner believes in the ancient manner, with a child-like, genuine holiness. To whom our demands, our life, *our* faith are incomprehensible, unnecessary and seem accursed. Of indifferent and stupid hierarch-bureaucrats. Of sweet, semi-liberal ecumenists like Metropolitan Anthony [Vadkovsky]. Of kind and quiet semi-Buddhist, such as Fr. Sergei. Of wild and evil ascetics of thought. Of petty, crude, egoistical positivists such as Fr. Sollertinsky. Of cruel and vain moralist-positivists such as Fr. Gr. Petrov... The professors of the theological academy are almost all positivists, sometimes careerists; there are some with young, student souls, but they understand little, for by education they are profoundly uncultured.

"So this is what the Orthodox Church consists of at the given moment of history.

"I say this, *knowing* what I am talking about, I have experience. And believing in her genuineness, in the truth of the invisible Church."

But did this "God-seeking" intellectual really understand the Church? Her quasi-Protestant reference to the invisible Church, and her frustration with St. John of Kronstadt, makes one doubt it...

For "this was the point," as Firsov writes: "believing in the invisible Church, many God-seekers preferred to reason about the problems of the historical Church on a metaphysical plane. This kind of reasoning was profoundly alien to the political realist, K.P. Pobedonostsev," who said "Enough!" and brought the meetings to an end.<sup>252</sup>

I.K. Sursky writes: "Concerning St. John's relations with the Jews, it should be noted that he believed the policy of the Russian Tsars in regard to non-baptized Jews, in terms of isolating them from the mass of the Russian people in the Pale of Settlement, to be a very wise decision, since he thought that only such a policy would deliver the Russian people from inevitable subjugation to the Jews, which subsequently did happen in Russia. For this reason batyushka did not give his blessing in 1890 to V. Solovyev's project to expand the rights of the Jews in Russia, which project was later rejected also by the Tsar himself.

"Meanwhile, a direct confrontation between St. John and the Jews arose only during the revolution of 1905. St. John's detractors asserted that his activities were directed only towards making money, that all his molebens and blessings were done strictly for pay. Crude slander! He never asked for anything. He took only what was given him, and even that only to pass on to the poor.

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<sup>252</sup> Firsov, *op. cit.*, pp. 121-122.

“He was hardly ever at home, and thus his home furnishings were extremely modest, even though more than a million rubles a year passed through his hands. Only Pharisees and hypocrites manage not to have any enemies and be respected by all. Christ and His apostles had many enemies and died from their terrible malice. The righteous one of Kronstadt could not but likewise have enemies.

“The great pastor’s dirtiest and basest enemy was the Jewish press. For three years (1905-1908) it daily mocked the pious pastor, mocked his miracles, his charity, the veneration of his followers. Slandorous stories were made up, feminine veneration of him was vilified, popular ardor towards him was spit upon. St. John courageously spoke out against the revolution, and in his homilies he reminded the authorities of their duty to suppress rebellion. The Russian leadership amazedly learned from him that Apostle Paul himself obligates the use of the sword. The Jews could not forgive St. John for this. Becoming supporters of Leo Tolstoy, who rejected the church and state, the Jews rained down a whole torrent of dirt upon St. John, who had stood up for the defense of the Orthodox Church and the Russian state.

“Once, during the bringing out of the Holy Gifts from the altar, a Jewish student approached the saint and hit him in the ear with all his might, as a result of which St. John lost hearing in that ear and spilled the Holy Communion. Later on there was an armed seamen’s rebellion in Kronstadt, instigated and fanned by revolutionary Jews. These latter decided to use the event in order to make short work of St. John. However, the saint guessed at their trickery and did not allow himself to be talked into going and persuading the rebels to lay down their arms. After the failure of their plan, the revolutionaries decide to lure St. John into a trap and, taking advantage of his incessant concern for the sick, passed his entourage a message that an ill person was in need of the saint’s prayers. The saint had a foreboding that he would be met by enemies en route, and several times he warned his entourage, but they continued to plead with him for the supposedly sick person. The saint was led into a very rich house and was taken to the ailing person in the next room. When St. John went in there, the room was locked from the inside and the noise of a struggle could be heard. Then the women who had accompanied batyushka immediately remembered his foreboding of misfortune, tried to break into the room, and finally had to send for the coachman, who broke down the door. By that time St. John’s iniquitous attackers had managed to give him several knife wounds and had almost suffocated him. The coachman delivered St. John from his attackers and took him home. As soon as the saint regained consciousness, he immediately made the witnesses swear a terrible oath not to tell anyone of what had happened until his death, in order to avoid a pogrom.

“The remaining three-and-a-half years of his life the holy martyr suffered such terrible pain from his wounds that he could not sleep at all. Only the Divine liturgy allowed him to have a couple of hours of relief from the unbearable pain, and so despite his frailty he continued to serve daily until his very death, and when he could no longer walk at all, he lay in the altar and took communion.

“Thus during the Divine liturgy on 20 December 1908, at which the saint was present together with all the people who were praying for him, he quietly reposed in the Lord. He was buried in the burial vault of St. John’s monastery.”<sup>253</sup>

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<sup>253</sup> Sursky, *Otets Ioann Kronshtadtskij* (Father John of Kronstadt), Belgrade, 1941.

## 20. THE NEW THEOLOGY

Another kind of challenge to the Church came from the right, from what were called the “New Theologians”, who railed against the supposed scholasticism of contemporary Russian theology. One target was Moscow Metropolitan Makary (Bulgakov)’s *Dogmatic Theology*, which was considered to be lacking in inspiration. Thus Professor Nicholas Glubokovsky, while not denying that the virtues of Makary’s book were “undoubted and huge”, nevertheless argued that “the author is dragged towards the past, lives by its traditions and is governed by former methods. For him dogma is a finished theoretical formula that is undeniably obligatory in its abstract, irrefutable completedness. In this case only one scientific operation is permitted in relation to it – the establishment of its truth by the logically interrelated connections of all its parts the crushing force of its external arguments. Hence the whole construction inevitably acquires the character of *a priori* dryness and bookish lifelessness, and the scientific exposition turns out to be directly scholastic...”<sup>254</sup>

Michael Alexandrovich Novoselov wrote: “Our school theology, on the soil of which the struggle against the opponents of the Church is waged, is foreign to religious experience and not only inspires nobody and brings nobody to God, but even kills the living shoots of religious life which are apprehended in the pious family and in church. The disgust or distrust which theology elicits in many alumni of our theological (and sometimes also secular) educational institutions is hardly a secret to anyone. Indifference to the faith or its rejection – that is our heritage.

“Look: who rules the mind and the aroused conscience of the Russian man? Literature, philosophy, science – only not theology, which in its extreme schematism decisively refuses to see the living human soul with its demands, torments and doubts. It does not take the man with his present spiritual requirements and does not raise him, cautiously and penetratingly, to a higher level of self-knowledge and self-feeling. This role secular literature has taken upon itself, although unfortunately it is not always in agreement with Christian ideals.

“Who has good success with us in the purely religious sphere? Vladimir Soloviev, Khomiakov, Samarin, Kireevsky, Nesselov - that is, people who are particularly foreign to the methods of school theologising.

“How do such spiritual writers (who, however, are significant more for those who are not yet far from the Church, and still more those living in it) such as Bishop Theophan, Bishop Anthony of Ufa, Fr. John Sergiev (I have in mind his book, *My Life in Christ*) attract people to themselves? By renouncing the stereotypical, the dead and the deadening, the formal-dialectical method of thinking. They have gone along a new path of theological thought, a path which, it would seem, should most accurately be called ‘psychological’...”<sup>255</sup>

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<sup>254</sup> Glubokovsky, *Russkaia bogoslovskaja nauka v ee istoricheskom razvitii i novejshej sostojanii* (Russian theological science in its historical development and contemporary condition), Moscow: St. Vladimir Brotherhood, 2002; <http://proroza.narod.ru/Glubokovsky.htm>, p. 2.

<sup>255</sup> Novoselov, “Zabytij put’ opytnogo Bogopoznania” (The Forgotten Path of the Experiential Knowledge of God), 1902, Vyshnij Volocek; [http://catacomb.org.ua/modules.php?name=Pages&go=print\\_page&pid=653](http://catacomb.org.ua/modules.php?name=Pages&go=print_page&pid=653).

The call for a more living approach to theology, while not wrong in itself, contained potential dangers. One was that “exciting” but heretical theologians (Novoselov mentions Vladimir Soloviev) were preferred to “boring” but Orthodox ones like Metropolitan Makary. Another was that false diagnoses of the causes of Russian theology’s supposed “deadness” were offered. As, for example, that it was not Russian enough. Thus, as Protopriest Valentine Asmus writes, “Professor M.M. Tareev of the Moscow Theological Academy tried to demonstrate that Russian Orthodoxy had to cast off the yoke of Byzantine asceticism, which had dried up the Russian religious genius. A vivid representative of ‘the national theology’ was Tareev’s colleague, Vladimir Alexeevich Troitsky, in monasticism Hilarion (he was ordained to the episcopate after the revolution). He shared the ambiguity of Slavophilism, which well understood the universal meaning of Christianity and at the same time was inclined to see in Orthodoxy ‘the wealth of tribal faith’ (Khomiakov), as if it were naturally inherent in the Russians and Slavs as a whole. ‘The spirit of Slavdom is defined by Orthodoxy’ (Troitsky, *The Church as a Union of Love*, Moscow, 1998, p. 333). ‘I always somehow feel a lie in the position of the Slav Catholic’. Everything specifically Catholic ‘must be extremely opposed to the Slavic soul. The betrayal of Orthodoxy is... the betrayal of Slavdom, a going over to a western key in mood and in life’ (this was said about the Poles, p. 334). The remarkable thought of Tertullian that the human soul is by nature Christian is here narrowed to a single tribe taken on its own. The Russian man even in the fall preserves such natural resources as are not to be found in others, and even flirting with the devil is for him child’s play. ‘The German has sold his soul to the devil, but the Russian has given it away in such way that – and in this is the undoubted superiority of the Russian – he can leave the devil, while the German has nothing with which to redeem himself’ (p. 115).”<sup>256</sup>

Another danger was that the perception was created, whether justly or unjustly, that the reformers were striving to form an elite within the Church that would gradually replace the old cadres. Bishop Anthony in particular was seen as trying to create a core body of learned monks who would replace the old professorial cadres.

Thus, “recalling the 1890s, [Professor] N.N. Glubokovsky used to remark that it was precisely at that time that [there arose] the artificial development of a new monasticism, which created a special ‘direction’ in the Russian Church that announced and practised ‘in the spirit of true churchliness’ that ‘everything is permitted, allowed and forgiven to monks’. Later, wrote Glubokovsky, ‘there developed tendentious agitation for the monastic tonsure to be declared one of the sacraments, and if there were meant to be no more than seven, then it was necessary to dethrone marriage and put monasticism in its place, which would serve God following the example of the redemption on the Cross “through the compassionate love” of Christ alone...’”<sup>257</sup>

Glubokovsky is here referring to Bishop Anthony’s controversial theory of redemption, according to which Christ saved us simply through the power of His compassionate love and not through offering any kind of “expiation” or “sacrifice” or

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<sup>256</sup> Asmus, “Archiepiskop Ilarion Troitskij i Pravoslavnoe Bogoslovie” (Archbishop Hilarion Troitsky and Orthodox Theology)”, *Bogoslovskij Sbornik* (Theological Anthology), issue 7, Moscow, 2001; <http://proroza.narod.ru/Asmus-1.htm>, p. 1.

<sup>257</sup> Firsov, *op. cit.*, p. 91.

“satisfaction” of God’s justice, which he considered – wrongly - to be a Roman Catholic doctrine and alien to Orthodoxy. This product of the new, “living” theology, which was shared by other leading theologians such as Bishop Sergei (Stragorodsky), the future first Soviet patriarch, and Archimandrite Hilarion (Troitsky), bordered on heresy, and was to cause major arguments in the Russian diaspora in the 1920s. Thus one of the earliest critics of Bishop Anthony was the future Hieromartyr Archbishop Victor of Vyatka. He noted already in 1912 that the “new theology” of Bishops Anthony and Sergei “would shake the Church”. Later, after Sergei had issued his pro-Soviet “Declaration” of 1927, which caused a huge schism in the Russian Church, Archbishop Victor saw in the “Declaration” a direct result of Sergei’s pre-revolutionary teaching on salvation...<sup>258</sup>

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<sup>258</sup> Hieromartyr Victor, “Novie Bogoslovy” (The New Theologians), *Tserkov’* (The Church), 1912; reprinted by Orthodox Action, Moscow, N 1 (11), 2000; Protopriest Michael Polsky, *Novie Mucheniki Rossijskie* (The New Martyrs of Russia), 1949-57, Jordanville, vol. 1, p. 601.

## 20. PEASANTS AND SOLDIERS

“Contemporaries,” writes S.A. Smith, “seeing endemic poverty in the countryside, noting that the size of the average farm was shrinking in size [in accordance with the very rapid growth in the population, from 74 million to 167.5 million between 1860 and 1914], and believing that the burden of redemption payments continued to be heavy (these had been imposed in 1861 to remunerate the landowners for the land they assigned to their former serfs), were convinced that the standard of living of the rural population was deteriorating. Certainly, peasant lives remained poor and insecure, but it is likely that the overall standard of living of the rural population was slowly rising, for per capita growth of agricultural output exceeded the growth of populations, and the amount of grain and other foodstuffs retained by the peasant household also increased. The increasing height of army conscripts suggests that nutrition was improving. There is also some evidence that the burden of taxation, rents, and interest rates was falling in real terms, to an average of around one-fifth of household income, although this is not uncontentious. Finally, deposits in rural saving banks were healthy. This slow improvement reflected the fact that peasants were finding new sources of income in trade and handicrafts, such as brewing, making butter, spinning yarn, or tanning leather, and in wage work in agriculture, domestic service, forestry, transportation, and factory industry, usually by leaving the village on a seasonal basis.”<sup>259</sup>

Nevertheless, the standard of living rose more in some regions than in others, and “at the turn of the century,” writes Dominic Lieven, “the government was less scared by working-class militancy than by growing evidence of peasant discontent. In June 1901 A.A. Polovtsov wrote: ‘after the students’ disorders there have followed strikes and factor workers’ battles with the police. Next the peasant mass will rise up with a demand for land. Today’s militia [the conscript army], torn away from this very land for a short period, will not use its weapons to curb these appetites, which it itself shares. This will be the end of the Russia which we know.’ Nine months later, when a wave of arson and rioting swept the countryside in Poltava and Kharkov provinces, Polovtsov’s prediction seemed amply justified. In the wake of these agrarian troubles the Secretary to the Committee of Ministers, Anatol Kulomzin, sought to reassure his wife. There had always, he wrote, been agrarian riots of this kind in Russia, during which peasants customarily paid back stewards and foremen for a multitude of old scores and minor injustices. Troops had refused to open fire on only one occasion, and even then out of simple dislike for the officer who gave the order. Alexander Kireev had less reason to hide his fears since his comments were confined to his private diary. ‘I think we can cope with the students and co. without difficulty, but millions of peasants... that’s a completely different matter.’

“Witte’s response was to claim, correctly, that ‘the picture of the peasants’ miserable condition is greatly exaggerated’, particularly by opponents of the government’s economic policy who sought to hide their selfish interests or ideological preferences behind claims that the Ministry of Finance was ruining the peasantry. Throughout the 1890s Witte opposed direct subsidies or cheap credit to agriculture as a waste of scarce resources. In his view investment in industry was more useful even for the rural

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<sup>259</sup> Smith, *Russia in Revolution*, Oxford University Press, 2018, p. 28-29.

population because jobs in the cities would reduce land hunger in the villages and, above all, provide agriculture with markets for its produce and therefore with the incentive to modernize. Witte doubted whether big capital investments in noble estates could ever be justified given the low costs of production in the Americas and Australasia, whose agricultural produce was now flooding the world market. Though more sympathetic as regards cheap credit for peasant farms, he argued that the structure of peasant landowning made large-scale lending to the peasantry very dangerous. By law most peasant farms belonged not to individuals or even families but to the whole village community. Nor could this land be sold or mortgaged. As a result there was no way to secure loans or recover debts from the peasantry, as the latter knew only too well.

“By the early twentieth century, however, it was no longer possible for Witte to shrug off attacks on his indifference to peasant needs. Political pressure to ‘do something about agriculture’ was building up, as was fear of peasant discontent. After a tour of the provinces at the turn of the century even the rather dim Dmitri Sipyagin, the Minister of Internal Affairs, commented that ‘we are standing on a volcano’. In addition, the state’s finances were in increasing disarray, and the need to increase its revenues pressing.

“Nicholas II was kept well informed about the problem of both the peasantry and the treasury. In addition to receiving regular reports on these subjects from his ministers, he also on occasion was sent special memoranda by other high officials. In the spring of 1903, for instance, the Emperor received an analysis of his country’s budgetary crisis from Peter Saburov, a senior official whose career had included service both as an ambassador and as a financial expert, a very unusual combination in Victorian Europe. Saburov warned Nicholas that the huge and always increasing costs of the arms race ‘together with the sad economic position of the mass of the tax-paying population naturally arouse fears for the stability of the state’s finances... To restore the state’s fiscal power is only possible by means of raising the economic position of the peasantry... But it is already becoming clear that to fulfil this necessary but complicated task heavy sacrifices from the treasury will be needed.’

“Both Serge Witte and Vladimir Kokovtsov, who succeeded the critically ill Edvard Pleske as Minister of Finance in 1904, shared Saburov’s concern about the parlous state of Russia’s finances. Kokovtsov indeed commented that ‘I look with alarm on our economic and financial position’ and condemned what he described as the ‘fantasies’ that underlay much government expenditure. ‘These fantasies I see all around,’ he added: ‘in the exorbitant and unreasonable strengthening of the fleet, in our active foreign policy waged at the expense of the peasant’s hungry stomach... [in] the automatic attempt to get money for everything instead of stopping this saturnalia of expenditure and beginning to reduce the tax burden to a measure where it corresponds with the growth in income.’ But whereas Witte and Kokovtsov, like Saburov, believed that excessive armaments were the key to Russia’s financial problems, neither shared his view that international agreement to the reduction of armaments was possible, or indeed his conviction that the first step in this direction should be made through a deal between Nicholas II and the German Kaiser. Nor could the Tsar have any illusions on this score since the failure of his appeal for a reduction of armaments in 1898 had taught him the impossibility of halting the arms race. But, as Serge Witte pointed out

to Nicholas in January 1902, if the escalation of defence costs could not be halted, it was hard to see how the peasants' tax burden could be greatly reduced or large sums provided for the modernization of village life and peasant agriculture. The conclusion drawn by Witte was that improvement of the peasants' lot would have to come less from the largesse of the treasury than from changes in the system of peasant landholding. The farmer, he told Nicholas, must have individual rights and freedom, including unrestricted property rights to his land. In other words, Witte was calling for the abolition of the peasant commune, the cornerstone of Russia's rural economy and society.

"Ever since the abolition of serfdom in 1861, indeed to some extent even before that, the commune had been the most important institution in Russian rural life. The peasant community, which was usually but not always made up of inhabitants of a single village, was administered and judged by its own members through officials elected by itself. It also bore collective responsibility for paying the state's taxes. Although in principle the administrative, judicial and fiscal institutions of the village were distinct from the community's collective ownership of the land, in practice the power of the commune was enormously enhanced by the fact that it controlled, and in many cases periodically redistributed, the villagers' basic source of wealth.

"Defenders of the commune believed it was a form of social welfare, which would ensure that no peasant would go without the means of survival. They felt that at least until the capitalist economy had developed to the point where millions of secure jobs existed in the cities, the only way to avoid pauperization was to ensure that any peasant, even if he was temporarily resident in a town, would have a plot of land on which to fall back. Because the masses would not be destitute and would have rights to the use of property, it was believed that they would be more immune to radical and socialist propaganda than urban workers and landless agricultural labourers in the West. Not even the most ardent defenders of the commune would probably have argued that, from the narrow perspective of agricultural modernization, it was the best form of landownership; they did deny, and probably rightly, that it was as serious an obstacle to technical improvement as its enemies suggested. The fact that the commune was seen to be an old Russian institution which would preserve the country from the perils that had attended modernization in the West also added to its appeal. Anatol Kulomzin, for instance, was very much on the liberal and Westernizing wing of the ruling elite. He wrote, however, that even he swallowed whole the Russian nationalist view of the commune, so flattering to patriotic pride, and 'only troubles of 1905-6 which pointed to the socialist spirit which the commune had bred in the life of the peasantry finally sobered me.'"<sup>260</sup>

Here was the central paradox: that the peasants' basic institution, the commune, both protected from socialism of the western, Marxist type, and fostered socialism of the eastern, "Asiatic" type. The latter we may call "peasant socialism", since it is found in many peasant societies. For some degree of communal ownership of land is a characteristic of almost all pre-industrial societies, and the transition from a mainly agricultural to a mainly industrial economy is almost always accompanied by the taking over of communal lands into private ownership.

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<sup>260</sup> Lieven, *Tsar Nicholas II*, London: Pimlico, 1993, pp. 80-83.

Now the commune and “peasant socialism” was doomed in Russia from the moment that Alexander II decided, after the defeat in the Crimean War, to enter upon the path of industrialization. For industrialization required industrial workers living near industrial centres, which meant that peasants had to be free to sell up and move – in other words, they had to be free citizens in relation to their noble owners and free landholders in relation to their communes. The problem was that, while emancipation had made them citizens and freed them from the bonds of the landowner, it had not made them truly independent of the commune and therefore truly independent landholders. In fact, since emancipation had made many nobles poorer, persuading them, too, – seven out of ten of them<sup>261</sup> – to move to the cities, the communes had become even stronger, moving into the cultural void left by the nobility and controlling more land that used to belong to the nobility. (This was in contrast to, for example, Britain, where the landowning nobility remained powerful in the countryside long into the industrial age.) And so, though doomed in the longer term, peasant socialism for a time became more powerful and more aggressive.

Pipes writes: “The *muzhik* had no notion of property rights in the Roman sense of absolute dominion over things. According to one authority, Russian peasants did not even have a word for landed property (*zemel'naia sobstvennost'*): they only spoke of possession (*vladenie*), which in their mind was indissolubly bound up with physical labor. Indeed, the *muzhik* was not even able clearly to distinguish the land to which he held legal title by virtue of purchase from his communal allotment and from the land which he leased, all of which he called ‘our land’: ‘The expression “our land” in the mouth of the peasant includes indiscriminately the whole land he occupies for the time being, the land which is his private property... the land held in common by the village (which is therefore only in temporary possession of each household), and also the land rented by the village from neighbouring landlords.’ The *muzhik*’s whole attitude toward landed property derived from a collective memory of centuries of nomadic agriculture, when land was as abundant as water in the sea and available to all. The ‘slash-and-burn’ method of cultivating virgin forest had gone out of use in most of Russia in the late Middle Ages, but the recollection of the time when peasants roamed the forest, felling trees and cultivating the ash-covered clearings, remained very much alive. Labor and labor alone transformed *res nullius* into possession: because virgin soil was not touched by labor, it could not be owned. To the peasant’s mind, appropriation of lumber was a crime, because it was the product of labor, whereas felling trees was not. Similarly, peasants believed that ‘he who cuts down a tree with a beehive in it is a thief, because he appropriates human labor; he who cuts down a forest which no one has planted benefits from God’s gift, which is as free as water and air.’ Such a viewpoint, of course, had nothing in common with the rights of property as upheld in Russia’s courts. No wonder that a high proportion of the criminal offenses for which peasants were convicted had to do with illegal cutting of trees. This attitude was not motivated by class antagonism: it applied as much to land and forest owned by fellow peasants. The belief that the expenditure of *manual* labor alone justified wealth was a fundamental article of faith of the Russian peasantry, and for this reason it despised landlords, bureaucrats, industrial workers, priests, and intellectuals as ‘idlers’. Radical intellectuals exploited this attitude to denigrate businessmen and officials.”<sup>262</sup>

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<sup>261</sup> Pipes, *op. cit.*, p. 112.

<sup>262</sup> Pipes, *op. cit.*, pp. 116-117.

Pipes probably exaggerates the contempt of the ordinary peasant for non-peasants here, and in particular for priests. The priest was often as poor as himself, and had to work his own allotment in order to survive. In the Soviet period the solidarity between priest and peasant parishioners proved to be a powerful bond in many villages. In general, however, there can be no question but that a different attitude to landownership put many peasants at odds not only with the property-owning classes, but also with the Tsar and the Church, which upheld the traditional – that is to say, the Roman – concept of ownership. Thus on August 29, 1902 the Tsar addressed peasants of Kursk Region in Russia where he came to stop riots and looting in the region: "Get rich not by seizing someone else's wealth, but by honest work, thrift and by living according to God's commandments."

Pipes continues: "Such thinking underlay the universal belief of the Russian peasantry after Emancipation in the inevitable advent of a nationwide repartition of private land. In 1861, the liberated serfs could not understand why approximately one-half of the land which they had previously tilled was given to the landlords. At first, they refused to believe in the genuineness of such an absurd law. Later, after they had reconciled themselves to it, they decided that it was a temporary arrangement, soon to be annulled by a new law that would turn over to them, for communal distribution, all privately held land, including that of other peasants. Legends circulating in the villages had as one of their recurrent themes the prediction of the imminent appearance of a 'Savior' who would make all of Russia into a land of communes. 'The peasants believe,' according to A.N. Engelgardt, who spent many years living in their midst and wrote what is possibly the best book on their habits and mentality, 'that after the passage of some time, in the course of census-taking, there will take place a *general levelling of all the land* throughout Russia, just as presently, in every commune, at certain intervals, there takes place a repartitioning of the land among its members, each being allotted as much as he can manage. This completely idiosyncratic conception derives directly from the totality of peasant agrarian relations. In the communes, after a lapse of time, there takes place a redistribution of land, an *equalization* among its members. Under the [anticipated] general repartition, all the land will be repartitioned, and the communes will be equalized. The issue here is not simply the seizure of landlord land, as the journalists would have it, but the equalization of *all the land*, including that which belongs to peasants. Peasants who have purchased land as property, or, as they put it, 'for eternity', talk exactly as do all the other peasants, and have no doubt whatever that the 'lands to which they hold legal title' can be taken away from their rightful owners and given to others.' The soundness of this insight would be demonstrated in 1917-18.

"Peasants expected the national repartition of land to occur any day and to bring them vast increments: five, ten, twenty, and even forty hectares per household. It was a faith that kept the central Russian village in a state of permanent tension: 'In 1879 [following the war with Turkey] all expected that a 'new decree' would be issued concerning land. At the time, every small occurrence gave rise to rumors of a 'new decree'. Should a local village official... deliver the landlord a paper requiring some sort of statistical information about land, cattle, structures, etc., the village would at once call a meeting, and there it would be said that a paper had come to the landlord about the land, that soon a 'new decree' would be issued, that in the spring surveyors would come to divide the land. Should the police prohibit the landlord of a mortgaged

estate to cut lumber for sale, it was said that the prohibition was due to the fact that the Treasury would soon take over the forest, and then it would be available to all: pay one ruble and cut all you want. Should anyone take out a loan on his estate, it was said that the landlords had gotten wind that the land would be equalized, and so they hurried to turn their properties over to the Treasury for cash.'

"Such thinking meant that the Russian village was forever poised to attack private (non-communal) properties: it was kept in check only by fear. This produced a most unhealthy situation. The revolutionary potential was an ever-present reality, in spite of the peasant's anti-revolutionary, pro-monarchist sentiments. But then his radicalism was not inspired by political or even class animus. (When asked what should happen to landlords who had been evicted from their lands in consequence of the 'Black Repartition', some peasants would suggest they be placed on a government salary.) Tolstoy put his finger on the crux of the problem when shortly after Emancipation he wrote: 'The Russian revolution will not be against the Tsar and despotism but against landed property. It will say: from me, the human being, take what you want, but leave us all the land.'

"In the late nineteenth century, the peasant assumed that the nationwide repartition would be ordered by the Tsar: in peasant legends of the time, the 'Savior', the 'Great Leveller', was invariably the 'true tsar'. The belief fortified the peasantry's instinctive monarchism. Accustomed to the authority of the *bol'shak* in the household, by analogy it viewed the Tsar as the *bol'shak* or master (*khoziain*) of the country. The peasant 'saw in the Tsar the actual owner and father of Russia, who directly managed his immense household' - a primitive version of the patrimonial principle underlying Russian political culture. The reason why the peasant felt so confident that the Tsar would sooner or later order a general partition of the land was that, as he saw it, it lay in the monarch's interest to have all the lands justly distributed and properly cultivated.

"Such attitudes provide the background to the peasant's political philosophy, which, for all its apparent contradictions, had a certain logic. To the peasant, government was a power that compelled obedience: its main attribute was the ability to coerce people to do things which, left to themselves, they would never do, such as pay taxes, serve in the army, and respect private property in land. By this definition, a weak government was no government. The epithet *Groznyi* applied to the mentally unbalanced and sadistic Ivan IV, usually rendered in English as 'Terrible', actually meant 'Awesome' and carried no pejorative meaning. Persons who possessed *vlast'* (authority) and did not exercise it in an 'awe-inspiring' manner could be ignored. Observance of laws for the peasant invariably represented submission to a *force majeure*, to the will of someone stronger, not the recognition of some commonly shared principle or interest. 'Today, as in the days of serfdom,' wrote the Slavophile Iurii Samarin, 'the peasant knows no other sure pledge of the genuineness of imperial commands than the display of armed force: a round of musketry still is to him the only authentic confirmation of the imperial commands.' In this conception, moral judgement of governments or their actions was as irrelevant as approval or condemnation of the vagaries of nature. There were no 'good' or 'bad' governments: there were only strong and weak ones, and strong ones were always preferable to weak ones. (Similarly, serfs used to prefer cruel but efficient masters to kindly but ineffective ones.) Weak rulers made it possible to return to primitive freedom or volia,

understood as license to do whatever one wanted, unrestrained by man-made law. Russian governments took account of these attitudes and went to great lengths to impress on the country the image of boundless power. Experienced bureaucrats opposed freedom of the press and parliamentary government in good part because they feared that the existence of an overt, legitimized opposition would be interpreted by the peasantry as a sign of weakness and a signal to rebel."<sup>263</sup>

Again, we may suspect Pipes of some exaggeration here. The large-scale peasant rebellions against Soviet power in Tambov province and Siberia in 1920-21, and still more the rebellion against collectivization in the Black Earth region in the late 1920s and early 1930s, show that large numbers of peasants *did* know the difference between a "good" and "bad" power, and by no means always identified might with right. Moreover, the rebellion in the Black Earth region was closely linked with the True Orthodox Church and a specifically Orthodox Christian doctrine of political legitimacy: that for Orthodox Russians only the Orthodox tsar could be a legitimate, God-established authority, and that the "authority" that overthrew him could only be an "anti-authority", established not by God but by the devil (Revelation 13.2).

Nevertheless, this traditional teaching came to the fore again in the peasantry only as a result of the fiery trial of the revolution, when the terrible sufferings caused by the new "authority" had forced the peasants to rethink their assumptions about power and return to the traditional teaching of the Church (especially the commandments on stealing, killing and envy). The very success of the revolution, and the rapidity with which all forms of deference to authority collapsed in 1917, witnesses to the truth of Pipes' thesis for the *majority* of the peasants. And therefore the traditional hypothesis of right-wing historians and publicists that the revolution was caused mainly by the ideas of westernizing intellectuals needs to be modified at any rate to this extent: that if Westerners and westernizing ideas started and led the revolution, its success was guaranteed by the support it received from peasants who were scarcely touched by western ideas, but who had fallen away from the traditional teaching of the Orthodox Church in other ways... Chekhov's story "The Peasants" (1897) and Bunin's "The Village" (1910) created a sensation by their revelation of the low moral level of much of village life, so different from the idealistic ideas of the *Narodniki* of an earlier generation...

Pipes continues: "At the turn of the century, observers noted subtle changes in the attitudes of the peasantry, particularly the younger generation. They were religiously less observant, less respectful of tradition and authority, restless, and somehow disaffected not only over land but over life in general.

"The authorities were especially perturbed by the behaviour of those who moved into the cities and industrial centers. Such peasants were no longer intimidated by uniformed representatives of authority and were said to act 'insolently'. When they returned to the village, permanently or to help out with the field work, they spread the virus of discontent. The Ministry of the Interior, observing this development, objected, on security grounds, to further industrialization and excessive rural mobility, but, for reasons previously stated, it had little success.

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<sup>263</sup> Pipes, op. cit., pp. 117-119.

“One of the causes of changes in the mood of the peasantry seems to have been the spread of literacy, actively promoted by the authorities. The 1897 census revealed a very low level of literacy for the Russian Empire as a whole: only one in five (21 percent) of the inhabitants could read and write. But disaggregated the statistics looked considerably better. As a result of the combined efforts of rural schools and private associations, literacy showed a dramatic spurt among the young, especially males: in 1897, 45 percent of the Empire’s male inhabitants aged ten to twenty-nine were recorded as literate. At this rate, the population of the Empire could have been expected to attain universal literacy by 1925.

“Literate peasants and workers read most of all religious books (the gospels and lives of saints) followed by cheap escapist literature, the Russian equivalent of ‘penny dreadfuls’ – a situation not unlike that observed in England half a century earlier...

“Growing literacy, unaccompanied by proportionately expanding opportunities to apply the knowledge acquired from reading, probably contributed to the restlessness of the lower classes. It has been noted in other regions of the world that schooling and the spread of literacy often produce unsettling effects. African natives educated in missionary schools, as compared with untutored ones, have been observed to develop a different mentality, expressed in an unwillingness to perform monotonous work and in lower levels of honesty and truthfulness. Similar trends were noted among young Russian peasants exposed to urban culture, who also seemed less ready to acquiesce to the routine of rural work and lived in a state of powerful, if unfocused expectations aroused by reading about unfamiliar worlds.”<sup>264</sup>

Literacy enabled the peasants to read godly literature - but also ungodly. Anti-Orthodox and anti-monarchist ideas would naturally spread fastest among the literate peasants...

Orlando Figes points out that “the growth of the cities far outstripped the pace of church-building in them, with the result that millions of new workers, having been uprooted from the village with its church, were consigned to live in a state of Godlessness. The industrial suburb of Orekhovo-Zuevo, just outside Moscow, for example, had only one church for 40,000 residents at the turn of the century. Iuzovka, the mining capital of the Donbass, today called Donetsk, had only two for 20,000.”<sup>265</sup>

Of course, industrial workers were still half-peasants, and often used to return to their villages at harvest time. But there, instead of recovering their Church consciousness in the more godly atmosphere of the village, they tended to infect the villagers with their own corrupt urban ways. This tendency was accentuated with time, as the older, more godly generation died off, and the younger, revolutionary generation took its place.

Moreover, continues Figes, “the traditional extended peasant family began to break up as the younger and more literate peasants struggled to throw off the patriarchal tyranny [sic] of the village and set up households of their own. They looked towards the city and its cultural values as a route to independence and self-worth. Virtually

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<sup>264</sup> Pipes, *op. cit.*, pp. 119-120.

<sup>265</sup> Figes, *A People’s Tragedy*, London: Pimlico, 1996, pp. 64-65.

any urban job seemed desirable compared with the hardships and dull routines of peasant life. A survey of rural schoolchildren in the early 1900s found that half of them wanted to pursue an 'educated profession' in the city, whereas less than 2 per cent held any desire to follow in the footsteps of their peasant parents. 'I want to be a shop assistant,' said one schoolboy, 'because I do not like to walk in the mud. I want to be like those people who are cleanly dressed and work as shop assistants.' Educators were alarmed that, once they had learned to read, many peasant boys, in particular, turned their backs on agricultural work and set themselves above the other peasants by swaggering around in raffish city clothes. Such boys, wrote a villager, 'would run away to Moscow and take any job'. They looked back on the village as a 'dark' and 'backward' world of superstition and crippling poverty – a world Trotsky would describe as the Russia of 'icons and cockroaches' – and they idealized the city as a force of social progress and enlightenment. Here was the basis of the cultural revolution on which Bolshevism would be built. For the Party rank and file was recruited in the main from peasant boys like these; and its ideology was a science of contempt for the peasant world. The revolution would sweep it all away..."<sup>266</sup>

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In addition to the Church and the peasantry there was a third major mainstay of the Tsarist regime: the army, which was made up, of course, largely of peasants. The army had to defend the borders of the largest state in the world and double up as a police force in times of emergency. And so, "in 1900, according to one estimate, the Russian government was spending ten times more on its army than on education and the navy received more than the key ministries of Agriculture and Justice."<sup>267</sup>

The Tsar particularly valued and loved the army; he loved nothing more than marching with it or inspecting it. However, as Margaret Macmillan writes, "the newly emerging political class [i.e. the liberals] saw the army as an army of the absolutist regime, its officers drawn from a narrow segment of society. Russian public opinion and Russian intellectuals did not take pride in colonial conquest or past military victories because such things seemed to have little to do with them. In 1905, while the Russo-Japanese War still went on, Alexander Kuprin enjoyed great success with his novel, *The Duel*, which showed army officers as, among other things, drunken, dissolute, venal, lazy, bored, and brutal."<sup>268</sup>

Foreigners recognized that the courage of the ordinary Russian soldier, but were more sceptical about his superiors. As Max Hastings writes, "after attending Russian manoeuvres, the British military attaché wrote: 'we saw much martial spectacle, but very little serious training for modern war'. France's Gen. Joseph Joffre, invited to inspect Nicholas's forces in August 1913, agreed... The Russian army was burdened with weak leaders and chronic factionalism; one historian has written that it retained 'some of the characteristics of a dynastic bodyguard'. Its ethos was defined by brutal discipline rather than skill or motivation..."<sup>269</sup>

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<sup>266</sup> Figes, *Natasha's Dream*, London: Penguin, 2002, p. 259.

<sup>267</sup> Macmillan, *The War that Ended Peace*, London: Profile, 2014, p. 183.

<sup>268</sup> Macmillan, *op. cit.*, p. 257.

<sup>269</sup> Hastings, *Catastrophe: Europe goes to War 1914*, London: William Collins, 2014, pp. 15-16.

Figes writes: "The patrimonial principle survived longer in the army than in any other institution of the Russian state. Nothing was closer to the Romanov court or more important to it than the military. The power of the Empire was founded on it, and the needs of the army and the navy always took precedence in the formulation of tsarist policies. All the most important reforms in Russian history had been motivated by the need to catch up and compete in war with the Empire's rivals in the west and south: Peter the Great's reforms had been brought about by the wars with Sweden and the Ottomans; those of Alexander II by military defeat in the Crimea..."

"Many historians have depicted the army as a stalwart buttress of the tsarist regime. That was also the view of most observers until the revolution. Major Von Tettau from the German General Staff wrote in 1903, for example, that the Russian soldier 'is full of selflessness and loyalty to his duty' in a way 'that is scarcely to be found in any other army of the world'. He did 'everything with a will' and was always 'unassuming, satisfied and jolly - even after labour and deprivation'. But in fact there were growing tensions between the military - in every rank - and the Romanov regime.

"For the country's military leaders the root of the problem lay in the army's dismal record in the nineteenth century, which many of them came to blame on the policies of the government. Defeat in the Crimean War (1853-6), followed by a costly campaign against Turkey (1877-8), and then the humiliation of defeat by the Japanese - the first time a major European power had lost to an Asian country - in 1904-5, left the army and the navy demoralized. The causes of Russia's military weakness were partly economic: her industrial resources failed to match up to her military commitments in an age of increasing competition between empires. But this incompetence also had a political source: during the later nineteenth century the army had gradually lost its place at the top of government spending priorities. The Crimean defeat had discredited the armed services and highlighted the need to divert resources from the military to the modernization of the economy. The Ministry of War lost the favoured position it had held in the government system of Nicholas I (1825-55) and became overshadowed by the Ministries of Finance and the Interior, which from this point on received between them the lion's share of state expenditure. Between 1881 and 1902 the military's share of the budget dropped from 30 per cent to 18 per cent. Ten years before the First World War the Russian army was spending only 57 per cent of the amount spent on each soldier in the German army, and only 63 per cent of that spent in the Austrian. In short, the Russian soldier went to war worse trained, worse equipped and more poorly serviced than his enemy. The army was so short of cash that it relied largely on its own internal economy to clothe and feed itself. Soldiers grew their own food and tobacco, and repaired their own uniforms and boots. They even earned money for the regiment by going off to work as seasonal labourers on landed estates, in factories and mines near their garrisons. Many soldiers spent more time growing vegetables or repairing boots than they did learning how to handle their guns. By reducing the military budget, the tsarist regime created an army of farmers and cobblers.

"The demoralization of the army was also connected to its increasing role in the suppression of civilian protests. The Russian Empire was covered with a network of garrisons. Their job was to provide more or less instant military assistance for the provincial governors or the police to deal with unrest. Between 1883 and 1903 the

troops were called out nearly 1,500 times. Officers complained bitterly that this police duty was beneath the dignity of a professional soldier, and that it distracted the army from its proper military purpose. They also warned of the damaging effect it was likely to have on the army's discipline. History proved them right. The vast majority of the private soldiers were peasants, and their morale was heavily influenced by the news they received from their villages. When the army was called out to put down the peasant uprisings of 1905-6 many of the units, especially in the peasant-dominated infantry, refused to obey and mutinied in support of the revolution. There were over 400 mutinies between the autumn of 1905 and the summer of 1906. The army was brought to the brink of collapse, and it took years to restore a semblance of order.

"Many of these mutinies were part of a general protest against the feudal conditions prevailing in the army. Tolstoy, who had served as an army officer in the Crimean War, described them in his last novel *Hadji-Murad*. The peasant soldiers, in particular, objected to the way their officers addressed them with the familiar 'your' (*tyi*) – normally used for animals and children – rather than the polite 'you' (*vyi*). It was how the masters had once addressed their serfs; and since most of the officers were nobles, and most of the soldiers were sons of former serfs, this mode of address symbolized the continuation of the old feudal world inside the army. The first thing a recruit did on joining the army was to learn the different titles of his officers: 'Your Honour' up to the rank of colonel; 'Your Excellency' for generals; and 'Your Radiance' or 'Most High Radiance' for titled officers. Colonels and generals were to be greeted not just with the simple hand salute but by halting and standing sideways to attention while the officer passed by for a strictly prescribed number of paces. The soldier was trained to answer his superiors in regulation phrases of deference: 'Not at all, Your Honour'; 'Happy to serve you, Your Excellency'. Any deviations were likely to be punished. Soldiers would expect to be punched in the face, hit in the mouth with the butt of a rifle and sometimes even flogged for relatively minor misdemeanours. Officers were allowed to use a wide range of abusive terms – such as 'scum' and 'scoundrel' – to humiliate their soldiers and keep them in their place. Even whilst off-duty the common soldier was deprived of the rights of a normal citizen. He could not smoke in public places, go to restaurants or theatres, ride in trams, or occupy a seat in a first- or second-class railway carriage. Civic parks displayed the sign: DOGS AND SOLDIERS FORBIDDEN TO ENTER. The determination of the soldiery to throw off this 'army serfdom' and gain the dignity of citizenship was to become a major story of the revolution.

"It was not just the peasant infantry who joined the mutinies after 1905. Even some of the Cossack cavalry – who since the start of the nineteenth century had been a model of loyalty to the Tsar – joined the rebellions. The Cossacks had specific grievances. Since the sixteenth century they had developed as an elite military caste, which in the nineteenth century came under the control of the Ministry of War. In exchange for their military service, the Cossacks were granted generous tracts of fertile land – mainly on the southern borders they were to defend (the Don and Kuban) and the eastern steppes – as well as considerable political freedom for their self-governing communities (*voiskos*, from the word for 'war'). However, during the last decades of the nineteenth century the costs of equipping themselves for the cavalry, of buying saddles, harnesses and military-grade horses, as they were obliged to in the charters of their estate, became increasingly burdensome. Many Cossack farmers, already struggling in the depression, had to sell part of their livestock to meet their obligations and equip their

sons to join. The *voiskos* demanded more and more concessions – both economic and political – as the price of their military service. They began to raise the flag of ‘Cossack nationalism’...

“The government’s treatment of the army provoked growing resentment among Russia’s military elite. The fiercest opposition came from the new generation of so-called military professions emerging within the officer corps and the Ministry of War itself during the last decades of the old regime. Many of them were graduates from the Junker military schools, which had been opened up and revitalized in the wake of the Crimean defeat to provide a means for the sons of non-nobles to rise to the senior ranks. Career officials dedicated to the modernization of the armed services, they were bitterly critical of the archaic military doctrines of the elite academies and the General Staff. To them the main priorities of the court seemed to be the appointment of aristocrats loyal to the Tsar to the top command posts and the pouring of resources into what had become in the modern age a largely ornamental cavalry. They argued, by contrast, that more attention needed to be paid to the new technologies – heavy artillery, machine-guns, motor transportation, trench design and aviation – which were bound to be decisive in coming wars. The strains of modernization on the politics of the autocracy were just as apparent in the military as they were in all the other institutions of the old regime...”<sup>270</sup>

There were similar problems in the Navy, in spite of the particular emphasis the tsar made on Navy funding after the 1905 war. The chief of the Naval General Staff, Vice-Admiral Prince Alexander Lieven was quite open about it. “Although most naval officers preferred to debate technical and strategic issues, in reality, wrote Lieven, the question of personnel was the most important and most dangerous problem facing the navy, as the mutinies during the 1905 revolution had shown. Lieven was under no illusion that relations between officers and sailors could be divorced from class conflict in the broader society. Between officers and men, he wrote, ‘there exists an abyss from birth which it is difficult to cross from either side. Recently under the influence of agitation there has even been created a directly hostile attitude among peasants towards the lords. But even without this, the intellectual and moral level of the two sides to so different that it is difficult for them to understand each other.’...”<sup>271</sup>

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Defeat at the hands of Japan in 1905, writes Dominic Lieven, “made the need for radical reform especially evident. Disputes rage over what reforms were needed and how to implement them. The upper ranks of the army were a wasps’ nest of individual ambitions and jealousies that intersected with patron-client networks and arguments over fortresses, operational plans, and other professional concerns. The creation of the Duma in 1906 complicated the war minister’s job. After the changes in the electoral law in June, 1907, parliament was dominated by liberal-conservatives and nationalist parties that supported generous military budgets and took a strong interest in the resurrection of Russian military power. In terms of military matters, the Duma’s leading member was Aleksandr Guchkov, head of the liberal-conservative party in

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<sup>270</sup> Figes, *A People’s Tragedy*, London: Pimlico, 1996, pp. 55-59.

<sup>271</sup> Dominic Lieven, *Towards the Flame. Empire, War and the End of Tsarist Russia*, London: Allen Lane, 2015, pp. 161-162.

power (1906-11)... Nicholas distrusted most politicians, but he especially disliked Guchkov, whom he viewed (correctly) as an unscrupulous adventurer. But the conflict between the monarchy and parliament was also an inevitable result of the creation of representative institutions. In seventeenth-century England, control over the army had been a key source of conflict between Charles I and Parliament in the years leading up to the Civil War. Similarly, control over the army was at the core of the Prussian constitutional crisis of the 1860s. By winning this conflict for the crown, Bismarck did much to shape not just civil-military relations in the German Empire but also German politics as a whole..."<sup>272</sup>

In the end the army proved to be one of the Russian Empire's critical weak points. In 1905 it was more or less loyal. But in 1917 it was the open treason of the generals, and the wavering loyalty of the Guards regiments in Petrograd, that forced the Tsar to abdicate from the throne...

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<sup>272</sup> Lieven, *Towards the Flame*, p. 146.

## 21. THE MACEDONIAN QUESTION

Macedonia, according to Stevan K. Pavlowitch, "has always been the centre of the Balkans which neighbouring states, and foreign powers interested in the peninsula, have vied with one another in trying to control. In modern times [the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries], it was the region that remained longest in Turkish hands. Serbs, Bulgars and Greeks had their various aspirations for its largely undifferentiated slavophone population. Out of this rivalry - at once nationalistic, cultural and ecclesiastical, as always in the Balkans - slowly began to emerge a separate Macedonian consciousness, recognised by none of the three contending nation-states, who were busy serbianising, bulgarianising and hellenising their outlying Macedonian territories."<sup>273</sup>

So who did the inhabitants of Macedonia think they were? Misha Glenny writes: "The question of the origins of the modern Macedonians, who feel themselves categorically to be a Slav people [with a large Albanian minority] distinct from Serbs or Bulgars, provokes more intellectual fanaticism than any other in the southern Balkans. One scholar, let us say from Skopje, will assume that this nation has existed for over a thousand years; the next, perhaps a well-meaning westerner, will claim that Macedonians first developed a separate identity from Bulgaria about one hundred years ago; a third, for the sake of argument a Serb, will swear that the Macedonians only emerged as a nation at the end of the Second World War; and a fourth, probably a Greek or Bulgarian, will maintain doggedly that they do not exist and have never done so..."

"... In contested regions like Macedonia, national identity or identities do not remain stable. They change over a few generations; they mutate during the course of a war; they are reinvented following the break-up of a large empire or state; and they emerge anew during the construction of new states. Balkan nationalism evokes such ferocious passions because, paradoxically, it is so labile..."<sup>274</sup>

From the beginning of the century the Romanians, as Jelavich writes, "began to show a great interest in the Vlach population, which spoke a Romance language and was scattered throughout the area. Although Romania obviously could not advance claims for Macedonian territory, the issue could be used to gain compensation elsewhere. The Albanian position received very little recognition..."<sup>275</sup>

"The Greek national leaders had long expected eventually to absorb the entire area. Their arguments were based chiefly on the historical association of Greece, both classical and Byzantine, with the region. In a time before serious ethnographic studies were made, these leaders could sincerely believe that the population was indeed Greek. Certainly, Greeks and Muslim Turks formed the majority of the city inhabitants. The ecclesiastical jurisdiction exercised by the Constantinople Patriarchate after the abolition of the Peć and Ohrid authorities in the eighteenth centuries had given the Greeks control over cultural as well as religious matters. They thereafter tended to count all the Orthodox who were under the control of the Patriarchate as

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<sup>273</sup> Pavlowitch, "The Church of Macedonia: 'limited autocephaly' or schism?", *Sobornost*, 9:1, 1987, p. 42.

<sup>274</sup> Glenny, *The Balkans, 1804-1999*, London: Granta Books, 2000, p. 158.

<sup>275</sup> Jelavich, *op. cit.*, p. 91.

Greeks.... The establishment of the Bulgarian Exarchate [in 1870] was bitterly resented, because it ended the advantages previously held by the Greek churches. Even after it became apparent that the majority of the Christian people were Slavic, the Greek leaders continued to claim the area on a national basis; they argued that many of the inhabitants were what they called Slavophone Greeks, that is, individuals who were Slavic in language, but Greek in national sentiment.

"The Greek fears concerning the Exarchate," writes Pavlowitch, "were soon fully justified. Wherever two-thirds of a district voted for it, the Orthodox population could join this organization. This possibility naturally appealed to many Slavic-speaking people, for whom the attractions of a service in Church Slavic were much greater than those of one in Greek. The areas under the jurisdiction of the Exarchate thus expanded rapidly; the San Stefano boundaries [i.e. those marked out by the Treaty of San Stefano between the Russians and the Turks in 1878] were not greatly different from the lines of this religious authority. In the 1890s the Exarchate was able to add more districts. If nationality was to be used as the basis assigning ownership, Bulgaria had the advantage at the end of the century. Most Bulgarian leaders and the Bulgarian people were passionately convinced Macedonia was indeed rightfully theirs.

"Of the major rivals, Serbia was in the weakest position. Until 1878 its chief attention had been directed toward Bosnia, Herzegovina, and Old Serbia, which covered part of the Kosovo vilayet. After the Habsburg occupation of the two provinces, Serbia could expand only southward. In the agreement of 1881 with Vienna, [King] Milan had received assurances of support for such a move. Serbia thus entered with enthusiasm into the struggle for Macedonian lands, and exerted great efforts to demonstrate that the Macedonian Slavs were Serbs. Studies were made of the local languages and customs, and statistics were collected. Serbia opened consulates in 1887 in Thessaloniki and Skopje, and soon afterward in Bitola and Priatina. A major propaganda campaign was launched inside Macedonia. From the beginning the efforts of the Serbs were hindered by their lack of an ecclesiastical organization equal to that of the Patriarchate and the Exarchate. They nevertheless made considerable advances before 1912."<sup>276</sup>

"It has been argued that if the Serbs, too, like the Bulgars, had separated themselves from the Greek-dominated patriarchate of Constantinople at that time, they could have achieved considerable success in those areas where Macedonian Slavs had not yet taken sides. For it was not all that difficult to give inchoate national traits a definite mould with the systematic action of church and school.

"At first, the authorities of the autonomous principality of Serbia sympathised with Bulgarian aspirations. But they increasingly took fright after 1870 when, according to the statute granted to it, the autonomous Bulgarian Church began to expand. The sultan's firman established the authority of the Bulgarian exarch over a *millet* that was both territorial and ethnic. Broadly speaking, the dioceses of northern Bulgaria came within its jurisdiction, but upwards of two-thirds of the Orthodox Christian inhabitants of any other district could vote to join the exarchate. The principle of one territorial bishop thus came to be infringed occasionally, with a patriarchal and an exarchal bishop residing in the same see...

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<sup>276</sup> Jelavich, op. cit., pp. 92-93.

"... [The exarchate] thrived as a legal institution for Bulgarian national aspirations, and it sent out its priests and teachers to proselytise the slavophones of Macedonia. As a result it came to control territories that were to become Serbian in 1878... The reaction to these successes took the form of occasional calls for a separate archbishopric of Ohrid, but especially of Serbian government efforts to join forces with the Greeks. The idea was to convince the patriarchate that it was in its own interest to take into account the feelings of a majority of the faithful in making appointments to European sees, and to appoint ethnic Serbs where appropriate. Such efforts were at first hampered by the Serbo-Turkish wars of 1876-8 and the subsequent unpopularity of the Serbs with the Porte. It was not until the 1880s that Serbia entered the fray in Macedonia, with a proselytising programme of its own.

"By 1885, the ecumenical patriarchate had accepted the principle of sending ethnic Serbs to certain dioceses, provided they were Ottoman citizens, politically loyal to the Porte, and properly qualified canonically. But such candidates were not available at first, and it would take another eleven years before diplomatic pressure got the patriarchate to accept, but also the Porte to agree to, the first such Serbian bishop (Raaka-Prizren, 1896), with two more by 1910 (Skopje, Veles-Debar). In these years at the turn of the century, with another set of slavophone bishops and priests who, furthermore, were fully canonical, whole districts chose to return from the exarchate to the patriarchate..."<sup>277</sup>

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The tragedy of Macedonia consisted in the fact that it was as much a civil war among the Orthodox Christians as a war between the Orthodox and the Muslims. Between 1903 and 1908 these inter-Orthodox conflicts cost some eight thousand lives.<sup>278</sup>159 Moreover, even Orthodox clergy joined in the armed struggle. Thus the Kresna uprising against the Turks in 1878, which took place on the new frontier between Bulgaria and Macedonia, was led by a Bulgarian or Macedonian priest, Pop Georgievski-Berovski. This rebellion was quickly crushed, and for some years the Ottomans were able to restore peace to the region.

However, open warfare was now replaced by the building up of secret societies in both Bulgaria and Greece. At least three different Bulgarian societies fought with each other for leadership of the Macedonian struggle for independence. They also fought with the Bulgarian government, trying to persuade or force it into entering into a war of liberation in Macedonia. The Bulgarian Prime Minister Stambulov tried to resist their influence, but in 1895 he was killed by members of the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization (IMRO). A reign of terror followed in which Macedonian terrorists threatened to overthrow the Bulgarian State...

"Behind the scenes," writes Evans, "Abdulhamid II turned in desperation to Germany for help. Soon German officers were training Ottoman troops, and German engineers were building a new railway to Baghdad, financed by German banks. All of this, however, undermined the sultan's authority within the empire, and his refusal to

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<sup>277</sup> Pavlowitch, op. cit., pp. 43-44.

<sup>278</sup> Dominic Lieven, *Towards the Flame*, London: Allen Press, 2015, p. 20.

reintroduce the 1876 Constitution led to the emergence of conspiracies to try and oust him. Shortly after his accession, Abdulhamid had abandoned the policy of trying to create an Ottoman national identity. Perhaps reacting to the loss of a very large proportion of the empire's Christian population in the Balkans, and the migration of hundreds of thousands of Muslims from the Caucasus and from the new Balkan states to Anatolia, he had substituted the policy with a new ideology of pan-Islamism. From now on the sultan's religious status as the Caliph was emphasized in Ottoman propaganda as the basis for the allegiance of his people. Increasingly, Abdulhamid put his empire's troubles down to an international conspiracy of the Christian world, and in particular to the Christian minority in Anatolia, mostly well-off traders and merchants whom the Treaty of Berlin had obliged him to protect. In 1892-3, Muslim crowds, egged on by officials who claimed the Armenians were trying to destroy Islam, began massacring the area's Armenian population. When Armenian nationalist groups retaliated, they were crushed by the Ottoman Army, after which local and regional officials encouraged further violence against them, aided by Kurdish irregulars sent in by the sultan.

"The worst atrocity occurred with the burning alive of more than 3,000 Armenians in the cathedral of Urfa in December 1895. A protest demonstration of Armenians in Constantinople was suppressed and was followed by widespread killings of Armenians in the capital. Foreign intervention, again urged by Gladstone, never became a reality. The massacres continued until 1897, by which time between 100,000 and 300,000 Armenians had been killed."<sup>279</sup>

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Meanwhile, in 1895 a Greek secret society called *Ethniki Etairia* tried to revive the traditions of the Greek Revolution's *Philiki Etairia*. Glenny writes: "Just as IMRO was preparing to destabilize Bulgaria, so did the Etairia become a virtual state within the Greek state. The Etairia included many Greek Macedonian émigrés in its ranks, but the main focus of its aspirations was Crete..."<sup>280</sup>

In 1896 the Cretans, whose slogan was "Freedom or Death!", rebelled against the Ottomans and called on the Free Greeks on the mainland to support them. They responded by landing an army onto the island.

"The great powers, smelling another Eastern Crisis, attempted to mediate between Turkey and Greece by suggesting that Istanbul offer Crete autonomy. By the middle of 1897, the Greeks were still procrastinating and so the Sultan decided to declare war on Greece. Turkish troops massed in Epirus on Greece's northern border and soon put the Greeks to flight. [They were also defeated at Domokos in Thessaly, where around 45,000 troops were assembled on each side.<sup>281</sup>] Before long the Ottoman troops were marching on an open road to Athens. Once again the great powers stepped into the breach and imposed a peace-deal on the two sides.

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<sup>279</sup> Evans, op. cit., pp. 688-689.

<sup>280</sup> Glenny, op. cit., p. 193.

<sup>281</sup> Evans, op.cit., p. 690.

"The outcome was at first glance advantageous to the Greeks, as Crete was at last given extensive autonomy. But this apparent victory masked hidden dangers. The Greek army had suffered a great setback at Epirus. The Athenian coffers were empty; and the state had incurred an enormous debt. As part of the peace treaty, Athens was forced to hand over control of its budget to a great-power commission. Furthermore, its network of agents in Macedonia had been destroyed.

"King George of Greece (1863-1913) had justified the military intervention in Crete by pointing out that 'Britain... had seized Cyprus; Germany had taken Schleswig-Holstein; Austria had laid claim to Bosnia and Herzegovina; surely Greece had a better right to Crete!' The argument was not unreasonable, but had the Etairia and King George reasoned more soberly they would have concluded that the Ottoman Empire would be forced to relinquish control of Crete at some future date. By succumbing to the romantic movement for the liberation of Crete and finding itself at war with the Ottoman Empire, Greece was too weak at the end of the nineteenth century to combat the influence of IMRO in Macedonia, and unable to respond when the Ottoman Empire allowed the Bulgarian Exarchate to establish three new bishoprics in Debar, Monastir (Bitola) and Strumitsa. This area extended like a long hand across the middle of Macedonia, marking out the dark shadows of a near future when the Greek Patriarchists and Bulgarian Exarchists would do battle for the souls of the villages...

"Conversions of whole villages were common. Sometimes they took place at the end of a gun barrel, sometimes there were compelling economic reasons, as H.N. Brailsford discovered at the time. 'I was talking to a wealthy peasant who came in from a neighbouring village to Monastir market. He spoke Greek well, but hardly like a native. 'Is your village Greek,' I asked him, 'or Bulgarian?' 'Well,' he replied, 'it is Bulgarian now, but four years ago it was Greek.' The answer seemed to him entirely natural and commonplace. 'How,' I asked in some bewilderment, 'did that miracle come about?' 'Why,' said he, 'we are all poor men, but we want to have our own school and a priest who will look after us properly. We used to have a Greek teacher. We paid him £5 a year and his bread, while the Greek consul paid him another £5; but we had no priest of our own. We shared a priest with several other villages, but he was very unpunctual and remiss. We went to the Greek Bishop to complain, but he refused to do anything for us. The Bulgarians heard of this and they came and made us an offer. They said they would give us a priest who would live in the village and a teacher to whom we need pay nothing. Well, sirs, ours is a poor village, and so of course we became Bulgarian.'..."<sup>282</sup>

The situation gradually descended into chaos. In March, 1903 the Austrian consul in Monastir reported: "The Committee [IMRO] is extorting money from Bulgarians, Greeks, Vlachs, Christians and Muslims, with indescribable arrogance. Christians who don't pay are murdered while the Muslim landowners must reckon with arson attacks on all their property...

"The longing for order among these unbearable circumstances and for a new, strong administration is becoming ever more intense... people do not want reforms, autonomy or whatever - the majority of Macedonians want nothing more than... the same fate as Bosnia [i.e. occupation by Austria-Hungary].

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<sup>282</sup> Glenny, *The Balkans*, p. 199.

"Punitive executions continue to comprise standard fare of the guerrilla band activities. In the last 14 days alone, there has been a revenge murder of the Greek priest in Zelenic, the death of the teacher from Strebena, and of a Patriarch supporter from Ajtos... [then] the Serbian priest from Vrbjani and an Albanian landowner from Lenista... whose throat was slit."<sup>283</sup>

During the spring of 1903 the village of Kruševo, whose 10,000 inhabitants were almost all Orthodox - Vlach, Greek and Slav, anticipating an attack by IMRO, approached the Ottoman authorities and requested that they strengthen their garrison. Sure enough, on August 2, "Ilinden" (St. Elijah's day), 300 guerillas assaulted Kruševo. Having killed the whole garrison, they occupied the town and proclaimed it a republic... The revenge of the Turks was terrible. The town was bombed and gutted. Irregulars and bashi-bazooks then went on a spree. "In addition to the thousands of murdered civilians and rape victims, 119 villages were burnt to the ground, 8,400 houses were destroyed, forcing 50,000 refugees to flee into the mountains, where many more died during the bitter winter that followed. Both the IO and the EO [other Macedonian revolutionary organizations] were almost obliterated and, after watching the Slav *cetas* intimidate Greek villages, the Greek *andartes* swept through western Macedonia forcing the reconversion of Exarchate communities to the Patriarchate.

"The *andartes* now administered solace to those Patriarchate villages which had courageously resisted IMRO during the uprising. However, in the villages genuinely committed to the Exarchate or IMRO, the Greeks behaved like vengeful bullies, executing suspected renegades and holding the Patriarchate version of the Mass [Divine Liturgy] at gunpoint if the priest or townspeople were unwilling to perform the service. This Greek backlash was orchestrated by the gun-toting bishop of Kastoria, Germanos Karavangelis. This extraordinary figure who roamed the countryside in a dark English raincoat with a black scarf wrapped around his priest's hat, 'had a Männlicher slung over one shoulder, a bandolier over the other, a belt round the middle from which hung his holster carrying a large pistol and a knife.' Karavangelis appeared consciously to cultivate an image of threatening romanticism. The bishop considered Bulgarian influence in the region to be the greatest threat to Greek national interests. He therefore advocated close friendship and cooperation between the Greeks and Turks of Macedonia, but only as an expedient. Karavangelis admitted openly that the only issue in Macedonia was the future contours of the Balkan states once the Turks had been thrown out.

"As IMRO's influence shrivelled and almost died, Karavangelis and his colleagues began to receive more money, weapons and men from the Greek Kingdom. This renewed Greek activity and the retreat of Bulgarian aspirations hastened a change in Serbian policy, too. Nikola Pašić, the old Radical leader and now Prime Minister, had long given up hope that his ideal of a federal solution for the Macedonian Question might be realized. Serbia would now be fighting for clerical and territorial influence not just against Greeks and Bulgarians, but also against the Turks and Albanians. Demonstrating again that neither Greeks, Serbs nor Bulgarians have natural allies,

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<sup>283</sup> Glenny, *op. cit.*, pp. 201-202.

Pašić issued an order to Serbia's diplomatic representative: 'to protect our compatriots from the damaging consequences of the monopoly of Patriarchate organs which have placed themselves in the service of Hellenism to the detriment of the non-Greek adherents to the Patriarchate church; and to counter the activity of Exarchate agents whose Committees are appearing with weapons in those areas of eminent interest to us: Porec, Kisevo, Drimkol, Dibra, Köprülü.' The suppression of Ilinden had therefore failed to crush the nationalist struggle. On the contrary, it had made it worse. The struggle was spreading, but the balance of forces had changed. Like Bishop Karavangelis, the government of Istanbul considered the Bulgarian insurgency the most threatening. The Greek and Serbian guerrillas concentrated their efforts on expunging Bulgarian or Albanian influence on each other's - they proved less of a nuisance for the Ottoman forces. Indeed, the Christian guerrillas had to an extent assumed the state's role of policing the territory.<sup>284</sup>

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<sup>284</sup> Glenny, *op. cit.*, pp. 205-207.

## 22. REGICIDE IN SERBIA

For the Orthodox citizens of the Austrian empire, of whom Russia considered herself the protector, the situation had improved over time. For the hostile attitude towards them on the part of the Catholic emperors in the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries had now given way to an enforced tolerance (although there were some exceptions, as we shall see). As Winder writes, the Habsburgs "came to stand – against their will – as champions of tolerance in a nineteenth-century Europe driven mad by ethnic nationalism."<sup>285</sup>

The glue that held the empire together and guaranteed its tolerance was the Habsburg dynasty. Dynasticism, writes W.H. Spellman, "was the only variable linking a host of peoples who shared no racial, linguistic, social or historical cohesion. Austria-Hungary was an empire consisting entirely of minorities, a holdover from the medieval imperial idea of allegiance to crown and dynasty, not to abstract nation. The only bond between the far-flung and varied provinces of the empire was the monarch himself, whose 68-year reign overlapped the decades when nationalism was becoming the strongest factor in the political life of Europe. Thus it should not surprise us that the principal powers enjoyed by the emperor, control over foreign affairs and the military, were constantly employed in the service of obstructing the realization of the nationalist agenda. In the view of one observer, 'foreign policy was the justification of the monarchy; almost every important change within the Habsburg lands for a century or more had been the result of a need to meet a new crisis in foreign affairs.'

"And during the last 40 years of the monarchy's existence, questions of national rivalry within Habsburg-controlled lands constituted the key challenge to the ruler and his ministers. The ageing emperor felt a deep personal responsibility for the well-being and territorial integrity of his multi-ethnic inheritance. Unfortunately, concessions made to one group invariably spurred demands from another. What held the monarchical model intact into the twentieth century was, more than anything else, the sense of continuity represented by Europe's oldest dynastic house. Thus the celebration of the emperor's eightieth birthday in 1910 was every bit as significant for the empire as Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee had been for the British in 1897. The Habsburgs were associated in the minds of their subjects with the tradition of transnational Roman authority, the bold defence of Europe against the incursions of the Turk, and an almost exceptional sense of antiparochialism. The emperor was the heir of Charles V, apostolic king of Hungary and successor of St. Stephen. Tradition still counted for something in this polyglot empire.

"There were representative assemblies in both Austria and Hungary, and by the 1880s Austrians enjoyed freedom of religion, equality before the law and the protection of civil rights. In 1907 the parliament was elected on the basis of universal manhood suffrage, and a multi-party system was put in place. But government ministers were servants of the crown and not responsible to parliamentary control. Supported by an expanding civil service, army and Church, Francis Joseph was not a man predisposed to initiate change conducive to either a nationalist or constitutionalist agenda. The

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<sup>285</sup> Winder, *Danubia*, p. 1.

emperor did encourage state investment in certain infrastructure sectors like the railroad, and economic growth was led by industrial centres like Vienna and Prague. But raised in the intellectual climate of Metternich's Europe, and chastened as a young emperor by the memory of the 1848 liberal revolutions, the monarch placed the survival of the transnational dynasty above all other personal or political considerations. On the eve of the First World War few of the king-emperor's subjects would have proposed the dissolution of the monarchy."<sup>286</sup>

However, transnationalism was an increasingly difficult ideal to maintain as "ethnomania" spread from West to East and began to infect the smaller nations of the Austro-Hungarian Empire - and of the Ottoman Empire beyond it. It threatened not only the old empire, but also the subject nationalities of the new ethnic state.<sup>287</sup> As a Habsburg diplomatic circular of the year 1853 had correctly noted: "The claim to set up new states according to the limits of nationality is the most dangerous of schemes. To put forward such a pretension is to break with history; and to carry it into execution in any part of Europe is to shake to its foundations the firmly organized order of states, and to threaten the Continent with subversion and chaos..."

A particular threat to the unity and stability of the empire was presented by the Kingdom of Serbia, which threatened to unite with the Serbs and other Slavs inside the empire in one of three possible ways.

The first was "Yugoslavism", a federation of Slavic peoples stretching from the Croats in the West to the Bulgarians in the East, in which Serbia would serve as the geographical core and magnet, "the Piedmont of the South Slavs". Of course, this presupposed the break-up of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, which Russia, Serbia's patron, had opposed in 1848 when Nicholas I rescued both the Habsburg dynasty and the Habsburg Slavs from the Hungarian counter-revolution... A second possibility was "Illyrianism" - that is, Yugoslavism without Bulgaria. Surprisingly, perhaps, in view of later, twentieth-century history, there were many Catholic Croats and Slovenes - including the famous Catholic Bishop and opponent of papal infallibility, Strossmaier - who were enthusiastic about this option. Bulgaria was not part of the proposed new union because of her frequent wars with Serbia over Macedonia... A third possibility was Greater Serbia, the union of all the South Slavs, including those in Bosnia-Herzegovina, but excluding Bulgaria, under the Serbian king...<sup>288</sup>

A fourth possibility was favoured by the heir, Archduke Ferdinand: "Trialism", a union of the Slavic peoples into one kingdom inside the empire and alongside the Germans and Magyars.

There were many similarities between Austria-Hungary and Russia in the decades before 1914. Both were ancient and well-established dynastic regimes in which the monarch was revered by large parts of the population. But both also had

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<sup>286</sup> Spellmann, *Monarchies*, London: Reaktion Press, 2001, pp. 219-221.

<sup>287</sup> As Lord Acton put it in 1862: "By making the State and the nation commensurate with each other in theory, [nationality] reduces practically to a subject condition all other nationalities that may be within the boundary" (in Mark Mazower, *Dark Continent. Europe's Twentieth Century*, London: Penguin, 1999, p. 40).

<sup>288</sup> Judah, *The Serbs*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2009, third edition, pp. 93-94.

parliamentary systems that challenged the monarchy, together with clauses in their Basic Laws (Clause 14 in the Austrian, Clause 87 in the Russian) that enabled the monarch to override parliament in emergency situations. Both had rapidly expanding economies and rapidly developing systems of education and welfare. But both had major problems with national minorities, and both survived in spite of these problems. Both, moreover, feared above all a war with each other that could destroy both their states to the enormous detriment of all their constituent peoples...

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In 1897 Russia and Austria-Hungary had come to an agreement to preserve the status quo in the Balkans.

However, this agreement came under threat in 1903, when a group of over one hundred military conspirators, upset at King Alexander of Serbia's pro-Austrian orientation and proposed cuts to the military budget, killed him and Queen Draga, her two brothers, the prime minister and the war minister in a particularly brutal manner in Belgrade.<sup>289</sup>

This murder brought the Karadjordjević dynasty back to power in the person of King Peter I, who had been in exile in France and Switzerland since 1858.

The reaction of the Serbs to the murder of the Lord's Anointed was extraordinarily indifferent. The day after the murder was celebrated as a holiday; the streets were decorated with flags. The conspirators were not only not prosecuted: they were fêted. They filled the senior posts in the new government, and their leader, Dragutin Dimitrijević, nicknamed "Apis" (after the Egyptian god), was even thanked for his work by parliament and became a national hero. The leader of the largest, Radical Party, Nikola Pašić, wanted to limit the influence of the regicides; but even he was forced to recognize the legitimacy of the coup and oppose efforts to bring the regicides to trial.<sup>290</sup>

In fact, the murder, and the shameless reaction to it, was a symptom of a wider revolutionary malaise in contemporary Orthodox Christendom as a whole. This malaise took on a predominantly nationalist character in the Balkans, and an internationalist character in Russia. Soon it was soon to bring down upon it the wrath of God and the end of the whole "Sardian" period of the Orthodox Christian Empire from St. Constantine the Great to Tsar Nicholas II...

For, as Rebecca West writes, "when Alexander and Draga fell from that balcony the whole of the modern world fell with them. It took some time to reach the ground and

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<sup>289</sup> John Etty, "Serbian Nationalism and the Great War", *History Today*, February 27, 2014. For a description of the murder, and the circumstances leading up to it, see Christopher Clark, *Sleepwalkers: How Europe Went to War in 1914*, London: Penguin, 2013, pp. 7-13. There were other reasons for the murder. Thus the Interior Minister Djordje Genčić "objected to the king's marriage to Draga..., whose reputation in society was so bad that the entire Cabinet resigned when the couple became engaged. 'Sire,' Genčić told the king, 'You cannot marry her. She has been everybody's mistress - mine included.' The king's response - a slap in the face - was enough to drive Genčić into the arms of Apis's conspiracy" (Evans, *op. cit.*, p. 691).

<sup>290</sup> Clark, *op. cit.*, pp. 13-20.

break its neck, but its fall started then..."<sup>291</sup> The shots in Belgrade in 1903 led to the shots at Sarajevo in 1914, which led to the First World War and the Russian revolution.<sup>292</sup> For God is not mocked; as Holy Scripture says, He does not allow anyone to touch His anointed.

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The new king was surrounded by conspirators. Even if he had wanted to resist the irredentist mood in Serbia: it is doubtful that he could have done so. For he reigned but did not rule in a country ruled by elected politicians and unconvicted regicides.

This was evident from the very first day of his reign, when the Prime Minister Avvakumović pointedly introduced him to the Russian minister *before* the Austrian minister. "That formally signified," wrote the Belgrade *Daily Chronicle*, "that Austria-Hungary has no relations with the present cabinet."<sup>293</sup> This was because under the old Obrenović dynasty Serbia had been in a subservient position to Austria, an economic colony of the great Catholic empire of the West. But introducing the king first to the Russian minister was equivalent to saying that the old pro-Austrian orientation of Serbian foreign policy was over, and that Serbia's Great-Power patron was now the great Orthodox empire of the East. And this in turn signified that Serbia was no longer going to take such a passive attitude towards Austria's occupation of Bosnia with its large Serb population...

The next day the king swore an oath to "maintain inviolate the Constitution". And on June 25 he made a proclamation peppered with references to the Constitution: "I will be a true constitutional King of Serbia. For me all constitutional guarantees of freedom and popular rights, which are the basis of all regular and prosperous development as well as of all national progress and constitutional life, are sacred trusts which I will always carefully respect and guard. I expect everyone to do the same."<sup>294</sup> This meant that the real rulers of Serbia would remain the elected politicians... Then he went on: "Imbued with these sentiments, to the past I consign the past, and I leave it to history to judge each according to his deeds..." In other words, the murderers of the King Alexander would not be threatened by him. Nor would he undermine the policy of trying to gather all Serbs everywhere under one political roof...

Under the Obrenovićs a secret treaty had given Austria-Hungary a virtual veto over Serbian foreign policy. But now Serbia became more independent both politically and economically of her Catholic neighbour. Thus in 1904 Serbia signed a secret

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<sup>291</sup> West, *Black Lamb and Grey Falcon*, Edinburgh: Canongate, 2006, p. 12.

<sup>292</sup> "The assassination not only set Serbia on a new path of confrontation with Austria-Hungary, it helped to build the chain of events which led to the summer of 1914" (Margaret MacMillan, *The War that Ended Peace*, London: Profile Books, 2014, p. 388)

<sup>293</sup> Ulrick Loring and James Page, *Yugoslavia's Royal Dynasty*, London: The Monarchist Press Association, 1976, p. 60.

<sup>294</sup> Loring and Page, *op. cit.*, p. 62. Evidence of this irredentist, revanchist mood was provided by Edith Durham, who records the following conversation among her companions in a railway carriage in December, 1903. Her companions "were all Serbs, young and aflame with patriotism... Talk all ran on unredeemed Serbia and King Peter who is to realise the national ideal. 'Now we have a King who is as good as yours,' they said, 'and Serbia will have her own again!'" (*The Burden of the Balkans*, London, 1905, p. 86).

customs treaty with Bulgaria whose contents were communicated to the Russians, but not the Austrians, who “suspected the two Balkan powers were moving towards a union”.<sup>295</sup>

Belgrade now, writes Clark, “stepped up the pace of irredentist activity within the [Austrian] empire, focusing in particular on Bosnia-Herzegovina. In February 1906, the Austrian military attaché in Belgrade, Pomiankowski, summarized the problem in a letter to the chief of the General Staff. It was certain, Pomiankowski declared, that Serbia would number among the empire’s enemies in the event of a future military conflict. The problem was less the attitude of the government as such than the ultra-nationalist orientation of the political culture as a whole: even if a ‘sensible’ government were at the helm, Pomiankowski warned, it would be in no position to prevent the ‘all-powerful radical chauvinists’ from launching ‘an adventure’. More dangerous, however, than Serbia’s ‘open enmity and its miserable army’ was the ‘fifth-column work of the [Serbian] Radicals in peacetime, which systematically poisons the attitude of our South Slav population and could, if the worst came to the worst, create very serious difficulties for our army...”<sup>296</sup>

“During 1905-6, a crisis unfolded in which trade policy, armaments orders, high finance and geopolitics were closely intertwined. Vienna pursued a threefold objective: to secure a commercial treaty with Serbia, to ensure that Serbian armaments orders would continue to be placed with Austrian firms, and to contract a major loan to Belgrade.

“The failure to achieve agreement on any of these questions produced a drastic cooling of relations between the two neighbours, and the outcome was an unmitigated disaster for Vienna. The Serbian armaments orders went to the French firm Schneider-Creusot instead of to the Austrian rival, Škoda of Bohemia. The Austrians reacted by closing the border to Serbian pork, triggering a customs conflict that came to be known as the ‘pig war’ (1906-9). But this was a counter-productive measure, since Serbia quickly found other export markets (especially in Germany, France and Belgium) and at last began to build slaughterhouses on a substantial scale, thus emancipating itself from its long-standing dependence on Austro-Hungarian processing facilities. Finally, Belgrade secured a major loan again not from Vienna, but from Paris (offered in return for the placement of armaments orders with French firms).”<sup>297</sup>

As nationalist passions mounted in Serbia, the question arose: in their quest for a Greater Serbia on whom could they rely among the Great Powers now that Austria was no longer an ally? Possibly France, with whom the Serbs were now closely linked financially and militarily. Obviously Russia, where public opinion was turning more bellicose and nationalist...

And yet there were two major problems with regard to Russia. First, Russia’s main client in the Balkans was Bulgaria, which she had liberated in 1877-78 – and the Bulgars were the Serbs’ fierce rivals for control over Macedonia, a situation not changed fundamentally by the secret treaty of 1904. Secondly, the Russian Tsar was more

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<sup>295</sup> MacMillan, *op. cit.*, p. 388.

<sup>296</sup> Clark, *op. cit.*, p. 82.

<sup>297</sup> Clark, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

conscious of the wider geopolitical picture than other Orthodox statesmen, and did not support Serbia's nationalist irredentism, which could lead to disastrous consequences for the multi-national Russian empire and which had its roots, not in Orthodoxy or pro-Slav feeling as such, but in the French revolution. The tsar was trying to resist nationalism and irredentism both within Russia's borders and outside them. But it was a difficult task in view of the increasing nationalism of the Russian press. Moreover, the appointment of the ardent pan-Slav and Slavophile Baron Nikolai Hartwig as Russian minister in Belgrade after the Bosnian crisis made things worse. Largely unchecked by his superior, Foreign Minister Sergei Sazonov, Hartwig exercised an extraordinary and baleful influence over Serbian foreign policy until his sudden death in July, 1914 just as his martial ambitions were about to be fulfilled...

The suspicion was that the Serbs now, under the Karadjordjevićs, would not so much *follow* Russia as the leader of the Orthodox world as *use* her to protect themselves when their aggressive foreign policy would bring them into inevitable conflict with the more powerful states of Austria-Hungary or Ottoman Turkey...

### 23. THE RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR

“In November 1902,” writes Richard Pipes, “high-ranking Russian officials held a secret conference in Yalta to discuss China’s complaints about Russia’s treaty violations and the problems caused by the reluctance of foreigners to invest in Russia’s Far Eastern ventures. It was agreed that Russia could attain her economic objectives in Manchuria only by intense colonization; but for Russians to settle there, the regime needed to tighten its hold on the area. It was the unanimous opinion of the participants, Witte included, that Russia had to annex Manchuria, or, at the very least, bring it under closer control. In the months that followed, the Minister of War, A.N. Kuropatkin, urged aggressive action to protect the Trans-Siberian Railroad: in his view, unless Russia was prepared to annex Manchuria she should withdraw from there. In February 1903, Nicholas agreed to annexation.”<sup>298</sup>

Another bone of contention was Korea. “The ruler of Korea,” writes J.M. Roberts, “had only taken his title of emperor in 1897; only in 1901 did his government first decide to send representatives to foreign countries (even the Chinese had already done this). Several nations had interests in Korea: the Americans and British had long encouraged the ‘opening’ of the country to trade and reform (as they saw it), the Russians and the Japanese competed there for political supremacy and possible territorial aggrandizement, and (in theory as the suzerain power but actually increasingly powerless in Korean affairs) the Chinese went on claiming that Korea was a dependency of the Middle Kingdom. This was one reason for the Japanese (who had successfully occupied Seoul in the 1890s during a war against China) to promote ‘westernizing’ influences in the court and among officials.”<sup>299</sup>

“I do not want to take Korea for myself,” said the Tsar in October, 1901, “but in no way can I allow the Japanese to become firmly established there. This would be a *casus belli*. A conflict is inevitable, but I hope that it will not take place earlier than in four years’ time – then we will have dominance at sea. This is our main interest. The Siberia railway will be finished in five to six years’ time.”<sup>300</sup>

“Russia’s main interest in Korea,” writes Dominic Lieven, “lay in the proximity of that country’s northern border to Vladivostok, which made domination of the whole country by another great power worrying. In addition, the Russian navy lusted after a Korean port and feared that if the Japanese controlled both sides of the Straits of Tsushima they could easily cut communications between Vladivostok and Port Arthur. The Koreans themselves looked to Russia for protection from Japan, which was clearly the greatest threat to their independence, and offered Russia many inducements to

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<sup>298</sup> Pipes, *The Russian Revolution 1899-1919*, London: Collins Harvill, 1990, p. 13.

<sup>299</sup> J.M. Roberts, *History of the World*, London: Helicon, 1992, pp. 61-62.

<sup>300</sup> Oldenburg, *Tsarstvovanie Imperatora Nikolaia II*, Belgrade, 1939, vol. I, pp. 215-216.

occupy itself in their affairs. But the greatest single complicating factor in Russia's relations with Korea was the large timber concession which a number of aristocrats close to Nicholas had secured on the river Yalu, with the aim of building up a Russian bridgehead in northern Korea.

"The leaders in the Yalu enterprise were A.M. Bezobrazov and V.M. Vonlyarlyarsky. Both came from prominent families of the Russian aristocracy and were former officers of the Chevaliers Gardes, the most exclusive regiment in the Russian army. Bezobrazov gained access to Nicholas II through the former Minister of the Imperial Court, Count I.I. Vorontsov-Dashkov. Neither Bezobrazov nor Vonlyarlyarsky were interested in the Yalu enterprise for the sake of personal gain. They saw their company as a means by which non-official patriots could out-manoeuvre bureaucratic caution and push forward Russia's cause in the East. There was to be a latter-day version of Britain's East India Company but without its initially commercial priorities. The whole scheme bore the stamp of aristocratic arrogance and amateurism. Its leaders were convinced of their own innate superiority to mere bureaucrats. Without knowing the East, they nevertheless urged on Nicholas the belief that the Orientals would back down in the face of a confident show of Russian power. There was more than a touch of opera to the Bezobrazov affair. Rather typical was the fact that at one point secret correspondence between Bezobrazov and Nicholas II was sent through their respective batmen so that the ministers should be kept in the dark about it. But there was nothing funny in the effect of Bezobrazov's influence, which was both to increase Nicholas's distrust of his official advisers and to encourage him to take a tougher and more intransigent line with the Japanese and Chinese governments. In October 1901, for instance, the Emperor told Prince Henry of Prussia that 'I do not want to seize Korea – but under no circumstances can I allow the Japanese to become firmly established there. That would be a *casus belli*.' Here was the voice of Bezobrazov not of Nicholas's ministerial advisers, whose position on Korea was much less bellicose.

"Bezobrazov, Vonlyarlyarsky and their supporters in particular urged on Nicholas two ideas to which he was very inclined to listen. They told him that Russia was a proud and mighty country which should speak in a strong voice and take no cheek from foreigners, least of all Orientals. This Guards officers' patriotism was music to his ears. His aristocratic advisers, loathing the bureaucracy and above all Witte, also told Nicholas that he was the captive of his ministers, who colluded in keeping information from him, imposing their own views and sabotaging his instructions when they conflicted with their own interests. By 1900 Nicholas felt this to be true, not merely as regards Far Eastern policy but across the whole range of government business. Frustrated by his seeming powerlessness and aware of mounting criticism of his rule, he turned more and more to unofficial advisers in an effort to secure alternative sources of information and greater freedom from ministerial control. Among these advisers Bezobrazov was typical in his aristocratic control. Among these advisers Bezobrazov was typical in his aristocratic origins and in his appeal to Nicholas's patriotic and anti-bureaucratic instincts. In July 1901 Alexander

Polovtsov commented that 'in no field of policy is there a principled, well considered and firmly directed course of action. Everything is done in bursts, haphazardly, under the influence of the moment, according to the demands of this or that person and the intercessions emerging from various corners. The young Tsar feels more and more contempt for the organs of his own power and begins to believe in the beneficial strength of his own autocracy, which he manifests sporadically, without preliminary discussion and without any link to the overall course of policy.'

"As in his domestic policy Nicholas sought to balance between his groups of advisers, drawing information from both and thereby seeking a basis on which he could determine policy for himself. This had a disastrous impact on Russia's Far Eastern policy in 1902-3 and on the way it was perceived by foreigners, above all the Japanese. It was not merely that Bezobrazov's advice was dangerous and mistaken. Outsiders did not know what Petersburg's policy was. Faced by criticism that divisions between ministers and unofficial advisers were causing government policy in East Asia to be incoherent and uncoordinated, in August 1903 Nicholas appointed Admiral Alekseev Viceroy of the Far East and subordinated to him all responsibility not only for civil and military affairs but also for diplomatic relations with Tokyo and Peking. This was to make a bad situation worse. Alekseev was a sailor, not a diplomat or a statesman. By definition neither he nor other officials in the East could have a balanced overall grasp of the Empire's many interests for they were committed to pursuing a forward policy in their own bailiwick.

"The Japanese now had to deal with Alekseev in Port Arthur but they knew, of course, that the Viceroy's decisions would have to be ratified by the Tsar, and therefore by those high officials to whom he chose to listen, in Petersburg. Confusion was compounded by the fact that during the critical period between August and November 1903 Nicholas II was seldom in his capital, spending most of his time on official and private visits to Western Europe. Though Japanese counsels were themselves divided, had Russia consistently stood out for a free hand for herself in Manchuria in return for Japanese control over Korea, Tokyo would almost certainly have agreed in the end. The demilitarization of northern Korea could have been obtained through such a deal had Petersburg offered some concessions in southern Manchuria. But the Russians overestimated the strength of their position, and the incoherence and delay in their responses to Tokyo convinced the Japanese that Petersburg was simply prevaricating. Nicholas's own statements betrayed his uncertainty and miscalculations. In October 1903 he telegraphed to Alekseev: 'I do not want war between Russia and Japan and will not permit this war. Take all measures so that there is no war.' In late December, however, he commented that the situation reminded him of the 1895 crisis when Japan backed down under firm Russian pressure and surrendered Port Arthur. Referring to Japan, Nicholas remarked: 'all the same it is a barbarian country. Which is better: to risk war or

to continue with concessions?' In February 1904 the Japanese permitted Russia no more wavering and attacked Port Arthur."<sup>301</sup>

At first, the whole country united behind the Tsar in a war that everybody assumed Russia would win. "There was an outburst of patriotism, and government propaganda portrayed the Japanese as 'the yellow peril' and 'the Asian hordes' which were threatening the whole of European civilization. Tow Russian soldiers, it was said, were worthy any three Japanese. With the Russian ships trapped in harbour, the Japanese controlled the sea and this enabled them to land troops in Korea to besiege Port Arthur [which fell in January, 1905]. A Russian army advancing from Manchuria to relieve Port Arthur was attacked by a smaller Japanese army and forced to retreat at Mukden."<sup>302</sup>

At the Battle of Mukden (February-March 1905), one of the biggest battles in history before the First World War, the Russians received a crushing blow to their pride at the hands of the "barbaric" Japanese, losing 89,500 in killed and prisoners, while the Japanese lost 67,500.<sup>303</sup> Finally, in May, Admiral Makarov's Baltic fleet, which had sailed all the way around the world to the Korean bay of Tsushima, was annihilated. "15 Russian battle ships and 54 other ships were sunk and many others were captured."<sup>304</sup> The Russians lost 5000 sailors killed with 6000 captured, while only 117 Japanese sailors died.<sup>305</sup> Tsushima took place on the anniversary of the tsar's coronation, a coincidence that was not lost on the Royal Couple.

The Russo-Japanese war is the first instance of a phenomenon that was to be of major importance in 1917: the financing of Russia's enemies by American Jews. Archpriest Lev Lebedev asserts that "at the end of 1903 the American Jewish banker Jacob Schiff, Morgan and also 'First National Bank' and 'National City Bank' loaned Japan 30 million dollars so that she should attack Russia<sup>306</sup>... The Japanese information services were actively *helped by the Jews*. Some of them acted as spies in the Russian army, others tried to demoralize it, which is witnessed by the commander-in-chief of the armies in the Far East, General Kuropatkin. In 1906 the well-known journalist M.O. Menshikov wrote in *Novoe Vremia*: 'The [enemy in the] last terrible war... was armed with the most active participation of the Jews. In order to thrust Japan against Russia, it was necessary to arrange for Japan not only external loans, but also the most ardent sympathy [for Japan] in America and England. This sympathy, as has now been

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<sup>301</sup> Lieven, *Nicholas II*, London: Pimlico, 1993, pp. 97-100.

<sup>302</sup> Norman Lowe, *Mastering Twentieth-Century Russian History*, Houndmill: Palgrave, 2002, p. 68.

<sup>303</sup> Oldenburg, *op. cit.*, p. 274.

<sup>304</sup> Lowe, *op. cit.*, p. 68.

<sup>305</sup> Frank Furedi, "The Rise of the Rising Sun", *BBC History Magazine*, vol. 6, N 9, September, 2005, p. 49. (V.M.)

<sup>306</sup> In all Schiff loaned \$200 million to Japan during the war, while preventing other firms from lending to Russia (A. Solzhenitsyn, *Dvesti let vmeste* (Two Hundred Years Together), Moscow, 2001, p. 347). Oleg Platonov gives the figure of \$400 million, and says that Schiff financed the sending of revolutionary propaganda to Russian prisoners of war in Japan (*Ternovij Venets Rossii* (Russia's Crown of Thorns), Moscow, 1998, pp. 354. 355). (V.M.)

established beyond doubt, was artificially stirred up in the American press, which was almost completely in Jewish hands. In the course of a whole series of years an army of Jewish hacks has slandered Russia, poured an unbelievably dirty torrent of abuse on her, and stirred people up to hate and despise everything Russian. As a result public opinion, and not only in America, was confused. The huge reading world was pitifully deceived...’ At the height of the war the Paris newspaper *Presse* noted: ‘Japan has not been waging war against Russia alone. She has a powerful ally – Jewry.’...”<sup>307</sup>

Although many experts still thought that Russia could win the war if she continued, she sued for peace. In September, 1905, at Portsmouth, U.S.A., thanks to the very tough negotiating stance of Tsar Nicholas, skilfully carried out by Witte, favourable terms were won for Russia. She did not have to pay an indemnity, and lost only Port Arthur and the south of Sakhalin. Japan was given a free hand in Korea.<sup>308</sup> Nevertheless, the loss of prestige was great, and gave renewed encouragement to the revolutionaries.

During the war, “the revolutionary newspaper *Liberation*, which was published abroad, counted up the forces of the ‘liberation movement’ and gave, with some exaggeration, the following reply to the question: ‘What do we have?’: ‘The whole of the intelligentsia and part of the people; all the *zemstva*, the whole of the press, a part of the city Dumas, all the corporations (jurists, doctors, etc.)... The socialist parties have promised their support... The whole of Finland is with us... Oppressed Poland and the Jewish population languishing within the Pale of Settlement are for us.’ But the same newspaper did not hide its fears: ‘If the Russian armies defeat the Japanese... then freedom will be quietly strangled under the cries of “Hurrah!” and the tolling of the bells of the triumphant empire.’”<sup>309</sup>

“In many ways,” writes Ferguson, “the Japanese had won by being more European than the Russians; their ships were more modern, their troops better disciplined, their artillery more accurate. To Leo Tolstoy, the titan of Russian letters, Japan’s victory looked like a straightforward triumph of Western materialism. By comparison, it was the Tsarist system that suddenly looked ‘Asiatic’ – and ripe for overthrow. Now, it seemed, the Japanese could concentrate on acquiring the other indispensable accessory of a great power: a colonial empire.”<sup>310</sup>

And so in 1910 they annexed Korea...

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<sup>307</sup> Lebedev, *Velikorossia* (Great Russia), St. Petersburg, 1999, pp. 417-418.

<sup>308</sup> In August, 1905 the Korean emperor wrote to the tsar imploring him to liberate his country from Japanese oppression. See “Joong Ang: Koreiskij imperator umolial Nikolaia II spasti stranu ot Iaponia”, <http://russian.rt.com/inotv/2015-08-12/Joong-Ang-Korejskij-imperator-umolyal>, August 12, 2005.

<sup>309</sup> Oldenburg, *op. cit.*, p. 261.

<sup>310</sup> Ferguson, *The War of the World*, London: Penguin, 2006, p. 55.

In the last analysis, however, the Russians did not lose because they had fallen behind their enemies in the technologies of the West. Their proud disdain of the Japanese “monkeys” had been punished. And, according to St. John of Kronstadt, the real cause of the defeat was the leaders’ negligent attitude towards Orthodoxy.<sup>311</sup> The theft of Russia’s greatest holy thing, the wonderworking Kazan icon of the Mother of God, on June 29, 1904 indicated that the Mother of God had withdrawn her protection from Russia. For “not in vain”, wrote Archbishop Nikon (Rozhdestvensky), “has there long been the belief in the people that as long as this holy icon is intact, and stands guard between Christian Europe and the heterodox, pagan-Muslim world of Asia, we can be calm. But if she, our fervent Intercessor, leaves her place, then woes and misfortunes threaten us, and we shall remain defenceless...”<sup>312</sup> The Russians lost also because “a house that is divided against itself cannot stand” (Mark 3.25) – and Russia was divided against herself. Thus “at the end of 1904, on the eve of the preparation of a general attack against the Japanese army near Lyaodun, strikes began in the major Russian military factories and on the railways, which left the Russian army without ammunition and food and allowed the Japanese to take back the initiative. The first defeats of the Russian army elicited the genuine joy of the liberals and a flow of congratulations on this score to the emperor of Japan...”<sup>313</sup>

In spite of that, “the Russian army conducted its retreat in good order, and its losses in manpower turned out to be almost two times fewer than those of the Japanese... The experience of the war of 1904-1905 allowed Russia in the next three to four years to carry out a military reform and modernize her armaments, munitions and technical equipment in all sections of the army. In spite of colossal credits by the standards of those times from England and the USA, and the participation of Germany in the technical fitting out of the army and fleet, Japan was so exhausted by this military encounter that it was only fourteen years later, at the very end of the First World War, that she was able to re-establish her pre-war military potential and join the Entente.”<sup>314</sup>

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The war with Japan caused particular problems for the Russian Orthodox Mission in Japan, headed by Archbishop Nicholas (Kasatkin). A peasant from Smolensk province, St. Nicholas first went to Japan in 1861. Encouraged to learn Japanese by St. Innocent, enlightener of Alaska, in 1870 he founded an astonishingly successful mission that by 1910 numbered 32,000 native converts, 28 priests, seven deacons and 150 catechists.

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<sup>311</sup> “The leader of our army A.N. Kuropatkin left all the icons given to him in captivity with the Japanese pagans, while he took all the secular things. What an attitude to the faith and the holy things of the Church! It was for this that the Lord is not blessing our arms and the enemies are conquering us” (in S. Fomin & T. Fomina, *Rossia pered Vtorym Prishestvoiem* (Russia before the Second Coming), Sergiev Posad, 1998, vol. 1, p. 373).

<sup>312</sup> Archbishop Nikon, in Fomin & Fomina, *op. cit.*, vol. 1, p. 374.

<sup>313</sup> Lebedev, *op. cit.*

<sup>314</sup> *Pravoslavnaia Rus'* (Orthodox Russia), N 24, December 15/28, 2005, p. 14.

The story of how St. Nicholas gained his first convert is instructive. The Japanese were quite xenophobic at that time and it was very difficult being a foreigner. At one point, while Nicholas was still studying, the samurai Sawabe Takuma came to the Saint's home and pulled his sword, telling him he was going to kill him before he could start his preaching. St Nicholas asked the samurai why he was going to kill him before he knew what he was going to preach, and proposed that the two sit together so that he might explain his message to Sawabe. Then at the end, if Sawabe did not like it, he could kill the saint. The honourable samurai agreed. By the end of the conversation, Sawabe was convinced of the truth of Christianity and became the first convert, and eventually the first Japanese Orthodox priest.

He aroused the admiration of all, including the Japanese. In July, 1882 he presided over the first All-Japanese Orthodox Council. A delegation from Peking was also present. During the Boxer Uprising in Peking in 1900 222 Chinese Orthodox converts were martyred for Christ.<sup>315</sup>

On the eve of the Russo-Japanese war, "alarmed by the possibility of war with their co-religionists, the Orthodox Japanese turned to their bishop. He replied that they, like all Japanese, were obliged by their oath to carry out their military duty, but to fight was not at all the same as to hate one's enemy, but meant to defend one's fatherland. The Saviour Himself bequeathed patriotism to us when He sorrowed over the lot of Jerusalem.<sup>316</sup> The archpastor himself decided to stay in Japan with his flock, even if there was a war...

"It began in February 1904. Then Bishop Nicholas handed over all ecclesiastical affairs to the council of priests, and himself served his last liturgy before the war. At the end of the service in his farewell sermon to his flock he called on it to pray for victory for their fatherland, but he, as a subject of the Russian Emperor, could not take part in the common service; but he would be happy to see his flock carrying out their duty. In his encyclical of February 11, 1904, Bishop Nicholas blessed the Japanese to carry out their duty, not sparing their lives, but reminded them that our fatherland is the Church, where all Christians constitute one family; he told them to pray for the re-establishment of peace and asked for mercy to prisoners of war [many of whom were nursed

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<sup>315</sup> [http://www.orthodox.cn/history/martyrs/188207jpcouncil\\_en.htm](http://www.orthodox.cn/history/martyrs/188207jpcouncil_en.htm).

<sup>316</sup> As he wrote in his diary for January 30 / February 12, 1904: "Pray to God that He give victory to your emperor's army. Thank God for the victories He gives. And sacrifice to the needs of the war... Fight, not out of hatred to the enemy, but out of love for your fellow-citizens... In a word, do everything that is required of you by love for your Fatherland. Love for the Fatherland is a holy feeling. The Saviour consecrated this feeling by His example: out of love for His earthly Fatherland He wept over the wretched lot of Jerusalem. But besides our earthly Fatherland we also have a Heavenly Fatherland. This Fatherland of ours is the Church, of which we are all equally members and through which the children of the Heavenly Father truly constitute one family. Therefore I am not separating from you, brothers and sisters, and I remain in your family. And we shall together fulfill our duty with regard to our Heavenly Fatherland." (V.M.)

by Japanese Orthodox. After this he shut himself away and gave himself over to exploits of prayer...

“Nobody in Russia understood the hierarch of Japan as well as Emperor Nicholas II. At the end of the war the Tsar wrote to him: ‘You have shown before all that the Orthodox Church of Christ is foreign to worldly dominion and every tribal hatred, and embraces all tribes and languages with her love. In the difficult time of the war, when the weapons of battle destroy peaceful relations between peoples and rulers, you, in accordance with the command of Christ, did not leave the flock entrusted to you, and the grace of love and faith gave you strength to endure the fiery trial and amidst the hostility of war to keep the peace of faith and love in the Church created by your labours...’<sup>317</sup>

On July 19 / August 1, 1904 St. Nicholas wrote some penetrating remarks on the spiritual causes of Russia’s defeat: “The Japanese are beating us, all the peoples hate us, it seems as if the Lord God has poured out His wrath upon us. And how could it be otherwise? Why should we be loved and pitied? Our nobility has been corrupted over the centuries by serfdom and has become debauched to the marrow of its bones. The simple people has been oppressed over the centuries by the same serfdom and has become ignorant and crude to the highest degree; the service class and the bureaucrats have lived through bribery and stealing from the State and now at all levels of service, wherever it is possible to steal, there is the most shameless and universal stealing from the State. The upper class is a collection of monkeys; they are imitators and worshippers, now of France, now England, now Germany and of every other thing that is foreign. The clergy, oppressed by poverty, can hardly repeat the catechism – are they capable of developing Christian ideals and sanctifying themselves and others through them?... And with all that we have the very highest opinion of ourselves: we only are true Christians, we only have real enlightenment, while there we see only darkness and corruption... No, it is not for nothing that the present woes have overwhelmed Russia – she herself has drawn them upon herself. Only work it, O Lord God, that this may be the punishing staff of Thy love! Do not allow, O Lord, that my poor Homeland should be destroyed to the end! Save and have pity!”

Again, on May 20 / June 2, 1905 he wrote: “Russia is not a naval power. God gave her land covering one sixth of the world and stretching without interruption across the continent, without any islands. And she could have taken possession of it peacefully, exploiting its wealth and converting it to the good of her people; she could have taken care of the material and spiritual well-being of her citizens. But all this was not enough for the Russian government; it is expanding its possessions more and more; and by what means! Is it really a good thing to attempt to conquer Manchuria and take it from China?

“‘We need a warm-water port.’ Why? To give our sailors something to boast about? Well, let them now boast in the unheard-of shame of their defeat [at

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<sup>317</sup> *Pravoslavnaia Zhizn'* (Orthodox Life), 1982; in Fomin and Formina, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 372.

Tsushima]. It is obvious that God was not with us, because we destroyed His righteousness.

“‘Russia has no outlet to the ocean.’ What for? Do we have trade here? None at all. The fleet had done a good job defending a handful of Germans who are conducting their German trade here... All we needed were a few ships to catch those who are stealing from our fishermen, and a few fortresses on the coast; in the event of war these same fortresses would defend the ships and would not allow the enemy to take control of the coast.

“‘Why do you need Korea?’ I once asked Admiral Dubasov. ‘It should be ours by natural right,’ he replied. ‘When a man stretches out his legs, he is chained down by what is on his legs; we are growing and stretching our legs. Korea is on our legs, we cannot stop stretching out to the sea and making Korea ours.’ So that’s what they did! They cut off our legs!

“And God is not defending His people because it has done unrighteousness. The God-Man wept over Judaea, but did not defend it from the Romans. I used to say to the Japanese: ‘We will always be friends with you, because we cannot bump into each other: we are a continental power, you are a naval power; we can help each other, supplement each other, but there will never be a reason for enmity.’ I always said this boldly right up to our taking Port Arthur from the Japanese after the Chinese-Japanese war. ‘God, what have they done now!’ were my first words and groan when I heard about this unclean act of the Russian government..

“... It was not need for a fleet that created the Russian fleet, but vainglory; while lack of talent prevented us from arming it properly, which is why everything ended in dust. Will Russia at least now renounced the role of a great sea power that does not belong to her? Or will she continue in her blindness and try again to create a fleet, exhausting her resources, which are very much needed for more vital, truly vital things, like the education of the people, the exploitation of her internal resources and such like? She will be unprecedentedly powerful if she firmly and clearly recognizes herself to be a continental power, but fragile and weak – like a weak hermaphrodite – if she again begins to see herself as also a great sea power which must therefore have a big fleet, which in such a case will always be the prey of her enemies and the source of shame for herself...”

Archbishop Nicholas may have been a sharp critic of his Homeland, but his noble affirmation, in word and deed, of the primacy of faith over politics did not go unappreciated. After the war he was given awards by the Tsar and the Holy Synod, and his death in 1912 was covered by all the newspapers of Japan. His life witnessed vividly to the fact that Christianity, while supporting true patriotism, is a *universalist* religion which always places the universalist message of the Gospel above the interests of any individual State or nation.

This universalism, so fitting for an Apostle of the nations, was expressed in a letter to the future Hieromartyr Nikon, Archbishop of Vologda: "I was greatly saddened on reading the darker part of your letter: 'Threatening clouds are passing over our poor Russia. Not without reason, many are thinking about the end of the world', etc. But my sadness did not hold out in its full force in the face of my further thoughts. In the heat of battle the warrior sees blood, much blood; but he will not be right if he says: 'Look, there is only blood; the world will not last, the world will perish!' You are in the very centre of the heated battle, and you yourself are suffering wounds. How can you not suffer, how can your heart not bleed, how can you restrain a cry of pain! But turn your gaze on the expanse of human history from Adam to the present day: when were there times that were completely consoling? The pre-Christian world choked in a lightless atmosphere of evil to the point that the best people of the time resorted to the final consolation, suicide. Suddenly a heavenly light shone on the earth, and a cup of consolation was given to men, Nevertheless, even when they had entered the beam of this light and accepted the cup, on seeing the darkness that surrounded from outside, they suffered to the point of thinking that the end of the world had come. Remember how the Apostle Paul tried to persuade the Thessalonian: 'Haste not to be disturbed in mind about the end of the world', as if the mystery of iniquity has already come. But the end is not now. And when will it be? 'This Gospel of the Kingdom will be preached throughout the inhabited world, as a witness in every language, and then the end will come.'" [Matthew 24:14] What could be clearer or more sure, and also more comforting than this indication! A good half of the pagans in the inhabited world has not yet heard the Gospel of the Kingdom. And have those who have heard it assimilated it in a fitting way? Has the Gospel penetrated the depths of the hearts of the European peoples? No, it is still on the surface of their souls. And this is because the western listen to a Gospel darkened by the distortions of Catholicism and Protestantism; the Russians listen to the all-radiant Gospel with as-yet-unenlightened, ignorant and undeveloped minds and superficial hearts. Was it for that reason that God descended to earth and Himself uttered His teaching to men, so that it should quickly appear in the darkened forms of Catholicism and Protestantism, and that there where it shines with in its full radiance, only a few should be enlightened to the bottom of their hearts and minds and be transfigured by it as was the chorus of saints of the Orthodox Church, but that the masses should walk in this light more through the inclination of their hearts without clearly giving an account to themselves of the treasure they possessed?... The life, both of the individual person, and still more of each people and, undoubtedly, of the whole of humanity, goes through the period appointed for it by its Creator. But what age is humanity now since the time of its birth into new life? Oh, of course, it is still in its youth! Two thousand years for such a large organism is quite a small number of years. Many thousands of years must yet pass before the true teaching of Christ and the life-creating grace of the Holy Spirit penetrate all the members of this organism, and all the peoples and all the people in them assimilate the teaching of Christ and are subjected to its grace-filled action – the justice of God demands this. The truth of Christ and the grace of the Holy Spirit must enter humanity in all their strength and produce their full effect: then this

great organism will extend to its full height, and will accomplish as much good as the nature of man, created by God the Creator and fertilized by God the Saviour, is capable of. Already the ancient prophets foresaw and in ecstatic tones described this time, when 'there will be no impure path and people will not go astray, there will be no lion or savage beast, and the wolves and sheep will feed together', in accordance with the much-desired word of Incarnate Truth Himself. There is still a long way to go before humanity reaches this summit! And then it will go down and descend to such a depth of evil as it did not reach even before the flood; the vital forces of light and goodness will dry up almost completely in decrepit humanity - then, and not before that time, will the end of the world come."<sup>318</sup>

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It was not only in Japan that the Russian Church was doing important missionary work. There was a vibrant mission in Persia under the future hieromartyr, Fr. John Vostorgov. And in North America Bishop Tikhon (Bellavin), the future patriarch of Moscow and hiermartyr, united the emigres of various Orthodox nations under his omophorion<sup>319</sup> and encouraged the use of English in Divine services. In this way he was preparing a place of refuge for many thousands of Orthodox refugees fleeing from the Russian revolution.

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<sup>318</sup> Archbishop Nikon, *Orthodoxy and the Coming Destinies of the World*, Pskov-Caves Dormition Monastery, 1995, pp. 295-297. Translation kindly provided by Fr. Chad Arneson.

<sup>319</sup> The recently canonized Bishop Raphael of Brooklyn, a native Arab, worked fruitfully under Bishop Tikhon. He was the first bishop consecrated on American soil. See <https://www.hsir.org/pdfs/2015/03/12/E20150312aAgiorsRaphaelBrooklyn/E20150312aAgiorsRaphaelBrooklyn.pdf>

## 24. THE PRESS AND THE LIBERALS

We have noted that one of the causes of the defeat of the Russians in the war with Japan was the defeatist attitude of the liberals in the rear, which was magnified by the diatribes of the press. Now the press was first recognized as an important factor by Napoleon, who said to Metternich: "You see me master of France; well, I would not undertake to govern her for three months with liberty of the press."<sup>320</sup> Its importance again emerged in the Crimean War, when reports in the British press of military incompetence and insanitary conditions in the hospitals, together with photographs from the battlefield, had had an important influence on public opinion, and thence on the government. It became even more important in the Balkan crises of the 1870s when reports of Turkish atrocities in *The Daily Telegraph* and *The Manchester Guardian* were an important ally to Gladstone in his campaign to jolt Disraeli's government out of its pro-Turkish indifference. By the 1890s all the major powers had reason to fear the press. In the early 1900s the British press came under the dominion of Lord Northcliffe, and was largely uncensored. Even in monarchical Germany and Russia it was beginning to flex its muscles...

St. Theophan the Recluse appealed: "Stop the mouths of the journalists and newspapermen. Declare unbelief a state crime, and ban materialist views under the threat of the death penalty". In 1901, St. John of Kronstadt linked "the lying press" with the power of Jewry. The press "has been gradually invading the sphere of life of recent centuries and is becoming a dominant factor in the historical acts of the peoples. They go wherever the press draws them. They are drawn to serve the Jews, for since the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the Jews have begun to take control of the press. This took place on the orders of the founder of the universal Jewish union. He taught it the way to get control of the peoples and kingdoms. The victory of Jewry is guaranteed by the fact that the apostates from Christianity see allies in those who are similar to them in their apostasy; but they are woefully wrong. The Jews can be allies only with themselves..."<sup>321</sup>

"Already in the 70s," writes Solzhenitsyn, "the 'unbridledness of the Russian press' had been noted more than once by Dostoyevsky. In relation to the State it displayed itself even at the conference of March 8, 1881 under the just-crowned Alexander III, and more than once after that: the journalists behaved like self-willed representatives of society.

"The expression: 'Three hostile newspapers are more dangerous than 100,000 hostile soldiers' has been ascribed to Napoleon. This phrase became very applicable to the Russo-Japanese war. The Russian press was openly

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<sup>320</sup> Napoleon, in Cohen and Major, *op. cit.*, p. 530.

<sup>321</sup> St. John, *Nachalo i Konets Nashego Zemnogo Mira* (The Beginning and End of our Earthly World), Moscow, 2004, p. 115.

defeatist throughout the war, in each of its battles. And, still more important: it did not hide its sympathy for terrorism and revolution..."<sup>322</sup>

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On August 25, 1904 the Tsar made his first significant concession to the views of the newspaper publishers and their readership by appointing Prince P.S. Sviatopolk-Mirsky, a liberal conservative, as Minister of the Interior in place of the Plehve, who had been murdered by the SRs' Combat Organization. This represented a sharp change of policy in a liberal direction.

As Alexander Bokhanov writes, "the minister gave several interviews to the newspapers, met with representatives of liberal circles and popularized his political programme, whose main points were: religious tolerance, the broadening of local self-government, the provision of great rights to the press, a change in policy in relation to the border regions, an allowance of workers' meetings for the discussion of economic questions. These declarations produced a sensation.

"Political activists of a liberal persuasion were very sceptical about them. They were convinced that the time of the autocracy was drawing to an end, and did not want to bind themselves with any obligations to the 'departing authorities'. One of the most well-known activists among the liberals, Paul Nikolayevich Miliukov, wrote in the summer of 1904 on the pages of the illegal newspaper *Liberation*: 'We shall be patriots for ourselves and for a future Russia, we shall remain faithful to the old 'people's proverb' - 'Down with the autocracy!' This is also patriotic, and at the same time guarantees us freedom from the danger of being in the bad company of reactionaries.'

"At the very height of the 'Sviatopolk spring', at the end of September and beginning of October, 1904, a leading group of Russian liberals grouped around the newspaper *Liberation*, which had been published since 1902 under the editorship of P.B. Struve, first in Stuttgart, then in Paris, conducted a congress of opposition parties in Paris. Various liberal and radical unions took part in it. Of the most significant only RSDRP [the Russian Social Democrat Party] was absent. This meeting unanimously approved a resolution on the liquidation of the autocracy and replacing it with 'a free democratic structure on the basis of universal suffrage' and on the right of 'national self-determination of the peoples of Russia'.

"At the congress was present the flower of the Russian liberal intelligentsia, which later formed the core of the most powerful liberal party in Russia - the constitutional-democratic party ('the cadets'). These gentlemen, fighters for freedom and 'European rules' considered it appropriate to define common actions with the extreme tendencies and groups that had stained themselves with bloody murders, for example, the party of the social revolutionaries ('S-

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<sup>322</sup> Solzhenitsyn, *op. cit.*, p. 428.

Rs'), which emerged in 1902 and placed terror at the head of the corner of its 'strategy and tactics'.

"Already after the revolution, when all the noble-hearted liberal word-mongers had been scattered by the crude reality of Russian life, some of them came to their senses and confessed their criminal lightmindedness. In the emigration at the beginning of the 1930s the well-known cadet V.A. Maklakov wrote about the notorious Paris congress: 'On the part of liberalism, this agreement was a union with the revolution that threatened it. The salvation of Russia was possible only through the reconciliation of the historical authority with liberalism, that is, the sincere transformation of the autocracy into a constitutional monarchy. By instead concluding this union with the revolution, the liberalism of *Liberation* lost this exit; it preferred to serve the triumph of the revolution.'

"Mirsky's proclaimed 'epoch of trust' very soon began to demonstrate its hopelessness. It turned out that it was easy to make promises, but very difficult to fulfil them. In particular, right in the centre of the discussions and debates was the old and painful question of the creation of a pan-Russian representative organ, its competency and the path to its formation. It immediately came up against the problem of the unassailability of the monarch's prerogatives. Prince N.D. Sviatopolk-Mirsky was convinced that the autocracy and representation were compatible, but many others in the ruling circles did not share this position. They feared that the creation of any unappointed, elected organ would inevitably generate confusion in the administration and would contribute to the paralysis of power, which the enemies of the throne and the dynasty would unflinchingly use. At the end of 1904 there were more and more reasons for such fears.

"Passions fired up especially during and after the congress of *zemstvo* activists, which took place in Petersburg from November 7 to 9, 1904. The minister of the interior allowed the congress, but asked the participants to occupy themselves with 'practical questions of *zemstvo* life'. However, in the atmosphere of social tension and of the sharp politicization of the whole of public life, the practical realization of such a direction was impossible.

"The *zemstvo* deputies discussed some of their specific questions briefly, but the centre of their attention was in the stream of general political problems. It was accepted that the convening of a 'national representation' was necessary, that a political amnesty should be introduced, that 'administrative arbitrariness' should be stopped, that the 'decrees on intensified guard' should be rescinded, that personal inviolability should be guaranteed, and that religious tolerance should be affirmed. Although those assembled left for the authorities the initiative in carrying out transformations and rejected the calls of some participants to support the demand for the convening of a Constituent Assembly, nevertheless the event that took place was unprecedented. For the first time subjects of the tsar, gathered together in the capital of the empire, did

not petition the monarch on personal matters, but spoke out with demands of a political character.

“The most blatant was one very important demand-resolution, ‘point ten’, which declared that only a constitutional order, limiting autocratic power, could satisfy public opinion and give Russia ‘peaceful development of state life’.

“This thesis elicited sharp objections from the moderate participants in the congress led by the well-known liberal *zemstvo* activist D.N. Shipov, who categorically declared that he did not share the constitutionalist point of view. In his lengthy speech he defended the old Slavophile thesis: ‘The people has its opinions, the tsar makes the decisions’, and did not allow any written agreements and guarantees between the authorities and the people, considering that their relations were built, not on juridical formal principles, but on unassailable moral principles. This reasoning was not influential, and during the voting the majority cast their votes for a constitution.

“The decisions of the *zemstvo* congress aroused considerable interest and became the subject of lively discussion in the press and in private gatherings. At first it was supposed that the deputation of *zemstvo* activists would be received by the Interior minister and the tsar, which would be seen as a turning of the authorities towards constitutionalism. The conservative traditionalists were angry. Great-Prince Sergius Alexandrovich wrote in his diary on November 10: ‘I heard about the details of the *zemstvo* congress in St. Petersburg: they voted for a constitution!! A deputation of *zemstvo* activists has been received by Mirsky, and will be received by the Tsar!! (It was not – A.B.) Unhappy man,” and he added: ‘It sometimes seems to me that I’m going out of my mind.’

“The authorities were shocked: it could not satisfy such extreme demands, since this *de facto* meant the self-liquidation of the historical power. But they could not leave things as they were before. At the beginning of December 1904 meetings of high officials of the empire took place in Tsarskoe Selo, at which urgent measures to transform the inner structure were discussed.

“At the centre of the discussions was a programme put forward by the Interior minister. The special attention of the participants was drawn to the point about elected representatives in the State Council (until then all members had been appointed personally by the monarch). The majority of those assembled expressed themselves against this. The over-procurator of the Most Holy Synod, K.P. Pobedonostsev, entreated the tsar in the name of God not to limit the autocracy, and this position was supported by the minister of finances V.N. Kokovtsov, the president of the Committee of ministers, S.Yu. Witte and most of the others. The tsar wavered at the beginning, but soon unambiguously spoke for keeping the authority inviolable.

“At the end of the Tsarskoe Selo meetings, a decree of the Senate was issued containing resolutions on the broadening local self-government, on reviewing

resolutions on the press and confirming the necessity of establishing religious toleration. The point about elected representatives was missing. But the liberals hoped that the elective principle would be specified there. However, the tsar considered that it was not yet time for sharp changes..."<sup>323</sup>

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The press, which had done so much to stir up this constitutionalist mania, continued unchecked in 1905. Solzhenitsyn writes that it "was seen during the Duma period as, in the words of Witte, mainly 'Jewish' or 'half-Jewish': more precisely, with a predominance of leftist or radical Jews in the key correspondent and editors' posts. In November, 1905 D.I. Pikhno, the editor of the Russian national newspaper *Kievlianin*, who had already been in this post for 25 years and studied the Russian press, wrote: 'Jewry... has placed huge stakes on the card of the Russian revolution... The serious part of Russian society had understood that at such moments the press is a force, but it did not have this power - it was in the hands of its opponents, who spoke in its name throughout Russia and forced themselves to be read, because there were no other publications, and you can't create them in one day... and [society] was lost in the multitude of lies in which it could not find its way.'

"L. Tikhomirov saw nothing national in this, but in 1910 he made the following comments on the character of the Russian press: 'Tearing on the nerves... One-sidedness... They don't want decency, gentlemanliness... They have no ideal, and have no understanding of it.' And the public brought up by this press 'demands glibness and hooliganism, it cannot value knowledge, and does not notice ignorance'.

"And, from completely the opposite political extreme, a Bolshevik publicist [M. Lemke], expressed himself as follows on the character of this press: 'In our post-reformation era ideas have become cheap, while information, sensation and unabashed authoritarian ignorance fill the press.'

"Speaking, more specifically, about culture, Andrew Bely complained in 1909, although he was by no means a rightist or 'chauvinist': 'The leaders of national culture turn out to be people who are foreign to this culture... Look at the lists of those working on the newspapers and journals of Russia: who are the musical and literary critics of these journals? You will see almost exclusively Jewish names: among these critics there are some talented and acute people, there are some among them who understand the tasks of a national culture, perhaps, more profoundly than the Russians: but they are exceptions. The general mass of Jewish critics are completely foreign to Russian art. They write in an Esperanto jargon and terrorize every attempt to deepen and enrich the Russian language.'

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<sup>323</sup> Bakhanov, *Imperator Nikolaj II*, Moscow, 1998, pp. 226-230.

“In those same years the far-sighted Zionists Vl. Zhabotinsky complained about the ‘leading newspapers sustained on Jewish money and filled with Jewish workers’ and warned: ‘When the Jews hurled themselves *en masse* to create Russian politics, we foretold them that nothing good would come out of it, neither for Russian politics, nor for Jewish.’

“The Russian press played a decisive role in the pre-revolutionary Cadet-revolutionary storming of the government: its mood was powerfully picked up and expressed by Duma deputy A.I. Shingarev: ‘Let this power sink! We will not cast *this* power even a bit of rope!’ It is appropriate to mention here that the First Duma stood up in memory of the victims of the Belostok pogrom (not agreeing... that this was an armed battle between anarchists and soldiers); the Second Duma – in honour of the murdered terrorist Iollos. But when Purishkevich suggested standing in honour of those killed at their posts as policemen and soldiers, he was forbidden to speak and excluded from the session: at that time it seemed unthinkable to the enflamed parliamentarians to sympathize with those who kept simple order in the State, which was necessary for all of them, and for a generally quiet life.

“A member of the Union of [Jewish] Complete Equality, A. Kulisher, drew the truthful conclusion – but late, looking back at the past in the émigré *Jewish Tribune* in 1923: ‘In Russian-Jewish society before the revolution there really were people and whole groups whose activity can be characterized precisely as... the absence of a feeling of responsibility for the turmoil in the minds of Russian Jewry... the spreading of an indefinite and light-minded ‘revolutionism’... The whole essence of their politics consisted in being more leftist than anyone else. Always remaining in the role of irresponsible critics, never going to the end, they saw their purpose in saying: ‘Not enough!’ ... These people were ‘democrats’... But there were also democrats who called themselves ‘The Jewish *Democratic* Group’ who attached this adjective to every unsuitable noun, composing an intolerable Talmud of democratism... They created around themselves an irresponsible mood of groundless maximalism, with no precise limit to their demands. This mood manifested itself with destructive consequences in the revolution.’ The destructiveness proceeding from this press was indeed one of the weakest, most vulnerable points in the Russian State by 1914 and 1917...”<sup>324</sup>

Indeed, the stream of slander turned out by the Jewish-controlled press against the Tsar was one of the major causes of the revolution... In her press, we see how Russia was a microcosm, as it were, of one of the main problems of modern civilization... No ruler now, however powerful or autocratic, could afford to ignore the opinions, however misguided, of “the common man” – or, more commonly, of that relatively small group of newspaper owners who presumed to speak in his name...

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<sup>324</sup> Solzhenitsyn, *op. cit.*, pp. 428-431.



## 25. BLOODY SUNDAY

In the 1890s Russian industry had known growth rates of 8 or 9 percent. However, as Beryl Williams writes, “depression set in after 1900, causing sharp price rises, reversing wage gains, increasing unemployment, and affecting particularly the new boom towns of the south and west, where the Russo-Japanese war exacerbated the problem, as wheat exports in the Far East collapsed.... There were peasant revolts in 1902-03, strikes increased, and the opposition movements became more organized.”<sup>325</sup>

“By 1902-3,” writes Dominic Lieven, “rumblings of revolution, or at least of fundamental constitutional change, were in the air. Not everyone heard them. Even in April 1904, three months before his assassination, the Minister of Internal Affairs, Vyacheslav Plehve, did not believe in ‘the closeness of danger’ to the regime. Plehve’s optimism was partly based on the belief that ‘in the event of things going to extremes, the government will find support in the peasantry and urban lower-middle class’. In addition he recalled having survived earlier times of crisis and panic. ‘I have lived through more than one moment like the one we are living through now,’ he commented. ‘After the First of March [1881: the day Alexander II was assassinated] Count Loris-Melikov said to Plehve on the day after Alexander III rejected Alexander II’s constitution that “the Tsar will be killed and you and I will be hanged on a gallows”. Nothing happened though.’

“Other senior officials were less optimistic, often understanding better than Plehve that opposition to the government was by now much broader and deeper than had been the case a quarter of a century before. Kireev himself commented, as early as October 1900, that ‘I have seen a lot of intelligent people recently and in one voice, some with joy... others with horror, they all say that the present system of government has outlived its era and we are heading towards a constitution.’ Even the very conservative Konstantin Pobedonostsev agreed on this. A year later Kireev stated that in upper-class and senior bureaucratic circles ‘in the eyes of the great majority a constitutional order is the only salvation’. He himself believed, however, that ‘it is precisely this [constitutional order] which will in fact destroy us’. Like Alexander Polovtsov his eyes were turned towards the peasant masses, with their huge numbers and their potential for anarchy and socialism. ‘For the *time being* the peasants are still firm, still untouched. They are, as before, monarchists. But anyone can throw them into a muddle.’

“Those with the greatest interest in throwing the masses ‘into a muddle’ were of course the revolutionary socialist parties. Russian revolutionary socialism in the early twentieth century was divided into two currents, one Marxist, the other not. The former strand was represented by the Social Democrats, who in 1903 split into two factions, Menshevik and Bolshevik. The non-Marxist strand comprised the Socialist Revolutionary Party, formally

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<sup>325</sup> Williams, “Russia 1905”, *History Today*, May, 2005, p. 46.

constituted only in 1901, but deriving its ideas, traditions and older cadres from the nineteenth-century Russian socialist movement. In terms of ideas, the greatest distinction between the two was that the Marxists believed that the urban workers would spearhead the socialist revolution, which could only occur after capitalism had fully developed. The Socialist Revolutionary Party, on the other hand, claimed that a coalition of peasants, workers and poorer members of the intelligentsia and lower-middle class would achieve the socialist revolution, which could come immediately if the revolutionary parties pursued the proper tactics and exploited their opportunities.

“Unlike the Social Democrats, the Socialist Revolutionaries [called SRs] carried out a campaign of terror against leading officials as part of their strategy, killing three ministers between 1901 and 1904 alone and in the process sowing a good deal of alarm and confusion in the government. Partly for this reason the security police tended to regard the Socialist Revolutionaries as a more immediate and dangerous threat than the Social Democrats. The evaluation was not the product of mere panic or short-sightedness. The Marxists’ dogmatism and their obsession with the working class seemed to make them unlikely leaders of a successful revolution in a still overwhelmingly peasant country in which capitalism was only beginning to take root. Moreover, the fact that the majority of Social Democratic leaders were non-Russians, and a great number were Jews, made it seem less likely than ever that they would be able to compete with the Socialist Revolutionaries for the support of the Russian masses. Events were in part to prove the police right. When the monarchy fell in 1917 it was indeed the Socialist Revolutionaries who enjoyed by far the most popularity among the masses, not only in the countryside but also generally in the cities. Russia’s socialist future should have lain in their hands. The combination of their own ineptitude, Lenin’s intelligence and ruthlessness, and the specific conditions of wartime Russia were to deprive the Socialist Revolutionaries of the spoils of victory...”<sup>326</sup>

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Russian educated society now took a decisive turn to the left, being, “with very few exceptions, in a state of sharp, irreconcilable, blind opposition to the authorities. It was in these years that the short, categorical and martial phrase ‘Down with the autocracy!’ was put forward and became a popular phrase...”<sup>327</sup>

On September 17, 1904 representatives of the Union of Liberation met secretly in Paris with SRs and Polish and Finnish nationalists to create a united front against the autocracy.

In July, 1904 Plehve was assassinated. Under pressure from his mother, the Dowager Empress, the Tsar now chose Prince Peter Sviatopolk-Mirsky to take

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<sup>326</sup> Lieven, *Nicholas II*, London: Pimlico, 1993, pp. 89-91.

<sup>327</sup> Oldenburg, *op. cit.*, p. 198.

his place as Interior Minister. However, Sviatopolk-Mirsky was a liberal who opposed his predecessor's policies, was strongly opposed by the conservative officials in his ministry, and did not in any case want the job.

Lieven writes: "Disillusionment soon set in on both sides. Svyatopolk-Mirsky spoke in eloquent but rather nebulous terms to the press about a new era of trust and reconciliation between government and society, in the process unleashing a torrent of hopes about fundamental political change. In early October the Grand Duke Constantine, an intelligent and decent cousin of the Emperor, wrote in his diary that the new minister had come to dinner. 'He makes a good impression by his broad views. It frightens me that everyone – society and the press – are very carried away with him. How can disenchantment not follow, since in the nature of thing it will be impossible for him to put into effect much of what he would like to do?' Very soon Svyatopolk-Mirsky found himself under increasing pressure from a growing liberal movement which wanted to go much further than the minister desired or the Tsar would allow.<sup>328</sup> Paul Benckendorff commented that Svyatopolk-Mirsky 'is very astonished by what is going on' and was bewildered by the forces he had unleashed. Public opinion was getting more and more excited but the minister, bereft of firm ideas, had no hope of steering it. Conservatives, led by Grand Duke Sergei [the Tsar's uncle], sought to persuade Nicholas II to stop Svyatopolk-Mirsky's reforms, warning him that otherwise the regime was doomed. The Minister of Internal Affairs, on the contrary, told the Tsar that 'if you don't carry out liberal reforms and don't satisfy the completely natural wishes of everyone then change will come in the form of revolution.'

"The dénouement came in December 1904 when the Emperor presided over a conference of ministers, grand duke and other top officials to discuss Prince Svyatopolk-Mirsky's ten-point programme of reforms. The latter included not only promises of civil rights but also a proposal that elected representatives of society participate in discussing legislation and central government policy. Under strong pressure from the Grand Duke Serge and warned by Witte that Svyatopolk-Mirsky's proposal was a long step towards a constitution, Nicholas rejected the key point of his minister's proposal. The Emperor commented that 'I will never agree to a representative form of government because I consider it harmful to the people whom God has entrusted to me.' What remained of Svyatopolk-Mirsky's programme after the conference, namely some rather vague promises of civil rights, would not satisfy society...

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<sup>328</sup> In accordance with his liberal views, Svyatopolk-Mirsky permitted the convening of a Congress of Zemstva at the beginning of November. The zemtsy, as was to be expected, did not confine themselves to discussing purely local government issues: they passed a resolution calling for an elected legislature with voice in controlling the budget and control over the bureaucracy. Under the influence of Grand Duke Sergei Alexandrovich and Pobedonostsev, the tsar rejected this resolution. The Zemstvo Congress was followed by a campaign of nationwide banquets organized by the Union of Liberation backing the Congress; some even called for a Constituent Assembly. (V.M.)

“Underlying the mutual recriminations between Nicholas II and Svyatopolk-Mirsky there was a deeper problem. In his classic study of the origins of the French Revolution Alexis de Tocqueville commented that the most dangerous moment for a repressive regime was when it began to reform itself. Under a resolute and united authoritarian government, opposition was deterred by the knowledge that it would be repressed without hesitation or mercy. Once the government began to allow greater leeway to society, however, difficulties mounted. Brave spirits were tempted to see how far freedom could be pushed. For the government, finding the right mix of repression and concession required much more skill and judgement than simply sticking to an unwavering policy of coercion. As reforms were introduced and society began to emancipate itself from the regime’s control, splits almost invariably occurred within the government between those who argued that change was coming too rapidly and others who argued that change was not coming fast enough. Both sides tended to believe that their opponents’ line threatened political stability and the regime’s survival. Divisions within the government led to uncoordinated and tentative actions which themselves encouraged the regime’s opponents. Prince V.P. Meshchersky, the very conservative editor of *Grazhdanin*, made most of these points in an editorial which appeared shortly after Svyatopolk-Mirsky announced the onset of an era of trust between government and society. Meshchersky added that in Russia at present ordered reform would be particularly difficult since the government’s prestige was low, many of its enemies were irreconcilable, and reforms could easily be interpreted as concessions born of fear and weakness. Meshchersky was a reactionary, a homosexual, a past-master at Petersburg intrigue and a well-known unofficial adviser to both Alexander III and Nicholas II. For all these reasons he was widely hated by his contemporaries and has enjoyed a bad press with historians. But the Prince was not stupid and on this occasion, as on many others, his political analysis was quite shrewd...”<sup>329</sup>

At the same time, the government was beginning to lose control of the workers’ union movement in St. Petersburg. In 1900-01 the Ministry of the Interior, supported by the Governor-General of Moscow, Grand Duke Sergei Alexandrovich, had sponsored a scheme whereby a monarchist official of the ministry, Sergei Zubatov, created workers’ trade unions that would give expression to workers’ complaints against their employers while remaining loyal to the Tsar and without turning to revolutionary activity. At first highly successful, the movement fell into disfavour after the Odessa general strike of 1903, and revolutionaries were elected to the leadership of the unions in St. Petersburg. Zubatov was dismissed, being replaced by a priest, Father George Gapon.

As Lieven writes, “Zubatov, an intelligent and professional police chief, had understood that police trade union had to be closely and carefully supervised otherwise they could result in a labour movement organized by the government being captured by its opponents and escaping from the regime’s

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<sup>329</sup> Lieven, *Nicholas II*, pp. 135-136, 137-138.

control. By 1904 the Petersburg police leadership was much less careful and professional than Zubatov had been. Even while Plehve was still alive, Gapon was being converted to socialism by the lieutenants whom he was supposedly using on the government's behalf to create a loyal workers' movement. 'By March 1904 he conspiratorially revealed a "plan" to his group, a radical plan aiming at civil liberties, a responsible ministry, the eight-hour day, unions, universal education, and sweeping land reforms, a plan they [his supposed lieutenants] had put in his mind in the first place.' Throughout 1904 the police regarded Gapon as loyal and left him unsupervised, though by the autumn the threat represented by his movement should have been clear..."<sup>330</sup>

Gapon's original intentions appear to have been good and his frame of reference patriotic: "he wanted to 'build a nest among the factory and mill workers where Rus', a truly Russian spirit, would prevail.' He aimed to promote this spirit by encouraging self-help, temperance, and the peaceful acculturation of the workers. To this end he set up tearooms, clubs, and mutual aid funds as well as arranging lectures on economic and other topical themes."<sup>331</sup>

But then he began listening to the workers' more political complaints; he took advice from the Union of Liberation and from some disaffected Social Democrats. Gradually he was drawn to political activism... And then, on December 20, 1904, four workers belonging to Gapon's Assembly of Russian Factory and Plant Workers were dismissed by the management of the Putilov Factory, St. Petersburg's largest. By January 8 120,000 workers were on strike; the city was without electricity and newspapers. On January 9, Gapon, having decided that the workers must register their petition publicly, ignored the police's instructions and led a demonstration of some tens of thousands of workers with a petition for the Tsar towards the Winter Palace. They were forbidden to go further, but when some did, pushed from behind. "The opposition of the demonstrators and soldiers soon turned to gunfire from the crowd. The first victims turned out to be soldiers. A part of the armed force returned fire on the provocateurs..."<sup>332</sup> The troops killed perhaps 200 and injured 800. This tragic event was used by the *intelligenty* and revolutionaries as an excuse to undermine faith in the Tsar among the masses.

The first myth that needs to be dispelled is that the Tsar was heartless towards the condition of the workers. Of course, conditions for workers in Russia, as in every other industrialized country of the time, were harsh. But it needs to be borne in mind, as Nicholas Kazantsev writes, that "before 'Bloody Sunday' special laws had been issued to secure the safety of workers in mining and factory industries, on the railways and in enterprises that were dangerous for their life and health, as for example in munitions factories, etc.

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<sup>330</sup> Lieven, *Nicholas II*, p. 139.

<sup>331</sup> Hosking, *Russia and the Russians*, p. 365.

<sup>332</sup> Review of A.M. Khitrov & O.L. Solomina, *Khram-pamiatnik v Briussele* (The Memorial Church in Brussels, Moscow, 2005, *Pravoslavnaia Rus'* (Orthodox Russia), N 24, December 15/28, 2005, p. 14.

“Child labour until the age of 12 was forbidden, while adolescents and women could not be employed in factory work between 9 in the evening and 5 in the morning. Fines deducted from pay packets could not exceed one third of the packet, moreover every fine had to be confirmed by the factory inspector. Money from fines went into a special fund designed to satisfy the needs of the workers themselves.

“In 1903 workers’ wardens elected by the factory workers on the corresponding sections were introduced. Moreover, in Tsarist Russia – again, *before* ‘Bloody Sunday’ - it was possible to resort to strikes. In factories controlled by the Labour Inspectorate there were 68 strikes in 1893, 118 in 1896, 145 in 1897, 189 in 1899 and 125 in 1900. While in 1912 social insurance was established.

“At that time the emperor’s social legislation was undoubtedly the most progressive in the world. This caused Taft, the president of the United States at the time to declare publicly two years before the First World War in the presence of some high-ranking Russians: ‘Your Emperor has created such a perfect workers’ legislation as not one democratic state can boast of.’”<sup>333</sup>

However, the demonstration was not really about workers’ conditions...

The second question relates to the role of Gapon. “Perhaps Gapon did not believe that the authorities would disperse his ‘peaceful’ march? He himself answered this question later when he admitted that he knew full well that the authorities would not permit the protest to take place under any circumstances, because – very simply – it would not have been peaceful. The chief of the Special Corps of the tsar’s secret personal guard, and afterward historian, Alexander Spiridovich, wrote of this, ‘Nobody had the idea then at the time [9 January 1905] that Gapon had played the role of traitor. It was some long time later that Gapon admitted that he had known, in inciting the workers to go before the tsar with their petition, that the authorities would never permit the demonstration; he also knew that they would bring in the troops against the workers, and all the same, he still urged them to demonstrate and in fact insisted they do so.’

“A great number of workers were members of the Social Revolutionary Party, and even though the party did not officially take part in the demonstration, many of their members participated in the march. A multitude of witnesses relate that many of the demonstrators were armed; they broke windows, they looted stores, they burned vehicles and even broke into houses! Thus, the shots of the security forces were not in cold blood, but in reply to the repeated provocations of the demonstrators...

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<sup>333</sup> Kazantsev, “Provokator Gapon kak Znamia Perekrestyshej” (The Provocateur Gapon as a Banner for the Turn-Coats), *Nasha Strana* (Our Country), July 14, 2006, N 2799, p. 2.

“As for the fact that some of the demonstrators held icons, church banners, and portraits of the tsar, that can also be explained. A certain portion of the workers did not realize what was about to happen. They believed Gapon’s fraudulent promises and did not know that the tsar was absent from the palace that day. These were the first to be surprised by the violent behavior of the other demonstrators. They indeed had peaceful intentions and believed that they would meet the tsar to hand over to him their humble petition. They also did not know that the content of the petition almost did not have anything to do with them at all...”<sup>334</sup>

In the petition composed by Gapon the demands included: an amnesty for political prisoners, the convening of a Constituent Assembly, the separation of the Church and State, a progressive income tax, the abolition of redemption payments from the peasants, an end to the war, the creation of elected trade unions and the abolition of the factory inspectorate. There was no way these demands could be considered as relating only to the conditions of factory workers...

“A few days before the march Gapon met with Pinhas Rutenberg, a member of the Socialist Revolutionary Party, from whom he was inseparable during the days of preparation for the march. At midnight of the eighth going into the ninth of January, Rutenberg, with Gapon present, composed the petition on behalf of the workers who would hand it to the Tsar – certainly not personally, since they knew that the tsar would be absent. In no way was the content of this document a simple request to improve the working conditions of the workers, but a provocative manifesto that demanded in a threatening tone the immediate devolvement of the absolute monarchy of Russia into a constitutional monarchy with a democratic constitution and the promulgation of significant reforms of a socialist character.”<sup>335</sup>

Moreover, writes Spiridovich, “it was Rutenberg who had chosen the route the marchers would follow, including Gapon himself, and it was also Rutenberg who came up with the suggestion that, in case the troops began to fire, to erect barricades, to seize the arms depots, and to clear the streets, at all costs, to the Palace.”<sup>336</sup>

“From this it was evident,” writes Kazantsev, “that Gapon was completely led by the revolutionaries. But the masses went behind the *former* Gapon, who had organized his workers’ movement under the protection of the over-procurator of the Synod, Pobedonostsev.

“They went towards the Tsar with a by no means a peaceful request, as D. Zubov affirms, but with an ultimatum. Gapon went round the crowd of

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<sup>334</sup> *The Romanov Royal Martyrs*, Saint John the Forerunner Monastery, Meta Potamos, Cyprus: Metapotamos Publications, 2019, pp. 121-122, 123.

<sup>335</sup> *The Romanov Royal Martyrs*, p. 123.

<sup>336</sup> Spiridovich, in *The Romanov Royal Martyrs*, p. 123.

workers and said everywhere: 'If the Tsar refuses us, then we have no Tsar.' The crowd, as if enthralled, repeated his words and cried out: 'We shall die!' ... Fine 'monarchical sentiments' ...

"N. Varnashev, the closest fellow-struggler of the provocateur, tells us that Gapon was warning those close to him: 'I will have two flags with me – a white and a red; flying the white flag will mean that the tsar accepts our demands, but flying the red will be a signal for revolutionary actions' ... While the active participant in Gapon's organization, I. Pavlov, cites the boastful declaration of Gapon: 'We shall disarm the whole of the Petersburg police in ten minutes' ... That's a 'Workers' movement free of politics' for you!..."<sup>337</sup>

"Mirsky and the police panicked. Instead of using Cossacks, whose charges were terrifying and whips painful but rarely fatal, the garrison's infantry was under Uncle Vladimir, who was untrained for crowd control."<sup>338</sup>

Indeed, "The main perpetrator was the tsar's uncle, Grand Duke Vladimir Alexandrovich, the commander of the St. Petersburg military district, who said he would enforce order at any cost; and he really did not care what the cost was for keeping order."<sup>339</sup>

The Tsar sacked the commander. Then, on January 11, he "received a deputation of workers who repented to him that they had allowed themselves to be drawn into an anti-government provocation. His Majesty mercifully forgave them all and gave to each family of those who suffered an allowance equivalent to half a year's pay of a highly qualified worker. The police measures of the governments of the western countries, and especially the USA, at the beginning of the 20th century, to break up strikes and demonstrations led to far larger numbers of victims. It is sufficient to recall the shooting of the First of May strikers in Chicago and other cities in America, but democratically-inclined journalists prefer to keep silent about these facts."<sup>340</sup>

In a long letter to her sister Princess Victoria of Battenburg (27 January, 1905), the Tsarina complained of the lack of "real" men whom the Tsar could rely on for support. She did not blame the people, who were deceived by their leaders, but blamed the high society of Petersburg, that "rotten" city which did not represent the true Russia...<sup>341</sup>

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<sup>337</sup> Kazantsev, *op. cit.*

<sup>338</sup> Montefiore, *op. cit.*, p. 521.

<sup>339</sup> Yuris Proshchaev and Theodore Gaida, "'Painful Points' of Nicholas II's Reign", June 18, 2018, <http://orthochristian.com/113736.html>.

<sup>340</sup> Kazantsev, *op. cit.*

<sup>341</sup> Baroness Sophia Buksgevdn, *Ventsenosnaia Muchenitsa* (The Crown-bearing Martyr), Moscow: Russkij Khronograf, 2010, p. 184.

On February 4, in the febrile atmosphere that followed Bloody Sunday, Grand Duke Sergei Alexandrovich, uncle of the Tsar, former governor of Moscow and one of the foremost pillars of the regime, was killed by a bomb that exploded outside the palace that he and his wife, Grand Duchess Elizabeth, the sister of the Tsaritsa, was living in the Kremlin. At that moment she was leaving for her workshops. Alarmed by the sound of an exploding bomb nearby, she hurried toward the place and saw a soldier stretching his military overcoat over the maimed body of her husband. The soldier tried to hide the horrible sight from the eyes of the unfortunate wife. But the grand duchess dropped to her knees, on the street, and put her arms out trying to embrace the torn remains of her husband. The bomb had shattered his body to such an extent that fingers of the great prince were found, still in their gloves, on the roof of the neighbouring building.

The lofty spirit in which the Grand Duchess took the tragedy astounded everyone; she had the moral strength even to visit in prison her husband's assassin, Kaliayev, hoping to soften his heart with her Christian forgiveness.

"Who are you?" he asked upon meeting her.

"I am his widow," she replied, "Why did you kill him?"

"I did not want to kill you," he said. "I saw him several times before when I had the bomb with me, but you were with him and I could not bring myself to touch him."

"You did not understand that by killing him you were killing me," she said.

Then she began to talk to him of the horror of his crime before God. The Gospel was in her hands and she begged the criminal to read it and left it in his cell. Leaving the prison, the Grand Duchess said:

"My attempt was unsuccessful, but, who knows, perhaps at the last minute he will understand his sin and repent."

She then besought the tsar for clemency for him. And the emperor was ready to bestow it provided the bomber did not refuse it. He refused it...

On the memorial cross erected upon the site of her husband's death, the grand-duchess inscribed the Gospel words: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do..." After some years she became a nun and founded the monastery of Saints Mary and Martha in Moscow. The transformation of this scion of royalty and renowned beauty into a strict ascetic astounded and intrigued high society...

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Other consequences of Bloody Sunday included protest meetings throughout the country, strikes in Riga, Warsaw, Baku and Odessa (where the crew of the battleship *Potemkin* joined the strikers) and the closing down of all institutions of higher learning.

Thus in the Baltic provinces “revolutionary turbulence ran high. In Latvia strikers protesting Bloody Sunday on 13 January were fired on by Russian troops, killing 73 and injuring 200. Through the summer agricultural and industrial workers went on strike, peasants refused to pay rents and sacked the estates of German landowners, and the public boycotted courts and administrative institutions run by Russians.”<sup>342</sup>

This threatened to draw in foreign powers. Thus “William II promised Professor Theodore Schliemann, a leading spokesman for the Baltic Germans in Berlin, that if the Russian monarchy fell, Germany would not abandon the Balts...”<sup>343</sup> There is no question that the 1905 revolution could have led to international war...

On February 18 the tsar invited his subjects to submit suggestions “on matters concerning the improvement of the state and the nation’s well-being”, and issued a rescript to the new interior minister, Alexander Bulygin, telling him that the tsar had decided “to involve the worthiest men, endowed with the nation’s confidence and elected by the people, in the preliminary working out and evaluation of legislative bills”. This was a project for a parliament in all but name; and when the *zemtsy* held their second congress in Moscow in April they demanded a Constituent Assembly. All kinds of professional unions were formed, all making similar demands. On May 8 a congress of fourteen unions organized by the Union of Liberation in Moscow joined to form a Union of Unions under the chairmanship of Paul Miliukov.

The peasants also issued *prigovory* (or *cahiers*). “Much the most widely expressed demand was that the land should be awarded to those who cultivated it. Even the fact that a substantial minority of households now owned land privately did not weaken the general conviction that ‘It is essential to abolish private property in land and to put all privately owned state, monastery, and church land at the disposal of the whole people. Land should be used only by those who cultivate it.’ Otherwise the issued peasants felt most strongly about were reforming the inequitable tax system and introducing universal free primary education, for, as a Kursk village assembly put it, ‘One of the main reasons we have no rights is our ignorance and lack of education’ ...

“When they felt they were not being listened to, peasants tried other strategies. One serious attempt was made to organize them above the level of the volost: that was the creation of the All-Russian Peasant Union, which held

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<sup>342</sup> S.A Smith, *Russia and the Revolution*, p. 56.

<sup>343</sup> Dominic Lieven, *Towards the Flame. Empire, War and the End of Tsarist Russia*, London: Allen Lane, 2015, p. 190.

two congresses. Its debates and resolutions reflected the spirit of village petitions quite closely, though the second congress went further by calling for direct political action through a national strike and a boycott of the landowners.

“Thereafter the Peasant Union suddenly fell apart, for reasons which are not wholly clear. All peasant associations above volost level were fragile, and the non-peasant organizers had other concerns by the end of 1905. Moreover, the regime treated it as an illegal organization and arrested its members. Perhaps in any case the peasants were not putting their hopes in the upcoming elections to the First Duma.

“They were also trying out more forceful tactics. They organized rent strikes, felled the landlord’s timber, and cut his hay. Increasingly, they also stole his property, making for estate outbuildings with their carts, breaking open the padlocks, and loading grain onto their carts to trundle back home. By summertime, when another poor harvest seemed likely, they were going further, driving the landlord out and making sure he would find it difficult to return by setting fire to the manor house. Two waves of arson began in Saratov gubernia in the east and Chernigov gubernia in the west; they engulfed much of the central black-earth region, where peasants were most poverty-stricken and short of land. The decision to burn the manor was usually taken in the village assembly and implemented immediately. Every householder was expected to take part in the action: ‘joint responsibility’ was the rule in defying the regime as much as in obeying it. Over much of the affected area the night sky was red with the glow of burning buildings: people called the spectacle the ‘red cockerel’. Often its appearance in a neighbouring village prompted the decision to burn. Nearly 3,000 manor houses, some 15 percent of the total, were destroyed during 1905-06. In addition, there was a great deal of vandalism as peasants ransacked libraries, plundering works of art and antiques which had adorned the ‘nests of the gentlefolk’. They were destroying a milieu which they had always regarded as belonging to alien occupiers...”<sup>344</sup>

And yet it was the peasants who were supposed to be the class most loyal to the Tsar... And many peasants were still loyal. But the revolutionary virus, combining with the peasants’ long-held “Russian socialism” with regard to land ownership, had deeply infected their class also. Thus was the deepest fear of the authorities – that the peasants would join the revolution – being realized. For, as Tolstoy once wrote: “The Russian revolution will be directed, not against the Tsar and despotism, but against the ownership of land...”<sup>345</sup>

## 26. THE STRIVING FOR CHURCH-STATE SYMPHONY

The Tsar was deeply interested in the project of the convening, for the first time since 1682, of a Church Council that would reform Church-State relations

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<sup>344</sup> Hosking, *Russia and the Russians*, pp. 370-371. Cf. Macmillan, *op. cit.*, p. 167.

<sup>345</sup> Tolstoy, notebook for *War and Peace*, cited in Hosking, *Russia. Empire and People 1552-1917*, London: HarperCollins, 1997, p. 303.

and restore the patriarchate that had been abolished by Peter the Great. According to some reports, doubted by Sergei Firsov<sup>346</sup>, he had even suggested his own candidature to the post of patriarch!<sup>347</sup>

The process that led to this discussion had begun a little earlier, in November, 1904, when a report sponsored by the Minister of the Interior, Prince Sviatopolk-Mirsky, was completed envisaging important changes in a liberal direction in both Church and State. This led to the convening of an important conference on December 2 that included all the government ministers and four of the Tsar's uncles. An *ukaz* called "On Plans for the Perfecting of State Order" was signed on December 12. The sixth point of this *ukaz* spoke of the sovereign's unbending desire to grant tolerance to schismatics and non-Orthodox confessions in the empire. The question this immediately raised was: how would this affect the interests of the dominant confession of the empire, the Orthodox Church? In order to answer this question, a note entitled "On the Contemporary Situation of the Orthodox Church" was composed by professors of the theological academies in the capital for the president of the council of ministers, Count Witte.

Firsov writes: "The note said that while externally free and protected by the State, the Orthodox Church was weighed down by heavy chains. The expulsion of the principle of *sobornost'* from Church life had led to a change in her spirit. The main cause of the disorders was recognized to be Peter's Church reform, as a result of which the Church's administration had turned into one of the 'numerous wheels of the complex machine of State'. The secular bureaucratic element was called a constant barrier between the Church and the people, as also between the Church and the State, while the only way to excite life from the dead was to return to the former, canonical norms of administration.

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<sup>346</sup> Firsov, *Russkaia Tserkov' Nakanune Peremen* (The Russian Church on the Eve of the Changes), Moscow, 2002, pp. 62-63.

<sup>347</sup> Thus according to the account of Archbishop Anthony (Khrapovitsky), "the senior hierarchs, including myself, were summoned to his Majesty. At that time, in accordance with the will of the Tsar, preparatory work was being conducted for the convening of a Council at which the restoration of the Patriarchate in Russia was to take place. And his Majesty, following the course of the matter, wanted to see us. When we assembled in the palace, the Tsar asked us whether we had chosen a candidate. We glanced at each other and were silent. Each of us was probably thinking about himself as the most fitting Patriarch. After quite a long pause we replied: 'No, your Majesty.' A short period ensued; the Tsar again summoned us to himself, and put the same question to us. In our embarrassment we were forced, as before, to give a negative answer. Then the Tsar, after looking at us in silence, fell into thought. Some moments passed. The Tsar again began to speak: 'If you have not found a candidate, then I have someone in mind.' We all listened attentively, waiting to see which one of us the Tsar would point to. But what was our amazement when the Tsar declared to us: 'I myself am a candidate'. Stunned, we could not even find anything to say in reply. And the Tsar continued: 'The heir to the throne has been born. When he has grown up a little, Great Prince Michael Alexandrovich will become the regent. The Empress has agreed to go into a monastery. And I will be tonsured.'" (in Fomin & Fomina, *Rossia pered Vtorym Prishestviem Khristovym* (Russia before the Second Coming of Christ), Moscow, 1994, p. 394).

“Witte also subjected the contemporary situation of the Orthodox parish to sharp criticism; ‘only the name remained’ from it. The reasons for the fall of the parish were attributed by the authors of the note to the development of State centralization and the intensification of serfdom in Russia in the 18<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries; the imposition of police duties on the clergy, as a consequence of which it was separated from its flock; the caste alienation of the clergy, and the payments it demanded for the carrying out of needs. But the autonomous re-establishment of small ecclesiastical units, which is what the parishes were, would not attain its aim if a general reform of the Church administration were not carried out: the parishes had to be linked by spiritual communion and pour into the community of the diocese, while ‘diocesan assemblies’ having Local Councils as their model should be convened periodically in parallel with the parish meetings.

“Later the note touched on the problem of the alienation from the Church of a significant part of the intelligentsia. Only the Church herself could resolve this problem and overcome the ‘spiritual schism’. The problem of the theological school was also raised; it was declared to be a task of the whole State, ‘for the degree of the influence of religion on the people depends completely on its organization’. The union of Church and State was wholeheartedly approved, while the ‘self-governing activity’ of the ecclesiastical and state organism, in the opinion of the authors, had to achieve the equilibrium destroyed by Peter the Great. With this aim it was necessary to convene a Local Council in which both white clergy and laity would participate. ‘In view of the present undeniable signs of a certain inner shaking both of society and of the masses of the people,’” pointed out Witte, ‘it would be dangerous to wait. Religion constitutes the main foundation of the popular spirit, and through it the Russian land has stood and been strong up to now.’

“And so in S.Yu. Witte’s note the question was posed not about particular changes, but about a general ecclesiastical reform, which would lead to a strengthening of the independence of the Orthodox Church and would sharply reduce the privileges of the over-procurator’s authority. After all, it was a secret to nobody that in speaking about ‘dry bureaucratic principles’, the president of the Committee of Ministers had in mind the rules that found their completed expression in the activity of the department of the Orthodox confession.

“It was at about the same time, in February, that another note appeared expressing the opinion of the capital’s Metropolitan Anthony [Vadkovsky]: ‘Questions relating to desirable transformations in the position of our Orthodox Church’. Vladyka reviewed concrete questions of the reform of the ecclesiastical administration that demanded a very speedy resolution. Referring to the discussions on religious toleration that had taken place in the Committee of Ministers, he noted: the authorities are opening to those who have separated from the Orthodox Church (the Old Ritualists, sectarians and others) ‘a definite position in the State’ without touching their inner church life, at the same time that the ‘ruling’ Church is deprived of such freedom. Citing the *Popovtzi* Old Ritualists who had accepted ‘the Austrian hierarchs’ as an example,

Metropolitan Anthony warned: 'The danger may occur that this community will be turned into the people's Church while the Orthodox Church will remain only the State Church'.

"In pointing to the Church's position within the State, Vladyka placed before the authorities a question of principle: had not the moment come to weaken the control of the secular authorities over the life of the Church? Other questions followed logically from that: should not the Church be given a greater freedom in the administration of her internal affairs? Should Orthodox priests also have the right to be permanent members of social-state institutions having their place in the parishes? After this it was natural to pose the further question on the desirability of providing the Church hierarchy with the right to participate in the sessions of the State Council, the Committee of Ministers and other higher state institutions with the right to vote in them.

"The note undoubtedly touched on the privileges of the over-procurator of the Most Holy Synod. After all, if the desires expressed by the metropolitan were to be satisfied, the Orthodox episcopate would receive the possibility of independently, with the mediation of the State, influencing legislative proposals touching the Church, that is, it would have the right of a political voice in the empire. It is understandable that K.P. Pobedonostsev could not welcome such self-will, the more so in that, besides questions on the position of the Orthodox Church in Russia, the metropolitan gave reasons for the need to review the structure of the Church and some aspects of the Church's administration, and spoke about the particular importance of recognizing the parish as a legal person and on the desirability of reviewing the laws that regulated the right of the Church to own, acquire and use property..."<sup>348</sup>

This debate highlighted two paradoxes within the present position of religion in the Russian empire, paradoxes that could be removed only *simultaneously* or not at all. The first paradox was that the 44<sup>th</sup> and 45<sup>th</sup> articles of the *Basic Laws* of the Empire guaranteed freedom of religion - **but** the Emperor had to be Orthodox and was obliged both to watch over the purity of the Orthodox Faith and to protect the Orthodox population of the empire from threats presented by schisms and heresies. And the second paradox was that the Orthodox Church was the dominant confession of the empire - **but**, since it was also a department of State, it was less, rather than more free in relation to the State than the other confessions. Increasing freedom of religion in the sense, not simply of allowing freedom to practise religious rites (which already existed), but of creating real *equality* between the religions from the point of view of the State (which did not yet exist) would have the effect of abolishing the first paradox - but only by removing the Emperor's role as guardian of the Orthodox faith and substantially increasing the threat to Orthodoxy from certain confessions in certain regions (for example, Catholicism in the west). This could be compensated for, in the view of the hierarchs, only by abolishing the second paradox at the same time - that is, by giving the Church a free hand

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<sup>348</sup> Firsov, *op. cit.*, pp. 149-153.

to defend herself from the competition of other confessions without interference from the State.

Pobedonostsev suspected that Witte and Metropolitan Anthony were in league against him, and mounted a vigorous campaign to stop the projected reforms, defending the Petrine system. On March 13 he succeeded in persuading the emperor to remove the question of Church reforms from the competence of the Conferences of Ministers and Heads of State Departments and place it before the Holy Synod. However, this was only a seeming victory: the Holy Synod was no less in favour of the reforms than was Witte and the State. On March 17 the Synod recognized the necessity of reviewing the present situation of the Church vis-à-vis the State "in view of the changed situation of the heterodox confessions, the so-called Old Ritualists and sectarians, and transform the Church's administration". The restoration of the patriarchate was deemed desirable "for the sake of the honour of the Russian State", and it was suggested that a Local Council be convened in Moscow composed of the diocesan bishops and their representatives. On March 22 the seven members of the Synod signed an appeal to the Tsar to convene a Council "at the appropriate time" in Moscow, at which a patriarch would be elected and a series of major questions of Church life would be discussed.<sup>349</sup>

However, as Oldenburg writes, "protests against this plan came not only from those close to the over-procurator, but also from eminent theologians, convinced supporters of the restoration of parish self-government. 'The Church must be regenerated. But this regeneration must be conducted in the correct way, without repeating the self-willed methods of action of 1721 [i.e. Peter's *Spiritual Regulation*],' wrote M.A. Novoselov. Criticizing the Synod, he added: 'The haste is truly striking. It recalls the spectacle of the so-called St. Vitus' dance rather than a serious discussion of a holy and great work!'"<sup>350</sup>

This criticism was unfair. The question of the restoration of Church-State relations to its pre-Petrine, canonical condition had been discussed already for several years in many parts of society. It was seen as priority by many on both the right and the left. Moreover, unlike in 1721, when only the will of the Tsar had been involved, there was no self-will here on the part of the hierarchy, but a determination to effect the changes in a truly conciliar manner, through the convening of a Church Council – the only means known by the Orthodox Church, the Conciliar Church *par excellence*, for effecting real change in its organization and administration.

Once again, on March 31, Pobedonostsev succeeded in persuading the Tsar to put off the Synod's project, and to postpone giving Metropolitan Anthony an audience "for a certain time". As the Tsar wrote on the Synod's appeal: "I admit the impossibility of accomplishing, in the anxious times we are living through, such a great work requiring both calm and careful thought as the convening of

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<sup>349</sup> Firsov, *op. cit.*, p. 163.

<sup>350</sup> Oldenburg, *op. cit.*, p. 276.

a Local Council. I reserve for myself, when the fitting time for this will come, in accordance with the ancient examples of the Orthodox Emperors, the task of giving this work momentum and convening a Council of the All-Russian Church for the canonical discussion of matters of faith and Church administration.”

However, Pobedonostev’s victory could only be temporary: society’s interest in the reforms was increasing, and even V.M. Skvortsov in the conservative journal *Missionerskoe Obozrenie* [*Missionary Review*], after pointing out that the martyred Grand Duke Sergius Alexandrovich had been in favour of the reforms, expressed the opinion that “the reform of the administration of the dominant Church has appeared as *the logical end and natural consequence of the confessional reform* which was so quickly and decisively pushed through by S.Yu. Witte and a special Conference of the Committee of Ministers”.<sup>351</sup>

On May 5, the Tsar consented to see the metropolitan, who explained that to delay the reform was neither possible nor desirable. “But as long as Pobedonostsev is alive,” he said, “we cannot expect much.” On May 18 the Tsar officially thanked the Synod for the icon and the report that had been composed two months before, thereby indicating that Pobedonostsev’s bid to keep the Petrine system untouched had failed...

Meanwhile, on April 17, the Sunday of Pascha, 1905, a decree “On the Strengthening of the Principles of Religious Toleration” was published, abolishing the last significant discrimination against non-Orthodox religion. Such a decree had been dear to the heart of the Tsar since his early years, but he had desisted out of respect for his teacher, Pobedonostsev.

St. John of Kronstadt, among others, was critical of the decree, seeing it as yet another product of the revolutionary unrest: “Look at what is happening in this kingdom at the present time: everywhere students and workers are on strike; everywhere there is the noise of parties who have as their goal the overthrowing of the true monarchical order established by God, everywhere the dissemination of insolent, senseless proclamations, disrespect for the authority of the ruling powers established by God, for ‘there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God’: children and young people imagine that they are the masters and commanders of their own fates; marriage has lost all meaning for many and divorces at will have multiplied endlessly; many children are left to the whims of fate by unfaithful spouses; some kind of senselessness and arbitrariness rule... Finally, an unpunished conversion from Orthodoxy into any faith whatever is allowed [the Decree of April 17, 1905]; even though the same Lord Whom we confess designated death in the Old Testament for those denying the law of Moses.

“If matters continue like this in Russia and the atheists and crazy anarchists are not subjected to the righteous retribution of the law, and if Russia is not

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<sup>351</sup> Skvortsov, in Firsov, *op. cit.*, p. 172.

cleansed of its many tares, then it will become desolate like the ancient kingdoms and cities wiped out by God's righteous judgement from the face of the earth for their godlessness and their wickedness: Babylon, Assyria, Egypt, Greece-Macedonia. Hold fast, then, Russia, to your faith, and your Church, and to the Orthodox Tsar if you do not wish to be shaken by people of unbelief and lawlessness and if you do not wish to be deprived of your Kingdom and the Orthodox Tsar. But if you fall away from your faith, as many *intelligenty* have fallen away, then you will no longer be by Russia or Holy Rus', but a rabble of all kinds of other faiths that wish to destroy one another..."<sup>352</sup>

Immediately after the publication of the decree on religious toleration, tens of thousands of uniates in the western regions, who had been Orthodox only formally, returned to uniatism<sup>353</sup>, and the Orthodox began to suffer persecution. Archbishop Anthony (Khrapovitsky) of Volhynia addressed this problem in his report to the Pre-Conciliar Convention of 1906 entitled "On Freedom of Confession":

"Freedom of confession (not 'freedom of conscience': that is a senseless expression)," he said, "must of course be preserved in the State: there is no point in keeping anybody by force in the ruling Church; it is also necessary to excommunicate from the Church those who declare themselves to be outside her confession after exhorting them twice. But this is quite another matter than freedom of religious *propaganda*..."

"Orthodoxy has very little to fear from the preaching of foreign religious dogmas, and hardly any religion would decide to address Orthodox listeners with such preaching; this would mean hoping to draw people from the light of the sun to a dim kerosene lamp. The propaganda of heterodoxy is possible only through cunning, deception and violence. Who does not know by what means the Latins drew to themselves 200,000 Orthodox Christians last year? They persistently spread the rumour that the Royal Family and even St. John of Kronstadt was joining their heresy, assuring the people that supposedly all Catholics would be re-ascribed to the Polish gentry and be given lands, while the Orthodox would be returned to the status of serfs. But that was still only half the sorrow. Representing in themselves almost the whole of the landowning class in the western and south-western region, the Polish gentry and counts are oppressing the Orthodox in their factories... The peasants there are completely in the hands of these contemporary feudal lords, and when they meet them they kiss their feet.

"And so even now, when there is not yet equality of religious confessions, they are bestowing on the renegades from Orthodoxy both money and forests

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<sup>352</sup> St. John of Kronstadt, in Kizenko, *op. cit.*, pp. 247-248. At about the same time, St. John's friend and fellow-wonderworker, Protopriest Valentine Amphiteatrov said: "Pray well for the Sovereign. He is a martyr. Without him the whole of Russia will perish..." (Protopriest Valentine, in "Zhizneopisanie protoiereia Valentina Amfiteatrova (II)" (Life of Protopriest Valentine Amphiteatrov), *Pravoslavnaia Zhizn'* (*Orthodox Life*), N 12 (659), December, 2004, p. 29).

<sup>353</sup> Oldenburg, *op. cit.*, pp. 276-277.

and lands, while the faithful sons of the Church are being insulted, deprived of employment and expelled together with their earnings from the factories. What will the situation be when there is equality of confessions?

“The Protestants are acting by the same means in the north-western region, as are various sects in the Crimea and New Russia. Orthodoxy and the Orthodox, by contrast, despise such ways of acting. The Muslim or Jew, on accepting holy baptism, is often immediately lynched, that is, killed by his former co-religionists... Can the government leave them defenceless? Thousands of Christians have fallen into Mohammedanism in the last year; even several purely Russian families in Orenburg diocese have done so, having been subjected to threats, bribes and absurd rumours about the imminent re-establishment of the Kirghiz kingdom with its hereditary dynasty, together with expulsion and even the beating up of all Christians.

“If the governments of all cultured countries punish falsification in trade, as well as the spreading of sensational false rumours and deliberate slander, etc., then our government, too, if it is to remain consistent, must protect the Orthodox people from the deceit, blackmail and economic and physical violence of the heterodox. They are able to act only by these means, as did the Catholics during the time of the Polish kingdom, when they seduced the Orthodox into the unia.

“Let us remember one more important circumstance that is completely ignored when talking about religious toleration.

“If our flock were catechized both in the truths of the faith and in how they should look on various faiths, peoples and estates, it would be possible to present them to themselves and to the spiritual influence of their pastors in the struggle for faith and nationality.

“But our government – more precisely, our State – has been attracted since the time of Peter and after by the aims of purely cultural and state centralization, constricting, distorting and even half eclipsing the religious consciousness and religious life of the Orthodox people. In the 17<sup>th</sup> century the latter had nothing to fear from any propaganda (except that of the Old Ritualists, of course), because, if not each peasant family, at any rate every village had its own teachers of dogmas, who lived the same peasant life as all the other village dwellers. Moreover, discipline in Church and everyday life was as strong as among the Jewish *hassidim* or, to take a closer example, our contemporary *Yedinovertsy*, to whom also, thanks to their conditions of life, no propaganda presented any danger.

“But the government of the 18<sup>th</sup> century tore away the clergy from the people, driving the former into the ranks of a separate caste, and educating it, not in the concepts and everyday discipline of popular Orthodoxy, but in the traditions of the Latin school and scholastic theological theory. The people was further and further estranged from Church literature and Church services, and which is still

more sad, remained alone in its religious way of life, in its fasts, its prayers, its pilgrimages. The clergy became more and more learned and cultured, while the people became more and more ignorant and less steeped in Orthodox discipline. That is what happened with the Great Russian people, which was Orthodox from ages past. But what are we to say about the down-trodden, enslaved Western Little Russians and Belorussians, or about the descendants of the formerly baptized non-Russian peoples beyond the Volga and in Siberia?

“All these people, abandoned as regards spiritual development, chained to the land, had, willingly or unwillingly, to be reconciled to the thought that the Tsar, the lords, the bishops and the priests were reading sacred books and studying the holy faith for them, while they themselves would listen to them – learned people who could find the leisure and the means to read.

“The grey village hardly distinguishes between spiritual bosses and secular ones, spiritual books and science from secular ones. Everything that comes from the legislative authorities comes from God; everything that is published in the newspapers comes from the Tsar and the bishops. Look at what views on life our poor people has come up against: the mountains of proclamations, the blasphemous brochures, the caricatures of August Personages and Fr. John of Kronstadt and all the rest with which yester-year’s enlighteners have blessed their homeland.

“This is the clue how the people can believe the Catholic proclamations about his Majesty accepting this religion, and the revolutionary proclamations to the effect that the Tsar has supposedly ordered the landowners to be robbed, etc. And so, having taken into its hand the people’s conscience, can the Russian government renounce Orthodoxy before the people has been catechized in it consciously? If it would like to take an extra-confessional stance, then let it first return to the people the confessional conscience it leased from it, let it give out millions over several years for the establishment of catechists – at least one for every 300 people (now there is one priest for every 2000 Orthodox Christians). But until then it is obliged to protect the Orthodox people from violent deception, from economic compulsion to apostasy.

“We said that an elective authority will not dare to violate the people’s will, but it must get to know it and obey it. Government authority has, of course, lofty privileges, but it too is obliged to go in agreement, if not with everything that is contemporary, but in any case with the historically unchanged will of the people. It is in it that Russia, as a growing collective organism, as a nation, as an idea pouring out in history, is recognized. And what is this people in its history and its present? Is it an ethnographical group or a group, first of all, of self-defence at the level of the state? No, the Russians define themselves as a *religious* group, as a confessional group, including in this concept both the Georgians and the Greeks who cannot even speak Russian. According to the completely just definition of K. Aksakov and other Slavophiles, the Russian people thinks of itself as the flock of God, the Church, a society of people that accomplished their salvation with the guidance of its faith and through *prayer and labour*. The

people looks on its life as a cross given it by God, and the whole of its earthly state prosperity it has entrusted to the Tsar. Let the Tsar with his boyars and warriors repel the enemies of his Orthodox country, let him take taxes and recruits for this end, let the Tsar judge his servants and punish thieves, robbers and other evildoers; all this is of little interest to the Russian man, his work is to struggle in labour and prayer, and to learn virtue from the people of God. And let the Tsar and his warriors take care that nobody hinders him in this.

“True, in this country there are many people who are foreign to the aim of life that is embraced by the whole people, that is, salvation. But they do not hinder Russian people in this, let them without hindrance live in accordance with their ‘pagan habits’ and pray to their gods, until they recognize the true faith. But, of course, not only the personal life of each man, but also the mission of the whole Orthodox country is seen by each Russian as consisting in exalting the light of Orthodoxy both among his own ‘heathen’, and beyond the frontiers of his native land, as is proved for us by the constant missionary colonization by Russians of the East and the North, beginning from the 9<sup>th</sup> century, and their constant consciousness of their historical duty to liberate their co-religionists from under the Turk and bring down his ‘God-hated kingdom’, for which a litany is raised at the New Year *moleben* since the days of Ivan III to the days of Nicholas II.

“To renounce this task, which the people has considered for nine centuries to be its most important work, and to establish equality of rights for all faiths in the Russian state – this means annihilating Russia as an historical fact, as an historical force; it means carrying out a greater violation on the thousand-year-old people than the Tatar khans or the usurpers of the Time of Troubles carried out...”<sup>354</sup>

The April decree on religious toleration was the first step on the path of the Russian Church towards ecumenism, what was known in those days as “indifferentism”. This, we may suppose, was not the last of the reasons why the Lord now unleashed the revolution...

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<sup>354</sup> Archbishop Anthony, in Rklitsky, *Zhizneopisanie Blazhenneishago Antonia*, vol. 3, pp. 277, 278-281.

### III. THE EAST: REAPING THE WHIRLWIND

## 27. THE OCTOBER MANIFESTO

The final defeat of the Russian navy at Tsushima in May, 1905 increased the political tensions in Russia. A meeting in Moscow of representatives from the *zemstva*, the nobility and the municipal councils called for the convocation of a national representative body elected on a secret, equal, universal and direct ballot. On June 6 a delegation from the meeting led by Prince Sergei Trubetskoj was received by the Tsar, and on August 6 what became known as the Bulygin Constitution was published: a proposal for a consultative parliamentary body called the Duma.

Now the Tsar was never against *consultative* bodies. He welcomed every opportunity to find out more about the opinions and attitudes of his subjects. But he said: "I shall never in any circumstances agree to a representative form of government, for I consider it harmful for the people entrusted to me by God".<sup>355</sup> The Bulygin Constitution was far from being a representative form of government in the full western sense: its powers were limited, and "the inviolability of autocratic power" was retained. Nevertheless, it was seen as a major concession by the government to the liberal opposition.

But it was too little, too late. "Workers went on strike, peasants attacked landowners, students rioted, swathes of the Baltics and Caucasus became independent revolutionary fiefdoms."<sup>356</sup> In Guria in Georgia, for example, peasants refused to pay taxes and demanded to run their own affairs. On August 27 the government made another unexpected concession: university faculties were allowed to elect rectors and students to hold assemblies. Moreover, the police were told to keep out of the universities, making them in effect "no-go" areas. Soon workers and other non-students joined the student meetings, and, as Richard Pipes writes, "academic work became impossible as institutions of higher learning turned into 'political clubs': non-conforming professors and students were subjected to intimidation and harassment... In Witte's view, the university regulations of August 27 were a disaster: 'It was the first breach through which the Revolution, which had ripened underground, emerged into the open.'"<sup>357</sup>

The expert on Kremlin antiquities, Ivan Zabelin, wrote: "Everyone has stopped talking: instead they importunately DEMAND that their lives must improve, that the working day should be reduced and wages raised, and they demand this AT ONCE. They also demand the introduction of a democratic republic AT ONCE. Russia has become a madhouse... it's like an epidemic of plague or cholera."<sup>358</sup>

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<sup>355</sup> Yana Sedova, "V Plenu Mifov i Stereotipov" (In Captivity to Myths and Stereotypes), *Nasha Strana* (Our Country), 17 July, 2010, pp. 1-2.

<sup>356</sup> Montefiore, *The Romanovs*, p. 524.

<sup>357</sup> Pipes, op. cit., pp. 36-37.

<sup>358</sup> Zabelin, *Dnevnik*, in Catherine Merridale, *Red Fortress*, New York: Picador, 2013, p. 261.

On September 5 Count Witte came back from negotiating the Treaty of Portsmouth (USA) with Japan. Russia surrendered the southern half of Sakhalin and the Liaotung peninsula with Port Arthur. There was no indemnity. In general, this was a good deal for Russia. However, there was no hiding the fact that a European great power had been defeated by an Asiatic one, and that, as Thomas F. Mullard pointed out, this “radically reshaped” the mood of the Orient: “There is no Asiatic country, from China to Persia, which has not felt the reaction to the Russo-Japanese war, and in which it has failed to wake new ambitions. These usually find expression in a desire to assert independence, to claim equality with the white races, and have had the general result of causing Western prestige to decline in the East.”<sup>359</sup>

Witte now used his restored prestige to speak in favour of the creation of a constitutional monarchy along the lines of the resolution of the *Zemstvo* Congress held in Moscow the month before. As chaos spread in the first half of October as a result of strikes organized by the Union of Unions, Witte argued that there were only two alternatives for the government: appoint a military dictator or make major concessions to the liberation movement: “The advance of human progress is unstoppable. The idea of human freedom will triumph, if not by way of reform then by way of revolution. But in the latter event it will come to life on the ashes of a thousand years of destroyed history. The Russian *bunt* [rebellion], mindless and pitiless, will sweep away everything, turn everything into dust. What kind of Russia will emerge from this unprecedented trial surpasses human imagination: the horrors of the Russian *bunt* may exceed everything known to history. It is possible that foreign intervention will tear the country apart. Attempts to put into practice the ideals of theoretical socialism – they will fail but they will be made, no doubt about it – will destroy the family, the expression of religious faith, all the foundations of law.”

The Tsar was not convinced by this memorandum, prescient though it was. He saw himself as having to choose between two courses: the first was to “appoint an energetic military man and try by all means to suppress the rebellion; then there would be a pause, and again in a few months one would have to act by force again; but this would mean torrents of blood and in the end would lead to the present situation, that is, the authority of the power would have been demonstrated, but the result would remain the same... The other path is to present the population with civil rights... Among other things, that would imply the obligation of passing every bill through the State Duma. This, in essence, is a constitution.”<sup>360</sup>

These words of the Tsar would seem to indicate that he did not believe in the use of force to suppress the rebellion. Nevertheless, he did think of making the reliable and loyal D.F. Trepov, the Governor-General of St. Petersburg, a kind of military dictator. However, when Trepov was asked “whether he could restore order in the capital without risking a massacre, he answered that ‘he

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<sup>359</sup> Mullard, *America and the Far Eastern Question*, New York, 1909, pp. 1-2.

<sup>360</sup> Oldenburg, *op. cit.*, pp. 312-313.

could give no such guarantee either now or in the future: rebellion [*kramola*] has attained a level at which it is doubtful whether [bloodshed] could be avoided. All that remains is faith in the mercy of God.'

"Still unconvinced, Nicholas asked Grand Duke Nikolai Nikolayevich to assume dictatorial powers. The Grand Duke is said to have responded that the forces for a military dictatorship were unavailable and that unless the Tsar signed the manifesto he would shoot himself..."<sup>361</sup>

With "Nikolasha's" hysterical rejection, the Tsar gave in: if he could not impose a dictatorship, he would have to allow a constitution. For by now the existence of the regime itself was under threat. "The breakdown of law and order and the rise of crime and what contemporaries called 'hooliganism' added to the general disruption. The climax of the years came in October with a general strike, which paralyzed the entire country. It started with a printers' strike in Moscow on September 20th, and spread quickly to the capital and to the railway network."<sup>362</sup> A peasant *jacquerie* spread from the Baltic region into Central Russia, incited by false manifestos supposedly proclaiming that the Tsar had given the peasants the landowners' estates.<sup>363</sup> The country was descending into anarchy.

On October 13 two new goads of the regime were created simultaneously: the Constitutional Democratic Party under Paul Miliukov (the "Cadets") and the Petrograd soviet of worker's deputies, with Trotsky as one of its leaders, which was controlled by the socialists, who had twenty-one out of fifty seats on the Executive Committee. By November over eighty soviets were created across the country including several peasant soviets and three soldier ones. This "dual power" system foreshadowed the dual power that was to be established in March, 1917 when the tsar abdicated. And so if the revolution was born in October, 1917, it was conceived twelve years before, in 1905...

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In his Manifesto of October 17, 1905, which was entitled "On the Improvement of Order in the State", the Tsar declared: "The disturbances and unrest in St Petersburg, Moscow and in many other parts of our Empire have filled Our heart with great and profound sorrow. The welfare of the Russian Sovereign and His people is inseparable and national sorrow is His too. The present disturbances could give rise to national instability and present a threat to the unity of Our State. The oath which We took as Tsar compels Us to use all Our strength, intelligence and power to put a speedy end to this unrest which is so dangerous for the State. The relevant authorities have been ordered to take measures to deal with direct outbreaks of disorder and violence and to protect people who only want to go about their daily business in peace. However, in

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<sup>361</sup> Pipes, *op. cit.*, p. 43.

<sup>362</sup> Williams, *op. cit.*, p. 50.

<sup>363</sup> Bukstgevdn, *op. cit.*, p. 168.

view of the need to speedily implement earlier measures to pacify the country, we have decided that the work of the government must be unified. We have therefore ordered the government to take the following measures in fulfilment of our unbending will:

“Fundamental civil freedoms will be granted to the population, including real personal inviolability, freedom of conscience, speech, assembly and association.

“Participation in the Duma will be granted to those classes of the population which are at present deprived of voting powers, insofar as is possible in the short period before the convocation of the Duma, and this will lead to the development of a universal franchise. There will be no delay to the Duma elect already been organized.

“It is established as an unshakeable rule that no law can come into force without its approval by the State Duma and representatives of the people will be given the opportunity to take real part in the supervision of the legality of government bodies.

“We call on all true sons of Russia to remember the homeland, to help put a stop to this unprecedented unrest and, together with this, to devote all their strength to the restoration of peace to their native land.”<sup>364</sup>

“Far less dramatically,” writes Stephen Kotkin, “but no less consequentially, he tsar also conceded – for the first time – a unified government with a prime minister... The model that Witte had in mind was Prussia’s, which afforded the minister-president the authority – used to great effect by Bismarck – to control all contact between individual ministers and the monarch.

“A strong cabinet coordinated by a prime minister might seem an obvious necessity in any modern state, but globally it had arisen relatively recently. In Great Britain, the prime ministership owed its largely unplanned origins to the circumstance that King George I (r. 1714-27), of the Brunswick House of Hanover (a German state), could not speak English (he spent at least half the year in Hanover); so responsibility for chairing cabinet sessions fell to a newly created post of *prime* or first minister, a circumstance that would become institutionalized: Prussia acquired a prime minister equivalent – minister-president – and a cabinet of ministers in stages from 1849 through 1852 in an improvisation to deal with the surprise advent of a legislature in 1848... But whereas the British Prime Minister was awarded to the majority leader in the House of Commons, meaning he owed his status not to royal but to elected parliamentary majorities, Prussia’s minister-president was appointed or removed by the monarch alone, without consideration of parliamentary (elected) majorities.

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<sup>364</sup> *Polnoe sobranie zakonov Rossijskoi Imperii* (A Complete Collection of the Laws of the Russian Empire), 3rd series, vol. XXV/I, N 26803).

“Russia followed not the British example – a genuinely parliamentary system – but the Prussian one. True, the Duma could summon ministers for a report, but the tsar retained absolute power over ministers’ appointments or dismissal, as well as an absolute veto over legislation, the right to dismiss the Duma and announce new elections, and the right to declare martial law. In addition, the ministers of foreign affairs, war, the navy and the court fell outside the prime minister’s portfolio...”<sup>365</sup>

The Manifesto secured the ending of the general strike, but little else. The revolutionaries saw it as a capitulation to their demands – and continued with their revolution. However, the attitude of most people in the provinces was: “Thank God, now there will be an end to the strikes and disturbances – ‘the Tsar has given liberty’, there is nothing more to demand. This liberty was understood in different ways, and in a very woolly way: but the popular masses came out onto the streets with portraits of the Tsar and national flags; they celebrated the publication of the manifesto and did not protest against it.”<sup>366</sup>

Witte was invited to chair the Council of Ministers. His position under the constitution was now critical – and critically ambiguous. Was he still primarily a servant of the Tsar - or a lackey of the Masons in the Duma?

Fr. Lev Lebedev writes: “When some time had passed, Witte began to praise his Majesty with sweet words for ‘the people’s representation’ in which the Tsar would find support. Nicholas II interrupted him: ‘Sergius Yulyevich: I very well understand that I am creating for myself *not a helper*, but *an enemy*, but I comfort myself with the thought that I will succeed in bringing up a state force which will turn out to be useful for providing Russia in the future with a path of peaceful development, without sharp undermining of those supports on which she has lived for so long.’ In the new order the old State Council, composed of high-ranking dignitaries appointed by the Tsar was preserved, as a kind of ‘higher chamber’. However, all this together with the Duma *was not a parliament*, since his Majesty was not intending to renounce his autocratic power. He made a public declaration about this during a reception of a monarchist organization: ‘The reforms I announced on October 17 will be realized unflinching, and the freedoms given by me in the same way to the whole of the population are inalienable. But my Autocracy will remain *what it was of old*.’...”<sup>367</sup>

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But could the Autocracy really remain what it was when there was now a mainly liberal Duma with not merely consultative, but also legislative powers?

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<sup>365</sup> Kotkin, *Stalin. Paradoxes of Power. 1878-1928, vol. I*, London: Penguin, 2014, pp. 83-84.

<sup>366</sup> Oldenburg, *op. cit.*, p. 315.

<sup>367</sup> Lebedev, *op. cit.*, pp. 424-425.

Although the Manifesto made no mention of the word “constitution”, many thought that it was a constitution permanently limiting his autocratic powers.

Of course, the Tsar’s power had never been unlimited in an absolutist sense. As Protopriest John Vostorgov said, “The supreme power in a pure, true monarchy is unlimited, but not absolute, for it is limited morally by the content of its ideal”<sup>368</sup> – which is the Law of God. It was because he always saw himself as under God’s law that when the Tsar came to review the Basic Laws of the Empire in April, 1906, he removed the word “unlimited” from Article 1 to describe the nature of his power, while retaining the word “autocratic”.

However, the Tsar remained above all *human* (as opposed to Divine, Church) laws in his realm, since he was the source of them. Therefore if he bestowed a law, or manifesto, or even a constitution, he was entitled to change it or remove it altogether. As N. Rodzevich wrote in *Moskovskie Vedomosti*: “Let us assume that the Tsar is not knowledgeable on military affairs. Well, he selects an experienced general and declares that without the agreement of this general no military question may be decided. A time comes and the Tsar realizes that the general selected by him gives bad advice; can he really not change his previous order and dismiss the general? Of course he may do so. Similarly, if the Duma does not warrant the Tsar’s confidence, would he not be justified in dissolving the Duma and then creating a new one or refusing to convoke one at all? This depends on the Autocrat’s will.”<sup>369</sup>

The Tsar’s right to dissolve the Duma, and promulgate new laws in the interval between elections was enshrined in Article 87. As Reginald E. Zelnik writes, “Because the same article also required that, for such laws to be valid, the next Duma must approve them within two months, Article 87 by itself did not directly undermine the new order, but it did create a situation where an insecure or embattled regime could promulgate a law to change the Fundamental Laws themselves, and thereby alter the composition of the next Duma.” Also, “the Fundamental Laws invested the tsar (still called ‘autocrat’) and his appointed ministers with what appeared to be full power over diplomacy and war, but made any increase in the military budget contingent on the approval of the Duma.”<sup>370</sup>

The relationship between Tsar and Duma was thus similar to that between the English King Charles I and parliament, or to that between the French King Louis XVI and the Estates General – with a similarly tragic outcome...

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<sup>368</sup> Vostorgov, in Fomin & Fomina, *op. cit.*, p. 403.

<sup>369</sup> Rodzevich, in A. Ascher, *The Revolution of 1905*, Stanford University Press, 1992, p. 12.

<sup>370</sup> Zelnik, “Revolutionary Russia 1890-1914”, in G. Frazee (ed). *Russia. A History*, London: Constable, 2001, p. 258.

## 28. THE JEWS IN THE 1905 REVOLUTION

While the October Manifesto was not called a constitution *de jure*, it was a constitution *de facto*. That the introduction of a constitution would lead to revolution had been predicted in 1902 by an Austro-Hungarian attache in St. Petersburg, who sent the following perceptive memo to Vienna: "The Russian empire is everywhere in ferment. Unrest and apprehension prevail in all classes. This applies equally to labour, students, the nobility, including the highest Court society, industrialists, merchants, shopkeepers, and, last but not least, the peasants... The only proven method of dealing with this situation, which is often proposed abroad, is the granting of a constitution: if this were done here, the consequence would almost certainly be revolution..."<sup>371</sup>

This was because the Manifesto, far from calming political passions, excited them to the utmost. Anarchy increased as young revolutionaries rampaged in the cities; while the police, overstretched and unsure of their rights under the new constitution, hesitated to apply strong measures. Since the peasants were not promised land by the Manifesto, the wave of peasant violence continued.<sup>372</sup>

The press, freed from all preliminary censorship and almost exclusively owned by Jews, trebled the number of its publications and raged against the government. True, "the authorities maintained the right to fine, suspend, and close publications which 'published false information', 'fostered disorder' or 'provoked the population's hostility to officials, soldiers or government institutions'."<sup>373</sup> But such restraints were essentially powerless when Duma deputies were allowed to say what they liked, and cite any source of information, fake or otherwise. And so "newspapers delighted in reporting crime, violence, and scandal, and there was plenty of it to entertain readers with. Terrorism, the remarkable career of Azef, the maverick activities of Rasputin became daily press fodder. All this helped to discredit the authorities, including - perhaps especially - the emperor himself..."<sup>374</sup>

However, in Petersburg there was a new phenomenon: demonstrations in favour of the Tsar, the so-called "Black Hundreds", or monarchist counter-revolution... The view generally accepted in the West is that the "Black Hundreds" simply slaughtered masses of Jews. But the truth was somewhat different... The general pattern was as follows. First the revolutionaries, usually led by young Jews, would call on the population to strike and free prisoners from the prisons, and would themselves tear down the symbols of tsarist authority, although "undoubtedly both Russians and Jews took part in the destruction of portraits and monograms".<sup>375</sup> Then, a day or two later,

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<sup>371</sup> Kotkin, *Stalin*, vol. I, p. 56.

<sup>372</sup> "The October Manifesto said nothing about the land question, yet there was a wide presumption that the duma would enact a transfer of landlords' lands to the peasants." (S.A. Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 55.

<sup>373</sup> Hosking, *Russia and the Russians*, p. 382.

<sup>374</sup> Hosking, *Russia and the Russians*, pp. 382-383.

<sup>375</sup> Solzhenitsyn, *op. cit.*, p. 375.

when it was clear that the authorities were unwilling or unable to restore order, the anti-Jewish pogrom would begin.

Thus in Kiev the pogrom began on October 18. "A crowd of Jews seized the building of the City Duma, tore down national flags and mocked the portraits of the Tsar. One of the Jews cut the head out of a portrait [of the Tsar], put his own [in the hole] and shouted: 'Now I'm the Tsar!' Others declared to the stunned Kievans: 'Soon your St. Sophia cathedral will become our synagogue!'"<sup>376</sup>

"In its initial stage the pogrom undoubtedly had the character of revenge taken for the offence to national feeling. Subjecting the Jews they met on the street to blows, smashing shops and trampling the goods they took out of them into the dirt, the pogromists would say: "There's your freedom, there's your constitution and revolution; there are your tsarist portraits and crown". And then on the following morning, the 19th, a thousand-strong crowd made its way from the Duma to St. Sophia square carrying the empty frames from the broken portraits of the tsar, the tsarist monogram and smashed mirrors. They went to the university, repaired the damaged portraits and served a *moleben*, while 'Metropolitan Flavian exhorted the crowd not to behave badly and to disperse to their homes'. 'But at the same time that the people constituting the centre of the patriotic demonstration... maintained exemplary order in it, people joining it from the street allowed themselves to commit all kinds of violence in relation to the Jews they met and to people wearing the uniforms of academic institutions [students].' Then the demonstrators were joined by 'black workers, homeless inhabitants of the flea market and bare-footed people from the river-bank', 'groups of pogromists smashed up Jewish flats and stalls and threw out property and goods onto the street. Then they would be partly destroyed and partly stolen.'...

"The pogromists passed by the stalls of the Karaite Jews without touching them, and also 'those Jewish flats where they were shown portraits of the emperor'. [On the 19th the wealthiest Jewish shops in the centre were looted.] Proceeding from the fact that 'almost two thirds of all the trade in the city was in the hands of the Jews', [Senator] Turau calculates the losses, including the homes of the rich, 'at several million roubles'. They set out to destroy not only Jewish houses, but also the flats of well-known liberal social activists...

"In all during the days of the pogrom, according to the approximate estimate of the police (some of those who suffered were taken away by the crowd), 47 people were killed, including 12 Jews, while 205 were wounded, one third of them Jews.

"Turau concludes his report with the conclusion that 'the main cause of the Jewish pogrom in Kiev was the long-existing enmity between the Little Russian and Jewish population, based on the difference in their world-views. The

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<sup>376</sup> Lebedev, *op. cit.*, p. 428.

immediate cause was the insult to national feeling by the revolutionary manifestations, in which a prominent role belonged to Jewish youth.' The simple people saw 'the Jews alone as being to blame for the insults and imprecations against everything that was holy and dear to it. It could not understand the revolutionary movement after the concessions given it, and explained it by the striving of the Jews to gain "their own Yiddish freedom".' 'The failures of the war, at which Jewish youth always openly expressed its most lively joy, their avoidance of military service, their participation in the revolutionary movement, in a series of violent acts and murders of high-ranking people, and undoubtedly the irritation of the simple people against the Jews - that is why there were incidents in Kiev when many Russians openly gave refuge in their houses to poor Jews hiding from the violence, while sharply refusing to give it to young Jews.'

"The newspaper *Kievljanin* also wrote about this. 'Unfortunate Jews! What were these thousands of families guilty of?... To their own woe and misfortune the Jews have not been able to restrain their madmen... But, you know, there are madmen among us Russians, too, and we have not been able to restrain them.'

"The revolutionary youth went mad - and it was the elderly and peaceful Jews who had to pay for it..."<sup>377</sup>

Indeed, the older generation of Jewry did not in general support their young people. "'[Jewish] orthodoxy was in a struggle, not always open, but hidden, against the Jewish intelligentsia. It was clear that orthodoxy, in condemning the liberation movement in Jewry, was striving to win the goodwill of the government.' But it was already late. By 1905 the autocracy had generally lost control in the country. While traditional Jewry by that year had completely lost a whole, and already not the first, *generation*, which had departed into Zionism, into secular liberalism, rarely into enlightened conservatism, and - the most significant in its consequences - into the revolutionary movement."<sup>378</sup>

The older generation, continues Solzhenitsyn, "helped the police to catch Jewish revolutionaries, and to break up demonstrations, strikes, etc.' Not that it was nice for them to be on the side of the government. But... they not want to accept the revolutionary law, for they honoured *their own*. While for many young revolutionaries the religious 'Union of the Jews' in Bialystok and other places was 'Blackhundredist'."<sup>379</sup>

It must also be emphasized that the main motivation for this flood of young Jews into the revolutionary movement was not the restrictions placed by the government on the civil rights of Jewry, but infection with the same liberal and revolutionary ideas as infected so many contemporary Russians. "'The

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<sup>377</sup> Solzhenitsyn, *op. cit.*, pp. 379-380, 383-384.

<sup>378</sup> Solzhenitsyn, *op. cit.*, p. 358.

<sup>379</sup> Solzhenitsyn, *op. cit.*, pp. 367-368.

participation of Jews in the general Russian revolutionary movement can only to a very small degree be explained by their inequality... The Jews only shared the general mood' of the struggle against the autocracy. Is that to be wondered at? The young members of *intelligenty* families, both Russian and Jewish, had for years heard at home [such phrases as]: 'the crimes of the authorities', 'a government of murderers'. They then rushed into revolutionary action with all their energy and ardour."<sup>380</sup>

In Odessa, the Manifesto was published on the 17th. The next day, "General Kauldbars, the commander of the Odessa military district, in order to 'give the population the unhindered opportunity to use the freedom given by the Manifesto in all its forms', ordered all the soldiers not to appear on the streets, 'so as not to spoil the joyful mood in the population'. However, 'this mood did not last for long. From all sides individual groups, mainly of Jews and young students, streamed towards the centre of the city' with red flags of shouts of "Down with the autocracy!" and "Down with the police!" And orators summoned them to the revolution. From a metallic image on the Duma of the words 'God save the Tsar!', the first two words were broken off. They rushed into the Duma hall, 'a huge portrait of his Majesty the Emperor was torn to pieces, while in the Duma the national flag was replaced with the red flag. They removed the hats from a protopriest, deacon and reader who were passing by in a cab to a pannikhida, and then later at the burial they stopped the procession 'and interrupted the singing of "Holy God" with shouts of "Hurrah!". 'They dragged along a dead cat and a scarecrow without its head and with the inscription "This is the autocracy", and collected money on the spot "for killing the Tsar" or "for the death of Nicholas"'. 'The young people, and especially the Jews, with an evident consciousness of their superiority began to point out to the Russians that freedom had not been given voluntarily, but had been snatched away from the government by the Jews... They openly said to the Russians: "Now we will rule you"', and also: 'We gave you God, we will also give you a tsar'."<sup>381</sup> Prophetic words...

Soon the students were forcing workers to take off their hats in front of the red flag. When the workers refused, they were shot at. But though unarmed, they succeeded in dispersing the crowd. Then, however, another thousand-strong crowd of Jews began to fire at the workers, killing four. Thus "in various places there began fights and armed confrontations between Russians and Jews: Russian workers and people without fixed occupations, the so-called hooligans, began to catch and beat up Jews. They went on to break into and destroy Jewish houses, flats and stalls."<sup>382</sup>

The next day the "counter-pogrom" of the Russians against the Jews began in earnest. Crowds of Russians of all classes carrying icons and portraits of the tsar, and singing "Save, O Lord, Thy people" marched into the centre of the

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<sup>380</sup> Solzhenitsyn, *op. cit.*, p. 361.

<sup>381</sup> Solzhenitsyn, *op. cit.*, pp. 390-391.

<sup>382</sup> Solzhenitsyn, *op. cit.*, p. 393.

town. There the revolutionaries shot at them, a boy carrying an icon was killed, bombs were thrown...

Open warfare between Jews and Russians now began. "On October 31 [21?] a crowd of Jews destroyed state emblems and seized the Duma, proclaiming a 'Danubian-Black Sea Republic' headed by the Jew Pergament. It was suggested that the Don and Kuban lands should be 'cleansed' of Cossacks and handed over to Jewish settlers. Moreover, Jewish organizations *armed* from four to five thousand warriors, and not a little blood was shed in conflicts with soldiers. All this was described by the correspondent of the [London] *Times*, who was a witness of the events, in an article entitled 'A Regime of Terror' (Jewish terror was meant). Then in London the chief rabbi of the Spanish communities Gasper came out in print denying *everything* ('Not one Jew insulted the Majesty' of the Tsar) and affirming that that Tsarist troops and police had killed four thousand completely innocent Jews! The *Times* correspondent from Odessa refuted this fabrication: in general there had not been thousands of Jews killed. During the Odessa disorders only 293 Jews had been buried, of whom many died a natural death. 383 The Englishman also pointed out that the provocation had been arranged by the 'central Jewish organization in Switzerland which sent its emissaries from Poland to Odessa'. He quoted L.Ya. Rabinovich on how the transfer of arms had taken place. But such witnesses from objective foreign observers were extremely rare! On the other hand, the whole of the world's press was filled with descriptions of the horrors of the Jewish pogroms, which rolled in an especially powerful wave from October 18 to 21 in the cities of Orel, Kursk, Simferopol, Rostov-on-Don, Ryazan, Velikie Luki, Ivanovo-Voznesensk, Kaluga, Kazan, Novgorod, Smolensk, Tula, Ufa, Tomsk, Warsaw, many others and in all the cities of the 'Pale of Settlement'. Of course, nothing was said about how these pogroms had been *provoked by the Jews themselves* (especially often by firing at Russians from the windows of *well-known Jewish houses*). In our days it has become clearer that at that time *social-democratic* organizations led by Jews deliberately spread leaflets among the people calling on them to [start] *Jewish pogroms*." 384

The wrath of the people was directed not only against the Jews but against leftists generally. Thus in Tver a crowd set fire to the theatre in which the leftists were sitting - 200 perished. Another crowd threatened to do the same thing in Balashov, but thanks to the courageous actions of the governor, Peter Arkadyevich Stolypin, there were no victims.

And yet, considering the scale of the disturbances, there were far fewer victims than might have been expected - 1000 dead and several thousand wounded, according to one Jewish source. Again, the Jew G. Sliozberg, a contemporary witness who was in possession of all the information, wrote:

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<sup>383</sup> "According to information provided by the police, those killed numbered more than 500, of whom 400 were Jews, while the wounded registered by the police numbered 289... of whom 237 were Jews" (Solzhenitsyn, *op. cit.*, p. 397). (V.M.).

<sup>384</sup> Lebedev, *op. cit.*, pp. 428-429.

“Fortunately, all these hundreds of pogroms did not bring in their wake significant violence against the persons of Jews, and in the vast majority of places the pogroms were not accompanied by murders.”<sup>385</sup> For in 1905 faith and morality still held the great majority of the Orthodox people back from taking revenge against their persecutors. It would be a different story during the Civil War...

On October 27 the Tsar wrote to his mother “that the *pogromshchiki* represented ‘a whole mass of loyal people’, reacting angrily to ‘the impertinence of the Socialists and revolutionaries... and, because nine-tenths of the trouble-makers are Jews, the People’s whole anger turned against them.’ This analysis was accepted by many foreign observers, notably British diplomats like the ambassador at St. Petersburg, Sir Charles Hardinge, his councillor, Cecil Spring Rice, and the Consul-General in Moscow, Alexander Murray.”<sup>386</sup> This analysis was also supported by Senator Kuzminsky, who concluded that “the October disturbances and disorders were caused by factors of an undeniably revolutionary character and were crowned by a pogrom of Jews exclusively as a result of the fact that it was the representatives of this nationality who took the dominant part in the revolutionary movement”.<sup>387</sup>

Alexander Solzhenitsyn has shown by extensive quotations from Jewish sources that the Jews were well aware of the true state of affairs. Even the more honest Jews had to admit that 1905 was in essence “a Jewish revolution”. “Thus in November, 1905 a certain Jacob de Haas in an article entitled ‘The Jewish Revolution’ in the London Zionist journal *Maccabee* wrote directly: ‘The revolution in Russia is a Jewish revolution, for it is the turning point in Jewish history. This situation stems from the fact that *Russia is the fatherland of about half of the overall number of Jews inhabiting the world...*’<sup>388</sup>

“There is no question,” writes Niall Ferguson, “that Jews were over-represented in the various left-wing parties and revolutionary organizations that spearheaded the 1905 Revolution, against which the pogroms of that year were directed. For example, Jews accounted for 11 per cent of the Bolshevik delegates, and 23 per cent of the Menshevik delegates at the 5th Congress of the Russian Social Democratic Party in 1907. A further fifty-nine delegates, out of a total of 338, were from the socialist Jewish Workers’ League, the *Bund*. In all, 29 per cent of the delegates at the Congress were Jewish – as against 4 per cent of the Russian population. The *Bund’s* rhetoric in the wake of the Kishinev pogrom did nothing to allay the suspicion that the revolutionary movement had a Jewish character. One Yiddish flysheet explicitly linked the struggle against capitalism and Tsarism with the struggle against anti-Semitism. ‘With hatred, with a threefold curse, we must weave the shroud for the Russian

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<sup>385</sup> Solzhenitsyn, *op. cit.*, p. 401.

<sup>386</sup> Niall Ferguson, *The War of the World*, London: Penguin Books, 2006, p. 68.

<sup>387</sup> Solzhenitsyn, *op. cit.*, pp. 398-399.

<sup>388</sup> Lebedev, *op. cit.*, p. 421.

autocratic government, for the entire anti-Semitic criminal gang, for the entire capitalist world.”<sup>389</sup>

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<sup>389</sup> Ferguson, *The War of the World*, Lonon: Penguin, 2006, p. 63.

## 29. THE CHURCH IN THE 1905 REVOLUTION

What part did the Church play in the revolution? There were some lower clergy (Gapon is the best-known example) who expressed themselves against the Tsar.<sup>390</sup> But the great majority of the clergy were patriots. A great champion of Tsarism who emerged into the spotlight at this time was the missionary, future hieromartyr and great friend of St. John of Kronstadt, Fr. John Vostorgov. On Great Friday, March 31, 1906 he said the following in the cathedral of Christ the Saviour:

"Our homeland has entered upon a new path of life, before and ahead of us is - a new Russia.

"Forgive us, forgive us, old, thousand-year-old Russia! Before our eyes they have judged you, condemned you and sentenced you to death... Threatening and merciless judges have spat in your face and have found nothing good in you. The judgement was strict, implacable and merciless. Everything has merged into the cry: 'Take her, crucify her!'

"We also know that nothing human was alien to you; we know that you had many faults. But we also know and see that you made Russia holy, and her people - a God-bearing people, if not in actuality, at any rate in the eternal, undying ideal of the people's soul; you gave birth to and raised a mighty people, preserving it in its bitter fate, in the crucible of its historical trials through a whole series of centuries; you gave birth to and raised an array of saints and righteous ones; you did not perish under the blows, the heavy blows of destiny, but became stronger under them, strong in faith; with this faith, this great power of spirit, you endured all the burdens, and yet you created, and entrusted to us and left behind, a great kingdom. For all this we bow down to the earth in gratitude..."

The bishops conducted themselves in general with great distinction.

Thus, as we have seen, Metropolitan Flavian tried to restrain the patriotic crowds in Kiev. Other Kievan clergy were similarly brave. Thus Protopriest Michael Yedlinsky, the future catacomb hieromartyr, in full vestments, together with his clerics, choir and banners, headed a procession in the direction of the Kontaktovi Square and Gostini Place, where some Jewish shops were located. The procession moved along the boulevard, cutting off the rioters from Gostini Place. People in the crowd removed their hats out of respect. When Batyushka turned to the rioters admonishing them, many of them calmed down and began to disperse, even more so because a squadron of cavalymen began to move onto the square from Alexander Street.<sup>391</sup>

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<sup>390</sup> D.E. Leonov, "Antimonarkhicheskie vystuplenia pravoslavnogo dukhovenstva v period Pervoj russkoj revoliutsii" (Antimonarchist speeches of the Orthodox clergy in the period of the first Russian revolution), <http://www.portal-credo.ru/site/?act=lib&id=2389>.

<sup>391</sup> "New Martyr Archpriest Michael Edlinsky", *Orthodox Life*, vol. 39, N 2, March-April, 1989.

Another hero was Archbishop Platon, the future Metropolitan of North America. Charles Johnston writes: "On October 22, 1905... a huge throng of wildly excited townsmen assembled, inflamed by stories and rumors of misdoings, determined to raid the Jewish quarter [of Kiev]. Their pretext was that a Jew had cursed the Emperor and spat upon his portrait.

"When the multitude assembled Archbishop Platon was in his own church in full canonicals, with his miter upon his head. He heard the angry storming of the crowd without and realized its meaning and purpose. Instantly he came to a decision, and in robes and miter went forth to meet the multitude. Of the church attendants only two accompanied him. So the tumultuous throng came on, crying for vengeance upon the Jews, and Archbishop Platon went to meet them. It had rained heavily all night and was raining still. Paying no heed to the pools of water and mud that covered the street, the Archbishop, seeing that there was but one way to check the hysterically excited mob, knelt down in the street immediately in the path of the turbulently advancing throng and began to pray.

"The profound love and veneration for the Church which is at the center of every Russian heart was touched, and the multitude wavered, halted, grew suddenly silent. Those who were in front checked those who were behind, and a whisper ran through the crowd carrying word that the Archbishop was kneeling in the street praying, in spite of the mud and rain.

"After he had prayed Archbishop Platon rose and confronted the huge throng.

"He spoke, and his fiery words so dominated the multitude that he led the turbulent thousands to the church and made them promise, calling God to witness, that they would leave the Jews unharmed and return quietly to their homes. Thus the multitude was checked and the work of destruction was prevented by the great churchman's fearless devotion.

"The impression which this exhibition of devoted valor made on the public of Kieff was immediate and profound. The Jews especially were full of gratitude..."<sup>392</sup>

In Moscow an important role was played by the future hieromartyr Metropolitan Vladimir, who powerfully raised his archpastoral voice, rebuking the rebels and exposing the essence of the revolution: "The heart bleeds when you see what is happening around us... It is no longer the Poles, or external enemies, but our own Russian people, who, having lost the fear of God, have trusted the rebels and are holding our first capital as it were in a siege. Even without this we have been having a hard time because of our sins: first harvest failures [in 1891, 1897, 1898 and 1901], then illnesses, then an unsuccessful war

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<sup>392</sup> Johnston, "Archbishop Platon Discourses", *Harper's Weekly*, July 27, 1912, p. 10.

[the Russo-Japanese war of 1904-05], and now something unheard of is taking place in Rus': it is as if God has deprived Russian people of their minds. By order of underground revolutionaries, strikes have begun everywhere, in the factories, in the schools, on the railways... Oh if only our unfortunate workers knew who is ruling them, who is sending them trouble-maker-agitators, then they would have turned from them in horror as from poisonous snakes! You know these are the so-called social-democrats, these are the revolutionaries, who have long ago renounced God in their works. They have renounced Him, and yet it may be that they have never known the Christian faith. They denounce her servants, her rites, they mock her holy things. Their main nest is abroad: they are dreaming of subduing the whole world to themselves; in their secret protocols they call us, the Christians, animals, to whom God, they say, has given a human face only in order that it should not be repulsive to them, His chosen ones, to use our services... With satanic cunning they catch light-minded people in their nets, promising them paradise on earth, but they carefully hide from them their secret aims, their criminal dreams. Having deceived the unfortunate, they drag him to the most terrible crimes, as if for the sake of the common good, and, in fact they make him into an obedient slave. They try in every way to cast out of his soul, or at any rate to distort, the teaching of Christ. Thus the commandments of Christ say: do not steal, do not covet what belongs to another, but they say: everything is common, take from the rich man everything you like. The commandments of Christ say: share your last morsel, your last kopeck with your neighbour, but they teach: take from others everything that you need. The commandments of Christ say: give to Caesar what is Caesar's, fear God, venerate the Tsar, but they say: we don't need any Tsar, the Tsar is a tyrant... The commandments of God say: in patience possess your souls, but they say: in struggle acquire your rights. The commandment of Christ orders us to lay down our souls for our friends, but they teach to destroy people who are completely innocent, to kill them only for the fact they do not agree with them, and do not embark on robbery, but just want to work honourably and are ready to stand for the law, for the Tsar, for the Church of God..."

"The sermon of Metropolitan Vladimir elicited the annoyance of the liberal-democratic press, and also of the liberal clergy. The latter either read the sermon in a shortened version, or did not read it at all. In the leftist newspaper *Russkoe Slovo* 76 priests published a declaration regarding their 'complete non-solidarity' with 'the "Word" of Metropolitan Vladimir...'

"As a result of the actions of the priests quarrels also arose amidst their flock. The Synod, in response to this, unfortunately saw in the epistle of Metropolitan Vladimir, not a call to defend the Faith and the Fatherland, but 'a call to the local population to defend themselves in the sphere of political convictions', and in their 'Resolution of October 22, 1905 N 150' instructed the diocesan bishops and the clergy subject to them to make efforts 'to remove quarrels in the population', which, to a large extent, were continuing because of the opposition of the liberal priests to their metropolitan.

“But nothing could devalue or undermine the influence of the epistle of Metropolitan Vladimir on the Muscovites, and the truly Russian people responded to it. The day after the publication of the ‘Word’, the workers began to serve *molebens* and return to work; the city water-supply began to work, the trams began to run, etc. Metropolitan Vladimir himself went to the factories and, after prayer, conducted archpastoral discussions with the workers.

“Later, in evaluating the labours of the holy hierarch Vladimir in overcoming the disturbances of 1905, Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) said the following notable words about him: ‘Meek and humble, never seeking anything for himself, honourable and a lover of righteousness, Vladyka Vladimir gradually and quietly ascended the hierarchical ladder and was immediately exalted by his authority, drawing the hearts of ecclesiastical and patriotic Russia to himself during the days of general instability and treachery, when there were few who remained faithful to their duty and their oath, firm in the defence of the Orthodox Church, the Tsar-Autocrat and the Homeland... when everything began to shake in our Rus’, and many pillars began to waver...’ (speech of Archbishop Anthony of Zhitomir and Volhynia at the triumphal dinner given by Metropolitan Vladimir in honour of Patriarch Gregory of Antioch who was visiting Russia, 22 February, 1913).

“By ‘pillars’ Vladyka Anthony probably had in mind the liberal members of the Most Holy Synod, who did not support their brother, Metropolitan Vladimir...”<sup>393</sup>

Among these, many suspected the most senior member of the Synod, Metropolitan Anthony of St. Petersburg, who was said to be an enemy of St. John of Kronstadt and even a Mason... <sup>394</sup>

Another under suspicion was Bishop Sergei (Stragorodsky), whose political sympathies were clearly leftist. Thus “when in 1905 the revolutionary professors began to demand reforms in the spiritual schools, then, in the words

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<sup>393</sup> Riasophor-Monk Anempodist, “Sviaschennomuchenik mitropolit Vladimir (Bogoiavlenskij) i bor’ba s revoliutsii” (Hieromartyr Metropolitan Vladimir (Bogoiavlensky) and the struggle against the revolution), *Pravoslavnaia Zhizn’* (Orthodox Life), 53, N 1 (636), January, 2003, pp. 2-10. Metropolitan Vladimir’s strong monarchist convictions were apparent already at his ordination, when he said: “A priest who is not a monarchist is unworthy to stand at the Holy Altar. A priest who is republican is always of little faith. A monarch is consecrated to his power by God, a president receives power from the pride of the people; a monarch is powerful through his carrying out of the commandments of God, a president holds on to power by pleasing the mob; a monarch leads his faithful subjects to God, a president leads them away from God.” (Valentina Sologub, *Kto Gospoden – Ko Mne!* (He who is the Lord’s – Come to me!), Moscow, 2007, p. 45)

<sup>394</sup> See Fomin & Fomina, *Rossia pered Vtorym Prishestviem* (Russia before the Second Coming), Sergiev Posad, 1998, pp. 391-392; M.B. Danilushkin (ed.), *Istoria Russkoj Tserkvi ot Vosstanovlenia Patriarshestva do nashikh dnei* (A History of the Russian Church from the Restoration of the Patriarchate to our Days), vol. I, St. Petersburg, 1997, pp. 78-80, 771-783; Nadieszda Kizenko, *A Prodigal Saint: Father John of Kronstadt and the Russian People*, Pennsylvania State University Press, 2000, chapter 7. For a positive assessment of Metropolitan Anthony, see Firsov, *op. cit.*, chapter 3.

of Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky), 'his Grace Sergei... wavered in faith.'"<sup>395</sup>

Again, when the revolutionary Peter Schmidt was shot in 1906, Archbishop Sergei, who was at that time rector of the St. Petersburg Theological Academy, served a pannikhida at his grave; and he also gave refuge in his hierarchical house in Vyborg to the revolutionaries Michael Novorussky and Nicholas Morozov (a participant in the attempt on the life of Tsar Alexander II).

Having such sympathies, it is not surprising that he was not liked by the Royal Family... Thus in 1915 the Empress wrote to the Emperor that Sergei "must leave the Synod" <sup>396</sup>

Bishop Sergei was to betray the Church to the Bolsheviks after the revolution and become the first Soviet patriarch...

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<sup>395</sup> "Preemstvennost' Grekha", Tsaritsyn, p. 7.

<sup>396</sup> A. Paryaeu, "Mitropolit Sergij Stragorodskij: Neizvestnaia Biographia", *Suzdal'skie Eparkhial'nie Vedomosti*, N 1, September, 1997, pp. 12-15).

### 30. THE CRUSHING OF THE 1905 REVOLUTION

As the disturbances spread through the country and the regions, the government under Witte, to the Tsar's disgust, showed itself completely devoid of courage and ideas, and of necessity it was the Tsar himself who reassumed power and gradually reintroduced order. He decided to make concessions in Finland, restoring the old constitution there. But in Poland and the Baltic region he imposed martial law, and he sent loyal troops to quell disturbances in many other parts of the country, such as Georgia. He was helped by a new Interior Minister, Peter Durnovo, who was appointed on October 23, and quickly restored order in the capital and beyond.

In fact, Durnovo turned out to be the strong man that the Tsar was looking for. On October 26, the Baltic sailors mutinied. "By October 28, Durnovo had crushed their chaotic mutiny, ordering hundreds of executions. He contemplated an empirewide crackdown, but Witte (initially) insisted that Durnovo act within the parameters of the October Manifesto - after all, it had been signed by the Tsar. Soon, however, Durnovo began to implement harsher measures, which of course greatly pleased the signatory of the October Manifesto, as well as much of state officialdom, once the measures appeared to be successful. 'Everyone started to work, the machinery went into high gear' recalled one top *okhranka* official. 'Arrests began.' Indeed, between the tsar's promise of a constitution (October 1905) and the promulgation six months later of the Fundamental Laws - Nicholas II refused to allow it to be called a constitution - Durnovo's police arrested many tens of thousands (by some estimates, up to 70,000). Durnovo also sacked numerous governors and, more important, goaded the rest to seize back all public spaces.

"Durnovo showed *initiative*. In mid-November 1905, when a new strike shut down the postal and telegraph system, he broke it by organizing citizen replacements..."<sup>397</sup>

Then in Petersburg a situation of dual power came into being: a Soviet of Workers' Deputies, led by Leon Trotsky, was formed alongside the legitimate authorities and began organizing the revolution. This was a major threat to the autocracy because, as Pipes writes, with the radical left "there was no room for compromises, for the socialists would be satisfied with nothing less than a political and social revolution.

"The authorities tolerated the St. Petersburg Soviet, which continued to sit in session although it no longer had a clear purpose. On November 26, they ordered the arrest of Nosar, its chairman. A three-man Presidium (one of whose members was Leon Trotsky) which replaced Nosar resolved to respond with an armed uprising. The first act, which it was hoped would bring about a financial collapse, was an appeal to the people (the so-called Financial Manifesto), issued on December 2, urging them to withhold payments to the

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<sup>397</sup> Kotkin, *Stalin*, vol. I, pp. 85-86.

Treasury, to withdraw money from savings accounts, and to accept only bullion or foreign currency. The next day, Durnovo arrested the Soviet, putting some 260 deputies (about one-half of its membership) behind bars. Following these arrests a surrogate Soviet assembled under the chairmanship of Alexander Helphand (Parvus), the theoretician of 'permanent revolution'. On December 6, the St. Petersburg Soviet issued a call for a general strike to begin two days later. The call went unheeded, even though the Union of Unions gave it its blessing.

"The socialists were more successful in Moscow. The Moscow Soviet, formed only on November 21 by intellectuals of the three principal socialist parties, decided to press the revolution beyond its 'bourgeois' phase. Their followers consisted of semi-skilled workers, many of them employed in the textile industry<sup>398</sup>, professionally and culturally less mature than their counterparts in the capital. The principal force behind this effort was the Moscow Bolshevik Committee. The Moscow rising was the first occasion in the 1905 Revolution when the socialists took the lead. On December 6, the Moscow Soviet voted to begin the following day an armed insurrection for the purpose of overthrowing the tsarist government, convoking a Constituent Assembly, and proclaiming a democratic republic.

"On December 7, Moscow was paralyzed: the strike was enforced by Soviet agents who threatened with violence anyone who refused to cooperate. Two days later, government forces launched an attack on the insurgents; the latter responded with urban guerilla tactics. The arrival of the Semeonovskii Regiment, which used artillery to disperse the rioters, settled the issue. On December 18 the Executive Committee of the Moscow Soviet capitulated. Over 1,000 people lost their lives in the uprising and whole areas of the ancient capital were gutted..."<sup>399</sup>

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<sup>398</sup> The textile industry was virtually founded by the freed serf Savva Morozov in the Orekhovo-Zuevo district near Moscow during the Napoleonic Wars. The Morozov family soon became rich, and in the 1850s Savva employed more than 1000 workers. His son Timothy took over the business, but was very cruel to the workers, which led in 1885 to the first organized workers' strike in Russian history. Savva junior took over after his father's death, and, as Valentine Tschepotariiev Bill writes, "decided to build new, light, and airy living quarters for the workmen and their families. Savva improved medical care with remarkable efficiency and reduced the accident rate. And most important of all, he did away with the system of fines." However, Savva admired Maxim Gorky, and gave large sums to the Social Democratic Party. Early in 1905, his mother heard of this and promptly removed him from the management of the firm. A few weeks later, on May 13, Savva Morozov shot himself. As Bill writes, the history of the Morozovs "is typical of the times and the development of the Russian bourgeoisie: the painful efforts of the first generation to extricate themselves from the burden of servitude, the coldblooded, uncompromising tyranny displayed by the second generation, and the rising tide of revolution which confronted the third." It is thought that Gorky's novel *The Artamanov Business* is based on the history of the Morozov family. A comparison between the fortunes of the Morozovs and the Artamanovs discloses a number of interesting parallels ("The Morozovs", *The Russian Review*). For more on the Morozovs, see Natalia Dumova, *Moskovskie Metsenaty* (Muscovite Maecenases), Moscow, 1992, pp. 132-150, and Natalya Semenova, *Morozov*, Yale University Press, 2020 (V.M.)

<sup>399</sup> Pipes, *op. cit.*, pp. 48-50. According to Kotkin, 454 people were killed and 2000 wounded.

Durnovo was able to use such decisive force because he had gone directly to the tsar “at Tsarskoye Selo to report and receive instructions – without Prime Minister Witte, his (nominal) superior, whom Durnovo no longer bothered to consult even though by now Witte had come round to a hard-line approach. Durnovo did not even appear at the meetings of the government (Council of Ministers), or explain his absence therefrom.”<sup>400</sup> The tsar backed Durnovo to the hilt – “Durnovo acts splendidly”, he wrote to his mother, the dowager-empress – and soon the Moscow uprising had been crushed.

Already before that, by the late autumn, although soviets formed in some fifty cities<sup>401</sup>, the mood was turning against the radicals. Thus “Paul Benckendorff said at the end of 1905 that people who had previously howled with indignation at the mistreatment of a single student were now screaming that no prisoners must be taken and all radicals must be shot. On 1 December Nicholas was able to write to his mother that ‘more and more voices are heard protesting that the time has come for the Government to take matters firmly in hand – which is a very good sign indeed.’”<sup>402</sup>

Durnovo also ordered crackdowns in other parts of the empire, notably in Kiev and Georgia, where Stalin’s Bolshevik “Red Hundredists” at the mining town of Chiatura were routed, and the Menshevik Gurian peasant republic was destroyed.

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The Gurian peasant republic was a sign that 1905 was by no means an exclusively worker’s revolution. For “the peasantry,” writes Pipes, “completely misunderstood the October Manifesto, interpreting it in its own manner as giving the communes license to take over the countryside. Some rural disorders occurred in the spring of 1905, more in the summer, but they exploded only after October 17. Hearing of strikes and pogroms [both anti-Christian and anti-Jewish] in the cities going unpunished, the peasants drew their own conclusions. Beginning on October 23, when large-scale disorders broke out in Chernigov province, the wave of rural disorders kept on swelling until the onset of winter, re-emerging in the spring of 1906 on an even vaster scale. It would fully subside only in 1908 following the adoption of repressive measures by Prime Minister Stolypin.

“... The principal aim of the *jacquerie* was neither inflicting physical harm nor even appropriating land, but depriving landlords and other non-peasant landowners of the opportunity to earn a livelihood in the countryside – ‘smoking them out’, as the saying went. In the words of one observer: ‘The [peasant] movement was directed almost exclusively against landed properties and not against the landlord: the peasants had no use whatever for landlords

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<sup>400</sup> Kotkin, *Stalin*, vol. I, p. 86.

<sup>401</sup> S.A. Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 52.

<sup>402</sup> Lieven, *op. cit.*, p. 151.

but they did need the land.' The notion was simple: force the landlords to abandon the countryside and to sell their land at bargain prices. To this end, the peasants cut down the landlord's forests, sent cattle to graze on his pasture, smashed his machinery, and refused to pay rent. In some places, manors were set on fire...

"In an effort to stem the agrarian unrest, the government in early November reduced the due instalments of the redemption payments (payments for the land given the emancipated serfs in 1861) and promised to abolish them altogether in January 1907, but these measures did little to calm the rural districts.

"In 1905 and 1906 peasants by and large refrained from seizing the land they coveted from fear that they would not be allowed to keep it. They still expected a grand national repartition of all the non-communal land, but whereas previously they had looked to the Tsar to order it, they now pinned their hopes on the Duma. The quicker they drove the landlords out, they reasoned, the sooner the repartition would take place..."<sup>403</sup>

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Durnovo's success demonstrated the importance of firm and decisive leadership in a crisis situation... "An even more interesting example," writes E.E. Alferov, 'of how a group of people with a decisive commander can be stronger than an anarchist mob is illustrated by the pacification of Siberia. By the end of the war a one-million-strong army including up to one hundred thousand demobilized soldiers and reservists trying to return to Russia had gathered in Manchuria. Fed on obscure rumours about the events that had taken place in Russia, the whole of this mass of men was subjected to a revolutionary working-over. Discipline weakened. By the end of December, 1905, a situation had developed in such a way that the whole of the Great Siberian way, a distance of 8000 versts was occupied by detachments of disorderly soldiers. The authorities lost their heads. A direct telegraph communication to General Kuropatkin was cut off and communications were maintained only through Shanghai. Practically the whole of Siberia had fallen into anarchy. At many stations strike committees and local centres of revolutionary power were formed. Then his Majesty entrusted to General Meller-Zakomelsky the task of getting rid of the revolutionaries. This energetic man immediately sprang into action. On the night of the New Year he and a unit of only about two hundred lads chosen from the Warsaw Guards units, left Moscow on a special train. Meller-Zakomelsky acted decisively. When two agitators were found in a train, they were thrown out of the carriage while it was at full speed. Strike committees in two stations were immediately shot. In another station a revolutionary mob was locked up in a railway building. They tried to offer armed resistance, but were swiftly subdued by the shots of a punishment squad. Just a few more such facts, swiftly communicated by

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<sup>403</sup> Pipes, *op. cit.*, pp. 48-50.

telegraph along the whole route, were enough to ensure that by January 20 the whole Siberian route was liberated, and on February 9 General Meller-Zakomelsky presented his unit to the Tsar in Tsarskoye Selo. This expedition showed how strictness employed in time can prevent great bloodshed.”<sup>404</sup>

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The 1905 revolution failed because the majority of Russians still remained loyal to the Autocracy, as expressed in this speech pronounced at a reception for the Tsar on December 31, 1905 by Professor B.V. Nikolsky (who was shot in June, 1919): “We have appeared before the face of Your Imperial Majesty at an agonizing time, when the whole people is beginning with horror to understand that Russia is threatened by danger not only from foreign invasions and enslavement to foreign evil, but also from internal civil collapse, while Your Ruling House is threatened not only by open rebellion with its bloody banners, but also by a great schism from the people. At such a time our duty before the Fatherland orders us to witness before the whole people that we have sworn an oath of allegiance and that it is impossible to order us to change this oath or replace it by another oath to any other earthly authority, and least of all to that authority which itself has betrayed the authority to which we have sworn allegiance. The time has come for us, before the face of the whole world and in the name of the people’s oath, to say directly to the Tsar that the universe must know that we, who have so far been voiceless and weaponless, are no less firm in our confession than the enemies of Your Majesty, of the Russian people and of us, who have long been shaming our homeland by their mutinous betrayal, by their hysterical cries and by their treacherous shedding of blood.

“God’s punishing hand is hanging over us. War has not given us victory, and peace has not brought us pacification. The intrigues of the international enemies of law and order, who have united into a global Judaeo-Masonic conspiracy, are waging a desperate struggle in our homeland with Christianity, enlightenment and culture... Rebellion is tearing away the borderlands, and treachery is corrupting the age-old Russian lands. Russian people are being driven out of the borderlands by violence and threats, while panic has seized the native population. Mutual distrust and outright hatred are tearing apart the provinces, the tribes, the cities and the villages, the institutions and the unions, the Church and the family, the school and the army. Neither the authorities, nor freedom, nor personal security, nor lawful possessions are recognized. Mindless preachers of violence are conducting propaganda in the army by word, in print and by their very acts; they are calling society to general destruction and armed rebellion. Murder, theft and robbery rule throughout our Fatherland. Russia has become hell, and its existence – torment. God Himself is calling on us to respond on the eve of the 1000th anniversary of our past. Events have powerfully put a threatening question before us: is our history about to be broken?

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<sup>404</sup> Alferov, *Imperator Nikolai II kak chelovek sil'noj voli* (Emperor Nicholas II as a Man of Strong Will), Jordanville, 1983.

“However, Your Majesty, our history will not be broken in two if the whole people itself does not want it... That is why we, your faithful subjects, Russian people, in the name of the Tsar and the people and their unbreakable unity, proclaim that we do not recognize and never will recognize any other supreme power than the Tsarist Autocracy, and we dedicate all our spiritual powers and all our resources to its regeneration... For our fidelity there is not, and with God’s blessing never will be, any reconciliation with a government acting not in agreement with the oath we have given, and we will be reconciled only on the basis of the complete victory of the traditions, waging an unbending struggle to the end for the Orthodox Faith, for the Russian people and for Your Royal Autocracy.”<sup>405</sup>

In 1905 the Jewish revolutionaries in Kiev said: “We gave you God, and we will give you a Tsar!”<sup>406</sup> By a “tsar” they evidently meant Lenin and the Bolshevik party. And so after the revolutionaries came to power in 1917 we see an ever-quickenening descent from autocracy to democracy to despotism in the form of Lenin and Stalin. Democracy cannot be more than a transitional phase because the rule of the people by the people is a contradiction in terms; for “rule” means the imposition of one will on the will of the people, which, at least in its fallen state, is always multiple. It is possible for one man to rule with the consent of the people and for the benefit of the people; but it is impossible for the State to be ruled by the people itself; real democracy is a myth.

That is why the great saints of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries insisted on the necessity – the *religious* necessity – of faithfulness to the Orthodox Tsar. Thus St. Seraphim of Sarov said that after Orthodoxy, faithfulness to the Tsar was “our first Russian duty and the chief foundation of true Christian piety”. Again, St. John of Kronstadt said: “The autocracy is the sole condition of the piety of Russia; if there is no autocracy, there will be no Russia; power will be taken by the Jews, who greatly hate us...” And Metropolitan Makary (Nevsky) of Moscow, the apostle to the Altai, said: “You don’t want your own Russian authority, so you will have a foreign power over you...”<sup>407</sup>

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<sup>405</sup> *Russkoe Slovo*, May 14, 2016.

<sup>406</sup> Lebedev, *op. cit.*, p. 428.

<sup>407</sup> St. John, in Sergei Fomin, *Rossia pered vtorym prishestviem* (Russia before the Second Coming), Sergiev Posad: Holy Trinity Monastery, 1993, p. 100.

## 31. THE PRECONCILIAR CONVENTION AND GEORGIAN AUTOCEPHALY

As the political situation began to stabilize towards the end of 1905, writes E.E. Alferev, the Tsar “addressed a rescript to Metropolitan Anthony of St. Petersburg in which he wrote: ‘I now recognize that the time is quite right to carry out certain transformations in the structure of our native Church... I suggest that you determine the time for the convening of this Council.’

“On the basis of this rescript a Pre-Conciliar Convention was formed for the preparation of the convening of a Council, which soon set about its work. The convention carried out exceptionally important and valuable work demanding much time and labour, but the world war that broke out hindered the convening of the Council during the reign of Emperor Nicholas II. Instead of the peaceful situation which the Sovereign considered necessary for the introduction of such important reforms, it was convened in very unfavourable circumstances, during a terrible war, after the overthrow of the historical state structure of Russia, when the country was seized by revolutionary madness, and its most important decisions were taken to the sound of cannons during the beginning of the civil war.”<sup>408</sup>

The Pre-Conciliar Convention gathered detailed responses from the bishops and leading theologians on the main issues that were to dominate the history of the Orthodox Church in the coming century. The debates during the Convention brought to the fore several of those churchmen who would play such important roles, both for good and for ill, in the coming struggle with the revolution: on the one side, men such as Metropolitan Vladimir (Bogoyavlensky), Archbishop Anthony (Khrapovitsky), Archbishop Theophan (Bystrov) of Poltava, Archbishop Tikhon (Bellavin) and Bishop Arsenius (Stadnitsky) of Pskov, and on the other, Bishop Antoninus (Granovsky), Archbishop Sergei (Stragorodsky) and Bishop Evlogy (Georgievsky). Thus among the suggestions made to the Convention we find the following one from Archbishop Sergei on January 18, which clearly looks forward to the renovationist movement of the 1920s:

On the reform of the liturgical language: the future Council must debate the question of the simplification of the language of the Church, Slavonic, and the right accorded to the parish that wants it to serve the Divine offices in that language.

- (i) It must think of abbreviating and simplifying the Typicon, and suppressing certain ritual actions, such as the breathing and spitting during the sacrament of baptism.

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<sup>408</sup> Alferev, *op. cit.*, pp. 92-92.

- (ii) It must think of abolishing the multiple repetitions of the same litanies during the same service, and replacing them by reading aloud the secret prayers during the Liturgy.
- (iii) It must think of giving priests [who have been widowed before the age of 45] the right to remarry."<sup>409</sup>

The first section of the Convention studied the questions of the composition of the future Council and the transformation of the central administration of the Church. The second section studied the question of the division of Russia into metropolitan districts and the transformation of the local Church administration. In June, the question of Georgian autocephaly also began to be discussed by this section. The third section studied Church courts and reviewed the laws of marriage, divorce and mixed marriages. The fourth section studied the questions of the parish, church schools, church property, diocesan congresses and the participation of clergy in public institutions. The fifth section studied the question of the transformation of spiritual-academic institutions. The sixth section studied the questions of the *yedinoverie*, the Old Ritualists and some other issues. The seventh section analyzed measures necessary "for the protection of the Orthodox Faith and Christian piety from wrong teachings and interpretations in view of the strengthening of the principles of religious toleration in the empire".<sup>410</sup>

In May, 1906 a general assembly of the Convention decided that the future Council should be composed of clergy and laity, with a bishop, a priest and a layman being elected from each diocese. But while the clergy and laity were given the right to discuss all questions discussed in Council, the right to compose and confirm conciliar decisions was reserved for the bishops alone. This became the basis of the composition of the Council in 1917-18. However, few other recommendations of the sections - which included making parishes self-governing, able to influence the choice of their own priest and manage their own funds - were put into practice, and the Convention itself came to an end in December amidst a general waning of interest in it. In fact, according to F.D. Samarin, the results of the colossal amount of work put into the Convention amounted to nothing.

The root of the Church's problems lay in the fact that "all power belonged to the hierarchs, who, in their turn, were completely under the control of the secular, 'symphonic' power."<sup>411</sup> It followed that none of the smaller problems could be resolved unless and until the tsar took the initiative in resolving the the major, root problem. But the Tsar, backed by Stolypin, decided not to convene a Council, fearful that it would become the arena of the same kind of anti-government agitation as the Duma had become.

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<sup>409</sup> *Suggestions of the Diocesan Hierarchs on the Reform of the Church*, St. Petersburg, 1906, vol. 3, p. 443.

<sup>410</sup> Firsov, *op. cit.*, pp. 222-223.

<sup>411</sup> Firstov, *op. cit.*, pp. 95-96.

It should be remembered that since 1690 there had been no Church Council in Russia in order to discuss Church problems, including dogmatic questions. Moreover, since the time of Peter “every attempt to bring the hierarchs together that had not been sanctioned by the government had been cut off...

“That meant that there had been no canonical possibility of calling the hierarchs to order or for the hierarchs of the Russian Church to make any common (conciliar) decision. In pre-revolutionary Russia there simply did not exist any mechanism by which the hierarchs could express their common opinion. Instead, there existed a Synod which (in spite of its ecclesiastical name) in reality had the status of a state ministry...”<sup>412</sup>

This did not mean that the Church ceased to be a true Church, but it did mean that it had (temporarily) lost its capacity to govern itself in accordance with its own laws but was subject to the will of the Tsar. In other words, “Caesaropapism” prevailed. Fortunately, in 1906 the head of the State was a true Christian who did not use his power over the Church to force it into heresy... However, while removing the phrase “head of the Church” from the description of the Autocrat in the Basic Laws, he continued to follow the practice of his predecessors in treating the bishops as in some sense below him, his servants, ordering the removal or transfer of bishops, or canonization of saints, without even asking the hierarchy... For psychologically the Tsar – like most of the bishops also – was not ready for the radical change in Church-State relations that a return to the holy canons required...

“So the pre-revolutionary Church was perishing from disorder... but also was being saved by disorder”<sup>413</sup> because, while heretical opinions (especially on relations with other confessions) were commonplace, they could not become the official teaching of the Church because of the lack of conciliarity (*sobornost*). There followed a decade in which the wounds of the Church continued to fester, and the authority of both Church and State continued to decline. In the end the much-needed Local Council was convened only when the Tsar himself had been swept away...

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One of the problems raised by the Pre-Conciliar Convention was that of the restoration of the autocephaly of the Georgian Church. As we have seen, a movement to preserve the nation’s heritage and promote the cause of Georgian state independence and ecclesiastical autocephaly came into being under the leadership of the poet, historian and philosopher Ilia Chavchavadze, who was assassinated by revolutionaries in 1907. Georgian *State* independence could not be considered then, since at a time of increasing nationalist and tension, it would

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<sup>412</sup> G. Lurye, “Istinno-Pravoslavnaia Tserkov’ i World Orthodoxy: istoria i prichiny razdelenia” (The True Orthodox Church and World Orthodoxy: history of, and reasons for, the division”.

<sup>413</sup> Lurye, op. cit.

only undermine the whole empire. However, *Church* autocephaly was a different matter in view of the undisputed fact that the Georgian Church had once been autocephalous. And on June 2, 1906 this question was reviewed in the Alexander Nevsky Lavra in St. Petersburg during the sessions of the second section of the Preconciliar Convention.

Eugene Pavlenko writes: "The majority of those who spoke supported the state principle of Church division [that is, in one state there should be only one Church administration], but the minority insisted on a national or ethnic point of view. In winding up the second section of the Preconciliar Convention, participants accepted one of the two projects of Protopriest I. Vostorgov on giving the Georgian Church greater independence in the sphere of the use of the Georgian liturgical language, of the appointment of national Georgian clergy, etc., but the project for Georgian autocephaly was rejected."

This argument between is important and its conclusions applicable in other Churches striving for autocephaly or autonomy. So we shall follow it in Pavlenko's exposition: "The most completely phyletistic [nationalistic] argumentation of the supporters of the idea of Georgian autocephaly at the Preconciliar Consistory was sounded in the report of Bishop Kirion [Sadzagelov, of Sukhumi], 'The National Principle in the Church'.<sup>414</sup>

This report began by proclaiming the principle of nationality in the Church and by affirming its antiquity. In the opinion of the Bishop, Georgia 'has the right to the independent existence of her national Church on the basis of the principle of nationality in the Church proclaimed at the beginning of the Christian faith.' What does principle consist of, and when was it proclaimed? 'It is sufficient to remember,' writes Bishop Kirion, 'the descent of the Holy Spirit on the apostles, who immediately began to glorify God in various languages and then preached the Gospel to the pagans, each in their native language.' But in our [Pavlenko's] view, references to the preaching of the apostles in connection with the affirmation of the national principle in the Church have no firm foundation. The preaching of the apostles in various languages was necessary in order to unite the peoples in the Truth of Christ, and not in order to disunite them in accordance with the national principle. That is, the principle of nationality is precisely that which Christianity has to overcome, and not that on which the Church must be founded. Since the Bulgarian schism phyletist argumentation has characteristically sought support in references to the 34<sup>th</sup> Apostolic canon. 'The basic canonical rule,' writes Bishop Kirion, 'by which the significance of nationality in relation to Church administration is recognized, is the 34<sup>th</sup> Apostolic canon which is so well known to canonists... According to the direct meaning of this canon in the Orthodox Church, every nationality must have its first hierarch.' But the 34<sup>th</sup> Apostolic canon... has in view 'bishops of every territory' and not 'bishops of every people'. The word *ethnos*, which is employed in this canon in the ancient language and in the language of Christian

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<sup>414</sup> *Journals and Protocols of the sessions of the Preconciliar Convention Established by His Majesty*, volume 3. On the second section on Georgia. St. Petersburg, 1907, pp. 55-58.

antiquity, is translated in the dictionary of Liddell and Scott first of all as 'a number of people accustomed to live together', and only then as 'a nation'. It is precisely the first sense indicated here that points to the territorial meaning of the Apostolic canon. So references to its national meaning are groundless.

"An incorrect understanding and use of the principle of conciliarity – which phyletism has in common with ecumenism – sometimes brings them closer... to the point of being completely indistinguishable. For the supporters of the division of the Church along tribal lines the principle of conciliarity is only a convenient federal form for the development by each people of its nationality idiosyncrasy. '... The federal system,' in the opinion of Bishop Kirion, 'gave our Eastern Church significant advantages from a national point of view.' And the preservation of this idiosyncrasy – in his opinion – is prescribed by conciliar decisions (cf. the 39<sup>th</sup> canon of the Council in Trullo), and acquires a very important significance from the point of view of Church freedom.' But in the 39<sup>th</sup> canon of the Council in Trullo not a word is said about 'national religious-everyday and individual particularities' and the like, but there is mention of the rights of first-hierarchs over bishops and their appointment. 'Let the customs of each [autocephalous] Church be observed,' it says in this canon, 'so that the bishop of each district should be subject to his president, and that he, in his turn, should be appointed from his bishops, according to the ancient custom.' The émigré Church of Cyprus, of which mention is made in this canon, did not become the national Church of the Cypriots, but took into herself all the peoples of the Hellespont district where they emigrated. Where is mention made here of a conciliar sanction for the preservation of 'local ecclesiastical traditions' with the aid of administrative isolation?

"'Ecclesiastically speaking,' thinks Bishop Kirion, 'each people must make use of the freedom of self-determination' and 'possesses the right to develop according to the laws of its own national spirit.' The extent to which the Bishop sees the development of each Church possible 'according to the laws of its own national spirit' becomes clear from the following quotation cited by him: 'The Bulgarian Church, after a period of difficult trials and struggle, is near to the realisation of its age-old strivings without disrupting Christian peace and love. The enslaved Syro-Arabic Church is declaring its rights to national idiosyncrasy more and more persistently. The Armenian, Syro-Jacobite and Perso-Chaldean Churches, which have, because of regrettable circumstances, been separated from ecumenical unity for a long time, are also seeking reunion, but without the disruption of their national rights which have come into being historically.'<sup>415</sup> By 'regrettable circumstances' Professor Kavalnitsky and Bishop Kirion who quotes him apparently have in mind the Council of Chalcedon, which condemned the monophysite heretics. While by 'reunion' they have in mind, as becomes clear from the following sentence, the following: 'Unity between the Churches must take place on the principle of equality, and not of absorption.'<sup>416</sup>

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<sup>415</sup> M.G. Kovalnitsky. *On the Significance of the National Element in the Historical Development of Christianity*, Kiev, 1880, pp. 3-4.

<sup>416</sup> *Journals and Protocols*, p. 56.

Thus both in the schism of the Bulgarians, and in the heresy of monophysitism, there is nothing to prevent union with them, but only, in the opinion of Bishop Kirion, 'the religious variety of the Christian peoples'! Before our eyes, Bishop Kirion, a defender of Georgian autocephaly at the beginning of the century, is making a path from phyletism to ecumenism, the union of which we have already distinctly observed at the end of the century. This is the classical 'branch theory' in action. 'The peoples who accepted Christianity did not all assimilate its lofty teaching in the same way; each took from it only those elements of Christian life which it was able to in accordance with its intellectual and moral character. The Latin nations (the Catholics) developed a strict ecclesiastical organization and created architecture of high artistic value. The Greeks, who were experienced in dialectical subtleties, worked out a complex and firmly based dogmatic system. The Russians, on accepting Christianity, mainly developed discipline and church rubrics, bringing external beauty to a high level of development. But the Georgians, having christianised their age-old national beliefs [giving their paganism a Christian form? – the author] and being completely penetrated with the spirit of Christianity, attached to it the sympathetic traits of their own character: meekness, simplicity, warmth, self-sacrifice, freedom from malice and persistence. Although all the nations did not receive Christianity, in the sense of assimilate the height and fullness of its heavenly teaching, in the same way, nevertheless, enlightened by Christianity, as members of the one Body of Christ [one must suppose that Latins and Monophysites are included in this number – the author], strive for the one aim that is common to Christian humanity – the realization of the kingdom of God on earth (!)'. The idea of chiliasm – 'the kingdom of God on earth' – is a worthy crown of this union of phyletism and ecumenism. Fitting for a report at the assembly of the World Council of Churches, whose members are expecting the coming of 'the new era of the Holy Spirit'?

"From Bishop Kirion's report it is clearly evident that the idea of the national Church, beginning with the division of the Church on national lines, leads to her 'union', not on the basis of the patristic faith, but on the basis of the idea of abstract 'equality' of separate, including heretical, churches, and through this to the idea of the coming earthly kingdom of the antichrist..."<sup>417</sup>

There are stronger arguments to be made for Georgian autocephaly than those put forward by Bishop Kirion. However, Pavlenko is right to reject his essentially phyletist argument: one (ethnic) nation – one Church. From the earliest times, the Orthodox Church has been organized on a *territorial* basis, following the demarcation of *states* rather than ethnic groups. In more recent centuries state boundaries have tended to correspond more and more closely to ethnic boundaries, so that we now talk of the Greek Church, the Russian Church, the Serbian Church, etc., as if we are talking about the Churches of the ethnic Greeks, Russians and Serbs exclusively. But this is a misleading way of speaking, and does not alter the essential principle, confirmed both in Holy

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<sup>417</sup> Eugene Pavlenko, "The Heresy of Phyletism: History and the Present", *Vertograd-Inform*, September, 1999.

Scripture and in Canon Law, that a local Church is the Church of all the people, *of all nationalities*, gathered together on one territory.

The attempt to substitute the ethnic principle for the territorial principle led, as we have seen, to a schism between the Greek and the Bulgarian Churches in 1872. It would lead to a schism between the Russian and the Georgian Churches in 1917, when Bishop Kirion and a Council of the Georgian Church re-established Georgian Church autocephaly on the basis of the ethnic principle. It would thereby divide the two Churches at precisely the moment when unity between Orthodox Christians of all races was vital in the face of the international communist revolution...

Not even all the Georgian bishops were in favour of autocephaly. In March, 1917 Archbishop Demetrius of Tauris (formerly Prince David Abashidze), who later became organiser of the Georgian Catacomb Church until his death in Kiev in 1943, protested against the election and enthronement of Bishop Kirion as Georgian Catholicos. Vladyka Demetrius was "more Russian than the Russians" and did not sympathize with the nationalist designs of the leaders of the Georgian Church. During the Moscow Council of 1917-18, he was appointed president of the section on the Orthodox Church in Transcaucasia, and after the Georgians' declaration of the autocephaly of their Church was elected a deputy member of the Holy Synod.

## 32. RUSSIA RECUPERATES

“The First Revolution [of 1905] brought the elites to their senses. There began feverish and successful work for the salvation of Russia from the Pugachevshchina. A huge movement to reorganize and reinvigorate Russia was linked with the name of Stolypin. A grandiose plan for the construction of Russia on the principles of private property was realized. And it seemed as if this saving renewal of Russia was already becoming a reality when War broke out, putting an end to the reform, and then the Revolution. In the heat of the revolution it was revealed how fragile was what had been achieved. Under the cover of the cottage-owner’s fair... was revealed the same peasant greedy for land, and ready to take an active part in the redistribution by robbery of the surviving ‘nests of the nobility’. In the dawn-light of a terrible fire the Great Reform turned into ugly redistributive anarchy, which opened up the opportunity for Russia to be turned into the USSR. And there no longer existed either Holy Rus’ or Great Russia...”<sup>418</sup>

The freedoms bestowed by the October Manifesto soon led to an explosion of activity in civil society. Thus, as S.A. Smith writes, “professional associations of doctors, lawyers, and others grew more active, universities expanded, political parties were established. Most of these professionals rejected old-style family life, female subordination, and police rule, and sought to enlist education and social reform in the battle against communal control and the tyranny of custom. Yet though these professionals adopted the liberal ideal of the autonomous individual, they generally rejected western bourgeois regard for self-interest and self-fulfilment. By 1900 Russia already had some 10,000 voluntary associations and these now mushroomed, in areas as diverse as science and education, agriculture, charity, sports, or local history. This represented a strengthening of civil society and may, correspondingly, have represented a diminution of the power of the state, although most of these societies existed legally and thus were ratified by the state. Moreover, their initiatives in such areas as improving public health, popularizing science, expanding education, or promoting patriotism coincided with the government’s own projects...”<sup>419</sup>

However, although the 1905 revolution had been crushed, and recovery was well under way, the revolutionary spirit remained alive, and the country remained divided. The Empire had struck back; but the bell was tolling for the Empire... The disturbances, particularly in the countryside, continued well into 1906, and only gradually died down thereafter. Thus in January the Tsar was forced to emphasize to a peasant delegation from Kursk province that the private property of the landlords, no less than that of the peasants themselves, was inviolable.<sup>420</sup>

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<sup>418</sup> Archimandrite Cyril (Zaitsev), “Imperia Rossijskaia i Sviataia Rus’” (Imperial Russia and Holy Rus’), *Pravoslavnij Put’*, 1958, p. 17.

<sup>419</sup> Smith, *Russia and the Revolution*, p. 67.

<sup>420</sup> S.S. Oldenburg, *Tsarstvovanie Imperatora Nikolaia II*, Belgrade, 1939, vol. I, p. 337.

“Between January 1908 and May 1910, 19,957 terrorist attacks and revolutionary robberies were recorded; 732 government officials and 3,052 private citizens were killed, and nearly another 4,000 wounded.”<sup>421</sup> Kotkin writes: “Between 1905 and 1910 more than 16,000 tsarist officials, from village policemen up to ministers, would be killed or wounded by terrorist revolutionaries (including in many cases by Menshevik assassins). Countless carriage drivers and railway personnel – proletarians – perished as well. One top police official complained that the details of bombmaking ‘became so widespread that practically any child could produce one and blow up his nanny.’”<sup>422</sup>

Fr. Raphael Johnston gives some historical perspective to this red terror: “Alexander III came to the throne over the corpse of his father. The revolutionaries, emboldened, as they always are, by liberal pacification, the communist and other far left groups were becoming increasingly violent. From the reign of Alexander II to 1905, the total number of people – both innocent civilians and government officials (including lowly bureaucratic clerks) – murdered by the Herzenian “New Men” came roughly to 12,000. From 1906-1908, it rose by 4,742 additional, with 9,424 attempts to murder. On the other hand, the Russian government’s attitude towards the “New Men” was mixed. Generally, the monarchy was lenient. Exile to Siberia was often not a punishment. Siberia is not entirely a massive, frozen wasteland, but is possessed of great natural beauty, mountains and rivers. It is cold, but it is not the locale of the popular imagination. Local people, not knowing who the deportees were, received them with hospitality; they became part of town life, and the deportees were given much personal freedom. This sort of ‘imprisonment’ was far superior to the American penal system, which can be – at its maximum security level – considered merely a gang war between various minority groups.”<sup>423</sup>

These astonishing numbers explain why ordinary Russians were so strongly opposed to the Jewish-led revolutionary parties, which now disappeared temporarily into the underground.

They also explain why Stolypin’s strong reaction to them, executing thousands of revolutionaries after summary field-tribunals, was far from disproportionate – although, needless to say, it was fiercely condemned by the liberals.

Now the liberals formed a new political party, the Constitutional Democrats, or Cadets, and in the elections to the first Duma in March, they triumphed convincingly over their more rightist opponents. The first Duma did not

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<sup>421</sup> Douglas Smith, *Former People: The Last Days of the Russian Aristocracy*, London: Macmillan, 2012, p. 58.

<sup>422</sup> Kotkin, *Stalin*, vol. I, p. 104.

<sup>423</sup> Johnston, “The Third Rome”.

condemn the political assassinations, and even applauded them. "In 1902, after the murder of the Minister of the Interior Sipagin, when Lenin and his group spoke against individual terror, Miliukov [the Cadet leader] went to London to persuade Lenin to enter on the path of political murders. 'You are making a fatal mistake in opposing terror,' said the Cadet leader. 'Think only that a pair of murders would be sufficient to force the Government to give a Constitution.'"<sup>424</sup>

The Duma was simply continuing the revolution by other, "constitutional" means. After the Tsar had opened its first session on April 27, the deputies – about 37 per cent of whom were left-leaning Cadets, most of the rest were peasants – began fiercely attacking him and his ministers, and voted to give an amnesty to all political prisoners, "punishing them by forgiveness" in the words of F.I. Rodichev.<sup>425</sup> The deputies also made political demands: the formation of a ministry responsible to themselves and not to the Tsar and the abrogation of the State Senate. They voted for the forcible appropriation of the estates of the landowners – a measure that only incited the peasants to further violence. But at the same time they voted to reduce credit for the starving from 50 million rubles to 15 million!<sup>426</sup>

In June, the First Battalion of the elite Preobrazhensky Guards mutinied. General Alexander Kireev noted in his diary: "This is it..."<sup>427</sup> For if even the army rebelled, and the regime's other pillar, the peasantry was also revolting (on the land issue), then the regime itself, it would seem, was doomed...

However, the Tsar now acted with admirable decisiveness which belied his reputation for weakness of will. On July 8 he dissolved the Duma on the grounds of its open call to disobey the authorities.<sup>428</sup> The deputies were caught by surprise, and many of them travelled to Vyborg in Finland, where they issued an openly revolutionary declaration, calling on the people not to pay taxes, to refuse military service and not to recognize loans concluded with the government during the conflict. However, the governor of Vyborg asked them to cut short their session, fearing that it would lead to restrictions on Finland's autonomy. The deputies returned to Petersburg having achieved nothing; nobody paid any attention to them... So great was the change in mood that a conference of the Cadets in Helsingfors at the end of September even decided to abandon the Vyborg manifesto. The students returned to their studies. The revolutionaries ceased to be lionized... The Tsar's firmness had won the day.

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<sup>424</sup> I.P. Yakobi, *Imperator Nikolaj II i revoliutsia* (Emperor Nicholas II and the Revolution), Moscow, 2009 (first published in 1931), pp. 76-77.

<sup>425</sup> Oldenburg, *op. cit.*, p. 349.

<sup>426</sup> Oldenburg, *op. cit.*, p. 355.

<sup>427</sup> Lieven, *Towards the Flame*, London: Allen Lane, 2015, p. 190.

<sup>428</sup> In his proclamation of July 21, the Tsar complained that "the representatives have strayed into spheres beyond their competence and have been making comments on the imperfections of the Fundamental Laws which can only be modified by Our imperial will. In short, the representatives of the nation have undertaken really illegal acts, such as the appeal by the Duma to the nation."

Although the revolution had been crushed, monarchist thinkers felt that the concessions that the Tsar had given in his October Manifesto should be rescinded. True, in his new version of the Basic Laws published on April 23, 1906, just before the opening of the First Duma, the Tsar appeared to claw back some power: "4. The All-Russian Emperor possesses the supreme autocratic power. Not only fear and conscience, but God himself, commands obedience to his authority... 8. The sovereign emperor possesses the initiative in all legislative matters. The Fundamental Laws may be subject to revision in the State Council and State Duma only on His initiative. The sovereign emperor ratifies the laws. No law can come into force without his approval. . . 9. The Sovereign Emperor approves laws; and without his approval no legislative measure can become law."

However, there were other parts of the law that suggested that the Duma still had considerable power: "7. The sovereign emperor exercises power in conjunction with the State Council and the State Duma... 86. No new law can come into force without the approval of the State Council and State Duma and the ratification of the sovereign emperor."<sup>429</sup>

In any case, even if it was conceded that the Tsar had surrendered some of his autocratic powers to the Duma, he was clearly not going to take them back again.

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<sup>429</sup> *Svod Zakonov Rossiiskoi Imperii* (The Collection of the Laws of the Russian Empire), 3rd series, vol. 1, pt. 1. St Petersburg, 1912, pp. 5-26.

### 33. THE BLACK HUNDREDISTS

In order to shore up the monarchy a grass-roots monarchist party, “The Union of the Russian People”, was founded on November 8, 1905. It soon became very large: during the successful counter-revolution of 1906-07, it had about 11,000 local sections, and their members comprised several hundreds of thousands of people from all walks of life.<sup>430</sup> “In the Pale of Settlement and western borderlands (Volhynia, Bessarabia, Minsk), the rightists nearly took the entire peasant vote, and in the central agricultural heartland (Tula, Kursk, Oryol), site of major agrarian disturbances, rightists won around half the peasant vote. In fact, across the expanse of imperial Russia, sympathy for the political right was there to be galvanized.”<sup>431</sup>

The Union was called “the Black Hundreds” by its opponents, who reviled it as being the mainstay, not only of monarchism, but also of “anti-semitism” in the Russian people. However, the Union was not so much anti-semitic as anti-Judaist and anti-revolutionary, a distinction that liberals have never accepted but which is nevertheless fundamental.

Serhii Plokyh writes: “The first rally the Union organized in Moscow attracted close to 20,000 people. In December 1905, Nicholas received a delegation of leaders of the Union and gave his blessing to its activities. Backed by the authorities, the Union played a key role in mobilizing support for the monarchy under the banner of modern nationalism. According to the Union’s statute, ‘the good of the motherland lies in the firm preservation of Orthodoxy, unlimited Russian autocracy, and the national way of life.’ Count Sergei Uvarov’s formula of the 1830s – autocracy, Orthodoxy and nationality – had been revived, now inspiring not only imperial bureaucrats but also rank-and-file subjects.

“The Russia represented by the Union was not limited to Great Russians. ‘The Union makes no distinction between Great Russians, White Russians, and Little Russians,’ read the statute. In fact, the western provinces, and Ukraine in particular, became the Union’s main base of operations. Its largest branch, located in the Ukrainian province of Volhynia, was centered on the Pochaev Monastery. According to a report of 1907, the Union counted more than 1,000 chapters in Volhynia, with a membership of more than 100,000. If one trusts the report, compiled by the governor of Volhynia, that province alone accounted for one-quarter of the Union’s membership throughout the empire. Not far behind were other Right-Bank Ukrainian provinces, especially the Kyiv gubernia.

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<sup>430</sup> S. Anikin, “Budushchee prinadlezhit trezvym natsiam” (The Future Belongs to Sober Nations), *Vernost’*, 142, March, 2010, <http://metanthonymemorial.org/VernostNo142.html> (V.M.)

<sup>431</sup> Kotkin, *Stalin*, vol. I, p. 100.

“What accounted for the truly impressive number of Union members in the western provinces was that, as in Volhynia, individual chapters were organized and led by priests, who enlisted their parishioners into the Union...”<sup>432</sup>

The bishops were also enthusiastic. The most prominent exception was Metropolitan Anthony (Vadkovsky) of St. Petersburg, who refused to bless the Black Hundredists.<sup>433</sup> But Metropolitan Vladimir of Moscow<sup>434</sup>, Archbishop Tikhon (Bellavin) of Yaroslavl, Archbishop Anthony (Khrapovitsky) of Volhynia, Bishop Hermogen of Saratov, St. John of Kronstadt, Elder Theodosius of Minvody and many others joined it without doubting.

St. John of Kronstadt became member no. 200787, and blessed its standards, saying: “As a body without a soul is dead, so Russia without her all-enlightening Autocratic Power is dead”. In his telegram to the Congress of monarchist Black Hundredists, he wrote: “I follow with rapture the speeches and actions of the Congress and with all my heart thank the Lord Who has had mercy on Russia and assembled around the cradle of Russian Christianity His faithful children for the unanimous defence of Faith, Tsar and Fatherland.”

Again, St. John said: “O Russia, hold firmly onto your faith and Church and Orthodox Tsar, if you want to be unshaken by the people of unbelief and anarchy and do not want to be deprived of the kingdom and the Orthodox Tsar. But if you do fall away from your faith, as many *intelligenty* have already fallen away, then you will no longer be Russia or Holy Rus’, but a mix of all kinds of heterodox striving to exterminate each other. And if there will be no repentance in the Russian people, the end of the world is near. God will take away from them their pious Tsar and will send them a whip in the persons of impious, cruel, self-appointed rulers who will drown the whole earth in blood and tears.”

A great organizer of the Union was the missionary, future hieromartyr and great friend of St. John of Kronstadt, Fr. John Vostorgov. On Great Friday,

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<sup>432</sup> Plokhly, *Lost Kingdom*, London: Allen Lane, 2017, p. 169.

<sup>433</sup> Firsov, *op. cit.*, chapter 3. Fomin and Fomina argue that Vadkovsky was a renovationist, an enemy of St. John of Kronstadt, and possibly a Mason (*op. cit.*, pp. 391-392)

<sup>434</sup> Monk Anempodist writes: “Metropolitan Vladimir went on to take part in the movement of the right conservative forces of Russia that was being formed. Thus in 1907 he took part in the work of the All-Russian congress of ‘The Union of the Russian People’. In 1909, while taking part in the work of the First Monarchist congress of Russian People, Metropolitan Vladimir was counted worthy of the honour of passing on a greeting to the congress from his Majesty the Emperor Nicholas II in the following telegram: “‘To his Eminence Vladimir, Metropolitan of Moscow. I entrust to you, Vladyko, to pass on to all those assembled in the first capital at the congress of Russian people and members of the Moscow Patriotic Union My gratitude for their loyal feelings. I know their readiness faithfully and honourably to serve Me and the homeland, in strict observance of lawfulness and order. St. Petersburg. 30 September. Nicholas.” Riasophor-Monk Anempodist, “Sviaschennomuchenik mitropolit Vladimir (Bogoiavlenskij) i bor’ba s revoliutsii” (Hieromartyr Metropolitan Vladimir (Bogoiavlensky) and the struggle against the revolution), *Pravoslavnaia Zhizn’* (Orthodox Life), 53, N 1 (636), January, 2003, pp. 2-10.

March 31, 1906 he said in the cathedral of Christ the Saviour: "Our homeland has entered upon a new path of life, before and ahead of us is - a new Russia.

"Forgive us, forgive us, old, thousand-year-old Russia! Before our eyes they have judged you, condemned you and sentenced you to death... Threatening and merciless judges have spat in your face and have found nothing good in you. The judgement was strict, implacable and merciless. Everything has merged into the cry: 'Take her, crucify her!'

"We also know that nothing human was alien to you; we know that you had many faults. But we also know and see that you made Russia holy, and her people - a God-bearing people, if not in actuality, at any rate in the eternal, undying ideal of the people's soul; you gave birth to and raised a mighty people, preserving it in its bitter fate, in the crucible of its historical trials through a whole series of centuries; you gave birth to and raised an array of saints and righteous ones; you did not perish under the blows, the heavy blows of destiny, but became stronger under them, strong in faith; with this faith, this great power of spirit, you endured all the burdens, and yet you created, and entrusted to us and left behind, a great kingdom. For all this we bow down to the earth in gratitude..."

Archbishop Makary (Parvitsky-Nevsky) of Tomsk explained the inscription on the banner of the Union of the Russian People, "'For Faith, Tsar and Fatherland! As calling "evidently, for Russian people to be united, so as to stand up for the foundations of the Russian Land. But the banner of unification has at the same time become a banner of altercation. Against the band standing with the banner 'For Faith, Tsar and Fatherland!' there stands a horde of people with the red banner, on which is written: 'Freedom, Equality, Brotherhood'. On this latter banner there remain traces of blood, blood that has already darkened with time. This is not our Russian banner, but has been brought from another country, where it was once steeped in blood. It appeared amongst us only recently. With its inscription, which speaks of freedom, equality and brotherhood, it has drawn the attention of many, not only foreigners who live in the Russian Land, but also Russians, who have not suspected that under this visible inscription there is hidden another meaning, that by this freedom we must understand violence, by equality - slavery, and by pan-brotherhood - fratricide. Between the horde of freedom, equality and brotherhood and the band for Faith, Tsar and Fatherland a struggle for dominance is taking place."<sup>435</sup>

However, the Union was plagued by schisms and poor leadership that gave it a bad name. Thus the "Union of the Archangel Michael", led by the deputy V.M. Purishkevich, separated from the "Union of the Russian People" led by A. Dubronin. Dubronin's views were contradictory: pro-tsarist, but also anti-hierarchical. And he wanted to rid the empire of "the Germans", that is, that highly efficient top layer of the administration which proved itself as loyal to

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<sup>435</sup> Tatiana Groyan, *Tsariu Nebesnomu i Zemnomu Vernij* (Faithful to the Heavenly and Earthly Kings), Moscow, 1996, p. CXI.

the empire as any other section of the population. When interviewed years later by the Cheka, Dubronin declared: "By conviction I am a *communist monarchist*, that is, [I want] there to be monarchist government under which those forms of government [will flourish] which could bring the people an increase in prosperity. For me all kinds of cooperatives, associations, etc. are sacred."

Fr. John Vostorgov considered Dubronin an enemy of the truth – a death-sentence for any movement that purports to support the autocracy on the basis of truth alone...

Another major problem was that the monarchist parties turned out to be "more royal than the king". In the provinces they often criticized the governors for being liberal, while in the Duma they remained in opposition to the government of Stolypin – who, of course, had the confidence of the Tsar.<sup>436</sup> The essential problem was that the Black Hundredists conducted party politics in favour of the idea that the tsar should rule – although the essence of the tsardom was that it should be above all party interests... For how can the tsar, who is above parties and politics, need the support of a party? In a sense, the idea of a monarchist party supporting the tsar was as absurd as that of a liberal or socialist party attacking him. For does not the idea of the autocracy, for an Orthodox Christian, consist in the fact that the autocratic tsar, the Anointed of the Lord, is *the only* politician, the only person entrusted by God with making decisions in the political sphere? One can, of course, agree or disagree with the tsar's policies, – freedom of thought is not forbidden, but one cannot *contest* them. The rule of an Orthodox state is the affair of the tsar and those whom he appoints to help him – and not of his subjects. Otherwise, they are no longer his subjects, but his self-appointed judges.

For these reasons government ministers became lukewarm towards the Union. According to Kotkin, they "wanted politics to return from the street to the corridors of power. This rebuff of the street held even though the supportive conservative movements pushed not for a right-wing revolution but, mostly, for a restoration of the archaic autocracy that had existed prior to the advent of the Duma."<sup>437</sup>

Kotkin sees as a critical failure of the "archaic" autocracy its failure, by contrast with every other contemporary Great Power government, to generate a mass movement to support it. The Black Hundredists were the nearest to such a movement, but Kotkin blackens it as "proto-fascist" – and we have seen how difficult its leaders found it both to preserve its unity and to keep it from deviations from Orthodoxy such as Dubronin's "communist monarchism". And so, since the only mass movement that is vital to the survival of the autocracy is *the Orthodox Church* seen as encompassing all the estates of the nation, the Black Hundredists withered on the vine... For, as Fr. John Vostorgov said, true patriotism and monarchism can only be founded on true faith and

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<sup>436</sup> Oldenburg, *op. cit.*, vol. II, p. 60.

<sup>437</sup> Kotkin, *Stalin*, vol. I, p. 101.

morality: "Where the faith has fallen, and where morality has fallen, there can be no place for patriotism, there is nothing for it to hold on to, for everything that is the most precious in the homeland then ceases to be precious."<sup>438</sup>

Having said that, the Black Hundredists were, as we have seen, joined by some of the holiest men of Russia, whose Orthodoxy and true patriotism were unquestioned. Therefore, whatever their faults, they played an essential role in shoring up support for the Tsar and Tsarism at a critical time. They stood for the truth, the truth of Orthodoxy and Autocracy against the lie of liberalism and socialism.

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For there could be no real unity between those who ascribed ultimate power to the Tsar and those who ascribed it to the Duma or the mob. Moreover, the struggle between the "reds" and the "blacks" was not simply a struggle between different interpretations of the October manifesto, or between monarchists and constitutionalists, but between two fundamentally incompatible world-views - the Orthodox Christian and the Masonic-Liberal-Ecumenist. It was a struggle between two fundamentally opposed views of where true authority comes from - God or the people.

Fr. John Vostorgov, in spite of his criticisms of the leadership of the Union of the Russian People, had this to say in praise of them: "The monarchist Unions ... foresaw the terrible dangers that threatened the Russian religious and popular-state structure and way of life. Others arose in their hundreds after the danger had already appeared, so as to protect the religious and state ideals of Russia and defend the integrity and indivisibility of Russia. Their essence consists in the fact that they are a storehouse of the religiosity and patriotism of the Russian people. At a fateful moment of history, when the ship of the Russian State was listing so far to the left that disaster seemed inevitable, the monarchist patriotic Unions leaned with all their strength to the right side of the ship and saved it from capsizing. The distinguished activists of the right-wing Unions came out onto the field of public work at a time when they could expect nothing except bullets and bombs, killings from round the corner, persecutions from the newspapers, mockery and disdain from the disoriented intelligentsia and even the government itself - that of Witte of sorrowful memory and his comrades and helpers..."<sup>439</sup>

As Bishop Andronicus, the future hieromartyr, wrote: "It is not a question of the struggle between two administrative regimes, but of a struggle between faith and unbelief, between Christianity and antichristianity. The ancient antichristian plot, which was begun by those who shouted furiously to Pilate about Jesus Christ: 'Crucify Him, crucify Him: His blood be on us and on our

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<sup>438</sup> Vostorgov, in Fomin & Fomina, *op. cit.*, p. 400. My italics (V.M.)

<sup>439</sup> Vostorgov, in Valentina Sologub (ed.), *Kto Gospoden' - ko mne!* (He who is of the Lord - to me!), Moscow, 2007, p. 115.

children' - continued in various branches and secret societies. In the 16<sup>th</sup> century it poured into the special secret antichristian order of the Templars, and in the 18<sup>th</sup> century it became more definite in the Illuminati, the Rosecrucians and, finally, in Freemasonry it merged into a universal Jewish organization. And now, having gathered strength to the point where France is completely in the hands of the Masons, it - Masonry - already openly persecutes Christianity out of existence there. In the end Masonry will be poured out into one man of iniquity, the son of destruction - the Antichrist (II Thessalonians 2). In this resides the solution of the riddle of our most recent freedoms: their aim is the destruction of Christianity in Rus'. That is why what used to be the French word 'liberal', which meant among the Masons a 'generous' contributor to the Masonic aims, and then received the meaning of 'freedom-loving' with regard to questions of faith, has now already passed openly over to antichristianity. In this resides the solution of the riddle of that stubborn battle for control of the school, which is being waged in the *zemstvo*s and the State Duma: if the liberal tendency gains control of the school, the success of antichristianity is guaranteed. In this resides the solution of the riddle of the sympathy of liberals for all kinds of sects in Christianity and non-Christian religions. And the sectarians have not been slumbering - they have now set about attacking the little children... And when your children grow up and enter university - there Milyukov and co. will juggle with the facts and deceive them, teaching them that science has proved man's origin from the apes. And they will really make our children into beasts, with just this difference, that the ape is a humble and obedient animal whereas these men-beasts will be proud, bold, cruel and unclean..."<sup>440</sup>

Archbishop Anthony (Khrapovitsky) put the monarchist case in February, 1907 as follows: "Perhaps there are countries which are best ruled not by tsars, but by many leaders. But our kingdom, which consists of a multitude of races, various faiths and customs that are hostile to each other, can stand only when at its head there stands one Anointed of God, who gives account to nobody except God and His commandments. Otherwise all the races that inhabit the Russian land would go against each other with knives, and would not be pacified until they had themselves destroyed each other, or had submitted to the power of the enemies of Russia. Only the White Tsar is venerated by all the peoples of Russia; for his sake they obey the civil laws, go into the army and pay their taxes. Our tsars are the friends of the people and preservers of the holy faith, and the present Sovereign Nicholas Alexandrovich is the meekest and quietest of all the kings of the whole world. He is the crown of our devotion to our native land and you must stand for him to your last drop of blood, not allowing anybody to diminish his sacred power, for with the fall of this power, Russia also will fall..."

"Russian man, lend your ear to your native land: what does it tell you? 'From the righteous Princess Olga, from the equal-to-the-apostles Vladimir until the

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<sup>440</sup> Bishop Andronicus, "Russkij grazhdanskij stroj zhizni pered sudom khristianina" (The Russian civil order before the judgement of the Christian), Fryazino, 1995, pp. 24-25.

days of Seraphim of Sarov and to the present day and to future ages all the wise leaders of my people think and say the same,' that is what the land will reply to you... 'They taught their contemporaries and their descendants one and the same thing: both the princes, and the tsars, and the hierarchs who sat on the Church sees, and the hermits who hid amidst the forest and on the islands of the sea, and the military commanders, and the warriors, and the boyars, and the simple people: they all taught to look on this life as the entrance courtyard into the future life, they all taught to use it in such a way as not to console the flesh, but to raise the soul to evangelical virtue, to preserve the apostolic faith unharmed, to keep the purity of morals and truthfulness of speech, to honour the tsars and those placed in authority by them, to listen to and venerate the sacred monastic order, not to envy the rich, but to compete with the righteous ones, to love to work the land as indicated by God to our race through Adam and Noah, and to turn to other crafts only out of necessity or because of a special talent; not to borrow the corrupt habits of foreigners, their proud, lying and adulterous morals, but to preserve the order of the fatherland, which is fulfilled through chastity, simplicity and evangelical love; to stand fearlessly for your native land on the field of battle and to study the law of God in the sacred books.' That is what our land teaches us, that is what the wise men and righteous ones of all epochs of our history entrusted to us, in which there was no disagreement between them, but complete unanimity. The whole of Rus' thinks in the same way. But she knows that only the Anointed of God must preserve this spirit and defend it from enemies visible and invisible by his mighty right hand. And look he hardly stepped back from life when his popular privileges were snatched from him by deception and violence by his enemies and the enemies of the people. Yes, the Russian people thinks and feels one thing: in its eyes public life is a general exploit of virtue, and not the realm of secular pleasures, it is the laborious increase of the Kingdom of God amongst us ourselves and its implanting in the unenlightened tribes, and not the equalisation of all faiths and superstitions. The Orthodox people knows and feels this. It feels that without one ruling royal right hand it is impossible for our land of many tribes to exist. In it are 102 different faiths, 102 tribes that will now nourish malicious enmity against each other immediately they cease to feel the ruling right hand of the White Tsar above them. Let him hear out the reports of the people's delegates, let him allow them to express their opinions on various matters of the kingdom. But the final decision will be made by him himself, and he will give an account for this only through his conscience before the Lord God. One only submission, one only limitation of his power is necessary to the people: that openly on the day of his crowning he should confess his Orthodox faith to God and the people in accordance with the Symbol of the Fatherland – so that he should not have human arbitrariness, but the evangelical law of God as his unfailing guide in his sovereign decisions and undertakings. That is the kingdom we need, and this is understood not only by Russian people, but also by people of other faiths who live in our land with a healthy people's reasoning, and not through lies and deceit: both Tatars and Kirgiz and the old Jews who believe in their own way, and the distant Tunguz.

All of them know that shaking the Tsar's Autocracy means beginning the destruction of the whole of Russia..."<sup>441</sup>

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<sup>441</sup> Archbishop Nikon (Rklitsky), *Zhizneopisanie Blazhenneishago Antonia, Mitropolita Kievskago i Galitskago*, vol. 2, pp. 173, 175-177.

### 34. THE DUMA MONARCHY

The Second Duma opened on February 20, 1907. Unfortunately, since the socialist parties – the SDs, the SRs, the Trudoviks and the Popular Socialists – had abandoned their boycott of the Duma, they now constituted the majority. Moreover, at the Fourth Congress of the SDs in Stockholm in April, they agreed to “exploit systematically all conflicts between the government of the Duma as well as within the Duma itself for the purpose of broadening and deepening the revolutionary movement”. Since the market price of Russia’s state loan of 1906 had dropped sharply when the First Duma was dissolved, the government was disinclined to use this weapon again. Nevertheless, the Tsar and his Prime Minister, Stolypin, did just that on June 2 on the grounds that some of the SD deputies had plotted to incite mutiny the St. Petersburg garrison. Moreover, the next day he announced that he was changing the electoral law in a way that would enhance the representation of the wealthier classes. This was considered an unlawful method of bypassing the constitution by some. But the fact was that both sides – the monarchy and the Duma – were trying to bypass the constitutional order of 1906: the monarchy in order to continue autocratic rule, and the Duma in order to overthrow the monarchy. This failure to agree on the basis of legitimate political power was at the root of the collapse of the Russian state in 1917. For a house that is divided against itself cannot stand...

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The restoration of order in Russia after the 1905 revolution was to a large extent the work of one of the great servants of the tsarist regime, the Interior Minister and later Prime Minister Peter Arkadyevich Stolypin, a landowner from an old Russian family in Kovno, Lithuania. He introduced military field tribunals, which decreed – with the full support of the Tsar – capital punishment for convicted revolutionaries. “In the aftermath of the 1905 Revolution,” writes Sir Richard Evans, “the average rose from around fifteen death sentences a year in the 1880s and 1890s to 637 in 1907 and 1,342 in 1908, almost all of which were actually carried out.”<sup>442</sup>

This rate was criticized by liberals such as Tolstoy and even by Stolypin’s predecessor as prime minister, Sergei Witte. But the number of those executed by “Stolypin’s neckties” (the hangman’s noose) was far less than the numbers of officials and others killed by the terrorists. Stolypin himself, who suffered several attempts on his and his family’s lives and was eventually killed by a terrorist, replied to one of his critics: “Learn to distinguish the blood on the hands of a doctor from the blood on the hands of an executioner...”<sup>443</sup> The nobility and patience of the Tsar’s loyal servants in this period, led by Stolypin, is often forgotten...

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<sup>442</sup> Evans, *op. cit.*, p. 433.

<sup>443</sup> Ariadna Tyrkova-Wiliams, “Na Putiakh k Svobode”, in *Petr Stolypin*, Moscow, 1998, p. 221.

“‘I can’t tell you,’ Nicky told his mother on 11 October 1906, ‘how much I’ve come to like and respect Stolypin.’ On 20 February 1907, when the second Duma assembled, it was much more radical than the first, containing 118<sup>444</sup> socialists, in the wake of the decision by Lenin and Martov to allow their parties to participate. Stolypin and Nicholas immediately started to consider its dissolution, ‘but it’s too early for that’, the tsar told his mother; ‘one must let them do something manifestly stupid... Then slap! And they are gone!’ The radicals demanded the confiscation of land, a measure which neither tsar nor premier would consider. On 6 March, Stolypin defied them in a virtuoso performance. ‘Such attacks to the authorities – “Hands up!”’ he proclaimed. ‘To these two words, gentlemen: “Not Afraid!”’ Nicholas was impressed.

“Once they had decided to dissolve the Duma, Stolypin planned a political *coup d’état* to change the electoral law. ‘I waited all day long with impatience for notification from you,’ Nicholas wrote to Stolypin. ‘Things are being dragged out. The Duma must be dissolved tomorrow. No delay. Not one moment of hesitation.’

“On 1 June, Stolypin told the Duma to expel its extremists. When the Duma refused, he went into action. On the 3<sup>rd</sup>, police surrounded the Taurida Palace, arresting many of the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks... The third Duma was dominated by noblemen and businessmen in which the party of 17 October known as ‘Octobrists’, who supported the semi-constitutional autocracy, held a majority. Yet the old convergence between Romanovs and the nobility was long since ruptured: the third Duma lasted for five years, but much of its opposition now came from the gentry. Even this ‘king’s parliament’ defied Stolypin...

“The revolutionary parties were broken. While there had been 150,000 Social-Democrats in 1907, there would soon be fewer than 10,000. Many Bolsheviks quietly retired into normal life and got jobs or went into exile to fulminate and feud, like Lenin in Switzerland and Austria...”<sup>445</sup>

Nevertheless, the election of the Third Duma was the signal for a significant shift to the right in society as a whole: terrorist acts did not cease around the country, but for the time being the wind had been taken out of the sails of the revolutionaries...

The Third Duma convened on November 1, 1907 and lasted for five years. Out of 422 deputies, 154 belonged to the Octobrists and 147 to right-wing and nationalist groupings, while the socialists had only 32. This, at last, was a Duma that the government could do business with, and much business was conducted, including agrarian reform and social legislation.

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<sup>444</sup> 222 according to Orlando Figes (*Revolutionary Russia, 1891-1991*, London: Pelican, 2014, p. 56). (V.M.)

<sup>445</sup> Montefiore, *The Romanovs*, pp. 542-543.

In the period of the Third Duma the revolution was finally suppressed. Norman Lowe writes: "Hundreds of radical newspapers were closed down, together with many of the newly legalized trade unions which tried to assert themselves. Leon Trotsky, writing about the years 1907-11, observed that 'factories which two or three years ago would strike unanimously over some single arbitrary police action, today have completely lost their revolutionary colour, and accept the most monstrous crimes of the authorities without resistance. Great defeats discourage people for a long time. The consciously revolutionary elements lose their power over the masses.' The situation seemed to be under tight control; in August 1907 Stolypin told a French newspaper reporter: 'In Russia there is no revolution whatever.'

"Stolypin combined his repression with reforms designed to improve life for the masses. The *zemstva*, encouraged and helped by the government, introduced extensive improvements in public health and a system of health insurance for workers. In 1908 a programme was announced to bring about compulsory universal education within ten years. By 1914 an extra 50,000 primary schools had been opened, mainly organized by the *zemstva*. Most important of all, Stolypin's agrarian reforms seemed to be working well until 1911. Lenin was certainly worried by their success: 'if this should continue for a long period of time,' he wrote in 1908, 'it might force us to renounce any agrarian programme at all.' By 1909 the economy was bouncing again and there was plenty of evidence to support Gerschenkron's optimistic forecast for future economic development."<sup>446</sup>

The change was evident to the Englishman Professor Charles Sarolea: "I can well remember my amazement and perplexity when I studied Russian conditions before the war. I had witnessed on a previous visit the terrible disorganization following the Japanese and Civil War. Revisiting the country in 1909, I fully expected to find everywhere traces of the suffering endured in the two terrible years 1904 and 1905. Instead, I observed the most wonderful recovery, a gigantic agrarian reform successfully carried out by the statesman Stolypin; millions of peasants settled in Siberia, industries growing by leaps and bounds, capital flowing into the country, the budget showing an abundant surplus, the population increasing at the rate of three million a year."<sup>447</sup>

Moreover, contrary to what is commonly thought, Russia was a remarkably *free* country (for everything except truly revolutionary activity and some newspapers<sup>448</sup>) in the decade before the war. Voluntary associations of all kinds flourished. Thus Duma deputy Baron A.D. Meyendorff admitted: "The Russian Empire was the most democratic monarchy in the world."<sup>449</sup> This view was

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<sup>446</sup> Lowe, *Twentieth-Century Russian History*, Houndmills and New York: Palgrave, 2002, pp. 49-50.

<sup>447</sup> Sarolea, "The Truth about Imperial Russia", *English Review*, June, 1925.

<sup>448</sup> Douglas Smith writes: "Under Stolypin, in 1907-09, hundreds of newspapers had been suspended and over three hundred editors had been sentenced to prison" (*Rasputin*, London: Pan Books, 2016, p. 274).

<sup>449</sup> Lebedev, *Velikorossia* (Great Russia), St. Petersburg, 1999, p. 405.

echoed by foreign observers, such as Sir Maurice Baring: “There is no country in the world, where the individual enjoys so great a measure of personal liberty, where the ‘*liberté de mœurs*’ is so great, as in Russia; where the individual man can do as he pleases with so little interference or criticism on the part of his neighbours, where there is so little moral censorship, where liberty of abstract thought or aesthetic production is so great.”<sup>450</sup>

However, this increased freedom was a mixed blessing. As we shall see, it facilitated and accelerated the spread of all kinds of non-political evil...

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<sup>450</sup> Baring, in Eugene Lyons, *Our Secret Allies*, 1953.

## 35. NEW INTERNATIONAL ALIGNMENTS

It was in this period that an important change in the pattern of international alliances took place.

Since 1892, Russia had been in a defensive alliance with France that formed the core of her foreign policy. And since 1903 the French had an *Entente Cordiale* with Britain. So it made sense for the Russians to mend fences with the British... However, a permanent Franco-Russo-British alliance was still problematic. Tsar Nicholas was still trying to patch up relations with Germany and “Cousin Willie”, which some important industrialists and politicians favoured. But he could not afford to go too far for fear of disrupting the important alliances Russia now had with France and Britain.

Moreover, the Tsar was still smarting from his defeat at the hands of Japan, whose ally was Britain, and was not at first inclined to favour Britain over Germany. Thus in July, 1905 he met the Kaiser in secret at Björkö in the Gulf of Finland, and signed a treaty with him which stipulated that each country would come to the other’s aid in the event of an attack by a third country. However, when his advisers saw it, they persuaded the Tsar to make changes to it and therefore in effect abandon it on the not unreasonable grounds that, although the treaty was a defensive one, it would be bound to look different to the French – and the alliance with France was too important to endanger.

“For Russia to move towards Germany,” writes Margaret Macmillan, “would mean abandoning the French alliance and, almost certainly, access to French financial markets. It was also certain to be opposed by the liberals who saw the alliance with France, and perhaps in the longer run with Britain, as encouraging progressive forces for change within Russia. And not all conservatives were pro-German; landowners were hurt by Germany’s protective tariffs on agricultural produces and foodstuffs...”<sup>451</sup>

The Kaiser suffered a similar experience from his ministers, which showed how real one-man-rule was becoming rarer and more difficult in the early twentieth century. Neither the Kaiser nor the Tsar was able to impose his will on his government.

And so “the Treaty of Björkö lived its brief shimmering day, and expired...”<sup>452</sup>

After this failure, a *rapprochement* with Britain seemed more attractive to the Russians. From the British perspective, such a *rapprochement* was made more palatable by Russia’s defeat in the Russo-Japanese War, and the Tsar’s concession of some elements of a parliamentary system after the abortive revolution of 1905, which combined to soften the image of Russia in British

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<sup>451</sup> Macmillan, *op. cit.*, p. 185.

<sup>452</sup> Tuchman, *The Guns of August*, p. 11.

minds: the bear no longer looked quite so powerful or threatening. Moreover, there were powerful geopolitical reasons why the two empires, both overstretched in their different ways, should seek some kind of accommodation with each other. Both countries feared German expansion: Britain feared Germany's new dreadnoughts in the North Sea and her new colonies in Eastern and Southern Africa, while Russia feared German interference in her Baltic provinces on behalf of the German minority there. As for the "Great Game", the rivalry of the two powers in Asia, this was no longer dangerous: talks on Tibet and Afghanistan had started already in 1903, and resumed with much greater hope of success after the crisis years of 1904-05.

And so in 1907, in spite of many misgivings on both sides, but eagerly supported by France, Britain and Russia signed a convention delineating their respective "spheres of influence" in Tibet, Afghanistan and Persia. From the British point of view, the key advantage gained was unhindered access to the recently discovered oil reserves in Southern Persia. This would prove very important in the world war, because the decision had been taken to run the British fleet, not on coal, but on oil...

But from the Russian point of view, "the core of the Convention", as Foreign Minister Izvolsky put it, was the prospect of British support for improved Russian access to the Straits.<sup>453</sup> For Russian foreign policy, having suffered a major defeat in the Far East, was now reorienting itself back towards the Balkans...

The Convention was sealed by a meeting in 1908 between King Edward VII and Tsar Nicholas in Revel<sup>454</sup> and by visits to England by a parliamentary delegation and then the Tsar himself in 1909. This latter visit was accompanied by huge security. Frances Welch explains why: "During the preceding months, there had been outcries in the Commons, where the visit of the Tsar was described as 'repulsive to multitudes of our people'. The Tsar was repeatedly lambasted for his poor record on civil liberties and for state censorship. Radicals called for his assassination. On the day of his arrival, seventy MPs and two bishops made formal complaints.

"The *Standart* arrived at Cowes [on the Isle of Wight] on schedule, on 2nd August. The *Isle of Wight County Press* reported a fond greeting. 'The two monarchs embraced with great affection.' But in private Edward VII had been complaining that the Tsar was 'deplorably unsophisticated, immature and reactionary'. Meanwhile, the Tsar was visiting under duress, his ministers having warned him that it might antagonize other European leaders. One minister had even insisted that Britain would never be a loyal ally.

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<sup>453</sup> Christopher Clark, op. cit., p. 158.

<sup>454</sup> This Anglo-Russian rapprochement at the highest level was aided by the fact that Tsar Nicholas' mother and King Edward's wife were Danish sister-queens who both hated Germany (the Germans had conquered the Danish provinces of Schleswig and Holstein in 1864), and consequently worked hard to unite their adopted countries against Germany.

“At their last meeting Edward VII had been rather critical of the young Romanovs, tut-tutting that they spoke English with a ‘déclassé accent’. The mortified Tsarina had sacked their tutor, the unfortunate Mr. Epps, forthwith. But the *Isle of Wight County Press* preferred to take a sunnier view: ‘The five beautiful Romanov children formed an interesting portion of a happy domestic picture.’

“Of the royal party the future George V entered best into the spirit of the occasion, writing in his diary. ‘Dear Nicky, Alicky [the Tsarina] and their children received us. Dear Nicky looking so well and Alicky too. I had not seen him for twelve years...’ George’s famously acquisitive wife, the future Queen Mary, was equally enthusiastic, the Tsarina had given her a trinket, ‘which for years I had wanted to have!!!!’.

“The Tsar’s review of the British fleet was hailed as a triumph, the King paid tribute to the biggest gathering of warships he had ever seen, and George wrote in his diary that ‘each ship cheered as we passed her’. In fact, the review had suffered a narrow squeak. At the end of the inspection of the first row of ships, the leading Russian cruiser had almost smashed into a British dreadnought. Lord Suffield, who was on board the King’s ship, wrote of ‘unprecedented turmoil’.”<sup>455</sup>

In fact, the whole visit, while deemed a success, served to underline the fact that the new agreement was still felt to be unnatural by many people on both sides... But the fact was that the two nations, which had united fruitfully in 1815 but had spent the rest of the long nineteenth century in fierce rivalry, were now travelling along different paths towards a single goal: survival in the modern world without the destruction of old national traditions that defined modernism. Both Britain and Russia were intensely traditionalist nations with powerful aristocratic cultures that only with difficulty contemplated the necessity of accommodating themselves with the new democratic, anti-traditionalist culture that was sweeping the world. Britain made the transition by slow, measured stages - with considerable success, avoiding revolutions and sharp upsets along the way, and culminating in the Lords bill of 1911, which removed the aristocrats’ veto on the democratic House of Commons.<sup>456</sup> Russia had greater difficulty in making the transition, partly because the transition was not so much from aristocracy as from *autocracy*, a higher principle that could simply *not* be reconciled with democracy, because “democracy” means the “rule of the people”, which is incompatible with “the rule of the autocrat”. But a reconciliation between the *demos* and the autocracy, in which the autocrat truly expressed the people’s ideal, making him truly “the people’s monarch”, was certainly possible.

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<sup>455</sup> Welch, “A Last Fraught Encounter”, *The Oldie*, N 325, August, 2015, pp. 24-25.

<sup>456</sup> The superb ITV series “Downton Abbey”, written by Julian Fellowes, charts this journey from the Edwardian era to the late 1920s with great style and insight.

However, such a reconciliation could take place only if the autocrat and the people truly shared the same ideal – that is, Orthodoxy. The tragedy of Russia in the period leading up to 1914 was that the autocrat believed in the ideal, but the aristocracy had long ago abandoned it. As for the people, they wavered between patient belief and violent unbelief...

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“As soon as the Anglo-Russian Convention had been signed, Izvolsky reached out to the Triple Alliance, signing an agreement with Germany on the Baltic and proposing to Austria-Hungary that they work together in the Balkans. Britain, likewise, continued to hope for a winding down of the naval race with Germany. In the end, however, it proved to be beyond the capacity of Russia’s leaders to bridge the growing chasm between Britain and France on the one hand and Germany and Austria-Hungary on the other, or to keep Russia out of the mounting arms race. By 1914, in spite of periodic struggles to escape, Russia was firmly on one side. Bismarck had warned of this many years earlier: in 1885 he had written to Wilhelm’s grandfather that an alliance of Russia, Britain and France would provide the basis for a coalition against us more dangerous for Germany than any other she might have to face’ ...”<sup>457</sup>

Meanwhile, writes Miranda Carter, “British attitudes to Russia had shifted. By 1912 the country had become fascinated by its would-be ally. In January 1912 *The Times* published a ‘Russian number’, and a group of liberal MPs visited Russia, a trip which Sir Charles Hardinge described as ‘the pilgrimage of love’. Russian literature was everywhere – not just Tolstoy but Dostoevsky, Chekhov and Turgenev had all been recently translated into English. Beef Stroganov had insinuated itself on to fashionable British menus. The Ballets Russes had brought a fantasy of Russian exoticism, wildness and modernity to London; [King] George went to see them on the eve of his coronation in 1911. But cultural fascination was not matched by political sympathy...”<sup>458</sup>

“Russian high life,” writes Max Hastings, “exercised a fascination for Western Europeans. That genteel British magazine *The Lady* portrayed Nicholas II’s empire in romantic and even gushing terms: ‘this vast country with its great cities and arid steppes and extremes of riches and poverty, captures the imagination. Not a few Englishmen and Englishwomen have succumbed to the fascinations and made it their home, and English people, generally speaking, are liked and welcomed by the Russians. One learns that the girls of the richer classes are brought up very carefully. They are kept under strict control in the nursery and the schoolroom, live a simple, healthy life, are well taught several languages including English and French... with the result that they are well-educated, interesting, graceful, and have a pleasing, reposeful manner.’”<sup>459</sup>

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<sup>457</sup> Macmillan, *op. cit.*, p. 196.

<sup>458</sup> Carter, *The Three Emperors*, London: Penguin, 2010, p. 401.

<sup>459</sup> Hastings, *Catastrophe: Europe goes to War 1914*, London: William Collins, 2014, p. 13.

Personal sympathies at the highest level helped: the Tsar and Tsarina got on much better with their English relatives than with their German ones. (It had not always been thus between the Romanovs and the Saxe-Coburgs. Queen Victoria wrote: "Oh, if the queen were a man, she would like to go and give those horrid Russians... such a beating!" And Alexander III described Victoria as a "pampered, sentimental, selfish old woman".<sup>460</sup>) "Nicky" and "Georgie" not only looked alike: they seemed genuinely to like each other. And they both disliked "Cousin Willie", the German Kaiser.

Moreover, the English ambassador in St. Petersburg, Sir George Buchanan, was "wonderfully devoted" to the tsar, declaring that "His Majesty had such a wonderful charm of manner that when he received me in audience he almost made me feel that it was as a friend, and not the Emperor, with whom I was talking. There was, if I may say so without presumption, what amounted to a feeling of mutual sympathy between us."<sup>461</sup>

And yet it was precisely Sir George's embassy that would turn out to be the nest of the February revolution; for cultural fascination and personal sympathies were swept away by the most powerful and enduring force in world politics - differences in faith, the fundamental collision between Orthodox Christianity and the democratic-socialist revolution.

The reason for the lack of political, as opposed to cultural sympathy was twofold: first, the increasing democratization of British society, as witnessed by the huge struggle for Lords reform, which reinforced the bias against monarchies, and secondly, the wildly inaccurate reporting of Russian affairs by the Jewish press inside Russia and their western followers. The fact which very few recognized was that Russia was far from being a despotic country, and that since the abortive revolution of 1905 it enjoyed more freedoms than any other major power.

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In retrospect, the new European alliances created in 1904-07 - the Anglo-French Entente of 1904 and the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907 - seemed to some commentators (for example, the French diplomat Maurice Paléologue) to foreshadow and even cause the subsequent aggressiveness of the Triple Alliance and hence the cataclysm of 1914.

However, as Clark writes: "It was still far from clear in 1907 that the new alliances would take Europe to war. The weakness of Russia after the disaster of 1904 obliged the policy-makers in St. Petersburg in the first instance to seek good relations with Germany, and it was widely accepted in St. Petersburg, for the time being at least, that Russia's domestic frailty ruled out any focus of

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<sup>460</sup> Coryne Hall, *Queen Victoria and the Romanovs*, Amberley, 2020.

<sup>461</sup> Carter, *op. cit.*, p. 402.

international adventurism. It was hard to imagine the circumstances in which France might be willing to chance its arm for the Russians in the Balkans and even harder to imagine Russians marching to Berlin for the sake of Alsace and Lorraine. In 1909, Paris underscored its independence by signing an accord in Morocco with Germany, a 'striking instance of the crossing of lines' between the Alliance blocs. Then, in November 1910, Russian and German leaders met in Potsdam and Berlin to reconcile German and Russian interests in Turkey and Persia. There was no question of loosening the Franco-Russian bond, to be sure, but this was a significant gesture in the direction of détente. As for the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907, it may have muted the tensions between Russia and Britain but it did not remove their cause, and right through until 1914 there were voices in the Foreign Office warning of the Russian threat to Britain's far-flung empire..."<sup>462</sup>

Britain's rivalry with Russia had traditionally centred on Central Asia and India. Now, however, it shifted to East Asia and China as a result of "the scramble for China" and the emergence of a new power in the East - Japan. For "in the aftermath of the Sino-Japanese War of 1894-5," writes Christopher Clark, "Britain and Japan shared a common interest in opposing further Russian expansion. Japan was Britain's 'natural ally' in the Far East, as Foreign Secretary Kimberley put it in a letter of May 1895 to the British minister in Tokyo. The threat posed to Russia's Chinese frontier by Japan's formidable land forces - 100,000 - 200,000 Japanese troops had entered Manchuria by the end of 1895 - would offset the vulnerability of the British imperial periphery in northern India. The swiftly growing Japanese fleet would provide a further 'counterpoise to the Russians' and thereby relieve the strain on Britain's overstretched fleet. In 1901, after a long period of rapprochement, discussions began with a view to a formal alliance - first a naval defence pact, later the more encompassing agreement signed in London on 30 January 1902. Renewed (with expanded terms) in 1905 and in 1911, the Anglo-Japanese Alliance became a fixture in the international system of the pre-war world."<sup>463</sup>

For Britain, strengthening ties with Russia, mainly on account of India, meant loosening them with Germany...

Now it might seem strange that possible Russian operations thousands of miles away in Asia should constitute a greater threat to the homeland than Germany's far more powerful military machine in Europe. But "as Sir Charles Hardinge, permanent under-secretary at the Foreign Office in London, stressed in 1908, 'it is far more essential for us to be on good terms with Germany.' It was a message he was at pains to repeat, even after he had been posted to India as viceroy two years later. 'We are practically impotent,' he wrote, if Russia were to escalate in Persia. It was therefore worth doing everything possible to balance the situation in Europe: 'it is far more disadvantageous to have an unfriendly France and unfriendly Russia than an unfriendly Germany.'

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<sup>462</sup> Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, pp. 166-167.

<sup>463</sup> Clark, *op. cit.*, p. 138.

Britain's relations with Russia were 'being subjected to severe strain' as a result of tensions in Persia, agreed Sir Arthur Nicolson, ambassador to St. Petersburg. 'I think,' he went on, 'that it is absolutely essential that we should at all costs maintain to the full our understanding with Russia.'

"Keeping Russia happy at all costs became the driving thrust of British policy after the alliance had been signed. In 1907, Sir Edward Grey told the Russian ambassador in London that Britain might consider being more flexible on the issue of the Bosphorus - if the Russians agreed to establish 'permanent good relations'. This was enough to prompt a shuffling of the European house of cards, as St. Petersburg embarked on a round of diplomatic horse-trading that included gaining Austrian support on the issue of the Bosphorus Straits in exchange for acquiescence over the annexation of Bosnia - a deal that was to have spectacular consequences.

"In 1910, Sir Edward Grey wrote again of the need to sacrifice relations with Berlin if necessary: 'we cannot enter into a political understandings with Germany which would separate us from Russia and France.' The single-mindedness of this approach was keenly felt in St. Petersburg, which recognized the frantic courting by the British - and the opportunities it presented. 'It seems to me,' mused the Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Sazonov towards the end of 1910, that 'the London cabinet looks upon the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907 as being important for the Asiatic interest of England.' This being the case, he went on it seemed that Britain could be pushed to make valuable concessions 'in order to keep a Convention alive which is of such importance to them'. It was an astute observation.

"As Russian forces began in 1910 to make new forays into Mongolia, Tibet and Chinese Turkestan, British observers could barely hide their alarm. The extension of Russia's reach emphatically underlined just how weak Britain's position was. Things could hardly have looked worse, as Grey's downbeat assessment in the spring of 1914 made clear. It was the same story in Afghanistan, Tibet, Mongolia and Persia: 'all along the line we want something, and we have nothing to give.' In Persia, there remained 'nothing to concede' to Russia, he noted, while there was no leverage in Afghanistan either. Worse, 'the Russians are willing to occupy Persia, and we are not'. Britain was spent - at least in Asia. It was time, surely, for the endgame. The question was where and when that would come..."<sup>464</sup>

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<sup>464</sup> Frankopan, *Silk Roads*, pp. 308-309.

## 36. THE STOLYPIN REFORMS

Prime Minister Stolypin was a great reformer as well as a stern disciplinarian and a great parliamentarian. He succeeded, writes S.S. Oldenburg, "in squaring the circle. Until then, the carrying out of reforms had unfailingly been accompanied by a weakening of the authorities, while the application of severe measures meant a refusal to carry out transformations. Now a government had been found that combined the two tasks; and broad sections of society were found that understood the necessity of this..."<sup>465</sup>

Using the 87<sup>th</sup> Article of the Basic Laws, which allowed the government to carry out urgent measures in the intervals between sessions of the Duma, Stolypin introduced a whole series of liberal measures that put into effect the promises made by the Tsar in his October manifesto, including compulsory insurance for workers against sickness, injury and old age. But his most important achievement was the land reforms designed to relieve poverty in the countryside, break the power of the commune over the individual peasant and create a strong, independent peasant class.

Zelnik writes: "The question, in the new post-1905 context, was whether the solution to land hunger, so vehemently expressed by peasant insurgency in 1905 (and there was much more to come in 1906), should be attained by the compulsory redistribution of gentry land, and if so, whether with compensation (the liberal or Kadet position) or without (the radical position)... [Stolypin's] central idea was to reallocate not the gentry lands but *communal* lands..."<sup>466</sup>

Stolypin had three closely related aims: to raise living standards in the countryside, to remove the roots of peasant revolutionism, and to break the communal system. For he noted, as Stephen Kotkin writes, "that much of peasant unrest in 1905-06 had been communally organized. On the basis of his experience in the communeless western borderlands, moreover, he concluded that a prosperous individualist village was a peaceful village. Thus, his agrarian reforms, enabled by a November 9, 1906 decree, aimed to drive agricultural productivity and remove the basis for peasant unrest by creating an independent property-owning class among the peasants; who, once furnished with state credits and access to technology, would strike out on their own. In other words, Stolypin sought to transform both the physical rural landscape, overcoming the separated communal strips of land with consolidated farms, and the psychology of the rural inhabitant."<sup>467</sup>

Besides strengthening the economy of the rural country, Stolypin was also attempting to achieve the maturing of the peasant to the point where he could take a considered, independent part in civil and political life. "First of all it is necessary to create the citizen," he said in a newspaper interview, "the peasant-

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<sup>465</sup> Oldenburg, *op. cit.*, pp. 365-366.

<sup>466</sup> Zelnik, *op. cit.*, p. 259.

<sup>467</sup> Kotkin, *Stalin. Paradoxes of Power. 1878-1928, vol. I*, London: Penguin, 2004, p. 95.

house-owner, the petty landowner, and when this task has been accomplished - citizenship itself will reign in Russia. First the citizen, and then citizenship..."<sup>468</sup>

As Archpriest Lev Lebedev writes, the land reforms were essentially the brain-child of the Tsar himself: "Immersing himself in a study of the matter, his Majesty departed more and more both from his teachers and from the politics of his father, and even from 'society'. They were all unanimous in striving to preserve the commune, although for various reasons (some of the liberals and democrats considered it [following Herzen] to be 'embryonic socialism'). Finally, having thought it all through, his Majesty came to the thought of the necessity of abolishing the village commune altogether. The more so, in that the majority of provincial committees created to discuss the land question had expressed themselves in one way or another against the preservation of the commune. He entrusted the carrying out of this idea to a man exceptionally well chosen - P.A. Stolypin, who was appointed President of the Council of Ministers. Stolypin carried out the reforms in constant consultation with his Majesty, from which they received their name, 'The Stolypin Reforms'. They began with the law of November 9, 1906, which allowed the peasants *freely to leave the commune...* and to have their own private agriculture. Immediately two-and-a-half million petitions to leave were submitted. In order to carry out the exit, 483 special commissions and seven thousand land-surveyors were mobilized. Redemption payments were rescinded. At the same time a new impulse was given to *the resettlement movement* of peasants in the East. Those who wanted were given plots in Siberia, in the Altai and in the Far East at fifteen hectares per person (45 per family), with each family being offered a mortgage at 200 roubles with the opportunity of moving with all their possessions to the new lands *at state expense*. In Siberia previously prepared warehouses of agricultural instruments awaited the re-settlers. They were sold at extremely low prices. For a long time the re-settlers *were freed from all taxes*. His Majesty personally owned forty million desyatins of land in Siberia. All these lands Nicholas II handed into the land fund for free, he simply *gave them away* to the Russian peasantry! Especially valuable gifts were the very extensive fertile lands of the Altai, which had formerly been exclusively the property of the Emperor. In these former possessions of his given away to the peasants his Majesty *at his own expense* constructed new roads, schools, hospitals and churches... Finally, the third component of the reforms were *the enterprises of the State Peasant Bank*, which began to snap up landowners' lands and sell them to the peasants on extremely advantageous conditions for the peasants. The bank offered them up to 90% of the value of the bought land in credit at a rate of 4.5% at huge instalments. In sum, by 1917 100% of the arable land in the Asiatic part of Russia, and about 90% of it in the European part was either owned or rented by peasants. By 1914 almost all the commune lands had passed into private peasant ownership. The results of the reforms exceeded all expectations. The harvest sharply increased, so that Russia exported up to a quarter of its bread abroad and became the main supplier of bread to Europe. The wheat harvest

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<sup>468</sup> Bokhanov, *op. cit.*, pp. 273-273.

rose from about two billion poods in 1894 to four billion in 1913 and 1914. In 1913 the wheat harvest in Russia was about one third higher than those in Argentina, Canada and the USA put together! In 1908 a little more than 858 million poods of wheat and flour were exported to England alone, and in 1910 – about three billion. The production of rye rose from two billion poods in 1894 to four billion in 1913. Also *doubled* in this period was the production of cotton, the consumption of sugar and tea per head of population, and other products. *Half* the world's trade in eggs belonged to Russia. She possessed 80% of the world's output of flax. Russia had not known such a rapid rise in agriculture as took place from 1907 to 1911 in connection with the reforms, throughout the whole period of her history. 'Give us twenty more years of internal and external peace,' said P.A. Stolypin, 'and you will not know the present Russia!' By 1914 the country was already unrecognizable in many things..."<sup>469</sup>

Indeed, in 1914 the French economist Edmond Thierry published a detailed report that concluded: "If the affairs of the European nations continue in the same way from 1912 to 1950 as they have done from 1900 to 1912, then Russia by the middle of the present century will dominate Europe, both in the political and in the economic and financial spheres."<sup>470</sup>

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Not everyone agrees, however, that the agrarian reforms were successful. Hosking points out that in 1916 "61 percent of household still held their land in communal tenure, and their holding totalled about 70 percent of allotment land. Those who left the commune tended to be at the extremes of the economic scale: the wealthy, who no longer wished to be tied by communal arrangements, and the poor, who wanted to give up trying to squeeze a living from the soil. Their departure left a solid group of 'middle peasants' (as they later became known), and they remained on the whole staunchly loyal to the commune. Besides, the reform proved more successful in the west of Russia, among Ukrainian and Belorussian peasants, where hereditary land tenure was already much more popular, than in Russia, where the reform was most sorely needed."<sup>471</sup>

Again, Orlando Figes writes: "There were profound cultural reasons for the peasants to oppose the break up of the commune, which had been the focus of their lives for centuries. The basic worry was that giving some peasants the right to own part of the communal land would deprive others of their customary rights of access to this land as their basic means of livelihood. What would happen if the peasant landowner bequeathed his property to his eldest son or sold it altogether? The rest of the family would be turned into paupers. Or if the richest peasants bought up all the land? Entire families would be unable to support themselves. There was also a widespread fear that the government

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<sup>469</sup> Lebedev, *Velikorossia* (Great Russia), St. Petersburg, 1999, pp. 403-405.

<sup>470</sup> Lebedev, *op. cit.*, p. 406.

<sup>471</sup> Hosking, *Russia and the Russians*, p. 376.

surveyors, who had been instructed to encourage the enclosures, would reward the separators with more than their fair share of the best land.

“And indeed the peasants had real cause to wonder just how the old patchwork of intermingled strips could be disentangled by all. On what terms was a good bit of land in one place to be exchanged for a poor one in another? How were they to divide the meadows, the woods and the rivers, which had always been held in common? And if the newly enclosed farms [*khutora*] were to build their own roads, wouldn't they cut across existing boundaries and rights of way? The peasants were attached to their land in a very particular sense. No one had ever taught them how to calculate the area of a piece of land by multiplying its width by its length – their fields were divided ‘by eye’ or by pacing out the strips and making rough adjustments where their length or the quality of their soil was uneven – so they had no reliable means of satisfying themselves that two plots deemed the same by the government's surveyors, with their town made suits, their rulers and their tripods, were in fact of equal size.

“All these fears led the communes to resist the peasant-separators, often using force or intimidation to put them off. Of the 6 million applications for land consolidation recorded before 1915, over one third were subsequently withdrawn by the applicants themselves; and of the 1 million that were completed, two thirds had to be forced through by the authorities against the opposition of the communes. Overall, the land reforms must be deemed a failure. Between 1906 and the eve of the revolution approximately 15 per cent of the peasant households in European Russia consolidated land as private plots, bringing the total of peasant farms in hereditary tenure to only around 30 per cent. Yet for every household that enclosed its land there was another that had tried and failed, usually because of communal opposition or bureaucratic delays, with the result that the would-be separators lost interest...”<sup>472</sup>

Nevertheless, in spite of opposition and complaints (whether justified or not is a technical question that the present writer is not qualified to answer), the agrarian reforms of 1907, following on the emancipation decree of 1861, were well on the way to transforming Russia radically in the tradition of the great “reforms from above” of the supposedly hidebound and reactionary Russian tsars. As I.P. Yakoby wrote: “In the course of half a century, through a series of measures undertaken by the state, there was completed a painless transition of lands to those who in reality worked them. Thus the peasants, who during the emancipation of the serfs, owned about 120 million desyatins, acquired, before the war, by means of state agrarian banks, 100 million more, while at the same time the area of privately owned lands was reduced from 100 million to 56 million desyatins. Through the continuation of this policy, fifty years on, almost the whole reserve of exploited lands would undoubtedly have passed to the peasants, and with this every chance of agrarian disturbances would have

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<sup>472</sup> Figes, *Revolutionary Russia*, pp. 58-59.

disappeared. Thus for the revolution there remained only the hope of an unsuccessful war..."<sup>473</sup>

Lenin, plotting the revolution from his Swiss hideaway, grudgingly agreed; he later calculated that if Stolypin's plans for the creation of an independent peasantry had been given some more years in which to come to fruition, thereby reducing the flow of poor, discontented peasants into the cities, the revolution would not have taken place. Even so, enough progress had been made to create one of the toughest nuts for the revolution to crack – the so-called "kulaks", or slightly richer, independent farmers. The peasants – and especially those who had acquired lands in Siberia – rose up in several vast rebellions in the early years of the revolution<sup>474</sup>, and were finally crushed only by the horrors of dekulakization and collectivization in the 1930s...

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<sup>473</sup> Yakobi, *Imperator Nikolaj II i revoliutsia* (Emperor Nicholas II and the Revolution), Moscow, 2010, p. 73.

<sup>474</sup> However, Stolypin's giving of land to the peasants in Siberia and Central Asia led to conflicts with the local population, leading to a major rebellion in 1916. See A.V. Shubin, "Reformy P. Stolypina i Rossia pered Pervoj Mirovoj Vojny" (The Reforms of P. Stolypin and Russia before the First World War), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7Wl-7vY6wG8>.

## 37. SIBERIA, THE FUTURE OF RUSSIA

Stolypin's reforms envisaged millions of European peasants migrating to Siberia... This vast, mysterious land was becoming an object of greater attention ever since the construction of the Trans-Siberian Railway in the 1890s had begun to open up its almost limitless potential.

Siberia first attracted the attention of Russian intellectuals when the Decembrists were exiled there after the rebellion of 1825, engendering the myth of the righteous, freedom-loving exiles suffering terribly at the hands of hard-hearted tyrannical tsars.

Now, as Anne Applebaum writes, "the first mention of exile in Russian law was in 1679. At the time, exile was considered to be a new, more humane form of criminal punishment – far preferable to the death penalty, or to branding and mutilation – and it was applied to a huge range of minor and major offences, from snuff-taking and fortune-telling to murder. A wide range of Russian intellectuals and writers, Pushkin among them, suffered some form of exile...

"In retrospect, it is easy to find, in the history of the tsarist prison system, many pre-echoes of practices later applied in the Soviet Gulag. Like the Gulag, for example, Siberian exile was never intended exclusively for criminals. A law of 1736 declared that if a village decided someone in its midst was a bad influence on others, the village elder could divide up the unfortunate's property and order him to move elsewhere. If he failed to find another abode, the state could then send him into exile. Indeed, this law was cited by Khrushchev in 1948, as part of his (successful) argument for exiling collective farmers who were deemed insufficiently enthusiastic and hard-working.

"The practice of exiling people who simply didn't fit it continued throughout the nineteenth century. In his book *Siberia and the Exile System*, George Kennan – uncle of the American statesman – described the system of 'administrative process' that he observed in Russia in 1891: 'The obnoxious person may not be guilty of any crime... but if, in the opinion of the local authorities, his presence in a particular place is 'prejudicial to public order' or 'incompatible with public tranquillity', he may be arrested without warrant, may be held from two weeks to two years in prison, and may then be removed by force to any other place within the limits of the empire and there be put under police surveillance for a period of from one to ten years.'

"Administrative exile – which required no trial and no sentencing procedure – was an ideal punishment not only for trouble-makers as such, but also for political opponents of the regime. In the early days, many of these were Polish noblemen who objected to the Russian occupation of their territory and property. Later, exiles included religious objectors, as well as members of 'revolutionary' groups and secret societies, including the Bolsheviks. Although they were not administrative exiles – they were tried and sentenced – the most

notorious of Siberia's nineteenth-century 'forced settlers' were also political prisoners: these were the Decembrists... Fyodor Dostoyevsky, sentenced in 1849 to a four-year term of penal servitude, was another well-known political prisoner. After returning from his Siberian exile, he wrote *The House of the Dead*, still the most widely read account of life in the tsarist prison system."<sup>475</sup>

However, it should be noted that Dostoyevsky looked back with some gratitude on his period of Siberian exile. It was there that his world-view began to change from socialist to Orthodox monarchist. However, it goes without saying that such an ideal outcome of the experience was only rarely found among the revolutionary exiles...

Another "pre-echo" of the Soviet Gulag, continues Applebaum, was the fact that "Like the Gulag, the tsarist exile system was not created solely as a form of punishment. Russia's rulers also wanted their exiles, both criminal and political, to solve an economic problem that had rankled for many centuries; the underpopulation of the far east and the far north of the Russian land mass, and the Russian Empire's consequent failure to exploit Russia's natural resources. With that in mind, the Russian state began, as early as the eighteenth century, to sentence some of its prisoners to forced labour – a form of punishment which became known as *katorga*, from the Greek word *kateirgo*, 'to force'. *Katorga* had a long Russian prehistory. In the early eighteenth century, Peter the Great had used convicts and serfs to build roads, fortresses, factories, ships and the city of St. Petersburg itself. In 1722, he passed a more specific directive ordering criminals, with their wives and children, into exile near the silver mines of Dauriya, in eastern Siberia.

"In its time, Peter's use of forced labour was considered a great economic and political success. Indeed, the story of the hundreds of thousands of serfs who spent their lives building St. Petersburg had an enormous impact on future generations. Many had died during the construction – and yet the city became a symbol of progress and Europeanization. The methods were cruel – and yet the nation had profited. Peter's example probably helps explain the ready adoption of *katorga* by his tsarist successors. Without a doubt, Stalin was a great admirer of Peter's building methods too."<sup>476</sup>

Of course, as we have seen, Peter, though formally an Orthodox autocrat, should really be categorized as a Western despot in the mould of Henry VIII or Louis XVI, in that he subdued the Church to his power and therefore would not permit its Grace-filled influence to moderate his own behaviour. St. Petersburg was indeed a symbol of Europeanization – not only of its arts and crafts, especially evident in its architecture, that of "the Venice of the North", but also of its despotic forms of government. However, as the tsar in the nineteenth century returned to Orthodoxy in a more than formal sense, so these

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<sup>475</sup> Applebaum, *Gulag: A History*, London: Penguin, 2004, pp. 13-14.

<sup>476</sup> Applebaum, *op. cit.*, pp. 16-17.

despotic and cruel methods of government became weaker, especially in the reign of Nicholas II.

Applebaum recognizes this: “In the nineteenth century, *katorga* remained a relatively rare form of punishment. In 1900, only about 6,000 *katorga* convicts were serving sentences; in 1916, on the eve of the Revolution, there were only 28,600. Of far greater economic importance was another category of prisoner: the forced settlers, who were sentenced to live in exile, but not in prison, in underpopulated regions of the country, chosen for their economic potential. Between 1824 and 1889 alone, some 720,000 forced settlers were sent to Siberia. Many were accompanied by their families. They, not the convicts labouring in chains, gradually populated Russia’s empty, mineral-rich wastelands.

“Their sentences were not necessarily easy ones, and some of the settlers thought their fate worse than that of the *katorga* prisoners. Assigned to remote districts, with poor land and few neighbours, many starved to death over the long winters, or drank themselves to death from boredom. There were very few women – fewer books, no entertainment.

“On his journey across Siberia to Sakhalin, Anton Chekhov met, and described, some of these exiled settlers. ‘The majority of them are financially poor, have little strength, little practical training, and possess nothing except their ability to write, which frequently of absolutely no use to anybody. Some of them commence by selling, piece by piece, their shirts of Holland linen, their sheets, their scarves and handkerchief, and finish up after two or three years dying in fearful penury...’

“But not all of the exiles were miserable and degenerate. Siberia was far away from European Russia, and in the East officialdom was more forgiving, aristocracy much thinner on the ground. The wealthier exiles and ex-prisoners sometimes built up large estates. The wealthier exiles became doctors and lawyers, or ran schools. Princess Maria Volkonskaya, wife of the Decembrist Sergei Volkonsky, sponsored the building of a theatre and concert hall in Irkutsk: although she had, like her husband, technically been deprived of her rank, invitations to her soirées and private dinners were eagerly sought after, and discussed as far away as Moscow and St. Petersburg.<sup>477</sup>

“By the early twentieth century, the system had shed some of its previous harshness. The fashion for prison reform which spread through Europe in the nineteenth century finally caught up with Russia too. Regimes grew lighter, and policing grew laxer. Indeed, in contrast to what came later, the route to Siberia now seems, if not exactly pleasurable, then hardly an onerous punishment for the small group of men who would lead the Russian Revolution. When in prison, the Bolsheviks received a certain amount of favourable treatment in ‘political’ rather than criminal prisoners, and were

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<sup>477</sup> For more on Volkonskaya, see Christine Sutherland, *The Princess of Siberia*, London: Quartet Books, 2001. (V.M.)

allowed to have books, paper and writing instruments. Ordzhonikidze, one of the Bolshevik leaders, later recalled reading Adam Smith, Ricardo, Plekhanov, William James, Frederick W. Taylor, Dostoyevsky and Ibsen, among others, while resident in St. Petersburg's Schlüsselberg Fortress. By later standards, the Bolsheviks were also well fed, well dressed, even beautifully coiffed. A photograph taken of Trotsky imprisoned in the Peter and Paul Fortress in 1906 shows him wearing spectacles, a suit, a tie and a shirt with an impressively white collar. The peephole in the door behind him offers the only clue to his whereabouts. Another taken of him in exile in eastern Siberia, in 1900, shows him in a fur hat and heavy coat, surrounded by other men and women, also in boots and furs. All of these items would be rare luxuries in the Gulag half a century later.

"If life in tsarist exile did become intolerably unpleasant, there was always escape. Stalin himself was arrested and exiled four times. Three times he escaped, once from Irkutsk province and twice from Vologda province, a region which later became pockmarked with camps. As a result, his scorn for the tsarist regime's 'toothlessness' knew no bound. His Russian biographer Dmitri Volkogonov characterized his opinion like this: 'You didn't have to work, you could read to your heart's content and you could even escape, which required only the will to do so.'"<sup>478</sup>

In the last analysis, in spite of some similarities in form, we must characterize the tsarist and Soviet systems of Siberian exile as being at opposing poles from each other. The tsarist system, especially in its later incarnations, was designed for real criminals and murderers (because that is what the revolutionaries were), and, while not pleasant, was a relatively lenient form of punishment, whereas the Soviet system was unequalled in its cruelty and injustice to millions and millions of innocent people.

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Returning to the pre-revolutionary empire, Dominic Lieven notes that Siberia was seen as a land of vast opportunity. "Beyond the Urals and all the way to the Pacific coast, a vast Siberian realm of riches and possibilities was opening up for Russia. Modern technology, and above all the railway, were at last making possible the colonization and exploitation of this treasure trove. The railway offered more to landlocked Russia than to any other country on earth, as intelligent Russians well understood. A railway network linking Europe to the Pacific, stretching out its tentacles into resource-rich Siberia and enabling the mass migration into Asia of European Russia's overflowing population had the potential to transform Russian society. No one understood or preached this reality more passionately than Dmitri Mendeleev. A Siberian himself and the son of a teacher, Mendeleev was an academic and a chemist of international renown. But he was also a polymath and a public intellectual, intent on converting both government and public opinion to his strategy for

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<sup>478</sup> Applebaum, *op. cit.*, pp. 17-18.

modernizing the Russian economy and society. Mendeleev was a great ally of Serge Witte, Russia's exceptionally able finance minister from 1892 to 1903, who devised and implemented an ambitious policy of rapid industrial development.

“Although deeply aware of Siberia's huge natural resources, Mendeleev considered Russia's greatest strength to be its population, which was growing more quickly than in any other European country. Russian Asia could employ these people. In 1906, Mendeleev predicted that the empire's population would grow from 155 million in 1910 to 282 million in 1950 and almost 600 million by 2000. This prediction was excessive, but no one doubted either that the population would grow enormously or that Siberia could absorb it. By contrast, the German or Italian population surplus would end up in another country, namely the United States. Even the British both exported people to the United States and found it hard to turn white Dominions scattered across the globe into a viable polity.

“Migration to Siberia also had internal political advantages. By 1900, massive population growth meant that in some of Russia's core agricultural provinces land was becoming scarce and rents were growing quickly. As a result, tensions between the peasantry and the landowning class were high. Mass migration to Siberia could be an answer. Much of the area worst affected by overpopulation was in what we would now call eastern Ukraine. It was here – in the provinces of Chernigov, Kharkov, Poltava and Ekaterinoslav – that the peasant revolt of 1905 was often most serious. Immigration to Siberia of Ukrainians (and Belorussians) might reduce not just the social crisis but also the national one. English, Scots, Welsh, and even sometime Irish immigrants to the white Dominions to some extent forged a new and unique British identity. Russian, Ukrainian and Belorussian immigrants to Siberia might even more easily become ‘New Russians’. By 1900, there was a minimal chance of separatism developing in Siberia, but a specific ‘frontier’ variant of Russian identity did exist. Even in western Siberia, there were no noble landowners, but by 1914 there were many wealthy peasant farmers. Their dairy exports were, for instance, competing strongly with the Danes’ in the British market. Siberia was very much more than the land of ice, convicts, and Rasputin so dear to the Western imagination. It was in fact a new Russia, and amid the many crises they faced, Russia's rulers were buoyed up when they contemplated its future...”<sup>479</sup>

## 38. THE NATIONALITIES POLICY: (1) THE SLAVIC MAJORITY

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<sup>479</sup> Lieven, *Towards the Flame*, pp. 58-59.

“Thanks to the *okhranka*,” writes Kotkin, the years between 1909 and 1913 would prove relatively peaceful, certainly compared with the madness of the preceding few years. Social Democratic party strength, which had peaked at perhaps 150,000 empire-wide in 1907, had fallen below 10,000 by 1910. Members of the Bolshevik wing were scattered in European or Siberian exile. A mere five or six active Bolshevik committees existed on imperial Russian soil. At the same time, by 1909, the Union of the Russian People had splintered, and the entire far right had lost its dynamism. That year, Stolypin began to align himself overtly with Russian nationalists and to promote Orthodoxy as a kind of integrating national faith. He did so out of his own deep religious conviction as well as political calculation. Imperial Russia counted nearly 100 million Eastern Orthodox subjects, some 70 percent of the empire’s population. But Eastern Orthodoxy did not unite to a sufficient degree... To be sure, non-Russian nationalist and separatist movements remained relatively weak: armed rebellion had largely been confined to the Poles, who in retribution lost their separate constitution, and the Caucasus mountain tribes. Imperial loyalties remained strong, and Russia’s loyal ethnically diverse elites constituted an enormous asset, even in the global age of nationalism. But the very constituency to which Stolypin appealed, Russian nationalists, caused the greatest political disruption precisely for wanting to compel non-Russians to become a single Russian nation. In aiming for a single ‘Russian’ nation defined in faith (Orthodoxy) – imagined to comprise Great Russians, Little Russians (Ukrainians) and White Russians (Belorussians) – the nationalists had imposed severe prohibitions against Ukrainian language and culture. Predictably, this only stoked Ukrainian national consciousness further – and in the guise of opposition, rather than loyalty. These were the same detrimental processes that we have seen at work in the Caucasus at the Tiflis seminary and elsewhere, whereby hard-line Russifiers infuriated an otherwise loyal, and largely cultural, nationalism. It was the Russian nationalists, more than non-Russian nationalists, who helped destabilize the Russian empire...”<sup>480</sup>

In order to fight the centrifugal forces of nationalism, it was necessary to emphasize, not a common Russianness, but a common *faith*, Orthodoxy. For the fact was that most subjects of the Russian tsar were Orthodox – not only Great Russians, Ukrainian and Belorussians, but also Georgians and increasing numbers of converts from the Asiatic races. The real problem was not only that so many of the Russian nationalists emphasized commonality of nationality rather than faith, but that their own Orthodox faith was becoming weaker, being infiltrated with elements of the foreign, heretical faith of *westernism*.

Of course, in a multi-national empire such as Russia the spread of nationalism in the nineteenth century could not fail to be a major concern of the authorities and to Russian nationalists such as Mikhail Menshikov, editor of the conservative *Novoe Vremia*. “In the years before 1914, Menshikov participated in an interesting ongoing debate in Russia about empire and nations. For him, the idea that an empire might in any sense be a supranational entity was anathema. A multinational, let alone federal empire was, in

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<sup>480</sup> Kotkin, *Stalin*, vol. I, pp. 118-119.

Menshikov's view, an artificial construct doomed to weakness and dissolution. He cited examples from ancient to contemporary empires to prove his point: in his opinion, for instance, the granting of citizenship to all the Roman Empire's [free] subjects in A.D. 212 had led to its inner weakening and final collapse. Menshikov also pointed to similar weaknesses in the Habsburg and Ottoman polities, where internal struggles between nationalities had frequently been exploited by foreign enemies. He wrote in March 1914 that the Ottoman Empire was disintegrating under his generation's eyes and 'the same fate undoubtedly threatens Austria'. Similar processes were also at work in 'the greatest empire that ever existed - Great Britain,' which was 'becoming ever more of a mere spectre with each passing decade.' Menshikov argued that even without Ukrainian nationalism the Russian Empire was threatened by disloyalty among its minorities and added, 'How long would Russia last... if to the other centrifugal tendencies were added tens of millions of people - the Little and White Russians - previously considered to belong to the core Russian people?'"<sup>481</sup>

Tsar Alexander III's answer to this problem, which was followed by his son, was the policy known to historians as "Russification", a well-meaning but unsuccessful attempt to unite the empire around the language and culture of the dominant imperial nation. It is possible that this programme was undertaken in imitation of the parallel programme of Prussianization undertaken by Bismarck in 1872-73. In both cases, the main target of the programme was the Poles, and in both cases the programme was a failure. Indeed, Poland was, besides the Jews, the main failure of the russification programme. Alexander I's grant to the Poles of a very liberal constitution was brought to an end by the revolution of 1831. Then the second revolution of 1863 necessitated a harsher reaction, which included Russification. Thus Hosking writes: "Most Polish officials were replaced by Russian ones, and the Russian language was imposed for official business. The University of Warsaw was converted into a wholly Russian institution, whilst it was stipulated that Polish schools, even at primary level, should teach all subjects in Russian, save the Polish language itself. [This "produced absurd situations, such as Polish students being forced to read their own literature in Russian translation" .482] In practice, the government had no means to impose these provisions, and Polish-language schooling continued, albeit clandestinely.

"Poland did derive economic benefits from being included within the empire's tariff enclosure: it was able to sell its industrial products in a huge market that needed them. With some 8% of the population, Poland produced about a quarter of the empire's industrial output, notably in textiles, metallurgy and machine tools..."<sup>483</sup>

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<sup>481</sup> Lieven, *Towards the Flame*, p. 56.

<sup>482</sup> Margaret Macmillan, *The War that Ended Peace*, London: Profile, 2014, p. 475. (V.M.)

<sup>483</sup> Hosking, *Russia: People & Empire*, London: HarperCollins, 1997, p. 377.

In spite of these benefits, the Poles remained hostile to Russia, especially during the 1905 revolution. In Krakow, which was in the part of Poland controlled by Austria-Hungary, the Left Socialist Party was training troops. (Lenin lived in Krakow in 1912-13). Their leader, Josef Pilsudski, the post-war President of Poland, was sent to Siberia, but remained a thorn in the side of the Russian authorities. The root cause of Russia's failure in Poland was, however, not the policy of russification, but the implacable opposition of Polish Catholicism to Russian Orthodoxy. As long as the combination of Catholicism and fervent nationalism prevailed, there was no hope, not only of assimilation, but even of peaceful relations between the two peoples. Catherine II's conquest of Poland, while it had certain geopolitical advantages, proved in the long run to have created the Achilles heel of the Russian empire, in that it included into the empire two peoples – the Poles and the Jews – whose opposition to Russia remained implacable to the end.

A critical western border province was that of Kholm, in the former kingdom of Poland, where the neighbouring Polish rebellion combined with the April manifesto on religious freedom elicited disturbances during the 1905 revolution. It was feared that many nominal Orthodox would be tempted to become uniates, and the Bishop of Kholm, Evlogy (Georgievsky), wrote to Pobedonostsev: "The very credit of our priests has been undermined. For thirty years they repeated to the people that the Kholm-Podliaschie country will always be Orthodox and Russian, and now the people see, on the contrary, the complete, willful takeover of the enemies of the Orthodox Russian cause in that country."

"Soon after he sent the letter," writes Serhii Plokyh, "Evlogii and his supporters went to St. Petersburg to meet with Pobedonostsev and discuss how to deal with the threat to Russian interests in the region. They wanted to redraw the borders of the imperial provinces, dividing the Kholm region from the lands of the former Kingdom of Poland. The new Kholm province was to have a 'Russian' core consisting of more than 300,000 ethnic Ukrainians – those who had said Little Russian was their native language in the 1897 census. Officials in the Ministry of the Interior got busy planning for the administrative change. The bill was sent to the Duma. Debates on the measure continued until 1912, leading eventually to the creation of a new province and mobilizing Russian nationalist forces in parliament and beyond.

"The Kholm debate brought together Ukrainophiles and proponents of Russia, one and indivisible, in common cause against Polish influence, but their alliance was situational and limited to a single goal. In almost every other case, Ukrainophiles and Russian nationalists found themselves engaged in a life-or-death struggle for the future of a land that both considered their own. The language issue had traditionally been central to the Ukrainophile agenda. In December 1904, with the war against Japan going badly and social discontent rising precipitously, the imperial government had agreed to revisit the question of the prohibitions imposed on Ukrainian-language publications by the Edict of Ems [in 1876]. Once again, discussion focused on translation of the

Gospels, but this time the atmosphere was different. The president of the Imperial Academy of Sciences himself, Grand Duke Konstantin Konstantinovich, advocated the abolition of the ban on publishing the Scriptures in Ukrainian.

“In March 1905, a commission of the Academy of Sciences also discussed the issue of ending the ban on Ukrainian-language publications generally. The discussion was held at the behest of the government, which also solicited the opinions of the universities of Kyiv, Kharkiv, and Odesa. All four institutions advised lifting the restrictions, with the Academy of Sciences making the strongest statement. Its memorandum, prepared by the philologists Aleksei Shakhmatov and Fedor Korsh and signed by many other liberal academicians in April 1905, not only recommended doing away with the ban but also opened the door to the recognition of Ukrainian as a separate language.

“The authors of the Academy of Sciences memorandum did not say explicitly that Ukrainian was a separate language, but their reasoning left little doubt that it was on a par with Russian. They achieved that effect by discarding the notion of an ‘all-Russian language’. The academics claimed that the efforts of Russian authors to bring their literary language closer to the vernacular ‘had already made the all-Russian literary language fully Great Russian by the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, and our literary speech, the speech of the educated classes and written language of every kind, should be considered fully Great Russian.’ The authors of the memorandum used not only historical and linguistic but also political arguments to make their case. ‘A state that does not know how to guarantee one of the most elementary civil rights – the right to speak and publish in one’s mother tongue – arouses neither respect nor love in the citizen but a nameless fear for his existence,’ wrote Shakhmatov and Korsh before delivering their ultimate warning: ‘That fear gives rise to dissatisfaction and revolutionary aspirations.’ Their timing was perfect: shocked by the revolutionary upheaval of the previous few months, the government was prepared to listen.

“The memorandum was published in a limited number of copies (exclusively for government use) in April 1905 and immediately had a major impact on political debates within the Russian Empire and beyond its borders. The lifting of restrictions on Ukrainian-language publications began in February 1905, with permission to publish religious texts in Ukrainian, for which Grand Duke Konstantin Konstantinovich had lobbied. All prohibitions were abolished with the introduction of new censorship regulations in the spring of 1906. By that time the abolition was a mere formality, given that the prohibitions on Ukrainian-language newspapers had been done away with in October 1905, the month that also saw the publication of the tsar’s manifesto granting his subjects basic civil rights, including ‘freedom of the word’. By the end of the year, three Ukrainian-language newspapers were being published in the empire, one in Kyiv and two in Poltava province.

“Among the beneficiaries of the changes in official language policy were Belarussian activists. In September 1906, the first Belarussian daily, *Nasha dolia* (Our Destiny), began publication in Vilnius. After being closed for its radical leftist content, it was replaced in November 1906 by the more centrist newspaper *Nasha niva* (Our Field), which would continue publication until 1915. It formed a new Belarussian literary canon and helped popularize Belarussian-language literature. Between 1906 and 1915, the number of books published in Belarussian increased from almost zero to 80 titles, attaining a cumulative print run of 220,000 copies.

“Although these figures represented a breakthrough for the Belarussian language and literature, they were very modest in comparison to publications in other languages of the empire. In 1911 alone there were 25,526 titles published in Russian, 1,664 in Polish, and 965 in Yiddish and Hebrew. The Ukrainians trailed those front-runners with 242 items. The Belarussians, who had never waged a prolonged struggle against the discrimination of their language or mobilized around that issue, were even further behind...”<sup>484</sup>

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From the strategic military point of view, Poland was vital to Russia because it was on the road to Germany. But Ukraine was, if possible, still more important, not only from a military, but also from an economic (as being Russia’s bread-basket) and from a cultural and religious point of view. For the Ukrainians were not only Slavs, but *Orthodox* Slavs – more precisely, *Orthodox Eastern* Slavs, which meant that they were as close as it was possible to be to the Russians themselves – no less than “Little Russians”, as the Great Russians rather condescendingly called them.

There was also an important difference in the way in which Ukraine and Poland became parts of the Russian empire. Ukraine was not “on the periphery” (as its name suggests) of the original Russian state, but at its very core; for St. Vladimir, the Baptizer of Russia and the real founder of the state, ruled from Kiev, simultaneously “the mother of Russian cities” and the capital of Ukraine. Kievan Rus’ at its greatest extent in the twelfth century included the whole of what is now Ukraine, including the whole of Galicia in the West.

Poland, on the other hand, was a conquered land – and definitely a foreign one, however Pan-Slavists might wish to emphasize the Poles’ kinship with the Russians. As Lieven writes, “historically the tsars ruled non-Russians largely by co-opting aristocracies into the imperial ruling elite. The one major failure of this strategy was the Poles. Members of the Polish Catholic nobility were the ancestral enemies of Russia and Orthodoxy. They bore proud memories of their nation’s former power and independence, which only disappeared finally in 1815. In 1830 and 1863, they attempted to regain this independence through widespread rebellions against Russian rule. The revolts were crushed, but right

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<sup>484</sup> Plokhy, *Lost Kingdom*, London: Allen Lane, 2017, pp. 161-163.

down to 1914 most Russian statesmen were convinced the Poles would seize any moment of Russian weakness to rebel again. Poland's geographic position across the main invasion routes from the west into the Russian heartland made that fear particularly acute, especially after German unification in 1871 and the Austro-German dual alliance of 1879.

"In 1914, the Poles were still seen in Petersburg as the most disloyal and dangerous of the empire's nationalities, apart from the Jews. Because most Jews lived in former Polish territory annexed by Russia, the Polish and Jewish danger overlapped in Petersburg's eyes. But in the Russian empire as elsewhere, new nationalisms were emerging among peoples who had in many cases never previously shown any sign of disloyalty. This was happening in Finland, the Baltic Provinces, Ukraine, the Caucasus region, and among many of the tsar's Muslim subjects. To be sure, even in 1914 most of these new nationalisms were not yet as developed as in the Habsburg monarchy or western Europe. Russia was less modern, so most of the tsar's subjects were still semiliterate peasants immune to nationalism's call. Constraints on civil society and political propaganda also slowed the spread of nationalism. Nevertheless, in Russia as elsewhere, rulers of empire faced the reality that subject populations could no longer be ruled just by co-opting their aristocracies. As societies modernized, the landowning class was losing power to businessmen, professional groups, and intellectuals. The new nationalism often attracted these groups' support. Concessions to nationalist currents might well take the empire down the road to federalism. Most Russian statesmen believed that this would be an instant recipe for weakening the empire and in time probably dooming it to destruction. They saw Austria's travails as an example of what happened when the growing weakness of government allowed national conflicts free rein: rulers were paralyzed, an empire's military power declined, and its many enemies and potential predators began to circle in increasing hope of a kill.

"From the Russian perspective, among the new nationalisms the Ukrainian movement was potentially much the most dangerous. This was partly because of the region's immense economic importance. In 1914, the eight Ukrainian provinces (a smaller area than today's Ukrainian republic) produced one-third of the empire's wheat, most of its exported grains, and 80 percent of its sugar. Without this, it would be hard to support the empire's positive balance of trade on which the government's strategy of economic development depended. Supplying Russian cities in the much less fertile northern zone would also become a problem. Even more crucial was Ukraine's role in heavy industry and mining in 1914. 70 percent of the empire's coal, 68 percent of its cast iron, and 58 percent of its steel came from the region, as did a large share of its engineering products. Until the 1930s, when Stalin developed the Urals and West Siberian industrial region, if Russia had lost Ukraine, it would have ceased to be a great power.

"The idea of a separate Ukrainian national identity also undermined all the calculations on which tsarist nationalities policy was based as well as the way

in which educated Russians understood the country they lived in. In 1897, although only 44 percent of the empire's population was Russian, a further 22.5 percent was at least east Slav – in other words, Ukrainian or Belorussian (White Russian). The great majority of these Ukrainians or Belorussians were Orthodox in religion, which had historically been a much more important marker of identity and political loyalty than questions of language. Ukrainians outnumbered Belorussians by more than four to one, and their region was richer and more developed. There was therefore every chance that if Ukrainian nationalism failed to develop, the same would be true in Belorussia. If Ukrainians and Belorussians could be counted as Russians in political terms, then two-thirds of the empire's population was 'Russian'. In this era of high imperialism, it was widely assumed that numerically small peoples could neither defend themselves nor sustain a high culture on their own. Their only choice therefore was between rival empires. The Russian government correctly believed that Georgians, Armenians, and the 'small peoples' of the Baltic region would prefer the tsar's rule to that of the German Kaiser or the Ottoman sultan. Much of the Muslim population, on the other hand, was deemed too backward to be vulnerable to nationalist ideas...

"Given such calculations, Russians could take comfort from the idea that theirs was a national empire with a secure future. In the eyes of Russian elites, their empire was strong and glorious precisely because – like its British and German counterparts – it both combined the national spirit of its core people and gave the Russian nation great global and historical significance. If Ukrainians were indeed a separate people, however, the calculations became far more alarming. The Russian Empire then began to look rather like its ever weaker, polyglot, and despised Habsburg rival. For most educated Russians and all Russian nationalists, this was unthinkable. As the leading pro-government newspaper stressed in 1911, 'The... Russian state was created by the great efforts and sacrifices of the Russian people and now in Russia two-thirds of the population is Russian... In this we see the greatness and the winning advantage of Russia over the Habsburg Empire, where the ruling nation, the Germans, constitute less than one-quarter of the entire population of the state.'..."<sup>485</sup>

Russia, Ukraine and Belorussia were three nations with slightly differing cultures in the sense of idiosyncracies of speech, folklore, dress and everyday life, but considerable identity of *civilization* in the sense of those "ideas and traditions... inherited from" the Orthodox Christianity that they had in common.<sup>486</sup> The Russian authorities emphasized the civilizational identity, pointing to the fact that Kiev was "the mother of all *Russian* cities", the capital of a pan-Russian State which in the eleventh century had covered the territories of all three peoples. Moreover (although here the commonality was cultural rather than civilizational), all three peoples were Eastern Slavic, and their languages could be said to be different dialects of a single original language.

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<sup>485</sup> Lieven, *Towards the Flame*, pp. 51-53.

<sup>486</sup> Davies, *Europe: A History*, London: Pimlico, 1997, p. 821.

So, the Russians argued, they were all really *one* nation... Thus, as Lieven writes, "Virtually all publications in Ukrainian were banned until the period 1905-14, when revolution, the semi-constitution of 1906 and the partial liberalization of politics allowed the language greater leeway. Even in the so-called Constitutional Era, however, not only the government but also the imperial parliament refused to contemplate any teaching of or in Ukrainian in schools, once again taking a much tougher line over Ukrainian than other languages."<sup>487</sup>

And yet here was the rub: that the ruling civilization (and culture) of most of Russia's ruling elites was no longer the Orthodox Christianity that had united all the Eastern Slavic peoples in the past: since Peter the Great its core civilization had been that of Western Europe. So "Russification" in practice often meant Westernization with a Russian tinge and in the Russian language. The paradox was that while the Great Russians in the nineteenth century suppressed Ukrainian language publications so as to prevent "Polonization", in the early twentieth the Russian language became, at least for the intelligentsia in the western regions, the vehicle for another kind of Westernization... A better policy, surely, would have been for the government to emphasise the "*civilizational*", - that is, in essence, *religious* - unity between the three peoples without trying to deny their *cultural* - especially linguistic - differences. For among the peasants, if not for the intelligentsia, civilizational, religious unity was still strong - and stronger than any nationalist passion.

History shows that multi-national empires, however difficult to hold together, have been ordained by Providence to be the earthly homes of very many millions of people. More particularly, the most important Orthodox Christian states have been the multinational empires of Byzantium and Russia, under whose tutelage Orthodoxy has been preached to millions of pagans and unbelievers, preserving the heritage of the true faith as far as the beginning of the twentieth century. The fall of these empires, as the history of the period 1917-45 showed conclusively, has not been beneficial to the peoples, but has rather permitted the coming to power of the most evil of tyrannies, both nationalist and internationalist. It remains therefore a matter of the greatest importance that the concept of the multinational empire should not be consigned to the dustbin of history as if only "pure-blooded" states can survive and thrive. But a multinational empire needs a common creed and civilization to hold it together; and in the case of Russia that could only be Orthodoxy and Orthodox Christian civilization...

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<sup>487</sup> Lieven, *Nicholas II*, pp. 279-280.

## 39. THE NATIONALITIES POLICY: (2) THE NON-SLAVIC MINORITIES

**1. Finland.** Dominic Lieven writes: “Conquered in 1809, the Grand Duchy of Finland enjoyed a high degree of autonomy throughout the nineteenth century. In Russian terms its status was anomalous, not only because it was uniquely free of Petersburg’s control but also because it possessed representative institutions and a secure rule of law.<sup>488</sup> In the last two decades of the nineteenth century pressure increased from Petersburg to bring parts of Finnish law and administration into line with Russian norms. It stuck in Russian gullets, for instance, that Russians resident in Finland enjoyed fewer rights than ethnic Finns, something that was not true of Finns living in Russia. With Russo-German antagonism growing and Sweden a very possible ally of Germany in any future war, the extent to which Helsinki was almost completely free from Petersburg’s supervision also caused worry. So long as Finland was governed by Count N.V. Adlerberg (1866-81) and then Count F.L. Heiden (1881-98) the very sensible rule prevailed that infringements on Finnish autonomy must be kept to the strictly necessary minimum. When General N.I. Bobrikov was appointed Governor-General in 1898, however, not only did he arrive with sweeping plans to increase Petersburg’s control, he also implemented this policy with a tactless, ham-fisted brutality which turned Finland into a hotbed of opposition.

“Real trouble with Finland began when Petersburg imposed its own military conscription system on the Finns and sought to unify the Russian and Finnish armies. Though this scheme had been in the making for a number of years, it was pushed hard by the new Minister of War, Aleksei Kuropatkin, who was appointed in 1898. The majority of Russian senior officials opposed Kuropatkin’s conscription law in the belief that it would needlessly antagonize the Finns and it was actually voted down in the State Council, the body of senior statesmen who advised the Tsar on legislation. As was his right, however, Nicholas overrode the council and Kuropatkin’s conscription law went into effect. In the Emperor’s defence it could be argued that had he failed to back up his new Minister of War the latter’s authority would have been fatally damaged. Moreover, the government’s case vis-à-vis Finland was not entirely unjustified, its fears for the security of Petersburg, very close to the Finnish border, causing it particular alarm. In terms of political wisdom and tact, however, Kuropatkin’s law, not to mention Bobrikov’s antics, were a disaster. The government, which had hoped to play off the ethnic Finnish majority against the country’s Swedish elite, quickly united the whole country against itself. Among those who protested to Nicholas about Bobrikov’s policy was his mother, herself a Scandinavian princess. In what was, coming from her, an extremely angry letter, she accused her son of going back on his promise to

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<sup>488</sup> Hosking writes: “Its parliament, the Diet, began to meet regularly after 1863, and passed a number of measures which underlined Finland’s distinctive status within the empire: the spread of education, consolidation of freedom of worship, the issue of a separate currency and the establishment of a Finnish army.” (*op. cit.*, p. 380). (V.M.)

her that Bobrikov would be reined in and commented that 'all that has been and is being done in Finland is based on lies and deceit and leads straight to revolution'. Apart from asserting that the Finns would come round if the government showed itself resolute, Nicholas's reply to his mother skated around the main issue at stake. Seen from the Russian perspective this issue was, in Kireev's words, that 'thanks to Bobrikov and his system we have created a new Poland at the gates of Saint Petersburg! And it would have been easy to avoid this.'

"In its approach to the Finnish question Petersburg made mistakes which were typical of the Russian government at this time. Policy towards Finland was decided on its own, not in the wider context of an overall strategy for achieving the government's aims and avoiding danger across the whole range of the empire's affairs. It made no sense to challenge Finnish nationalism at a time when the regime already had its hands full with a host of other domestic enemies. Nor did the government clearly define its essential interests in Finland in the light of its overall commitments, and then devote the necessary means to achieve these limited goals. By the time Governor-General Bobrikov was assassinated in June 1904 Finland was moving towards open insurrection. By then, however, much of urban Russia was moving in the same direction..."<sup>489</sup>

**2. The Baltic.** "The Baltic region," writes Hosking, "resembled Finland in so far as the Russian authorities supported, up to a point, the claims of the subordinate nationalities, the Estonians and Latvians, against the dominant Germans. But they pursued this policy with much greater caution than in Finland, since the Baltic Germans were far more important to them than the Swedes. Indeed, it could be argued that, of all ethnic groups in the whole empire, the Baltic Germans were the most loyal. However, their loyalty was to the Tsar personally, and to the empire as a multi-national entity, not to Russia as a nation. As Alexander Graf Keyserling, former rector of Dorpat University, wrote in 1889, 'As long as the Emperor dominates the nation, we shall be able to survive and develop further.' It was not only the Russian nation he had in mind. The growth of German nationalism was equally ominous for the Baltic landowners, since it threatened to swamp the *Ritterschaften* (aristocratic corporations) with Germans from the towns and Estonians or Latvians from the countryside, both more numerous than themselves. In the long run they would all become the mere pawns of European great-power politics.

"The first Russian statesman to attack the German domination in the Baltic was Iurii Samarin, who was sent to Riga as a senatorial inspector in 1849. He regarded the German urban guilds and the *Ritterschaften* as corrupt relics of an antiquated system which prevented the monarch from acting as the protector of ordinary people and obstructed Russians from exercising their legitimate authority in the Russian Empire. 'We Russians claim the right to be in Russia what the French are in France and the English throughout the British

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<sup>489</sup> Lieven, *Nicholas II*, pp. 86-87.

dominions.’ At this stage, before the drive to national homogenization had gripped the authorities, such views were unwelcome to the Tsar: Nicholas ordered that Samarin be detained in the Peter-Paul Fortress for twelve days and personally rebuked him. ‘Your attack is aimed at the government: what you really meant was that since the reign of the Emperor Peter we have been surrounded by Germans and have ourselves become Germanised.’

“By the 1870s, however, different views prevailed in St. Petersburg. Reform had come to Russia, rendering Tsars more reluctant to acknowledge intermediate authorities between themselves and their subjects. Besides, the unification of Germany naturally reinforced the ethnic identification of Baltic Germans, especially those in the towns. Ivan Aksakov had warned of this danger in 1862, when he complained that the Baltic Germans, ‘though devoted to the Russian throne, preach war to the death against the Russian nationality; faithful servants of the Russian state, they care not a fig for the Russian Land’. Alexander III took a symbolically important decision when, on his accession to the throne in 1881, he declined to confirm the privileges of the *Ritterschaften*, as all his successors had done since Peter the Great.

“Administrative integration began with the introduction of the new municipal institutions in the Baltic in 1877, but the authorities shrank from undermining the *Ritterschaften* in the countryside by introducing Russian-style *zemstvos* there. To that extent, the old policy of accommodating local elites continued: the *Ritterschaften* remained as the ultimate repositories of local authority right through to 1917, though their practical power was gradually being chipped away both by social change and by governmental measures. In the 1880s they lost judicial powers with the introduction of the new Russian courts, along with the use of Russian in all administrative and judicial procedures. Their supervision of schools was weakened by the opening of numerous ‘ministerial schools’ run from St. Petersburg and offering instruction in Russian only: it was here that many Estonians and Latvians received their basic education and began to move into professional and administrative positions, becoming what St. Petersburg hoped would be the agents of future Russian domination. At the same time an attempt was made to make Russian compulsory in all but the lowest forms of primary schools. In 1893 Dorpat University was closed and reopened as Iur’ev University, a Russian institution: professors and lecturers (with the revealing exception of theology) who were not prepared to teach in Russian had to resign.

“In religious matters there was a return to the policy of forbidding Estonians and Latvians who had converted – usually under threat – to Orthodoxy to return to the Lutheran faith. Those who had done so now found that their marriages were declared invalid, while pastors who had celebrated them were suspended investigation. Some 120 suffered this fate before the policy was abandoned in 1894...”<sup>490</sup>

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<sup>490</sup> Hosking, *op. cit.*, pp. 382-384.

Here Hosking distorts the evidence. There was a genuine, unforced movement of Latvians towards Orthodoxy, of which the most famous product was the future hieromartyr Archbishop John (Pommer) of Riga, who was devoted to Russia and Orthodoxy. The Latvian peasants of his region had begun to show an interest in Orthodoxy in the middle of the nineteenth century, thanks to preaching of the faith in their native language; and Hieromartyr John's great-grandfather had been one of the first to accept Orthodoxy in the region, for which he was subjected to persecution by the local German landowners. If there was persecution, it was much more likely to be by Lutherans against the Orthodox. Thus when St. John's great-grandfather died he was buried outside the bounds of the local Lutheran cemetery (there were no Orthodox cemeteries at that time) as the leader of the "rebels". The native peasants raised a mound over the place of his burial and put an eight-pointed star on top of it, but both the mound and the cross were removed by the Lutheran authorities.<sup>491</sup>

Nevertheless, the russification policy in the Baltic region did not achieve its purpose. For, as Miranda Carter writes, "émigré German Balts had become... at the forefront of anti-Slavic Pan-Germanism".<sup>492</sup>

**3. Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan.** The Georgian State and Church are much older than the Russian – the Church was granted autocephaly in the fourth century at the Council of Antioch. The Bagration dynasty was founded in 886, and Georgia's golden age lasted from the eleventh to the thirteenth centuries. In 1220 the Mongols invaded, the first of many invasions in which the country was repeatedly devastated and many thousands martyred for the Orthodox faith.

Daniel Sargis writes: "In the late eighteenth century, King Irakly II of Georgia, an Orthodox Christian, was threatened by the Islamic rulers of Persia and Turkey. He turned to Russia, his Christian neighbour, for protection. In 1783, Empress Catherine the Great of Russia and King Irakly II signed the treaty of Georgievsk, in which Russia guaranteed the territorial integrity of the Georgian kingdom in return for control of Georgia's foreign policy. The treaty also guaranteed the royal status of the Bagratid dynasty...: 'Henceforth Irakly II, as a believer in the same faith as Ours and as an ally of Russia, bears the title of King of Georgia, in which title and rights he and his issue are confirmed by Russia forever and for all time.'

"In 1795, the Persian shah, Aga Muhammad, demanded that King Irakly acknowledge Persian suzerainty over Georgia. King Irakly, declining to break his treaty with Russia, refused. The Persians then invaded. No Russian assistance was provided, but the old King, then more than 80 years old,

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<sup>491</sup> Lyudmilla Koeller, Sv. Ioann (Pommer), *Archiepiskop Rizhskij i Latvijskij* (St. John (Pommer), Archbishop of Riga and Latvia), Holy Trinity Monastery, Jordanville, 1984. (V.M.)

<sup>492</sup> Carter, *The Three Emperors*, London: Penguin, 2010, p. 226.

managed to repulse the invaders three times before he was outnumbered and defeated. Finally, the Russians intervened and pushed out the Persians.

“In 1798, Irakly II died and was succeeded by his son, King George XII. Fearing the Persian threat, King George suggested to Empress Catherine’s son and successor, Tsar Paul I, that he incorporate Georgia into the Russian Empire while allowing the Bagrations to continue to bear the title of King... At first, Emperor Paul agreed, but in the end he simply seized the country, putting an end to the long reign of the Bagrations.”<sup>493</sup>

The annexation of Georgia was proclaimed by Paul I on December 18, 1800, and was reaffirmed by his successor, Alexander I, on September 12, 1801. On the whole Georgia benefited from being part of the Russian empire – she would not have survived against the Muslims on her own. And Georgian saints, such as Elder Ilarion of Mount Athos, could be sincerely, even fiercely pro-Russian.

However, the price was high. “Within ten years,” writes Lado Mirianashvili, “the Russian authorities had abolished the Georgian monarchy, the Church’s autocephaly, and the patriarchal throne – all of which had withstood the Turks, the Mongols, and the Persians. During the subsequent 106 years, nineteen exarchs of the Russian Synod ruled the Georgian Church. Church services in Georgian were terminated, frescoes were whitewashed, and ancient Georgian icons and manuscripts were either sold or destroyed.

“The wanton destruction of the Iberian culture resulted in the emergence of the Georgian independence movement in the last half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Under the leadership of poet, historian, and philosopher St. Ilia Chavchavadze, members of the Georgian intelligentsia sought to preserve their language and culture, while promoting state independence and Church autocephaly. Both the Russian government and the Communist revolutionaries opposed this national movement, the latter because the movement proclaimed Georgia to be a Christian state. In 1907 the militant social democrats killed the ‘father of modern Georgia’, St. Ilia, in an attempt to crush the national movement, whose Christian ideology undermined the Communist agenda.”<sup>494</sup>

Although Georgian nationalism was essentially Christian and anti-Muslim in nature, harking back nostalgically to the medieval Christian kingdom, according to Hosking it also had “an anti-capitalist colouring, owing to the competition with the Armenians”, who dominated banking and commerce in

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<sup>493</sup> Sargis, *The Romanoffs and the Bagrations*, 1996; quoted by Brien Horan, “The Russian Imperial Succession”, <http://www.chivalricorders.org/royalty/gotha/russuclw.htm>. The smaller Georgian kingdoms of Samegrelo and Imereti (western Georgia) were annexed in 1803 and 1804, respectively.

<sup>494</sup> Mirianashvili, in Archpriest Zakaria Michitadze, *Lives of the Georgian Saints*, Platina: St. Herman of Alaska Brotherhood, 2006, pp. 25-27. Cf. Hieromonk Samson (Zateishvili), “Gruzinskaia Tserkov’ i polnota pravoslavia” (The Georgian Church and the Fulness of Orthodoxy), in Bessmertny, A.R., Philatov, S.B., *Religia i Demokratia* (Religion and Democracy), Moscow, 1993, p. 420.

the towns. "They also considered that, as a small nation, their interests were best protected by internationalism, or more specifically, by membership of a democratic multi-national federation formed on the framework of the Russian Empire. Two of the leading Georgian radicals, Noa Zhordania and Filip Makharadze, studied in Warsaw, where they became convinced that Poles and Georgians, for all their differences, were conducting a common struggle against the autocratic empire, and must work together. Marxism fulfilled both the internationalist and the anti-capitalist requirements. The Georgians became perhaps the most sophisticated Marxists in the empire, taking over from the Austrian Marxists the notion of individual cultural autonomy as the best way of making possible inter-ethnic cooperation in a multi-national state. They also adapted their original agrarian programme so that it met the demands of peasants, and in that way were able to make themselves the leading political force in the countryside as well as the towns."<sup>495</sup>

In his mammoth biography of Stalin, Stephen Kotkin writes: "The local 'Russian' administration overflowed with Georgians, who were favoured as fellow [Orthodox] Christians. Thanks to Russian rule, Georgian elites obtained powerful new instruments for imposing their will over the lower orders, and over the many other peoples in the Caucasus..."

"... Of the 8.5 million inhabitants of the Caucasus enumerated in the late nineteenth century, about a third were Muslim, while one half were Eastern Orthodox, but of the latter only 1.35 million were ethnic Georgians (by language). This minority came to rule more than ever thanks to Russia. Of course, far from everything was to Georgian liking. In 1840, imperial authorities in St. Petersburg decreed Russian as the sole language for official business in the Caucasus. This followed Russia's suppression (in 1832) of a conspiracy to restore the Georgian monarchy (some Georgian nobles had planned to invite local Russian officials to a ball and murder them). Most of the conspirators were exiled elsewhere within the Russian empire, but soon they were allowed to return and restore careers in Russian state service: the empire needed them. A majority of Georgian elites would become and remain largely Russophile. At the same time new infrastructure helped overcome barriers to tighter Russian incorporation. Between 1811 and 1864 the key military road was cut southward from the lowland settlement of Vladikavkaz ('rule the Caucasus') up through the high mountain pass - above seemingly bottomless chasms - on to Tiflis, the capital. Before the century was out, the Transcaucasian railway would link the Black and Caspian seas. Above all, the career opportunities induced many Georgians to master the Russian language, the greatest element of imperial infrastructure. Georgians memorized and retold stories about Georgia's heroic resistance to Russian conquest, but if they could, they also married into elite Russian families, indulged in Russian operas, and hankered after the peacock fan of imperial uniforms, titles and medals along with the commodious state apartments, travel allowances, and cash 'gifts'. What worked for elites became available on a lesser scale in the lower

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<sup>495</sup> Hosking, *op. cit.*, pp. 385-386.

orders, who took advantage of the opportunities to go to the new Russian-language schools in the Caucasus sponsored by the Russian Orthodox Church. Here, then, was the imperial scaffolding – conquest via Georgian collusion, Russification via the Orthodox Church – on which the future Stalin would climb...”<sup>496</sup>

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Armenia was as ancient a nation as Georgia; indeed, it is sometimes asserted that Armenia was the first Christian nation in world history, becoming so in the fourth century. However, its geographical position, “caught” between the Roman, Persian and Ottoman empires, meant that it rarely attained unity under a single state. Moreover, having rejected the Fourth Ecumenical Council of Chalcedon (451), it never became part of the Orthodox commonwealth of nations, becoming part of the heretical Monophysite family.

However, as Hosking writes, the Armenians’ hopes “were roused by the Russian incursion into their territories, and especially by the victories the Persians in 1828 and the Ottomans in 1829. For a time Russia held the strategically vital areas of Kars and Erzerum, but returned them to Turkey by the Treaty of Adrianople (1829). However, Armenians living there were allowed to emigrate to Russia, and did so in large numbers, the contingent including many peasants, who mostly settled in the hill country of Nagorny Karabakh. Armenian traders, artisans and professional people became a significant element in all the Transcaucasian cities, in Tiflis and Baku as much as in Erivan. By a statute of 1836 the Armenian Gregorian Church was recognized as self-governing.

“These population movements certainly provided new hope for thousands of Armenians. Yet they also had the effect of arousing the suspicion and enmity of the Azeris who had previously dominated the territories where they settled. The new Armenians were thus potentially insecure: basically, they remained, as before, a people divided among different empires, with no land they could securely call their own...

“The Armenians’ sense of nationhood sharpened markedly during the second half of the nineteenth century in mutual interaction with the Russian and Ottoman Empires. In both state the leading, ostensibly ‘imperial’ peoples, the Russians and the Turks, had for long been oppressed by their ‘own’ empires, but were now beginning to assert themselves. In the Ottoman Empire the Armenians were the direct victims of this process, in the massacres of the mid-1890s, and in the growth of anti-Armenian feeling among the Azeri people, most of whom considered themselves Turks. But in Russia, too, anti-Armenian feeling was growing during the 1880s.

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<sup>496</sup> Kotkin, *Stalin: Paradoxes of Power.*, 1878-1928, vol. I, London: Penguin, 2014, pp. 13-14.

“The Armenians were capable of enthusiastic support for Russia, as in 1878, when the triumph of Russian arms held out the prospect of Armenians gaining more territory from the Ottoman Empire – or at least of having Ottoman reforms in their favour guaranteed by the Russians. But after the diplomatic defeat of the Congress of Berlin, where she had to give up any exclusive right to speak for the Armenians, Russia became more inward-looking and defensive on the problem. Armenians reacted with disappointment and embitterment.

“Ani-Armenian stereotypes had always existed in the Russian official mind. According to an official report of 1836, ‘Armenians, like the people of Moses, have been dispersed about the face of the earth, gathering wealth under the weight of their rulers, unable to enjoy their own land. This is the cause of the Armenians’ lack of character; he has become a cosmopolitan. His fatherland became that land where he can with the greatest advantage and security and through the resourcefulness of his mind make a profit for himself...’ All the same, up to the 1880s, the view of the Armenians as a fellow Christian people, allies against Islam, predominated. In 1836, Nicholas I had issued a charter to the Armenian Church, guaranteeing it institutional autonomy, freedom of worship and the right to run its own schools. In 1885, however, this charter was suddenly abrogated by the closure of all parish schools and their replacement with Russian schools. Although the measure was rescinded a year later, it left a bitter deposit of resentment and suspicion among Armenians.

“This was the atmosphere in which the first Armenian revolutionary parties were created. The principal one, the *Dashnaktsiution* (The Federation, close to the Russian Populists in outlook) initially directed its hostility mainly against the Ottoman Empire, but all the same the Russian authorities were intensely aware of them. The suspicion that Armenian parish schools and seminaries were turning out terrorists was instrumental in the decision in 1896 to subordinate all of them to the Ministry of Education in St. Petersburg. In 1903 the Viceroy of the Caucasus, Prince Grigorii Golitsyn, took over direct administration of all the church’s properties, in the words of one observer, ‘placing the church under tutelage, like an infant or a lunatic’. To enforce this decree Russian police had to occupy the residence of the Catholicos at Echmiadzin, open his safe and seize the title deeds.

“This offensive procedure, coming on top of tow decades of insensitive and overbearing administration, finally persuaded the terrorists to turn their weapons against Russia and converted nearly all Armenians into their allies. A number of Russian officials were assassinated, and in October 1903 Golitsyn was seriously wounded by a terrorist. Armenians boycotted official schools, law-courts and administrative offices, and set up their own underground equivalents to take over their functions. The Dahsnaks were the main political inspiration behind this movement of peaceful protest, which they conducted parallel to their terror campaign. Gross and tactless measures of imperial

integration had provoked the Armenians into creating national institutions, directed against Russia, where none had existed before..."<sup>497</sup>

Meanwhile, in the third of the Transcaucasian territories, Azerbaidjan, "the emergence of a national consciousness was complicated by the domination of [Shiite] Islam, which tended towards supra-national forms and blocked the growth of a secular culture and a written language for the masses. To begin with, ironically, it was the Russians who encouraged the Azeris' secular culture to develop, promoting the plays of Akhundzada, the 'Tatar Molière', and commissioning histories of the Azeri folk culture and language, as a way of weakening the influence of the Muslim powers to the south."<sup>498</sup>

"With the development of the oil industry, many Azeris came down from the hills to seek employment as unskilled workers along the shore of the Caspian. Their national awareness was sharply intensified by the events of 1905-06. Armenians in Baku and Tiflis were a conspicuous and relatively successful middle class, easy targets for resentful Azeris, who formed the underclass in those cities. Now anti-Armenian pogroms took place inside the Russian Empire as well as the Ottoman, and again the Armenians, led by the Dashnaks, formed their own self-defence militias. At this point official Russian policy changed sharply. Realizing that the Armenians were potentially their staunchest allies in the Caucasus region, the government restored their church and schools to them and began to cooperate with the Dashnaks in restoring order."<sup>499</sup>

**4. Central Asia.** "In Central Asia," writes Hosking, "the thrust of imperial policy was economic rather than assimilationist. Uniquely in the Russian empire, one may consider this region a genuine colony. Its status differed from that of other parts of the empire in several ways. Its inhabitants were known as *inorodtsy*, a category common enough in other contemporary empires, but not applied elsewhere in the Russian one: it implied an alien and inferior political status. The whole territory was not even fully incorporated into the empire: the Khanate of Khiva and the Emirate of Bukhara remained nominally sovereign, as protectorates bound to Russia by one-sided treaties which included them in the Russian customs union.

"In the regions incorporated into the empire, the Russian authorities did not interfere in religion, education, local administration or law courts. These were Muslim and so far removed from Russian practice that any attempt to adapt them would have had scant chance of success and would have provoked intense resistance, which might have been exploited by the British to bolster their position in Central Asia. In this way a largely military supreme power in

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<sup>497</sup> Hosking, *Russia, People and Empire*, pp. 20-21, 386-387.

<sup>498</sup> Figes, *op. cit.*, p. 75.

<sup>499</sup> Hosking, *Russia and the Russians*, p. 341.

the region overlay a traditional and unchanged medium- and lower-level hierarchy."<sup>500</sup>

However, "tighter integration into the Russian economic system brought considerable changes. In the oases this meant more intensive cultivation of cotton, with the necessary irrigation, establishment of textile mills, and laying of railways, usually staffed by Russian immigrants.

"In the steppes the changes were even more far-reaching. Land was expropriated from the traditional elites, the khans and beks, to redistribute among ordinary tribal members. This policy also made it easier to award land to peasants being resettled from overcrowded and poverty-stricken regions of European Russia..."<sup>501</sup>

This discontent encouraged Pan-Islamism and Pan-Turkism, culminating in a large-scale insurrection in the Fergana valley in 1916...

In 1898 the Urmian spiritual mission of the Russian Orthodox Church was opened in Persia. By 1900 it had already opened more than 60 schools serving 2300 students. On August 21, 1901 the future Hieromartyr, Fr. John Vostorgov was sent to oversee the work of the mission, labouring for the conversion of the Syro-Chaldeans to Orthodoxy. For several years he waged a determined battle, the result of which was that three bishops - Mar Elijah, Mar John and Mar Marian - expressed their desire to be united to the Church. Thus was initiated the Syro-Chaldean Mission of the Russian Orthodox Church.<sup>502</sup>

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We may conclude that Russification was not a success in any of the regions of the Russian empire where it was applied, even in those, such as Ukraine and Belorussia, where religious, linguistic and cultural similarities were greatest. It even helped to create anti-Russian national movements where none had existed before. Nevertheless, it is an exaggeration to call this policy one of oppression and tyranny (we shall deal with the special case of the Jews later).

In general, in spite of the epithet "the prison of the peoples", Russia coped remarkably well with the extraordinary diversity of peoples and traditions within her borders. "The Russian empire," writes Lieven, "included a wide range of peoples of very different cultures and levels of socio-economic development. Any attempt to impose a single, 'coherent' strategy on all of them would have been unthinkable and catastrophic. Moreover, it should by now be clear that there was no easy solution to the dilemmas of empire in the modern

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<sup>500</sup> Hosking, *op. cit.*, pp. 388-389.

<sup>501</sup> Hosking, *Russia and the Russians*, p. 325.

<sup>502</sup> Gubanov, *op. cit.*, p. 690; "The New Martyr Archpriest John Vostorgov", *Orthodox Life*, vol. 30, N 5, September-October, 1980. Mar John became a bishop of the Russian Church Abroad, dying in Chicago in the 1960s.

era. If tsarism floundered, so too did all its imperial rivals,"<sup>503</sup> none of whom succeeded any better in solving one the most intractable problems of politics: how to accommodate different peoples with different cultures and religions within a unitary state. The British had the problem of Ireland, the French – of Algeria; while the Austro-Hungarians had to contend with a whole series of discontented nationalities.

Lieven thinks that "in principle it might have been possible to strengthen empire by the appeal of the great civilization [understood here in a sense inclusive of "culture"] to which the imperial regime was linked. Together with the economic and military advantages of empire, this might at least have provided some defence against the nationalist challenge... The century before 1914 had witnessed a tremendous flowering of Russian literary and musical culture. Not only had the Russian intelligentsia developed a very impressive high culture, but it was also open to people of varying races and religions, and had genuinely cosmopolitan sympathies and outlooks. Drawing inspiration from all the strands of European culture and speaking many languages, the Russian intelligentsia's culture was in some respects genuinely broader than the more national perspective common in the individual cultures of Western Europe. Though Polish and German subjects of the tsar were never likely to defer to Russian culture, the educated classes of Ukraine, Belorussia and the other smaller Christian peoples might well do so, especially if they were allowed to develop their own languages and cultures alongside Russian. Even the late nineteenth and early twentieth-century Muslim reformers, the so-called Jadids, often had considerable respect for the Russian intelligentsia's culture and were inclined to ally with it in order to modernize their own societies. Given the deep antagonism between the tsarist regime and much of the Russian intelligentsia, however, the pull of intelligentsia culture on the non-Russians was not much help to the empire's rulers. If, for example, Ukrainian or Jewish socialists were often drawn to all-imperial revolutionary parties rather than to more narrowly national ones, this was scarcely a gain from the tsar's point of view..."<sup>504</sup>

Here we come to the hub of the matter: Russification was of little value if the Russia it propagated was not *Orthodoxy*, the root of Russian culture and the one thing that could truly unite its peoples at a deep level. But the Russian government, while generously supporting Orthodoxy everywhere, did not always see its nationalities policy in terms of the spreading of Orthodoxy.

One reason for this was that the actual preaching of Orthodoxy is primarily the task of the Church, not the State – and the Church, hamstrung by its dependence administratively on the State, was barely able to cope with the task of preaching the Gospel to the Russians themselves.<sup>505</sup> Secondly, the principles

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<sup>503</sup> Lieven, *Empire*, p. 275.

<sup>504</sup> Lieven, *Empire*, p. 276.

<sup>505</sup> Thus St. John of Kronstadt had wanted to preach Christ to the Alaskan Indians, but decided to stay in Russia, where so many baptised people were still in need of conversion to True Christianity.

of religious tolerance and religious indifferentism had let down deep roots into the culture of the elites, who, if they had to preach or impose something, preferred that it would not be a dogmatic religion. And thirdly and most importantly, as Lieven points out, the dominant culture and religion of the Russian elites *was no longer Orthodoxy*, but West European liberalism, which led naturally to socialism, anti-tsarism and anti-Russianism. And so if the Russians were going to draw the peoples of the empire away from nationalism and towards universalism, it would be unlikely to be to the universalist civilization or “high culture” of Orthodox Christianity, the official religion of the empire, but to the quite different “high culture” of West European liberalism. What actually happened was a kind of bifurcation. Orthodoxy continued to be preached, with positive results, to the pagans and to the peasants, but the intelligentsia also continued to preach their gospel, the gospel of westernism, constitutionalism and ecumenism, with the most catastrophic results for the whole world...

Figes makes the important observation that it was not the liberals with their emphasis on individual human rights who exploited the nationalist unrest among the empires non-Russian peoples, but the socialists. “This socialistic aspect of the nationalist movements is worth underlining. For the late twentieth-century reader might be tempted to assume, on the basis of the collapse of Communism and the rise of nationalism in Eastern Europe, that they must have been opposed to socialist goals. What is striking about the nationalist movements within the Russian Empire is that their most successful political variants were nearly always socialist in form: Joseph Pilsudski’s Polish Socialist Party led the national movement in Poland; the Socialist Party became the national party of the Finns; the Baltic movements were led by socialists; the Ukrainian Socialist Revolutionaries were the leading Ukrainian national party; the Mensheviks led the Georgian national movement; and the Dashnak socialists the Armenian one. This was in part because the main ethnic conflict also tended to run along social lines: Estonian and Latvian peasants against German landlords and merchants; Ukrainian peasants against Polish or Russian landlords and officials; Azeri workers, or Georgian peasants, against the Armenian bourgeoisie; Kazakh and Kirghiz pastoralists against Russian farmers; and so on. Parties which appealed exclusively to nationalism effectively deprived themselves of mass support; whereas those which successfully combined the national with the social struggle had an almost unstoppable democratic force...”<sup>506</sup>

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<sup>506</sup> Figes, *op. cit.*, p. 71.

## 40. YOUNG TURKS AND YOUNG BOSNIANS

The year 1908 was a critical year because of two events: the revolution of the Young Turks in the Ottoman empire, and the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina by Austria-Hungary. With the benefit of hindsight, we can see that these two revolutionary events effectively cancelled the good work of the Russian counter-revolution and made world war much more likely. For while the internationalist revolution had been checked, its terrible twin, the nationalist revolution, was now on the cusp of victory against the forces of law and order.

Important changes were taking place in the dominant great power in the Balkans – Turkey, where the old system of Islamic Sharia law combined with the Sultan’s personal decrees was being undermined by a new liberal legal system, introduced under pressure from the Western powers, whose main idea was the equality of all citizens, both Muslim and Christian. The liberal legislation, which was incorporated into the Constitution in 1876, was displeasing to Muslims and Christians alike. For, on the one hand, the Muslims felt that they were losing their superiority to the “infidel”. And on the other hand, the Christians were worried about losing some of the exemptions they enjoyed under the old *millet* system.

For “in some ways,” as Taner Akçam writes, “Christians were better off than the average Turkish peasant, given their exemption from military service, and often the support of a foreign consulate, which excluded them from Ottoman courts, protected their homes from being searched by the authorities and freed them from Ottoman taxes. ‘The maligned Turkish peasant, at the other end of the social scale, was generally no better off than the ordinary non-Muslim and as much oppressed by maladministration... He was as much in need of reformed government as the Church, but [h]e had neither treaty, foreign power, nor patriarch to protect him, and his lot was generally unknown in Europe.’”

Defeat at the hands of Russia in 1877-78, and the gradual liberation of their European Christian subjects, increased the sense of grievance and frustration among the Turks. Massacres of Christians began, notably of Armenians (200,000 in 1894-96, nearly two million in 1915). And a new nationalist ideology began to be worked out on the basis of the empire’s Muslim Turks being the “millet-i Hakime”, or “ruling nation”.

In 1908 a modernizing group called “The Committee for Union and Progress” (CUP), or “The Young Turks”, seized power in Constantinople. The CUP’s stronghold was the Army in Macedonia, which had learned much from the discipline and conspiratorial techniques of the Bulgarian and Macedonian guerrillas. In fact, some of the rebel soldiers in Macedonia formed pacts with the Albanians, and with the Bulgarian and Serbian guerrillas they were supposed to be fighting.<sup>507</sup>

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<sup>507</sup> Glenny, *The Balkans. 1804-1999*, London, p. 215.

The result was a stunning victory for the revolution. In 1909 the Sultan was deposed. By 1913 the government had come under the complete control of the CUP. The Young Turks were thought to be liberals, but in fact were nationalists. According to Charles Emmerson, "Most Young Turks were not ethnic nationalists at this stage so much as frustrated Ottoman patriots."<sup>508</sup> Thus they declared: "We can compromise with the Christians only when they accept our position of dominance." However, one of their leaders, Namik Kemal, spoke of the Turks as "occupying the pre-eminent position in the Ottoman collective... on account of their great numbers and abilities, excellent and meritorious qualities such as 'breadth of intelligence', 'cool-headedness', 'tolerance and repose'". Another leader, Ali Suavi, declared that "the Turkish race [is] older and superior... on account of its military, civilizing and political roles".<sup>509</sup>

Now the CUP was a Masonic group, so we need say some words on the origins of Masonry in the Ottoman empire. As the Ottoman empire declined in power, it became more and more cosmopolitan, liberal and ecumenist, at least in the capital; and Freemasonry played no small part in this process. Thus Philip Mansel writes: "From 1884 the *Cercle d'Orient*, one of the main centres of news and gambling in the city, was housed in a magnificent building on the Grande Rue de Pera. It was open to men of every race and religion, and viziers were members *ex officio*. Freemasons had existed in Constantinople since the eighteenth century; the Bektashki order had remarkable, and remarked on, similarities with the Masons, perhaps due to contacts with France through Bonneval Pasha. The masonic message of universal fraternity and abolition of religious and national differences seemed especially appropriate to the Ottoman Empire. The lodge *Le Progrès*, founded in 1868, held meetings in Ottoman and Greek. It was joined by men of different religions... In another lodge called the *Union d'Orient*, in 1866, a French atheist cried, perhaps for the first time in Constantinople: 'God does not exist! He has never existed.'<sup>510</sup>

An important member of *Le Progrès* was the wealthy Greek banker and believer in the Ottoman Empire Cleanti Scalieris (Kleanti Skalyeri in Turkish), who was born into a noble family in Constantinople in 1833. According to Jasper Ridley, he was "initiated in 1863 into a lodge which had been established in Constantinople by the French Grand Orient. He was friendly with Midhat Pasha, a high official in the Sultan's government who was secretly the leader of the Young Turks. Midhat Pasha had been initiated as a Freemason while he was a student in England. After he returned to Turkey he was appointed Governor of the Danube region, and established a regime in which there was no religious persecution. In 1872 he was for a short time Grand Vizier, the head of the Turkish government.

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<sup>508</sup> Emmerson, 1913, *The World Before the Great War*, London: Vintage, 2013, p. 365.

<sup>509</sup> Taner Akçam, *A Shameful Act: The Armenian Genocide and the Question of Turkish Responsibility*, 2007, p. 39.

<sup>510</sup> Mansell, *Constantinople*, London: Penguin, 1995, p. 293.

“Scalieris and Midhat Pasha were able to exercise their influence on Prince Murad, the nephew of the Sultan Abd-UI Aziz and the heir to the throne. Murad listened with sympathy to their progressive liberal views, and at their suggestion became a Freemason in 1872, joining a Greek-speaking lodge in Constantinople under the authority of the French Grand Orient. In 1876, while the Bulgarian revolt against Turkish rule was taking place and Russia was preparing to go to war with Turkey in support of the Bulgarians, Midhat Pasha carried out a coup, deposed Abd-UI Aziz, and proclaimed Murad as the Sultan Murad V.

“A liberal-minded Freemason was now Sultan of Turkey; but within a few months he was deposed after another coup which placed the tyrannical Abd-UI Hamid II on the throne. During his thirty-three-year reign he acquired international notoriety both by his despotic government and by the sexual excesses of his private life. At first he maintained Midhat Pasha as Grand Vizier, but then arranged for him to be assassinated. He kept Murad imprisoned in the palace. Scalieris tried to arrange for Murad to escape, but the rescue attempt failed. Murad died in 1904, having been kept as a prisoner in the palace for 28 years.

“Abd-UI Hamid continued to reign until 1909, when he was deposed and imprisoned after the revolution of the Young Turks.”<sup>511</sup>

The new government of the Young Turks encouraged the prevailing nationalist mood in the country. Thus they declared: “We can compromise with the Christians only when they accept our position of dominance.” One of their leaders, Namik Kemal, spoke of the Turks as “occupying the pre-eminent position in the Ottoman collective... on account of their great numbers and abilities, excellent and meritorious qualities such as ‘breadth of intelligence’, ‘cool-headedness’, ‘tolerance and repose’”. Another leader, Ali Suavi, declared that “the Turkish race [is] older and superior... on account of its military, civilizing and political roles”.<sup>512</sup>

However, at first they renounced nationalism so as to bring as many members of other nationalities of the multi-national empire onto its side. Similarly, they were secularists at heart, but concealed this in order not to alienate the Turkish masses, who were fervently religious.

And so in Constantinople Muslims joined with Armenians in requiem services for the massacres of 1896. Again, on July 23, 1908, “Salonika’s gendarmerie commander observed how ‘[o]n the balcony of the Konak [town hall], Greek and Bulgarian bishops and the mufti shook hands and then in the name of fraternity, they invited their co-religionists to follow suit... A cry of joy burst from every lung in the crowd and you could see Muslims, Greeks and Bulgarians, the old mortal enemies, falling into one another’s arms. An

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<sup>511</sup> Ridley, *The Freemasons*, London: Constable, 1999, pp. 216-217.

<sup>512</sup> Akçam, *op. cit.*, p. 39.

indescribable delirium ensued as the reconciliation of the races and religions was consecrated underneath an immense flag emblazoned with the words 'Long Live the Constitution' ..."<sup>513</sup>

It was indeed an extraordinary moment, comparable only to the frenzied joy that accompanied the overthrow of the Tsar only nine years later in Petrograd. Like Herod and Pilate, bitter rivals abandoned their enmity in joy at the overthrow of their common enemy - one-man-rule that recognized its authority as coming, not from men, but from the One God. Instead, a new god, "the Constitution", was erected and worshipped by all.

Meanwhile, the priests of the new religion, the Masons, took over the reins of government - men such as Mehment Talaat Pasha, Grand Master of the Turkish Grand Orient, and Kemal Ataturk, who had been initiated into an Italian lodge in Macedonia. On July 23, 1908, the same day as the celebrations in Salonika, they restored the *Midhat* constitution on the empire. In 1909 the Sultan was deposed and became a constitutional monarch. And by 1913 the government had come under the complete control of the Committee of Union and Progress.

However, the new government soon cast off its liberal mask. "Over three years of counterrevolution and restoration, revolutionary idealism turned into a regime whose brutality surpassed that of Abdulhamid. 'The old espionage had returned, the extortion had never ceased, the oppression against non-Moslems had now acquired a fresher and more sinister vigour, for the measure of freedom that each nationality had once enjoyed was now being ruthlessly crushed by a heretofore unknown chauvinism.'"<sup>514</sup>

"Ottomanization" in effect meant "Turkification", including the imposition of Turkish as the single official language throughout the empire. This was an important stimulus to the rise of Arab nationalism (few Arabs understood Turkish), and the Arab rising against Ottoman power in the First World War. As for the Christians, in a secret speech in 1910, one of the three leaders of the Young Turks, Talaat Bey, "said that, while the constitution provided for equality of 'Mussulman and Ghiaur [i.e. non-Muslims]', they all knew that this was an unrealizable ideal. 'The Sheriat [i.e. *sharia*], our whole past history and the sentiments of hundreds of thousands of Mussulmans and even the sentiments of the Ghiaurs themselves, who stubbornly resist every attempt to ottomanize them, present an impenetrable barrier to the establishment of real equality. We have made unsuccessful attempts to convert the Ghiaur into a loyal Osmanli and all such efforts must inevitably fail, as long as the small independent States in the Balkan Peninsula remain in a position to propagate ideas of separatism among the inhabitants of Macedonia...'"<sup>515</sup>

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<sup>513</sup> Glenny, *op. cit.*, p. 216.

<sup>514</sup> Glenny, *op. cit.*, p. 218.

<sup>515</sup> Peter Mansfield, *A History of the Middle East*, London: Penguin, 2003, pp. 128-129.

Tsar Nicholas II knew better than anyone the true significance of the events of 1908, and the great danger they posed for the whole of Orthodoxy. Basically, the whole vast region of the Ottoman Empire had fallen under the power of Orthodoxy's greatest enemy, *the revolution*, albeit in its *nationalist* rather than internationalist form. The Serbs, the Bulgarians and the Greeks, in spite of their recent rejoicing *with* the Turks over their revolution, were now gripped by a mad enthusiasm for war *against* Turkey, whose revolution was seen by them as a sign of weakness. In October, Prince Ferdinand of Bulgaria declared his country, which until then had been nominally under the suzerainty of Turkey, completely independent. Days later, Austria, "fearing that the Young Turk revolution at Constantinople would undermine the position she had built up over thirty years, Austria-Hungary had finally annexed the Balkan lands of Bosnia and Hercegovina, which she had occupied since 1878."<sup>516</sup> Then Greece declared her *enosis* with Crete. "These events, writes Glenny, "in particular Vienna's annexation of Bosnia, set alarm bells ringing in the Ottoman military barracks, the real power behind the CUP. Henceforth, any Christian demands which smacked of secessionism would be rejected. In response, the guerrillas in Macedonia – Serb, Bulgarian, Greek and, significantly, Albanian – took to the hills once more. The military establishments of Greece, Serbia, Bulgaria and the Ottoman Empire had taken their first steps along the road that ended with the First and Second Balkan Wars of 1912 and 1913."<sup>517</sup>

The Tsar wanted to work with Austria in order to cool passions and avert world war; but his situation was made the more difficult in that Austria's annexation of Bosnia had involved a trick played by the Austrian Foreign Minister, Baron Aerenthal, on the Russian Foreign Minister, A.P. Izvolsky, that humiliated Russia and stirred Serbian and Russian public opinion to a frenzy of anti-Germanism.

The story is told by S.S. Oldenburg:- "On September 3/16, in Buchlow castle, A.P. Izvolsky met Baron Aerenthal. There are various versions of the details of this meeting. The German State-Secretary for Foreign Relations, von Schen, referring to the conversation with A.P. Izvolsky, wrote to Bülow on September 13/26 that in Buchlow Aerenthal had put forward the following plan: Austria would limit herself to annexing Bosnia and Herzegovina, but would forbear from moving on Salonika and would take her armies out of the Novi-Pazar Šandjak and would support Russia's demand that her fleet be given free passage through the Straits. At the same time Turkey's sovereignty over Bulgaria, which had for long been a pure formality, would be proclaimed to be annulled.

"Izvolsky evidently approved this plan in its general form. We have to bear in mind that already in 1876, at the Reichstag agreement, and then in a special

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<sup>516</sup> Rebecca Fraser, *A People's History of Britain*, London: Chatto & Windus, 2003, pp. 613-614.

<sup>517</sup> Glenny, *op. cit.*, pp. 218-219.

clause of the Austro-German-Russian agreement of June 18, 1881, Russia had declared her consent to the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina: 'Austro-Hungary,' declared this clause, 'retains for herself the right to annex both these provinces at a time when she considers it necessary'. So the hands of the Russian minister were tied, and it was a matter only of this or that compensation. A.P. Izvolsky thought that Austria's renunciation of the Šandjak, the freedom of travel through the Straits for Russia and the independence of Bulgaria (together with a profitable trade agreement for Serbia) represented enough compensation. Evidently he also counted on these changes to the Berlin congress agreement being accepted at the same time - perhaps with the help of a new international conference.

"But already on September 24 / October 7 Baron Aerenthal told the delegations of the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, explaining this step on the grounds of the necessity of giving these provinces representative organs, so that the local population should not turn out to be at a disadvantage by comparison with the Turkish domains.

"At the same time, Prince Ferdinand of Bulgaria proclaimed the complete independence of Bulgaria and took the title of tsar.

"Both these acts were undoubtedly a rejection of the obligations undertaken at the Berlin congress, although in essence they only confirmed a situation that had existed *de facto* for a long time.

"In international relations, '*c'est le ton qui fait la musique*', and public opinion in Russia and especially in Serbia reacted badly to these steps. In Belgrade they deemed Austria's declaration as the first step towards the establishment of her hegemony in the Balkans. Bulgaria's decision was seen as 'the acceptance of independence from the hands of Austria', while the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina - as Austria's self-willed appropriation of Slavic lands".<sup>518</sup>

"Since these two formally Ottoman provinces," writes Clark, "had been under Austrian occupation for thirty years and there had never been any question of an alteration of this arrangement, it might seem that the nominal change from occupation to outright annexation ought to have been a matter of indifference. The Serbian public took a different view. The announcement created an 'unparalleled outburst of resentment and national enthusiasm', both in Belgrade and in the provinces... The Russian liberal Pavel Miliukov, who visited Serbia in 1908, was shocked by the intensity of the public emotion. The anticipation of war with Austria, he recalled, became 'a readiness to fight, and victory seemed both easy and certain'. These views were universal and so unquestioned that 'to get into an argument over [them] would have been totally useless.'

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<sup>518</sup> Oldenburg, *Tsarstvovanie Imperatora Nikolaia II* (The Reign of Emperor Nicholas II), Belgrade, 1939, vol. 2, pp. 36-37.

“The mental maps that informed elite and popular understandings of Serbia’s policy and purpose were once again in evidence. The only way to understand the intensity of the feeling aroused in Serbia by the annexation, the British minister in Belgrade explained in a report of 27 April 1909, was to recall that ‘Every patriotic Servian who takes any interest or active part in politics, thinks of the Servian nation not as merely including the subjects of King Peter, but as consisting of all those who are akin to them in race and language. He looks forward, consequently, to the eventual creation of a Greater Serbia, which shall bring into one fold all the different sections of the nation, at present divided under Austrian, Hungarian and Turkish dominion... From his point of view, Bosnia is both geographically and ethnographically the heart of Great Serbia.’

“In an almost contemporary tract on the crisis, the celebrated ethnographer Jovan Cvijic, Nikola Pašić’s most influential adviser on the nationality question, observed that ‘it [was] plain that Bosnia and Herzegovina, by... their central position in the ethnographical mass of the Serbo-Croat race,... hold the key to the Serb problem. Without them, there can be no Great Serb state’. From the perspective of pan-Serb publicists, Bosnia-Herzegovina belonged to the ‘Serb lands under foreign domination’ – its population was ‘entirely Servian in face and language’, consisting of Serbs, Serbo-Croats and ‘Serb-Mohammedans’, except, of course, for the minority of ‘temporary inhabitants’ and ‘exploiters’ installed by the Austrians over the previous thirty years.”<sup>519</sup>

It is striking that Orthodox Christianity here does not count as one of the criteria of Serbness, only race and language... This demonstrates the secularism of Serbian nationalism of the time.

In March 1909, writes Lieven, “Vienna demanded that Petersburg and Belgrade formally recognize the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina. It prepared to invade Serbia to enforce this demand. Meanwhile Germany sent Russia a fierce note calling on it to defuse the crisis by agreeing immediately and unconditionally to recognize the annexation. Given its military and political weakness, Russia had no alternative but to do so.”<sup>520</sup>

The German action stirred up a huge wave of anti-German feeling in the two Slavic countries. Although the Russians were too weak, so soon after the Russo-Japanese war and the 1905 revolution, to take decisive action at this point, their humiliation strengthened their determination not to allow the Austrians to get away with it next time... Nevertheless, the Russians, while sharing the Serbs’ frustration with Austria, did not share their nationalist frenzy. The Serbian minister in St. Petersburg was warned that they should in no way mobilize against Austria because nobody would help them – the world wanted peace, not war.<sup>521</sup>

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<sup>519</sup> Clark, *op. cit.*, pp. 33-35.

<sup>520</sup> Lieven, *Nicholas II*, p. 193.

<sup>521</sup> Clark, *op. cit.*, p. 36.

The Serbs paid no attention. On March 31, 1909 the government was forced by the Great Powers officially to renounce her claims on Bosnia-Herzegovina. But that was only the official position. A new nationalist organization, *Srpska Narodna Odbrana* (Serbian National Defence), also known as “Black Hand”, sprang up with hundreds of committees throughout Serbia and a network of auxiliaries within Bosnia and Herzegovina. Then, in March 1911 a group of seven veterans from the Macedonian struggle, five of whom were officer-regicides founded a new secret organization under the leadership of Apis. “The constitution of *Ujedinjenje ili smrt!* [Union or Death!] opened with the unsurprising declaration that the aim of the new association was the ‘unification of Serbdom’. Further articles stated that the members must strive to influence the government to adopt the idea that Serbia was the ‘Piedmont’ of the Serbs, and indeed of all the South Slav peoples – the journal founded to expound the ideals of *Ujedinjenje ili smrt!* duly bore the title *Pijemont*. The new movement assumed an encompassing and hegemonic concept of Serbdom – Black Hand propaganda did not acknowledge the separate identity of Bosnian Muslims and flatly denied the existence of Croats. In order to prepare Serbdom for what would be a violent struggle for unity, the society would undertake revolutionary work in all territories inhabited by Serbs. Outside the borders of the Serbian state, the society would also combat by all means available the enemies of the Serbian idea.

“In their work for the ‘national cause’ these men increasingly saw themselves as enemies of the democratic parliamentary system in Serbia and especially of the Radical Party, whose leaders they denounced as traitors to the nation...

“The movement thrived on a cult of secrecy. Members were inducted by means of a ceremony devised by Jovanović-Čupa, a member of the founding council and a freemason. New recruits swore an oath before a hooded figure in a darkened room pledging absolute obedience to the organization on pain of death...”<sup>522</sup>

“Within Bosnia and Herzegovina, the networks of *Ujedinjenje ili smrt!* and *Narodna Odbrana* became interwoven with local groups of pan-Serb activists, of which the most important was *Mlada Bosna* (‘Young Bosnia’). *Mlada Bosna* was not a unified organization, but rather an aggregation of groups and cells of revolutionary youth operating across the province from around 1904; its focus was less narrowly Serbian than that of the Black Hand or of *Narodna Odbrana*. Since they were operating under the eyes of the Austrian police, the Young Bosnians adopted a decentred, flexible structure based on small ‘circles’ (*kruzki*), linked only by designated intermediaries. Young Bosnia’s great hour arrived in 1910, when one of their number launched a suicide attack on the Austrian governor of Bosnia. On 3 June 1910, on the occasion of the opening of the Bosnian parliament, Bogdan Žerajić, a Serbian student from Herzegovina, fired five shots at Governor Marijan Varešanin. When all his bullets went wide,

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<sup>522</sup> Clark, *op. cit.*, pp. 38-39.

Žerajić emptied the sixth and last round into his own head. He was buried anonymously in a section of Sarajevo cemetery reserved from criminals and suicides, but his grave soon became a shrine for the Serb underground movement and his deed was celebrated by the nationalist press in Belgrade..."<sup>523</sup>

In a very short time the *status quo* in the Balkans which Russia and Austria had pledged to preserve in 1897 had been blown apart. And now, with the prospect of a further disintegration of Turkish rule in the Balkans, the three Orthodox States of Serbia, Bulgaria and Greece began rapidly rearming themselves, as a result of which all were deeply in debt to western arms manufacturers - the Serbs to French ones, the Bulgarians to German ones.

The Bosnian crisis strengthened the alliance between Russia and France; for both countries were now more determined than ever to oppose any further gains for Austria in the Balkans.

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<sup>523</sup> Clark, *op. cit.*, p. 41.

## 41. VEKHI: THE ROOTS OF THE REVOLUTION

One of the good consequences of the failure of the 1905 revolution was that the radical intelligentsia began to look more closely and critically at themselves and their liberal and socialist philosophies. Thus a collection of articles written by a group of converts from socialism and published in 1909 under the title *Vekhi* (Landmarks) criticized the revolutionary credo of the intelligentsia from several points of view. The contributors included some names that were to become famous in the Paris emigration: Nicholas Berdyaev, Sergei Bulgakov and Simeon Ludwigovich Frank.

“The leading spirit of *Vekhi* was Petr Struve, the economist who had written the Social Democrats’ first program and then become a founder of the Union of Liberation and of the Kadet Party. Now he was disillusioned again, convinced that the Cadets had in effect become collaborators in the revolutionaries’ attempt to destroy the Russian state. Statehood and nationhood were, he argued, no less important in Russia than in any other European people, and they required that educated people recognize the autonomous value of law and order, property and culture; both the Russian forms of socialism, Marxism and populism, preached the destruction of the state, and Marxism also aimed to dissolve the nation in an international proletariat. Impressed by the example of Germany under Bismarck, Struve preached that ‘the national idea of contemporary Russia is reconciliation between the authorities and the people, which is awakening to its own identity... State and nation must organically coalesce.’”<sup>524</sup>

One of the contributors, the philosopher Simeon Ludwigovich Frank, wrote: “The Symbol of Faith of the Russian *intelligent* is the good of the people, the satisfaction of the needs of ‘the majority’. The service of this aim is for him the highest and in general the only duty of man, and what is more than this is of the evil one. It is precisely for this reason that he not only simply denies or does not accept other values – he even directly fears and hates them. One cannot serve two gods at the same time, and if God, as Maxim Gorky had already openly made known, was ‘the essence of the people’s soul’, then all the other gods were false gods, idols or devils. Activity guided by love for science or art, life overshadowed by a religious light in the direct sense, that is, communion with God, all this distracts from service to the people, weakens or destroys moralistic enthusiasm and signifies, from the point of view of the *intelligent*’s faith, a dangerous hunting after mirages. Therefore all this is rejected, partly as stupidity or ‘superstition’, partly as an immoral direction of the will. This, of course, does not mean that the Russian intelligentsia is in fact alien to scientific, aesthetic and religious interests and experiences. It is impossible to kill the spirit and its inveterate demands, and it is natural that living people who have clothed their soul in the moral uniform of the ‘intelligent’ should retain in themselves all the feelings intrinsic to man. But these feelings live in the soul of the Russian *intelligent* in approximately the same way as the feeling of pity for

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<sup>524</sup> Hosking, *Russia and the Russians*, p. 384.

an enemy lives in the soul of a warrior, or as the striving for the free play of fantasy in the consciousness of a strictly scientific thinker: they live precisely as an unlawful, albeit ineradicable weakness, as something in the best case merely tolerable. Scientific, aesthetic and religious experiences are always referred here, so to speak, to the private, intimate life of a man; more tolerant people look on them as a luxury, an amusement for hours of leisure, as a sweet eccentricity; the less tolerant condemn them in others and hide them with shame in themselves. But the *intelligent*, as an *intelligent*, that is, in his conscious faith and public activity, must be alien to them – his world-view and his ideal are hostile to these sides of human life. From science he takes several popularized, distorted or *ad hoc* positions, and although he often prides himself in the ‘scientificness’ of his faith, he also rejects scientific criticism with annoyance, as well as all the pure, disinterested work of scientific thought; while aesthetics and religion are completely unnecessary for him. All this – pure science, and art, and religion – is incompatible with moralism, with the service of the people; all this relies on love for objective values and, consequently, is alien, and for that reason also hostile, to that utilitarian faith which the Russian *intelligent* confesses. The religion of the service of earthly needs and the religion of the service of ideal values strike against each other, and however complex and varied their irrational psychological interweaving in the soul of the *intelligent*, in the sphere of the *intelligent*’s consciousness their conflict leads to the complete annihilation and expulsion of ideal demands in the name of the integrity and purity of the moralistic faith.

“Nihilistic moralism is the fundamental and most profound trait of the spiritual physiognomy of the Russian *intelligent*: from the denial of objective values there proceeds the deification of the subjective interests of one’s neighbour (‘the people’), hence there follows the recognition that the highest and only task of man is the service of the people, and hence in its turn there follows ascetic hatred for everything that hinders or even merely does not assist the realization of this task. Life has no other objective, inner meaning; its only good is to be materially provided for, to be satisfied in one’s subjective demands; therefore man is bound to devote all his strength to the amelioration of the lot of the majority, and everything that distracts from this is evil and must be mercilessly rooted out – that is the strange, logically badly founded, but psychologically strongly welded together chain of judgements that rules the whole behaviour and all the valuations of the Russian *intelligent*. Nihilism and moralism, lack of faith and a fanatical severity of moral demands, and a lack of principle in a metaphysical sense – for nihilism is also the denial of principled demands, it is an idiosyncratic, rationally unfathomable and at the same time in real life a strong merging together of antagonistic motives into a powerful psychical force. And it is that frame of mind which we call nihilistic moralism.”<sup>525</sup>

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<sup>525</sup> Frank, “Etika nigilizma” (The Ethics of Nihilism), in *Vekhi* (Landmarks), Moscow, 1909, pp. 183-185.

If we look more closely at the nature and origins of this atheistic but moralistic, rationalistic but at the same time quasi-mystic faith of the Russian intelligentsia we may find it in the Jewish chiliasm of the early Christian centuries. Thus Lev Alexandrovich Tikhomirov, who in the 1870s was still a revolutionary, but who later repented and became an ardent monarchist, wrote: "In spite of the seeming irreligiousness of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, in its most passionate dreams it is reminiscent of a moment not so much of cold unbelief, as of *an error of religious thought*, Jewish messianism or the Christian *chiliasm* that was born from it. The idea of earthly all-blessedness, whether it is expressed in the expectation of 'the sensible kingdom of Christ' or of a sorrowless 'future order' in the most various of philosophies, grows on the soil of one and the same psychology. The new chiliasm has *consciously* abandoned religion. But this difference is not as decisive as it seems. The very dreams about an *earthly* blessedness are already a rebuke to the weakness of spiritual feeling. On the other hand, the unconscious feeling which makes our rationally unbelieving revolutionaries, not simple epicureans, but fanatical dreamers about their future sorrowless order, bear unmistakable signs of the spiritual strivings of an erring religious quest...

"One may even now foresee some features of a future *mystical* anarchism, which is still thought now by the revolutionaries to be sick and illogical, but - as in Count L. Tolstoy, for example, - is already making itself talked about, and not only in Russia...

"It is not the inadequacies of the old order, but an insuperable dream about the new order that was and will remain the moving power of the revolution...

"There is nothing that can be done against further corruption until people understand the source of the mistake.

"This mistake consists in the concept of the autonomy of the personality. The false teaching of its supposed autonomy appears first of all as a result of its rebellion against God. Being left without God, and in this condition feeling itself to be autonomous, the personality at first tries to find a full satisfaction of its strivings in this earthly world. But this is impossible. The world is not capable of that. From here there begins the renunciation of the world in the form that it is according to these earthly laws. One after another there appear dreams of 'the future order'. Trying these orders, the autonomous personality rejects them one after the other, intensifying its rejection of the real world more and more..."<sup>526</sup>

"Among us revolutionary destruction constitutes the faith, hope and duty of every good radical. Everything that is rebellion, protest, overthrow is looked upon as something useful, containing the seed of progress. Destruction is

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<sup>526</sup> Tikhomirov, "Bor'ba veka" (The Struggle of the Century), in *Kritika Demokratii* (A Critique of Democracy), Moscow, 1997, pp. 189-190, 191, 192, 195-196.

considered still more useful if it is directed against the preservation of the existing order."<sup>527</sup>

Frank also saw the desire for autonomy as lying at the root of the revolution: "Socialism is at the same time the culmination and the overthrow of liberal democracy. It is ruled by the same basic motive that rules the whole modern era: to make man and mankind the true master of his life, to present him with the possibility of ordering his own destiny on his own authority... Socialism is the last stride in the great rebellion of mankind and at the same time the result of its total exhaustion - the complete spiritual impoverishment of the prodigal son in the long centuries of his wandering far from his father's home and wealth."<sup>528</sup>

Utopianism-chiliasm is based not only on a heretical eschatology, but also on a false anthropology that denies the fall of man. For utopia on earth is possible only on the assumption that the men who live in the utopia are sinless and passionless, being governed only by perfect love and humility. To suppose that any class of men, once delivered from injustice and poverty, will automatically behave like angels, is a myth. Still more mythical is the idea that the kingdom of love and brotherhood can be ushered in by hatred and fratricidal war. The means do not justify the ends; and the employment of evil means leads unfailingly to evil ends.

As Solzhenitsyn has said, "If only it were all so simple! If only there were evil people somewhere insidiously committing evil deeds and it were necessary only to separate them from the rest of us and destroy them. But the dividing line between good and evil cuts through the heart of every human being, and who is willing to destroy his own heart?"<sup>529</sup> If the line between good and evil passes, not between classes or nations, but down the middle of each human heart, it follows that the triumph of good over evil is possible only through the purification of the human heart, *every* human heart. And that is a spiritual task that is accomplished by spiritual, not material or political means, by confession of the faith and repentance of sin, not by rebellion against the king and the redistribution of property.

This brings us to a still deeper flaw of utopianism - its materialism. For while the heresy of chiliasm at any rate recognized the existence of God and the spiritual nature of man, utopianism reduces everything to the blind determinism of insensate matter. For the ancient heretics, utopia could only be introduced by God, and was awarded to the righteous in response to the right use of their freewill. For the moderns, there is neither God nor freewill - but

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<sup>527</sup> Tikhomirov, "Pochemu ia perestal byt' revoliutsionerom" (Why I ceased to be a Revolutionary), in "Korni zla" (The Roots of Evil), *Pravoslavnaiia Rus'* (Orthodox Russia), N 7 (1412), April 1/14, 1990.

<sup>528</sup> Frank, "Religioznoe-Istoricheskoe Znachenie Russkoj Revoliutsii" (The religio-historical significance of the Russian revolution), *Po Tu Storonu i Po Pravu* (On That Side and on the Right), Paris: YMCA Press, 1972.

<sup>529</sup> Solzhenitsyn, *The Gulag Archipelago*.

utopia will come in any case, as the result of the iron laws of necessity. And this fatalistic faith both gives the revolution its frightening power – for men acquire extraordinary self-confidence when they know that they must win in the end – and guarantees its terrifying cruelty – for without freewill there is no responsibility, and, as one of Dostoyevsky’s characters said, “if there is no God, everything is permitted”.

“Cosmic possession,” writes Fr. George Florovsky,<sup>530</sup> – is how we can define the utopian experience. The feelings of unqualified dependence, of complete determination from without and full immersion and inclusion into the universal order define utopianism’s estimate of itself and the world. Man feels himself to be an ‘organic pin’, a link in some all-embracing chain – he feels unambiguously, irretrievably forged into one whole with the cosmos... From an actor and creator, consciously willing and choosing, and for that reason bearing the risk of responsibility for his self-definition, man is turned into a thing, into a needle, by which someone sews something. In the organic all-unity there is no place for action – here only movement is possible.”<sup>530</sup>

As another contributor to *Vekhi*, Nicholas Berdyaev, wrote: “Just as pious mystics once strove to make themselves into an image of God, and finally to become absorbed in Him, so now the modern ecstasies of rationalism labour to become like the machine and finally to be absorbed into bliss in a structure of driving belts, pistons, valves and fly-wheels...”<sup>531</sup>

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The arguments of *Vekhi* had their effect. But still more important in quenching the self-confidence of the intelligentsia was the obvious success of the Tsar’s government, in the last decades before the revolution, in raising Russia’s standard of living and general effectiveness. For example, in St. Petersburg a congress of teachers – traditionally among the most revolutionary layers of the population – passed without any political demands or demonstrations. It even became fashionable to love your country and believe in it again...

For “the intelligentsia,” writes S.S. Oldenburg, “had lost faith in their former ideals. They already had doubts about materialism, about the ideas of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, even about the all-saving significance of the revolution, but they had as it were not decided to admit this to themselves. Moreover, this disillusion went very deep, it was reflected in the younger generation, among the students, even among the adolescents who were only beginning to live consciously. ‘The authority of the older generation has been lowered still more in the eyes of the younger than is usual among fathers and sons...’ wrote

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<sup>530</sup> Florovsky, “Metafizicheskie predposylki utopizma” (The Metaphysical Presuppositions of Utopianism), *Put’* (The Way), June-July, 1926, p. 30.

<sup>531</sup> Berdyaev, *The Russian Revolution*, Ann Arbor, 1966, p. 58; quoted in Michael Burleigh, *Sacred Causes*, London: Harper Perennial, 2007, p. 41.

Professor V.I. Vernadsky in the Cadet *Yezhegodnik* of the newspaper *Rech'* for 1914.

“The fall of the old *intelligenty* beliefs engendered, in the period around 1910, a wave of suicides among the young students. This wave then began to fall and be converted into religious searchings. In higher education, where politics had completely died out – not so much because of the energetic repressive measures of L.A. Kasso, but rather as a result of the change in mood among the students themselves, – various religious conversation circles began to appear – a hitherto unheard-of phenomenon...

“Russian society began to depart from the well-beaten track; it no longer preached atheism, materialism and socialism with its former fanatical conviction. But this change did not reach the broad, semi-intellectual masses. There, on the contrary, the sowing of the 19<sup>th</sup> century had only just put forth shoots; there the old dogmas were still considered unquestionable, and with the growth of literacy they quickly spread among the people...”<sup>532</sup>

Moreover, there were still many *intelligenty* who clung stubbornly to the old, well-beaten track of rationalism. The most famous of these was Lev Tolstoy, who mistranslated the beginning of St. John’s Gospel as: “In the beginning was reasoning...”

Tolstoy was brilliant at portraying the concrete life of men and at exposing the falsehoods of others, but remained blind to the truth that stood before him face-to-face. Thus *War and Peace* is justly famous for the superb vividness of its descriptions of free, living men and women; but the one of the author’s main messages is the perversely false one that man in all his thoughts, feelings and actions is completely determined... As Berlin writes: “At once insanely proud and filled with self-hatred, omniscient and doubting everything, cold and violently passionate, contemptuous and self-abasing, tormented and detached, surrounded by an adoring family, by devoted followers, by the admiration of the entire civilized world, and yet almost wholly isolated, he is the most tragic of the great writers, a desperate old man, beyond human aid, wandering self-blinded at Colonus.”<sup>533</sup>

In 1910, still clinging to his rationalism and having abandoned Orthodoxy, he died, alone and still unreconciled with God, at a remote railway station while on his way to Optina, that citadel of the Orthodox faith which he revered in spite of himself. The scene was captured on cine-film, the first “scoop” of the new leading art of the twentieth century, cinematography. ...

To Tolstoy’s sister, who was the nun Alexandra, his voluntary rejection of the truth was revealed in a vision: “When I returned from the burial of my

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<sup>532</sup> Oldenburg, *Tsarstvovanie Imperatora Nikolaia II* (The Reign of Emperor Nicholas II), Belgrade, 1939, vol. II, 121, 122.

<sup>533</sup> Berlin, “The Hedgehog and the Fox”, in *The Proper Study of Mankind*, p. 498.

brother Sergius to my home in the monastery, I had some kind of dream or vision which shook me to the depths of my soul. After I had completed my usual cell rule, I began to doze off, or fell into some kind of special condition between sleep and waking, which we monastics call a light sleep. I dropped off, and beheld... It was night. There was the study of Lev Nikolayevich. On the writing desk stood a lamp with a dark lampshade. Behind the desk, and leaning with his elbows on it, sat Lev Nikolayevich, and on his face there was the mark of such serious thought, and such despair, as I had never seen in him before... The room was filled with a thick, impenetrable darkness; the only illumination was of that place on the table and on the face of Lev Nikolayevich on which the light of the lamp was falling. The darkness in the room was so thick, so impenetrable, that it even seemed as if it were filled, saturated with some materialisation... And suddenly I saw the ceiling of the study open, and from somewhere in the heights there began to pour such a blindingly wonderful light, the like of which cannot be seen on earth; and in this light there appeared the Lord Jesus Christ, in that form in which He is portrayed in Rome, in the picture of the holy Martyr and Archdeacon Laurence: the all-pure hands of the Saviour were spread out in the air above Lev Nikolayevich, as if removing from invisible executioners the instruments of torture. It looks just like that in the picture. And this ineffable light poured and poured onto Lev Nikolayevich. But it was as if he didn't see it... And I wanted to shout to my brother: Levushka, look, look up!... And suddenly, behind Lev Nikolayevich, - I saw it with terror, - from the very thickness of the darkness I began to make out another figure, a terrifying, cruel figure that made me tremble: and this figure, placing both its hands from behind over the eyes of Lev Nikolayevich, shut out that wonderful light from him. And I saw that my Levushka was making despairing efforts to push away those cruel, merciless hands...

“At this point I came to, and, as I came to, I heard a voice speaking as it were inside me: 'The Light of Christ enlightens everyone!'"<sup>534</sup>

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<sup>534</sup> I.M. Kontzevich, *Optina Pustyn' i ee Vremia* (Optina Desert and its Era), Jordanville: Holy Trinity Monastery, 1970, pp. 372-73.

## 42. THE FALL OF STOLYPIN

For a vital five years after the 1905 revolution Stolypin had been the indispensable servant of the Tsar in restoring internal order in the country and in pushing through much-needed reforms. However, he continued to face a difficult dilemma. Although he saw himself as a servant of the Tsar and as deriving his authority exclusively from him, he inevitably had to play party politics to some extent in order to ensure that his bills passed the Duma. His very success in accomplishing this made him distrusted by some on the right, who believed that a servant of the Tsar should obey him alone and not resort to seeking political support elsewhere. But this was an inescapable dilemma for all those, including Black Hundredists, who supported the monarchy and yet sought to work in and through the mixed system that now prevailed in Russia. Only the revolutionaries could act with complete (demonic) consistency insofar as they openly despised the system and tried to destroy it. A man cannot serve two masters, but all right-wing politicians were forced to do just that...

And so by 1909-10, as Lieven writes, Stolypin's "stock among the elite was falling. Arguments were growing between the Duma, the government and the State Council [which had a veto on all legislation as well as the Tsar] as to whether it was yet safe to rescind the 'states of emergency' by which much of Russia was governed. This would allow the civil rights promised in the constitution to come into effect and would thereby reduce the anger of much of Russian educated society against bureaucratic arbitrariness. Some of Stolypin's proposed reforms were threatening the position of powerful groups and interests. The Orthodox hierarchy denounced efforts to widen and guarantee the rights of other religions and of non-believers. Industrialists complained about new welfare legislation for workers. Above all, the landowning aristocracy attacked Stolypin's plans to democratize in part local government while at the same time increasing the control over it of the central administration. The landowning class disliked bureaucracy only a little less than democracy. Both were seen as threats to the aristocracy's power, whose shakiness had just been rudely illustrated in the 1905 revolution. Landowners struggling to make big estates profitable were terrified at the prospect of the increased tax burdens a more democratic local government might impose. The aristocracy's intransigence was a measure of its weakness. Unlike in nineteenth-century England, the upper class felt itself too poor and too weak to be able to make concessions, buy off opposition and survive. Under the new constitutional system, the aristocracy was far better able to defend its interests than had ever previously been the case. For the first time, the landowners were allowed to organize on a national scale and their pressure group, the United Nobility, became the single most powerful lobby in Russia. Moreover, landowning nobles were now the biggest group in the Duma and were well entrenched in the State Council. They could and did block legislation that offended their interests. The Russian situation was very similar to that of Prussia in the decades after the 1848 revolution. When absolute monarchy gave way to a conservative and very restricted constitutionalism the aristocracy gained greatly in political power in both countries. As the class most trusted by

the monarchy, the landowners acquired the predominant weight in parliament in both Petersburg and Berlin. The agrarian lobby was a thorn in the flesh of Wilhelm II's government. The Russian agrarians helped to wreck Stolypin..."<sup>535</sup>

"The first sign of the court's opposition to Stolypin," writes Figes, "was over the Naval General Staff Bill in 1909. Proposed by the Octobrists [led by the Freemason Guchkov] in the Duma's Committee of Imperial Defence, which had a veto over the military budget the bill threatened to refuse the navy credits unless the Naval General Staff came under the control of the Ministry of War rather than the court. Nicholas saw the ultimatum as an attempt by the Duma to wrest military command from the crown, and used his veto to block the bill. He was infuriated that Stolypin and the Council of Ministers had supported the bill, but stopped short of accepting his offer to resign.

"The crisis united the defenders of autocracy against the Prime Minister. They managed to defeat virtually all his political reforms. His proposal to expand the state system of primary schools was defeated by... the Church, who their own parish schools. The same fate awaited his legislation to ease discrimination against the Jews and other religious minorities.

"Stolypin's local government reforms were bitterly opposed by the nobility because they challenged the gentry's domination of rural politics. Their intention was to give the peasants, as landowners, equal representation to the nobles in the zemstvos. They also proposed to abolish the peasant-class courts and bring the peasants fully into the system of civil law. Stolypin saw these measures as essential for the success of the land reforms. The new class of conservative peasant landowners which he hoped to create would not support the existing order unless they were made citizens with equal political and legal rights to those enjoyed by other classes. 'First of all,' he said, 'we have to create a citizen, a small landowner, and then the peasant problem will be solved.' He proposed to establish a new tier of zemstvo representation at the *volost'* (rural district) level, in which the franchise would be based on property rather than birth. But the gentry was afraid that the zemstvos would be swamped by the peasants, and accused Stolypin of trying to undermine 'provincial society' (i.e. themselves) through bureaucratic centralization. On this basis they organized against him in the Duma, the State Council and the United Nobility, forcing him to give up his reforms. Had Stolypin succeeded in broadening the social base of local government in the countryside, then perhaps in 1917 it would not have collapsed so disastrously and Soviet power might never have filled the subsequent political vacuum as successfully as it did.

"As a result of the naval staff crisis and the gentry reaction, Stolypin lost support in the Duma, the Octobrists went into decline, and he became

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<sup>535</sup> Lieven, *Nicholas II*, pp. 172-173.

dependent on the Nationalists, formed in 1900 to represent the interests of the empire's western borderlands."<sup>536</sup>

Now Stolypin was a landowner from Kovno, in the western borderlands, and took a particular interest in his native land and in the difficult situation of the Russian peasantry there. For in Belorussia especially, although there was a governor appointed from St. Petersburg, political and cultural power belonged to the Poles, and economic power – to the Jews. One of the reasons for the great popularity of the monarchist Unions in these western regions was that the peasantry looked to the Tsar and the monarchist parties as their only protection against these foreign oppressors.<sup>537</sup>

"The political balance of forces in pre-war Belorussia," wrote the émigré Belorussian writer Ivan Solonevich, "was as follows. The region had been comparatively recently joined to the Empire and was populated by Russian peasants. Besides the peasants, there were almost no Russians. Our Belorussian nobles very easily betrayed both the faith of their fathers and the language of their people and the interests of Russia. The Tyshkeviches, the Mitskeviches and the Senkeviches were all approximately as Belorussian as I. But they were traitors. The people remained without a governing class. Without intelligentsia, without bourgeoisie, without aristocracy, even without a proletariat and without craftsmen. The path to economic advancement was simply blocked by the Jews of the cities and hamlets. Count Muraviev... opened for the Belorussian peasant the path at any rate into the lower levels of the intelligentsia. Our newspaper [financed by Stolypin] depended on these *intelligenty*, so to speak, on the Belorussian staff-captains of the time: popular teachers, volost scribes, village priests, doctors, low-ranking officials. Then, as now, we had to fight on two fronts. This mass of people was inclined towards revolution. We had to prove to them that it could defend its political, economic and every other form of life only in a struggle against the Jews and Polonization. The struggle was very difficult. It was very difficult to prove to the readers of Chernyshevsky, Dobroliubov, and the venerated Aladin, Rodichev and Miliukov the completely obvious fact that if the monarchy retreated, they, these readers, would be eaten up by the Jews and Poles. And that it was only within the bounds of the empire and the monarchy that these people could defend their national being..."<sup>538</sup>

In the autumn Stolypin moved to strengthen this movement by introducing a Western Zemstvo Bill to supply the lack of self-governing zemstvos in the provinces of Vitebsk, Minsk, Mogilev, Kiev, Volhynia and Podolsk, where the Russian element was stronger than the Polish or Jewish, but not yet in Kovno, Vilna and Grodno, where the Russian element was weaker.

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<sup>536</sup> Figes, *op. cit.*, pp. 61-62.

<sup>537</sup> Plokhyy, *op. cit.*, p. 170.

<sup>538</sup> Solonevich, "Puti, Oshibki i Itogi" (Ways, Mistakes and Conclusions), in *Rossia i Revoliutsia* (Russia and the Revolution), Moscow, 2007, p. 98.

However, the bill was fiercely criticized in both the State Council and the State Duma on the grounds that it would violate racial equality in the region. This was doubly ironical, in that Stolypin *both* wanted to bring the position of the Russian peasant to a position of equality with his Jewish and Polish neighbours, *and* was in favour of removing many of the restrictions on the Jews in the region of the Pale. For, on the one hand, these restrictions were extremely complex, sometimes contradictory and difficult to enforce. And on the other hand, the lack of full equality of rights for the Jews gave them and their supporters in the Duma and the press a powerful weapon with which to beat the government...

However, the bill to broaden the rights of the Jews was attacked in the rightist press and vetoed by the Tsar. As for the bill to introduce *zemstva* in the western regions, in May, 1910 the Duma accepted it, but only with significant corrections that modified its anti-Polish character. But in February the State Council rejected it by 92 votes to 68. For "the gentry's fundamentalists were unwilling to see the privileges of the noble estate sacrificed to ensure the domination of Russian interests; the fact that the Poles were aristocrats should in their view take precedence over the fact that the peasants were Russians."<sup>539</sup>

Their opposition was encouraged by V.F. Trepov and P.N. Durnovo, rightists of impeccably monarchical principles who were close to the Tsar.

Stolypin immediately left the session of the State Council, suspecting a plot against himself. On March 5, he saw the Tsar and offered his resignation. The Tsar, stunned, asked him to reconsider. Stolypin then suggested suspending both the State Council and the Duma for several days while the law on the western *zemstva* was passed in accordance with Article 87 of the Basic Laws. He also asked that the Tsar order Durnovo and Trepov to leave St. Petersburg and their work in the State Council for a time.

The Tsar was doubtful about these measures, and thought about them for several days. Finally, on March 12, he accepted Stolypin's conditions. The fact that he had agreed to measures of dubious legality for the sake of keeping him was a vivid witness to how much he valued him.

But Stolypin had misjudged the situation, and almost everybody, including the State Council and Duma, condemned him. The law on the western *zemstvos* went through, but it did not give the expected results in the summer elections - the majority of those elected did not belong to any Russian bloc, but were non-party figures. Stolypin now felt himself to be in a position of "semi-retirement", and went to his daughter's estate for most of the summer...

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<sup>539</sup> Figes, *op. cit.*, p. 62.

The problem Stolypin faced was: even if he was right on this question and his general policies, he was in an impossible position. On the one hand, as a loyal servant of the autocracy, he could not do other than follow the will of the Tsar, who could veto any of his proposals. On the other hand, he had to steer all bills through the Duma, with its inbuilt anti-tsarist tendency, and the State Council, which put the interests of the nobility above every other consideration.

The problem went back to the basic ambiguity of the power structure of Russia since the 1905 revolution.

In 1911 an interesting debate took place between the revolutionary-turned-monarchist Lev Alexandrovich Tikhomirov and Stolypin. Tikhomirov considered the new order in Russia after 1906 to be “unprincipled” and “neither monarchy nor democracy” “Being ambiguous in concept and deviating from a clear attitude to any Supreme Power, it was formed in such a way that in it everyone can get in everyone else’s way but there is no one who could force the institutions of state to collaborate. His Majesty the Emperor himself can independently only not allow a law to be enforced, but he cannot independently create a law that is necessary for the country. But... the state, on the contrary, has the task of working, and especially in a country that has been so disturbed during the preceding years of woes and troubles.

“This order, which is extremely bad from the point of view of its apparatus, is, in addition to that, completely antinational, that is, it does not correspond either to the character of the nation or to the conditions of the general situation of the Empire. As a result of this, disorganization in the country is being engendered on all sides. Unifying elements are weakening. A friable, bored, discontented mood has appeared. The Russians are losing their spirit, their faith in themselves, they are not inspired by patriotism. Moreover, class and inter-racial quarrels are necessarily becoming sharper.

“Russia constitutes a nation and a state that are great in instincts and means, but also surrounded by great dangers. It was created by Russians and is preserved only by Russians. Only Russian power brings the remaining elements to some solidarity amongst themselves and with the Empire. ... We have a huge non-Russian population... The strongest of the other races are foreign to our patriotism. They are eternally quarrelling amongst themselves, but are inclined to rebel against the dominion of the Russians. The unifying element, the general bond is we, the Russians. Without us the Empire will disintegrate, and these other races will perish. Therefore we must remember our mission and support the conditions of our strength. We must remember that our state is a matter not simply of national egoism, but a global duty. We occupy a post that is necessary for all. But in order to keep this post we need a one-person Supreme Power, that is, the Tsar, not as the adornment of a pediment, but as a real state power.

“No combinations of popular representation or elective laws can guarantee the supremacy of the Russians. We must understand ourselves. As a people that

is essentially statist, the Russians are not suited to petty political struggles, they can do politics only wholesale, not retail, by contrast with the Poles, the Jews, etc. The aims of the supremacy of such a people (as with the Romans) are attainable only by a one-person Supreme Power that realizes its ideals. With such a power we become stronger and more skilful than all, for no Poles can compare with the Russians in the capacity for discipline and solidarity around a one-person power endowed with a moral character.

“But if it has no centre of unity, the Russian people loses its head and particularist peoples begin to obstruct it. Historical practice has created a Supreme Power in accordance with the Russian character. The Russian people has grown for itself a Tsar in union with the Church. [But] since 1906 that which was proper to the people has been undermined, and it is being forced to live in a way that it is not able to and does not want. This was undoubtedly a huge constitutional mistake, for whatever theoretical preferences there may be, practically speaking state reason requires institutions that conform to the character of the people and the general conditions of its supremacy. In destroying that, 1906 deprived us of that without which the Empire cannot exist – the possibility of creating a dictatorship immediately. Such a possibility was given first of all by the presence of a Tsar having the right to engage in the situation with all his unlimited Supreme Power.

“The consciousness alone of the possibility of an immediate concentration [of power] filled the Russians with confidence in their strength, while inspiring our rivals with fear and dread. Now that has been taken away. And without our watchfulness there is nobody to keep the remaining races in unity...”<sup>540</sup>

Stolypin replied on July 9: “All these fine theoretical considerations would in practice have turned out to be a malicious provocation and the beginning of a new revolution...”<sup>541</sup>

Both men were right. Tikhomirov was right that the post-1906 order in Russia was no longer a true autocracy in the full sense, and that it contained within itself the seeds of its own destruction. But Stolypin was right that there was no real practical alternative, and that through him and his government the Tsar could at any rate carry out part of his autocratic will.

But the root causes of the revolution were spiritual, not political, economic or social; and Stolypin’s reforms, while admirable, hardly scratched the surface of the deeper problems of Russia...

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At the end of August, 1911 Stolypin travelled to Kiev on the occasion of the opening of a monument to Tsar Alexander II in the presence of the Tsar and

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<sup>540</sup> Tikhomirov, “Poslednee pis’mo Stolypinu”, in *Petr Stolypin*, Moscow, 1998, pp. 235-237.

<sup>541</sup> Oldenburg, *op. cit.*, vol. II, p. 76.

leading government officials. On September 1 he was present with the Tsar at a performance of Glinka's opera, *A Life for the Tsar*. That evening, between the acts of the opera, Stolypin gave his life for the Tsar, being shot by the Jew Bogrov. As he fell, he slowly made the sign of the Cross in the direction of the Tsar (his right hand had been shot through), and as he was being carried out of the theatre, he said: "Tell his Majesty that I am glad to die for him and for the Homeland". He died a few days later.

For five critical years, Stolypin had steered his country out of the storm of revolution and into the relatively calmer water of the Duma Monarchy, at the same time significantly increasing the prosperity and stability of the country. "Another ten or fifteen years," Stolypin would tell his close collaborators, "and the revolutionaries won't have a chance." His greatness was generally recognized. The Tsar would never again find a minister like him, and after his death the country again began to turn towards the left and the revolutionary activity of the liberal Masons increased...

### 43. RASPUTIN

On November 1, 1905 the Tsar noted in his diary his first meeting with the peasant Gregory Rasputin... Now Kerensky later said that “without Rasputin, there could have been no Lenin”. This is a gross exaggeration: God would not have allowed the greatest Christian empire in history to fall because of the sinfulness of one man! Nevertheless, slanderous stories about the “elder’s” supposed sexual relationship with the Empress, and of his control of the Russian government through her, undoubtedly had a particularly corrosive influence on the reputation of the monarchy during the war and hastened its demise.

Since the early 1990s there have been attempts to rehabilitate the reputation of Rasputin, notably by the historians Oleg Platonov and Alexander Bakhanov.<sup>542</sup> We can sympathize with these attempts insofar as they are motivated by a desire to protect the reputation of the Tsar and Tsarina, which suffered so much because of their (especially her) credulity in relation to Rasputin. Moreover, it is right to point out that many of those who attacked Rasputin in the dying days of the empire were motivated not so much by a desire to save the empire as by mercenary, egoistic and unpatriotic considerations that make their testimony highly dubious.

However, even after discounting these evilly-motivated testimonies, and taking into account the political bias of such “champions of the truth” about Rasputin as Guchkov and Rodzyanko, the evidence against Rasputin is too great and too varied to dismiss wholesale. In 1995 the historian and dramatist Edvard Radzinsky came into possession of the long-lost file of testimonies to the Extraordinary Commission set up by the Provisional Government in March, 1917 to investigate the truth or otherwise of accusations against the Royal Couple and those close to them.<sup>543</sup> These testimonies, which include some by close friends of Rasputin, such as his publisher Filippov, as well as by others whose integrity and devotion to the Royal Couple cannot be doubted, and by several of his female victims, force us to the conclusion that, barring some of the wildest accusations<sup>544</sup>, Rasputin was “guilty as charged”.

Also impossible to reject wholesale are the very extensive police reports on Rasputin’s immoral behaviour. While Bakhanov among others has tried to dismiss even this evidence, Alexander Khitrov is right in pointing out that the police were, after the Tsar himself, the very first victims of the February revolution, and so cannot be accused of simply making up the whole story.<sup>545</sup>

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<sup>542</sup> Bakmatov, *Pravda o Grigorii Rasputine* (The Truth about Gregory Rasputin), Moscow, 2010.

<sup>543</sup> Radzinsky, *Rasputin: The Last Word*, London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2000.

<sup>544</sup> Which are well debunked in Douglas Smith’s highly detailed and carefully argued book, *Rasputin* (London: Pan Books, 2016).

<sup>545</sup> Khitrov, “Rasputin-Novykh Grigory Efimovich i kratkaia istoria spornogo voprosa o priznanii v RPTsZ ego oschetserkovnogo pochitania, kak pravoslavnogo startsa” (Gregory Efimovich Rasputin-Novykh and a short history of the controversial question of his recognition in ROCOR of his veneration throughout the Church as an Orthodox elder).

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It is impossible to understand the phenomenon that is Rasputin and his power over the Royal Family unless one takes into account the spiritual atmosphere of the time, not only in Russia but throughout Europe - a mixture of increased interest in religion and decadence in art and morals. There were many deluded cult-leaders collecting disciples in both the upper and the lower classes. This atmosphere helped to magnify the impact Rasputin made.

The occult wave sweeping the country during the Silver Age undermined the foundations of Holy Rus' just as surely as the anti-monarchism of the revolutionaries. Theosophy was especially rampant.<sup>546</sup>

"So many upper-class people were drawn into the pursuit of truth through metarational means, outside the Orthodox faith; attending séances, studying the Cabbala, reading journals called *From There* and *The Spiritualist*, visiting mediums and acquiring obscure books of hermetic wisdom. Self-proclaimed spiritual teachers sprang up in Petersburg, gathered worshipful followers into cultlike societies, and made fortunes offering advice, healing and the cachet of possessing hidden learning.

"Within the imperial family itself, Nicky's relative Grand Duke Nicholas Nicholaevich was, in the words of the highly sceptical Count Witte, 'one of the chief, if not the chief initiator of that abnormal mood of Orthodox paganism and searching for miracles, into which they obviously strayed in the highest circles.'"<sup>547</sup>

This was a period of apocalyptic ideas and great unrest among the people, with new gods and unorthodox saints. One of the many new sects was that of the "Johnnites", who worshipped St. John of Kronstadt as god. Tens of families uprooted themselves from Vladimir province in order to live closer to their idol in Kronstadt. Needless to say, St. John strongly disapproved of these supposed supporters of his.

In the winter of 1912-13 there was another large migration of peasants from Moldavia to Murom province and from there to Kargopol in Olonets province in the far north. They were followers of the defrocked hieromonk Innokenty of Theodosiev monastery in Balts province. Many, including many children, perished from hunger and cold during this "exodus".<sup>548</sup>

Rasputin spent some years as a wanderer, going from monastery to monastery, and also to Athos and Jerusalem. In 1899 he married and had

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<sup>546</sup> Maria Carlson, *"No Religion Higher than Truth": A History of the Theosophical Movement in Russia, 1875-1922*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993.

<sup>547</sup> Carolly Erickson, *Alexandra. The Last Tsarina*, London: Constable, 2001, pp. 96-97.

<sup>548</sup> M.B. Danilushkin, *Istoria Russkoj Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi* (A History of the Russian Orthodox Church), St. Petersburg, 1997, vol. I, pp. 54-57.

children, but in 1902 was recommended by Bishop Chrysanthus of Kazan to the rector of the St. Petersburg Theological Academy, Bishop Sergius (Stragorodsky, the future patriarch). “The latter, in his turn, presented Rasputin to the professor, celibate priest Veniamin, and to the inspector of the Academy, Archimandrite Theophan.”<sup>549</sup> Rasputin met the Tsar for the first time on November 1, 1905 through the Montenegrin Grand Duchesses Militsa and Anastasia, who knew him through their spiritual father, Fr. Theophan.

The Royal Couple, and especially the Tsaritsa, had already shown their vulnerability to religious quacks in the affair of the French charlatan, “Monsieur Philippe” of Lyons, who was a magician and conducted séances at which the spirits of Louis XVI and Alexander III were supposedly conjured up. At that time Grand Duchess Elizabeth, the Tsarina’s sister, had tried to open her eyes to the deception, but without success – she attributed her failure to her sister’s inability to distinguish between the true faith and the condition of religious exaltation.<sup>550</sup>

Philippe falsely prophesied that the Empress would have a son – it turned out to be a phantom pregnancy. But he did give one piece of good advice: he advised her to pray to St. Seraphim of Sarov, through whose prayers the Tsarevich Alexis was born in 1904. But he also, fatefully, said that after his death, which took place in 1905, another “Friend” like himself would come to the Royal Family. So the way was prepared for Rasputin... Finally, a letter of warning from St. John of Kronstadt convinced the tsar to send the Frenchman – who had been exposed by French agents as a charlatan and was rumoured to be a Mason and a member of the *Alliance Israélite* – home to France.<sup>551</sup>

St. Elizabeth Fyodorovna would also become a strong opponent of her sister’s “second Friend”, Rasputin. But the second Friend had a powerful weapon – his apparent ability to heal the symptoms of the Tsarevich Alexei’s haemophilia, a closely guarded secret and a cause of great anguish to his parents. As Pierre Gilliard, the Tsarevich’s tutor, said: “The illness of the Tsarevich cast a shadow over the whole of the concluding period of Tsar Nicholas II’s reign, and... was one of the main causes of his fall, for it made possible the phenomenon of Rasputin and resulted in the fatal seduction of the sovereigns who lived in a world apart, wholly absorbed in a tragic anxiety which had to be concealed from the eyes of all.”

As Archpriest Michael Polsky writes, Rasputin was “a simple man, uneducated, coarse but clever, he possessed a hypnotic power of suggestion and some clairvoyance. He cloaked his words and actions in a religious and Orthodox form. He was kind to all who sought his help, but dissolute in his personal life. The literature about him is full of conjecture, and the man remains

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<sup>549</sup> Alexander Bokhanov, Manfred Knodt, Vladimir Oustimenko, Zinaida Peregodova, Lyubov Tyutyunnik, *The Romanovs*, London: Leppi, 1993, p. 233.

<sup>550</sup> *Velikaia Kniaginia Elizaveta Fyodorovna i Imperator Nikolai II* (Grand Duchess Elizabeth Fyodorovna and Emperor Nicholas II), St. Petersburg: Aleteia, 2009, p. 34.

<sup>551</sup> Smith, *Rasputin*, p. 44.

an enigma. In the guileful environment of the court, he was able to have an influence on the pure, truth-loving and pious Royal couple... [But] this relationship was founded only on a mother's noble and heart-felt feelings for her seriously ill child..."<sup>552</sup>

Douglas Smith, Rasputin's latest and most thorough biographer, thinks there was more to it than that. He cites evidence that, only four days after meeting the Tsar for the first time, Rasputin was offering to advise him; "he did not shy away from addressing affairs of state with the tsar".<sup>553</sup> And the tsaritsa wanted Rasputin's influence to strengthen the tsar's supposedly weak will against the enemies of the throne...

Be that as it may, the abortive revolution of 1905 had demonstrated conclusively – to those with eyes to see – that it was not only the intelligentsia or the socialist revolutionaries that were enemies of the Tsar's rule, but also many of the simple people. This must have been shattering for the tsar, who always believed in the people's love for him; for they were indeed the foundation of his rule, a fact which had been demonstrated movingly during the Sarov days. Rasputin's appearance must have reassured the Tsar that the simple peasants were indeed with him; he was accepted in the first place because he seemed to represent that loyal and truly Orthodox peasantry that, unlike the intelligentsia, was still loyal to the throne. For, whatever his sins, Rasputin constantly spoke about God, was always loyal to "Papa" and "Mama" and reminded them constantly of their autocratic power.

Another powerful reason for his acceptance was his apparent healing gift. General V.N. Voeikov, commandant of the palace guard and a close friend of the Royal Couple until the end, was sceptical about Rasputin from the beginning. But he witnessed to his healing power: "From the first time Rasputin appeared at the bed of the sick heir, alleviation followed immediately. All those close to the Royal Family were well acquainted with the case in Spala, when the doctors found no means of helping Alexis Nikolayevich, who was suffering terribly and groaning from pain. As soon as a telegram was sent to Rasputin on the advice of Vyubova, and the reply was received, the pains began to decrease, his temperature began to fall, and soon the heir got better.

"If we take the point of view of the Empress-mother, who saw in Rasputin a God-fearing elder who had helped her sick son by his prayers – much should be understood and forgiven by every Russian devoted to the throne and the Homeland.

"The help he gave to the heir strengthened the position of Rasputin to such a degree at court that he no longer had need of the support of the [Montenegrin] Great Princesses and clergy. As a completely uneducated man, he was not able

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<sup>552</sup> Polsky, in Liubov Millar, *Grand Duchess Elizabeth of Russia*, Richfield Springs, N.Y.: Nikodemos Orthodox Publication Society, 2009, p. 214.

<sup>553</sup> Smith, *Rasputin*, London: Pan, 2017, p. 69.

or did not want to hide this, and simply turned his back on his benefactors. Then there began denunciations against him; in the Synod they began a case to investigate the life and activity of Rasputin with the aim of demonstrating that he was a sectarian [a *khlyst*] preaching principles harmful to Orthodoxy; while in society they began to speak about him as about a debauchee who cast a shadow on the empress by his appearances at court. The excuse for these conversations was disillusionment in Rasputin, who did not justify the hopes laid upon him.

“The stronger the campaign of denunciation against Rasputin coming from the Duma, the more there developed in her Majesty the feeling that it was necessary to protect the man who was irreplaceable for the health of the heir: the influence of the empress on certain appointments can be explained by her desire to distance people who were dangerous to Rasputin from power.

“Taking full account of all this, Rasputin put on the mask of a righteous man at court, but outside it did not disdain to use the privileges of his position and to satisfy his sometimes wild instincts...”<sup>554</sup>

There has been much speculation on the source of Rasputin’s healing power, human, demonic or Divine. We cannot answer this question. Nor can we be sure that he really did heal. For the possibility remains that his healings were actually the work of the prayers of those close to the Tsarevich or to the Grace communicated in the holy sacraments he received. Thus the most famous case of healing – at Spala in Poland on October 10, 1912 – actually took place immediately after he had received Divine Communion, and in his account to his mother the Tsar mentions the Communion but not Rasputin...<sup>555</sup>

“Let us not judge the doting parents,” writes D.P. Anashkin, “for grasping at any opportunity to aid their son, who himself loved Grigory Efimovich. But again arises the question of this character’s two-faced nature. Did he truly love the Royal Family? If it were so, he would not have discredited them in the eyes of the public by his behavior. Or, if he saw that the situation had gotten out of hand, then he would have quietly withdrawn. Instead, he placed self-assuredness before this. Besides which, sanctity does not signify omniscience. Though sincere, the Royal Family misjudged their ‘friend.’

“It must be noted that the ‘special intimacy of the elder’ with the Royal Family advertised by Rasputin’s admirers is greatly exaggerated. To be exact, there was no ‘special bond’ at all. The Tsar, contrary to the commentary of both the pro-Rasputin and the Soviet press, did not place blind trust in Rasputin. In a letter to the Empress, he writes, ‘As far as Rasputin’s counsels, you know how carefully one must regard his counsels.’”<sup>556</sup>

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<sup>554</sup> Voeikov, *op. cit.*, pp. 58-59.

<sup>555</sup> *The Romanov Royal Martyrs*, p. 146.

<sup>556</sup> Anashkin, “The Real Rasputin?: A Look at His Admirers’ Revisionist History”, *Orthodox Life*, May 4, 2017.

Again, on 7 September November, 1916 the Tsar wrote to his wife: "Our Friend's opinions about people are sometimes quite odd, as you yourself know. One should therefore be careful, especially when appointments to high positions are concerned."<sup>557</sup>

And on 10 November he wrote again to her concerning his decision to sack one of his ministers: "Only please don't mix in our Friend. It is I who carry the responsibility [and] I want to be free to choose accordingly."<sup>558</sup>

This judgement was confirmed by the Tsar's sister Grand Duchess Olga Alexandrovna, who claims that the real influence of Rasputin on the Tsar was negligible: "Knowing Nicky as I did, I must insist that Rasputin had not a particle of influence over him. It was Nicky who eventually put a stop to Rasputin's visits to the palace. It was again Nicky who sent the man back to Siberia and that more than once. And some of Nicky's letters to Alicky are proof enough of what he really thought of Rasputin's advice..."

Nevertheless, during the war through the Empress Rasputin's *pressure* on the Tsar (during the war in her letters to him she mentioned Rasputin 228 times, while the tsar mentioned him only eight times<sup>559</sup>undoubtedly increased. And also, it would seem, the comfort he brought him. For in August or September 1916, to General Alexeyev's question what he could see in the dirty peasant, the Tsar replied: "I find in him what I cannot find in any of our clergy".<sup>560</sup>

"As of 1914," writes Smith, "Nicholas had rarely ever taken Rasputin's advice on important matters and when he did, it was restricted to religious affairs. It was not until a year later after Nicholas had assumed supreme command of the armed forces in 1915 and was away at general headquarters (Stavka) that he showed any willingness, and then reluctantly and rarely, to follow Rasputin's advice."<sup>561</sup>

But Rasputin's influence became stronger and more dangerous during the war because, with the Tsar at the front, control of home appointments *de facto* came under the control of the Tsarina, who always turned to Rasputin and to those who were approved by him...

Voeikov points out that from 1914 Vyrubova and Rasputin "began to take a greater and greater interest in questions of internal politics", but at the same time argues that the number of appointments actually made by the Tsarina were few.<sup>562</sup> Bakhanov calculates that there were eleven. But these few

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<sup>557</sup> Radzinsky, *Rasputin: The Last Word*, p. 413.

<sup>558</sup> Radzinsky, *Rasputin: The Last Word*, p. 410.

<sup>559</sup> Sergei Firsov, *Russkaia Tserkov' Nakanune Peremen* (The Russian Church on the Eve of the Changes), Moscow, 2002, p. 475

<sup>560</sup> Firsov, *op. cit.*, p. 452.

<sup>561</sup> Smith, *Rasputin*, p. 364.

<sup>562</sup> Voeikov, *op. cit.*, pp. 50, 143.

included Prime Ministers, Interior Ministers and church metropolitans! Moreover, even the Tsarina admitted that one of them, the appointment of A.N. Khvostov as Interior Minister, was disastrous!<sup>563</sup> It is hardly surprising, in those circumstances, that the reputation of the Royal Couple suffered...

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Of particular significance was the relationship between Rasputin and Archimandrite, later Bishop Theophan (Bystrov).<sup>564</sup> Vladyka was at first impressed by the peasant, but became disillusioned with him after becoming convinced, from his own observations and from the confessions of his spiritual daughters, that the man was untrustworthy and sexually rapacious.

“After a while,” he testified to the Extraordinary Commission, “rumours reached me that Rasputin had resumed his former way of life and was undertaking something against us... I decided to resort to a final measure – to denounce him openly and to communicate everything to the former emperor. It was not, however, the emperor who received me but his wife in the presence of the maid of honour Vyubova.

“I spoke for about an hour and demonstrated that Rasputin was in a state of spiritual deception... The former empress grew agitated and objected, citing theological works... I destroyed all her arguments, but she... reiterated them: ‘It is all falsehood and slander’... I concluded the conversation by saying that I could no longer have anything to do with Rasputin... I think Rasputin, as a cunning person, explained to the royal family that my speaking against him was because I envied his closeness to the Family... that I wanted to push him out of the way.

“After my conversation with the empress, Rasputin came to see me as if nothing had happened, having apparently decided that the empress’s displeasure had intimidated me... However, I told him in no uncertain terms, ‘Go away, you are a fraud.’ Rasputin fell on his knees before me and asked my forgiveness... But again I told him, ‘Go away, you have violated a promise given before God.’ Rasputin left, and I did not see him again.”

At this point Vladyka received a written confession from a former devotee of Rasputin’s, Khionia Berladskaya. On reading this, he understood that Rasputin was “a wolf in sheep’s clothing” and “a sectarian of the *khlyst* type”

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<sup>563</sup> Bakhanov, *Imperator Nikolai II-ij*, Moscow, 1998, p. 371.

<sup>564</sup> On this important, but unsung hero of the faith, see Monk Anthony (Chernov), *Vie de Monseigneur Théophane, Archevêque de Poltava et de Pereiaslavl* (The Life of his Eminence Theophan, Archbishop of Poltava and Pereyaslavl), Lavardac: Monastère Orthodoxe St. Michel, 1988; Richard Bettes, Vyacheslav Marchenko, *Dukhovnik Tsarskoj Sem’i* (Spiritual Father of the Royal Family), Moscow: Valaam Society of America, 1994, pp. 60-61; Archbishop Averky (Taushev), *Vysokopreosviashchennij Feofan, Arkhiepiskop Poltavskij i Pereiaslavskij* (His Eminence Theophan, Archbishop of Poltava and Pereyaslavl), Jordanville: Holy Trinity Monastery, 1974 ; Radzinsky, *Rasputin*, op. cit.

who “taught his followers not to reveal his secrets even to their confessors. For if there is allegedly no sin in what these sectarians do, then their confessors need not be made aware of it.”

“Availing myself of that written confession, I wrote the former emperor a second letter... in which I declared that Rasputin not only was in a state of spiritual deception but was also a criminal in the religious and moral sense... In the moral sense because, as it followed from the ‘confession’, Father Gregory had seduced his victims.”

There was no reply to this letter. “I sensed that they did not want to hear me out and understand... It all depressed me so much that I became quite ill.” And indeed, the Tsaritsa’s faith in the “elder” was unshakeable; she felt in her heart – “which has never deceived me” – that Rasputin was a man of God and that her family and Russia lived through his prayers. It must be remembered that by this time the empress, worn down by many trials, had developed what Dr. Botkin, who was later martyred with the Royal Family, called “progressive hysteria”. In his view, her major illness was “psychosomatic”, although she had real physical weaknesses in the form of sciatica and a weak heart. These factors must be taken into account when assessing her behaviour.

In fact, Vladyka’s letter had reached the Tsar, and the scandal surrounding the rape of Alexei’s nurse, Maria Vishnyakova, whose confessor was Vladyka, could no longer be concealed. Vishnyakova herself testified to the Extraordinary Commission that she had been raped by Rasputin during a visit to Verkhoturys Monastery in Tobolsk province, a journey undertaken at the empress’s suggestion. “Upon our return to Petrograd, I reported everything to the empress, and I also told Bishop Theophan in a private meeting with him. The empress did not give any heed to my words and said that everything Rasputin does is holy. From that time forth I did not see Rasputin, and in 1913 I was dismissed from my duties as nurse. I was also reprimanded for frequenting the Right Reverend Theophan.”

Another person in on the secret was the maid of honour Sophia Tyutcheva, grand-daughter of the famous poet. As she witnessed to the Commission, she was summoned to the Tsar, who said to her:

“You have guessed why I summoned you. What is going on in the nursery?”

She told him.

“So you too do not believe in Rasputin’s holiness?”

She replied that she did not.

“But what if I told you that all these difficult years I have survived only because of his prayers.”

“You have survived them because of the prayers of the whole of Russia, Your Majesty.”

Then he “began saying that he did not believe any of the stories, that the impure always sticks to the pure, and that he did not understand what had suddenly happened to Theophan, who had always been so fond of Rasputin. During this time he pointed to a letter from Theophan on his desk.”

“‘You, your majesty, are too pure of heart and do not see what filth surrounds you.’ I said that it filled me with fear that such a person could be near the grand duchesses.

“‘Am I then the enemy of my own children?’ the sovereign objected.

“He asked me never to mention Rasputin’s name in conversation. In order for that to take place, I asked the sovereign to arrange things so that Rasputin would never appear in the children’s wing.”

But her wish was not granted...

In March and April, 1910 the newspaper *Moscow Gazette*, whose editor was the monarchist Lev Tikhomirov, published three articles against Rasputin by a member of the circle of the Grand Duchess Elizabeth Fyodorovna, Michael Alexandrovich Novoselov, the future bishop-martyr of the Catacomb Church. “Why do the bishops,” he wrote, “who are well acquainted with the activities of this blatant deceiver and corrupter, keep silent?... Where is their grace, if through laziness or lack of courage they do not keep watch over the purity of the faith of the Church of God and allow the lascivious *khlyst* to do the works of darkness under the mask of light?” The brochure was forbidden and confiscated while it was still at the printer’s, and the newspaper *The Voice of Moscow* was heavily fined for publishing excerpts from it.

However, Tikhomirov, while not changing his opinion about Rasputin, came to believe that exposing him in print was counter-productive and only strengthened the determination of the Tsarina to defend him while undermining the authority of the Tsar. This was also the opinion of Prime Minister Kokovtsev.

Private admonitions, however, were another matter. Also disturbed by the rumours about Rasputin was Kokovtsev’s predecessor as Prime Minister, Peter Arkadievich Stolypin. But he had to confess, as his daughter Maria relates: “Nothing can be done. Every time the opportunity presents itself I warn his Majesty. But this is what he replied to me recently: ‘I agree with you, Peter Arkadievich, but better ten Rasputins than one hysterical empress.’ Of course, the whole matter is in that. The empress is ill, seriously ill; she believes that Rasputin is the only person in the whole world who can help the heir, and it is beyond human strength to persuade her otherwise. You know how difficult in general it is to talk to her. If she is taken with some idea, then she no longer

takes account of whether it is realisable or not... Her intentions are the very best, but she is really ill..."

In the spring of 1911, after listening to a report on Rasputin by Stolypin, the tsar thanked him and said: "I know and believe, Peter Arkadyevich, that you are sincerely devoted to me. Perhaps all that you say is true. But I beseech you never again to talk to me about Rasputin. In any case I can do nothing..."<sup>565</sup>

In 1911 even the first-hierarch of the Russian Church, Metropolitan Anthony (Vadkovsky) reproached the Tsar about Raputin – but was told that it was none of his business...<sup>566</sup>

In November, 1910, Bishop Theophan went to the Crimea to recover from his illness. But he did not give up, and inundated his friend Bishop Hermogen of Saratov, the future hieromartyr, with letters. It was his aim to enlist this courageous fighter against freethinking in his fight against Rasputin. But this was difficult because it had been none other than Vladyka Theophan who had introduced Rasputin to Bishop Hermogen, speaking of him, as Bishop Hermogen himself said, "in the most laudatory terms." Indeed, for a time Bishop Hermogen and Rasputin had become allies in the struggle against freethinking and modernism.

Unfortunately, a far less reliable person then joined himself to Rasputin's circle – Sergius Trophanov, in monasticism Iliodor, one of Bishop Theophan's students at the academy. He later became a co-worker of Dzerzhinsky, a Baptist, married and had seven children. In an interview with the newspaper *Rech'* (January 9, 1913) Fr. Iliodor said: "I used to be a magician and fooled the people. I was a Deist." He built a large church in Tsaritsyn on the Volga, and began to draw thousands to it with his fiery sermons against the Jews and the intellectuals and the capitalists. He invited Rasputin to join him in Tsaritsyn and become the elder of a convent there. Rasputin agreed.

However, Iliodor's inflammatory sermons were not pleasing to the authorities, and in January, 1911 he was transferred to a monastery in Tula diocese. But he refused to go, locked himself in his church in Tsaritsyn and declared a hunger-strike. Bishop Hermogen supported him, but the tsar did not, and ordered him to be removed from Tsaritsyn. When Rasputin's bad actions began to come to light, Hermogen vacillated for a long time. However, having made up his mind that Vladyka Theophan was right, and having Iliodor on his side now too, he decided to bring the matter up before the Holy Synod, of which he was a member, at its next session. Before that, however, he determined to denounce Rasputin to his face.

On December 16, 1911, according to Iliodor's account, Hermogen, clothed in hierarchical vestments and holding a cross in his hand, "took hold of the head

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<sup>565</sup> Bakhanov, *Imperator Nikolai II*, Moscow, 1998, p. 294.

<sup>566</sup> Firsov, *op. cit.*, p. 460.

of the 'elder' with his left hand, and with his right started beating him on the head with the cross and shouting in a terrifying voice, 'Devil! I forbid you in God's name to touch the female sex. Brigand! I forbid you to enter the royal household and to have anything to do with the tsarina! As a mother brings forth the child in the cradle, so the holy Church through its prayers, blessings, and heroic feats has nursed that great and sacred thing of the people, the autocratic rule of the tsars. And now you, scum, are destroying it, you are smashing our holy vessels, the bearers of autocratic power... Fear God, fear His life-giving cross!"

Then they forced Rasputin to swear that he would leave the palace. According to one version of events, Rasputin swore, but immediately told the empress what had happened. According to another, he refused, after which Vladyka Hermogen cursed him. In any case, on the same day, December 16, five years later, he was killed...

Then Bishop Hermogen went to the Holy Synod. First he gave a speech against the *khlysty*. Unfortunately, only a minority of the bishops supported the courageous bishop. The majority followed the over-procurator in expressing dissatisfaction with his interference "in things that were not of his concern". Moreover, accusations of *khlystovstvo* carried much less weight after Bishop Alexis of Tobolsk decided, in November, 1912, to cut short and shelve his diocese's official inquiry into Rasputin's supposed *khlystovstvo*.<sup>567</sup>

Vladyka Hermogen was then ordered to return to his diocese. As the director of the chancery of the over-procurator witnessed, "he did not obey the order and, as I heard, asked by telegram for an audience with the tsar, indicating that he had an important matter to discuss, but was turned down." On receiving this rejection, Bishop Hermogen began to weep. Then he said: "They will kill the tsar, they will kill the tsar, they will surely kill him."

The opponents of Rasputin now felt the fury of the Tsar. Bishop Hermogen and Iliodor were exiled to remote monasteries. (Iliodor took his revenge by leaking forged letters of the Empress to Rasputin.) And Vladyka Theophan was transferred to the see of Astrakhan. The Tsar ordered the secular press to stop printing stories about Rasputin. But as well as being against the constitution, which guaranteed freedom of the press, this order proved to be ineffectual – the torrent of rumours about Rasputin could not be stopped.

Before leaving the Crimea, Vladyka called on Rasputin's friend, the deputy over-procurator Damansky. He told him: "Rasputin is a vessel of the devil, and the time will come when the Lord will chastise him and those who protect him." Later, in October, 1913, Rasputin tried to take his revenge on Bishop Theophan by bribing the widow of a Yalta priest who knew him to say that Vladyka had said that he had had relations with the empress. The righteous widow rejected his money and even spat in his face...

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<sup>567</sup> Firsov, *op. cit.*, pp. 469-70.

Who, then, was Rasputin? Formally speaking he was a heretic, and not only because of his support for the name-worshippers, or the suspicions that he was a *khlyst*, but also because of his indifferentism: "Every faith comes from the Lord," he wrote, "one must never criticize another faith".<sup>568</sup> As for his morality, even allowing for some exaggerations and straight falsehoods, it was certainly corrupt...

But this takes us only part of the way to understanding his personality and significance. Bishop Theophan's wrote to the Tsar that Rasputin was "in spiritual delusion" and "a criminal in both the religious and moral sense of the word".<sup>569</sup> At the same time, in Theophan's opinion "he was not a hypocrite, not a scoundrel. He was a true man of God, having come from the simple people. But under the influence of high society, which could not understand the simple man, a terrible spiritual catastrophe took place, and he fell. And the milieu that had brought this about looked upon it with the most frivolous attitude. For high society this was nothing but a 'laugh'."

This opinion accords with the words of the holy Elder Gabriel of Seven Lakes Monastery (+1915), who had once tried to dissuade Rasputin from going to the capital: "You'll lose your way in Petersburg, the city will ruin you." Unfortunately, Rasputin did not heed his advice. And so, as his daughter Maria wrote, he allowed himself "to be caught by the seductions of the capital".<sup>570</sup>

Archbishop Anthony (Khrapovitsky) had a similar opinion. After having tea with him twice, Rasputin "revealed himself as a deceiver and intriguer..."

But the Royal Couple, "surrounded as they were from all sides by flattery and slanders, decided that love for truth and honourableness remained only in the simple people, and therefore turned to 'the people's reason'..."

"However, they forgot about the most important point in such a choice.

"I myself was raised in the countryside amidst middle-ranking landowners and close to the people, and I share all the positive declarations about the people's reason and honourableness. But I insist on my conviction that a peasant is worthy of every respect only as long as he remains a peasant. But if he enters the milieu of the masters, he will unfailingly be corrupted..."<sup>571</sup>

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<sup>568</sup> Smith, *Rasputin*, p. 159. However, during his pilgrimage to the Holy Land in 1911 Rasputin did make some uncomplimentary remarks about other faiths...

<sup>569</sup> Smith, *Rasputin*, p. 163.

<sup>570</sup> Smith, *Rasputin*, pp. 52, 58.

<sup>571</sup> Khrapovitsky, "Moi Vospominania" (My Reminiscences), *Tserkovnie Vedomosti*, N 450, in Archbishop Nikon (Rklitsky), *Zhizneopisanie Blazhennejshago Antonia* (Biography of his Beatitude Anthony), vol. 3, New York, 1957, pp. 8-11.

Perhaps the most weighty witness concerning Rasputin came from St. John of Kronstadt, who died in 1908, before Rasputin had become notorious. According to a chanter in the choir of his St. Andrew cathedral in Kronstadt, "Once, at the end of a service, when Fr. John came out onto the ambon, a tall man with a black beard came up to him, asking for a blessing. Fr. John stepped away from him, stretching the palm of his right hand towards him, and exclaimed threateningly: 'You will not have my blessing, for your life will be in accordance with your name ["debauched"].' The perplexity of those who heard and saw this was soon explained: this turned out to be Rasputin."<sup>572</sup>

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<sup>572</sup> Liubov Millar, *Tsarskaia Semia – zhertva temnoj sily* (The Royal Family – victims of the dark force), Melbourne, 1998, pp. 107-108.

#### 44. NAME-WORSHIPPERS, SYMBOLISTS AND OCCULTISTS

A.J.P. Taylor writes: "Men's minds seem to have been on edge in the last two or three years before the war in a way they had not been before, as though they had become consciously weary of peace and security. You can see it in things remote from international politics... in the artistic movement called Futurism, in the militant suffragettes... in the working class trend toward Syndicalism. Men wanted violence for its own sake; they welcomed war as a relief from materialism. European civilization was, in fact, breaking down even before war destroyed it..."<sup>573</sup>

This was a revolution in spirit before the revolution in material forms. In Russia, this revolutionary spirit took a particular form, often religious and esoteric. The contagion spread even outside Russia, into the Russian monastery and sketes of Mount Athos. Here it manifested itself especially in the so-called name-worshipping heresy. The ignorance and superstition of the name-worshipping monks did not grow on an empty place; and pseudo-elders such as Rasputin and Iliodor could not have flourished in a more truly pious society...

In 1907, a Russian Athonite, Schema-monk Hilarion, published a book on the Jesus prayer entitled *On the Mountains of the Caucasus*. This book was at first well-received and passed the spiritual censor; but later its claim that the name of God is God - more precisely, that the Name of God as uttered in the Jesus prayer is not only holy and filled with the grace of God, but is holy *in and of itself*, being *God Himself* - elicited criticism. Although both the Greek and Russian Churches condemned the heresy<sup>574</sup>, the name-worshippers rose up and expelled their Orthodox abbots and spiritual leaders.

The leaders of the heresy on Mount Athos were Hieromonk Anthony (Bulatovich) and Archimandrite David, of the Russian skete of St. Andrew. Bulatovich was the son of a rich landowner of leftist political views. . In 1905, during the Russo-Japanese war, Bulatovich had commanded a squadron and for some reason ordered his men to attack a Russian battalion. 2000 men were killed or wounded. For this he was deprived of his officer's rank. According to the law, he should have been shot. But he was delivered from that fate on the grounds that he was mad. He was sent St. John of Kronstadt so that the saint

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<sup>573</sup> Taylor, *Englishmen and Others*, London: Hamish Hamilton, 1956, p. 121.

<sup>574</sup> The heresy was condemned by the Ecumenical Patriarchate in 1912 (Charter No. 8522 of Patriarch Joachim III to Mount Athos, dated September 12) and 1913 (Charter No. 758 of Patriarch German V to Mount Athos, dated February 15), and by the Russian Holy Synod in 1913 (Epistle of May 18, and Decree of August 27, No. 7644). See *Ekklesiastiki Alitheia*, N 16, April 20, 1913, pp. 123-125, N 19, May 11, 1913, pp. 145-146, N 11, N 24, June 15, 1913, pp. 187-191, March 15, 1914, p. 119 (in Greek); "O lzhe-uchenii imiabozhnikov", *Tserkovnie Vedomosti*, N 20, 1913. Cf. Bishop Photius of Marathon, "A Response to certain Name-Worshippers", *The Church of the GOC of America*, February 29, 2012, <http://www.hotca.org/orthodoxy/theological-texts/352-a-response-to-certain-name-worshippers>.

should pray for him and lead him to repentance. St. John blessed him to become a monk, and in 1906 he was tonsured in the Nikifor podvorie in St. Petersburg. In 1910 he went to Mount Athos and was received into the St. Andrew skete. St. John had blessed him to receive Communion every week, but on Athos monks were not allowed to commune more often than once every two weeks. He began to demand that he commune every day. So the abbot had him made a hieromonk, in which rank he could commune at every liturgy. In 1911 he was ordained and immediately went to Abyssinia, where he had some acquaintances, taking with him two monks from Athos. On arriving there, he decided to open a monastery without a blessing, and demanded that Athos send 50 monks to Abyssinia so as to build a monastery there. But nobody wanted to join him, and the two monks who were with him returned to Athos. In 1912 he returned to Athos and became the leader of the name-worshippers, who supported Hilarion's brochure. He gathered together a group of young novices and created a rebellion. He beat up the abbot, kicked out the elders and took over the skete. Monk Clement witnesses that Bulatovich and his supporters even trampled on their opponent with their feet.

The other leader of the group, Archimandrite David, openly declared at a meeting of the monks that Archimandrite Jerome, the superior of the skete, had "renounced God". Jerome replied that he did not recognize Bulatovich's teaching, but by no means renounced the Lord Jesus Christ, and believed that Christ was true God and that His name was holy, terrible, worthy of veneration, but not God Himself.

"But I," said Fr. David, "confess that the name of Jesus is God Himself in His essence and with all His attributes."

"What do you think when you meet the name of Jesus in the Divine Scriptures, as the son of Nun, or the son Sirach?" asked Abbot Jerome.

"Then, of course, it is not God."

"So what are you arguing about?"

Then Archimandrite David went out of the church and shouted: "Brothers, run! Our abbot is a Mason. He has renounced Jesus in front of the whole assembly..."

Finally, in 1913, after every attempt at peaceful persuasion had failed, the Tsar authorized a warship to be sent to Athos. The rebellious monks were transported to Odessa and then sent to different places of exile (for example, Novy Afon).

The first to oppose the teaching was an Athosian monk, Elder Kallinikos the Hesychast, who famously said of the name-worshippers that "they have abandoned the head and worship the hat". He was given a medal by the Tsar.

As for Russia, monastic opinion soon polarised between those who, like the monks of the Kiev Caves Lavra, approved of the book and its name-worshipping thesis (*imiabozhie* in Russian), and those, like the monks of the Pochaev Lavra and the Optina Desert, who rejected it. However, as Gubanov writes, “the illiterate G.E. Rasputin interceded for the heretical name-worshippers and even tried to incite the empress to attack the fighters against the heresy of name-worshipping.”<sup>575</sup>

In 1914 the leading name-worshippers, including Hieroschemamonk Anthony (Bulatovich), author of *An Apology of Faith in the Name of God and the Name of Jesus* (1913), were justified by the Moscow Diocesan Court, which declared: “... The Synodal Office has found that in *the confessions of faith in God and in the Name of God* coming from the named monks, in the words, ‘I repeat that in naming the Name of God and the Name of Jesus as God and God Himself, I reject both the veneration of the Name of God as His Essence, and the veneration of the Name of God separately from God Himself as some kind of special Divinity, as well as any deification of the very letters and sounds and any chance thoughts about God’ – there is contained information allowing us to conclude that in them there is no basis for leaving the Orthodox Church for the sake of the teaching on the Names of God.’ (decree № 1443 of May 8, 1914)”.

Of course, this decree did not constitute a “justification” of the name-worshippers’ teaching, especially in view of the fact that *on the same day* the Office, led by Metropolitan Makary, affirmed that name-worshipping – “*the new false-teachings on the names of God proclaimed by Schema-Monk Hilarion and Anthony Bulatovich*” – was a heresy (decree № 1442 of May 8, 1914). Moreover, in rejecting “any deification of the very letters and sounds and any chance thoughts about God”, Bulatovich was obliged also to renounce his words in the *Apology*: “Every mental representation of a named property of God is the Name of God [and therefore, according to the name-worshippers, God Himself]”, “the contemplation of the His name is God Himself”, “the conscious naming of God is God Himself”, “Every idea about God is God Himself”, “we call the very idea of God – God”.

Unfortunately, the repentance of the name-worshippers turned out to be fictional. Bulatovich concealed his heresy behind ambiguous words and phrases. Thus on May 18, 1914, in a letter to Metropolitan Makary, Bulatovich thanked him for his “justification”, and nobly deigned to declare that he was now ready to return into communion with the Orthodox Church (!). And he added: “Concerning the Name of God and the Name of Jesus Christ, we, in accordance with the teaching of the Holy Fathers, confessed and confess the Divinity and the Divine Power of the Name of the Lord, but we do not raise this teaching to the level of a dogma, for it has not yet been formulated and dogmatised in council, but we expect that at the forthcoming Council it will be formulated and dogmatised. Therefore we, in accordance with the teaching of the Holy Fathers, in the words of the ever-memorable Father John of Kronstadt

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<sup>575</sup> Gubanov, *Tsar’ Nikolaj II i Novie Mucheniki*, St. Petersburg, 2000, p. 770.

said and say that the Name of God is God Himself, and the Name of the Lord Jesus is the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, understanding this not in the sense of a deification of the created name, but understanding it spiritually, in the sense of the inseparability of the God-revealed Truth, Which is the Action of the Divinity." These words of Bulatovich show that he was not sincere in his signature below his *Confession*, but deceived Metropolitan Macarius (who was probably under pressure from the Over-Procurator Sabler, who was in turn under pressure from the fervent name-worshipper Gregory Rasputin). "Mixing truth with unrighteousness" (Romans 1.18), Bulatovich mixed Orthodoxy with heresy. Thus Orthodoxy recognises that there is a "Divine Power" in the name of Jesus, but does *not* recognise that it *is* "Divinity". Again, Orthodoxy recognises that in prayer the name of God is indeed inseparable from God, but it does not *confuse* the two, as does Bulatovich. For while a shadow is inseparable from the body that casts it, this is not to say that the shadow *is* the body. Finally, Bulatovich's "dogma" is still not "formulated and dogmatised in council" – because it is *not* a dogma, but heresy!

The Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church accepted that Bulatovich and his fellows had not really repented, so they set aside the decree of the Moscow Synodal Office, and confirmed the sentences against the name-worshippers (decree № 4136 of May 10-24, 1914), which confirmation was again confirmed by decree № 2670 of March 10, 1916. "In this decree of the Most Holy Synod," wrote the future Hieromartyr Bishop Basil (Zelentsov), "we find a confirmation of the basic rule that the name-worshippers must be received into ecclesiastical communion and admitted to the sacraments of the Church only on the unfailing condition that they reject the false teaching of name-worshipping and witness to their faithfulness to the dogmas and teaching of the Church and to their obedience to Church authority."

Although name-worshipping was on the agenda of the 1917-18 Council and a subcommission to study it under the leadership of Archbishop Theophan of Poltava and Fr. Sergius Bulgakov was formed, the subcommission did not have time to complete its work before the Council was terminated by the Bolsheviks. However, on October 8/21, 1918, Patriarch Tikhon and the Most Holy Synod declared: "The Most Holy Synod does not change its former judgement on the error itself [of name-worshipping]... and has in no way changed its general rule, according to which the name-worshippers, as having been condemned by the Church authorities, can be received into Church communion... only after they have renounced name-worshipping and have declared their submission to the Holy Church... The petition of Hieroschemamonk Anthony to allow him to serve is to be recognised as not worthy of being satisfied so long as he continues to disobey Church authority and spread his musings which have been condemned by the Church hierarchy to the harm of the Church".

After this decision, the leading name-worshipper, Anthony Bulatovich, broke communion for the second time with the Russian Church and was shortly afterwards killed by robbers.

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The name-worshipping movement survived in the Caucasus and South Russian region (where the Tsar had transported the rebellious monks); and the sophianist heretics Florensky and Bulgakov also confessed name-worshipping in the inter-war period. In modern times the heresy has enjoyed a revival in intellectualist circles in Russia, especially in the works of "Bishop" Gregory (Lourié), who supports the heretical views of Bulatovich, considers him to be a saint, and those who oppose his ideas, including several hieromartyrs of the Russian Church to be "enemies of the Name"!

Reasons for the failure to stamp out the heresy included the comparatively weak defence of the truth produced by the Greek and Russian theologians<sup>576</sup>, the aura of martyrdom which was attached to the name-worshippers as a result of their forcible expulsion from Mount Athos to Russia on a Russian cruiser, and the fact that the heresy coincided with the end of the Balkan wars and the transfer of Mount Athos from Turkish to Greek dominion after the Treaty of Bucharest, which meant that mutual suspicions between the Greeks and the Russians concerning the status of Athos hindered a united and thorough approach to the problem. Many took up the cause of the name-worshippers as part of their general attack on the "paralytical" Russian Holy Synod. Soon the debate acquired political overtones: democrats and socialists generally took the side of the name-worshippers, and the monarchists – that of the Orthodox.<sup>577</sup> Bulatovich himself was a left social revolutionary.<sup>578</sup>

In 1918 Patriarch Tikhon indicated that the controversy needed further study "in essence" at a future Pan-Russian (or Ecumenical) Council. But this did not mean, as some have claimed, that the Church had not delivered her verdict on the question. She has done so: but the reasons for that verdict need to be more extensively elaborated, and the "positive" teaching of the Church on the relationship between the uncreated and the created in prayer needs to be expounded still more clearly and thoroughly.<sup>579</sup>

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Just as the ascetic name-worshippers of Mount Athos wished to identify the Divinity with a created name, so the decadent artists of the Symbolist

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<sup>576</sup> The best effort was by S. Troitsky in one of the three reports attached by the Russian Holy Synod to their decision of 1913: "Afonskaia Smuta", *Tserkovnie Vedomosti*, N 20, 1913, pp. 882-909.

<sup>577</sup> Constantine Papoulides, *Oi Rossoi onomolatroi tou Agiou Orous*, (The Russian Name-Worshippers of Mount Athos), Thessaloniki, 1977 (in Greek).

<sup>578</sup> "Kratkoe opisanie biografii menie nyedostojnago skhiepiskopa Piotra Ladygina" (MS written in Bishop Peter's own hand, 1948); *Tserkovnaia Zhizn'*, NN 5-6, 7-8, 9-10, 11-12, 1984; NN 1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 7-8, 1985.

<sup>579</sup> See V. Moss, "The Name of God and the Name-Worshipping Heresy", <http://www.orthodoxchristianbooks.com>; E.S. Polischuk (ed.), *Imiaslavie. Antologija*, Moscow, 2002.

movement of Russia's so-called "Silver Age" wanted to capture the Divinity in artistic symbols. For them, symbolism took the place of religion; it was a new kind of religion, the religion of symbol-worshipping. "In the Symbolist aesthetic," as J.W. Burrow writes, "the intense focusing on the thing taken as a symbol, the perception of its numinous aura, gave access to another, as it were, parallel, invisible world of light and ecstasy."<sup>580</sup>

This "parallel, invisible world of light and ecstasy" was demonic, and obsession with "dark forces" and the devil was common to many Silver Age artists. Thus the Symbolist painter Michael Vrubel achieved fame with a large mosaic-like canvas called "Seated Demon" (1890), and went mad while working on the dynamic and sinister "Demon Downcast" (1902).<sup>581</sup> Again, the composer Alexander Scriabin "came to fear his own Sixth Piano Sonata, convinced that it had been corrupted by demonic forces and so refused to play it in public. Scriabin considered himself to be God (if one is to believe some of his later poetry) and even tried to walk on the waters of Lake Geneva (unsuccessfully), and after attempting to exorcize the demons by way of his Seventh Sonata, he went on to compose a Ninth Sonata in 1913 known as 'The Black Mass' with references to devil worship, saism and even necrophilia."<sup>582</sup>

In his *First Symphony*, echoing Wagner, Scriabin praised art as a kind of religion. *Le Divin Poem* (1902-1904) sought to express the evolution of the human spirit from pantheism to unity with the universe. *Poème de l'extase* (1908) was accompanied by the elaborately selected colour projections on a screen. In Scriabin's synthetic performances music, poetry, dancing, colours, and scents were used so as to bring about *supreme, final ecstasy*. In 1909, after a spell in Paris with the impresario Diaghilev, Scriabin returned to Russia permanently, where he continued to compose, working on increasingly grandiose projects. For some time before his death he had planned a multi-media work to be performed in the Himalayas, that would bring about Armageddon, "a grandiose religious synthesis of all arts which would herald the birth of a new world."<sup>583</sup>

Similar ideas to Scriabin's on the stage fusion of all arts were elaborated by the poet Andrej Bely and the painter Vassily Kandinsky, who, like so many creative artists of the time, was a Theosophist.<sup>584</sup> In 1913 Kandinsky's expressionist "Painting with White Lines" started a revolution in art, and sold for £29.2 million (excluding auctioneer's commission) in 2020.

Another of Diaghilev's composer-protégés, Sergei Prokofiev, was also influenced by Symbolism (and Mary Baker Eddy's Christian Science). Among the propositions of his theory of creative action were: "1. I am the expression of Life, i.e. of divine activity. 2. I am the expression of spirit, which gives me

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<sup>580</sup> Burrow, *The Crisis of Reason: European Thought, 1848-1914*, Yale University Press, 2000, p. 223.

<sup>581</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Russian\\_Symbolism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Russian_Symbolism).

<sup>582</sup> Douglas Smith, *Rasputin*, London: Pan Books, 2016, p. 96.

<sup>583</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alexander\\_Scriabin](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alexander_Scriabin).

<sup>584</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Russian\\_Symbolism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Russian_Symbolism).

power to resist what is unlike spirit... 9. I am the expression of perfection, and this leads me to the perfect use of my time..."<sup>585</sup>

These strivings for mangedhood – in defiance of the only God-Man - among Russia's creative intelligentsia were associated by them with a revolutionary future that rejected the past more or less totally. Hence the brief fashion for the European movement of Futurism with its radical rejection of the past and all past and present ideas of what is beautiful and tasteful - and its glorification of war. The Italian Futurist and future fascist Filippo Tommaso Marinetti extolled "the beauty and necessity of violence", declaring that war was "the sole hygiene of the world."<sup>586</sup>

"Russian Futurists," writes Charles Emmerson, "embraced the spirit of hooliganism, expressing a desire to shock the public out of their bourgeois values. In 1912 they published a manifesto for their movement entitled *A Slap in the Face of Public Taste*. In December 1913 they put on a Futurist opera in St. Petersburg's Luna Park theatre in which the sun itself, symbol of enlightenment, was taken captive and then killed..."<sup>587</sup>

The futurist obsession with the imagery of restless, continual movement was akin to Trotsky's idea of permanent revolution - early Soviet culture was similarly obsessed with machine imagery. As Nicholas Berdiaev wrote: "Just as pious mystics once strove to make themselves into an image of God, and finally to become absorbed in Him, so now the modern ecstasies of rationalism labour to become like the machine and finally to be absorbed into bliss in a structure of driving belts, pistons, valves and fly-wheels..."<sup>588</sup>

Fr. George Florovsky described this aesthetic-revolutionary experience as utopian and a kind of "cosmic possession": "The feelings of unqualified dependence, of complete determination from without and full immersion and inclusion into the universal order define utopianism's estimate of itself and the world. Man feels himself to be an 'organic pin', a link in some all-embracing chain – he feels unambiguously, irretrievably forged into one whole with the cosmos... From an actor and creator, consciously willing and choosing, and for that reason bearing the risk of responsibility for his self-definition, man is turned into a thing, into a needle, by which someone sews something. In the organic all-unity there is no place for action – here only movement is possible."<sup>589</sup>

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<sup>585</sup> Thomas Schipperges, *Prokofiev*, London: Haus Publishing, 2003, p. 8.

<sup>586</sup> Marinetti, in Piers Brendon, *The Dark Valley*, London: Pimlico, 2011, p. 120, and Margaret Macmillan, *The War that Ended Peace*, London: Profile, 2014, p. 247.

<sup>587</sup> Emmerson, 1913. *The World before the Great War*, London: Vintage, 2013, pp. 122-123.

<sup>588</sup> Berdiaev, *The Russian Revolution*, Ann Arbor, 1966, p. 58; quoted in Michael Burleigh, *Sacred Causes*, London: Harper Perennial, 2007, p. 41.

<sup>589</sup> Florovsky, "Metafizicheskie predposylki utopizma" (The Metaphysical Presuppositions of Utopianism), *Put' (The Way)*, June-July, 1926, p. 30.

The idea that the art of the time was creating a revolution of the world outside art was expressed in a public speech by Diaghilev in 1905: "We are witnesses of the greatest movement of summing-up in history, in the name of a new and still unknown culture, which will be created by us, and which will also sweep us away. That is why, without fear of misgiving, I raise my glass to the new aesthetic. The only wish that I, an incorrigible sensualist, can express, is that the forthcoming struggle should not damage the amenities of life, and that the death should be as beautiful and as illuminating as the resurrection."<sup>590</sup>

Diaghilev's words on "a new and still unknown culture, which will be created by us" were remarkably prescient. The old civilization was soon to be swept away in a terrible orgy of destruction (but for Diaghilev, at any rate, "the amenities of life" were not completely destroyed). In its place, however, was not a radically new civilization, but a catastrophic regression to Europe's pre-Christian, pagan past.

And perhaps the clearest prophecy of this barbaric civilization was provided by Diaghilev himself in the ballet he produced in conjunction with the composer Igor Stravinsky, in 1913 – *The Rite of Spring*.

As Oliver Figes writes, "the idea of the ballet was originally conceived by the painter Nikolai Roerich... a painter of the prehistoric Slavs and an accomplished archaeologist in his own right. He was absorbed in the rituals of neolithic Russia, which he idealized as a pantheistic realm of spiritual beauty where life and art were one, and man and nature lived in harmony. Stravinsky approached Roerich for a theme and he came to visit him at the artists' colony of Talashkino, where the two men worked together on the scenario of 'The Great Sacrifice', as *The Rite of Spring* was originally called. The ballet was conceived as a re-creation of the ancient pagan rite of human sacrifice. It was meant to *be* that rite – not to tell the story of the ritual but (short of actual murder) to re-create that ritual on the stage and thus communicate in the most immediate way the ecstasy and terror of the human sacrifice..."

"Artistically, the ballet strived for ethnographic authenticity. Roerich's costumes were drawn from peasant clothes in Tenisheva's collection at Talashkino. His primitivist sets were based on archaeology. Then there was Nijinsky's shocking choreography – the real scandal of the ballet's infamous Paris première at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées on 29 May 1913. For the music was barely heard at all in the commotion, the shouting and the fighting, which broke out in the auditorium when the curtain first went up. Nijinsky had choreographed movements which were ugly and angular. Everything about the dancers' movements emphasized their weight instead of their lightness, as demanded by the principles of classical ballet. Rejecting all the basic positions, the ritual dancers had their feet turned inwards, elbows clutched to the sides of their body and their palms held flat, like the wooden dolls that were so prominent in Roerich's mythic paintings of Scythian Russia. They were

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<sup>590</sup> Diaghilev, in Paul Johnson, *Modern Times*, New York: Harper Perennial, 1992, p. 8.

orchestrated, not by steps and notes, as in conventional ballets, but rather moved as one collective mass to the violent off-beat rhythms of the orchestra. The dancers pounded their feet on the stage, building up a static energy which finally exploded, with electrifying force, in the sacrificial dance. This rhythmic violence was the vital innovation of Stravinsky's score. Like most of the ballet's themes, it was taken from the music of the peasantry. There was nothing like these rhythms in Western art music (Stravinsky said that he did not really know how to notate or bar them) – a convulsive pounding of irregular downbeats, requiring constant changes in the metric signature with almost every bar so that the conductor of the orchestra must throw himself about and wave his arms in jerky motions, as if performing a shamanic dance. In these explosive rhythms it is possible to hear the terrifying beat of the Great War and the Revolution of 1917..."<sup>591</sup>

Indeed, *The Rite of Spring* not only created a revolution in music comparable to that created by *Tristan und Isolde* fifty years before: it prefigured the Bolshevik revolution as did no other work of art. Stravinsky's earlier works, *The Firebird* (1910) and *Petrushka* (1911), though innovative, were recognizably the work of the student of Rimsky Korsakov, the great Russian Romantic composer. But *The Rite of Spring*, both as a ballet and in its music, constituted a clean break with all earlier Russian traditions, whether Christian or Romantic. Its content is the purest paganism, sex and violence and the worship of false gods. Stravinsky himself was going through an atheist phase at the time (he returned to Orthodoxy in the 1920s). If it had a lesson about the revolution, it was that the revolution's deepest roots lay, not in any strand of European history of the last 1600 years, but in its pre-Christian paganism, in the darkest, most unredeemed passions of man...<sup>592</sup>

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Artistic movements such as symbolism, expressionism and futurism took place in the context of a greatly increased participation in heretical, sectarian and occult practices by society as a whole, and especially the intelligentsia.

Thus M. Rodzianko writes that "among the intelligentsia, especially of St. Petersburg, all kinds of groups began to organize, often infected by sectarianism. Simultaneously the enthusiasm for the teaching of [the Englishman Lord] Redstock, the passion for theosophy, occultism, spiritism and other teachings condemned by the Church was considerable. During the period after 1901 the society of 'Argonauts' was formed, which met at the home

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<sup>591</sup> Figes, *Natasha's Dance*, pp. 279, 280-282. However, a year later, on April 5, 1914, the reaction was different: "The audience gave it a standing ovation, and afterward ran behind the stage and carried the composer out in their arms." (Ilya Ovchinnikov, "Contact with a Mystery", *Russian Life*, June 17, 2017). In 2013 the Mariinsky ballet under Valery Gergiev recreated Nijinsky's original 1913 production in its original location, Paris. See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BryIQ9QpXwI>

<sup>592</sup> The biopic *Nijinsky* (1980) is an excellent description of the Ballets Russes, the genesis of *The Rite of Spring* and the madness to which it brought its most famous artist, the dancer Nijinsky.

of Andrew Bely... This is how he describes those times: 'Among the "unseeing", "seers" appeared, who recognized each other; they were drawn to share incomprehensible knowledge with each other; their interest in everything appeared new to them, encompassed with rays of cosmic and historical importance. The "seers" differed in their conjectures: one was an atheist, another a theosophist, one was drawn to piety, another was pulled away from it, but all agreed one with the other as to the imminence of a dawning: "something is shining forth", and from this "something" the future will unfold its destinies' (*Épopée*, vol. 1, pp. 136-137). This dawn was disclosed as the goddess Sophia and this in fact became the beginning, the 'disclosure' by the Russian progressive society of the object of its worship, tearing it away from Orthodoxy, i.e. from the Church, in order to begin a 'philosophical' combat with it. Numbered among the 'Argonauts' we meet the following widely known people: the poet Balmont, Valery Bryusov, Baltushaytis, S.I. Taneyev, N.A. Berdyaev, S.N. Bulgakov, later a priest, D.V. Filosofov, prof. Kadlukov, D.N. Merezhkovsky, Igor Kistyakovsky, Z.N. Hippius, A.V. Kartashev, Theodore Sologub and others (*Épopée*, vols. 1, 2 and 3; pp. 179, 191, 181, 144). The Russian intelligentsia of that time, knowingly or not, was undermining the age-old foundations of the Russian Orthodox Church. The guiding center was the 'Religious-Philosophical Society', created during this period. In this society were: V. Ivanov, D.V. Filosofov, S. Kablukov, Merezhkovsky, Rozanov, Kartashev, Bulgakov, Berdyaev and others (*Epopée*, vol. 1, pp. 61, 130, 156). This society held closed as well as open meetings, having as its goal the wide propaganda of the spirit of the revolution, reformation and sophianism..."<sup>593</sup>

Another fad was hypnotism, which, as Douglas Smith writes, "was more popular in early twentieth-century Russia than in Western Europe and was a particularly common practice among Petersburg psychiatrists. The poet Osip Mandelstam was a visitor to the home of the Petersburg physician Dr. Boris Sinani, famous for his ability to cure his patients merely 'by suggestion', as Mandelstam put it. The best known popular psychiatrist-hypnotist at the time was Vladimir Bekhterev, who used hypnosis as part of the science of 'psychoneurology'.

"The fascination for the occult became widespread, extending well beyond Russia's artists and intellectuals and reaching deep into the middle classes, becoming a truly popular cultural pastime. By 1914, Petersburg counted thirty-five officially registered occult circles and hundreds more informal ones; the craze was not limited to the capital but by then had seduced Moscow and most provincial cities and towns. If for some the occult was deeply serious, for others it was simply a form of entertainment. Russia hosted a variety of mediums, clairvoyants and savants for every taste: there was the 'Mysterious Dog Jack' able to guess one's age, the year of one's wedding, and even the amount of money in one's pocket; there was the Indian somnambulist Princess Madame Naindra; and there was the Polish medium Yan Guzik, who could summon not only the spirits of Alexander the Great, Napoleon, and Pushkin, but even those

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<sup>593</sup> Rodzianko, *The Truth about the Russian Church Abroad*, Jordanville, 1975, pp. 5-6.

of dead animals, some of which were so ferocious that spectators were known to seek medical attention after his séances.

“Even Russia’s peasants and workers, the vast majority of the population, embraced new spiritual movements and religious practices. Holy pilgrimage attracted ever larger numbers, including the likes of Rasputin, and the belief in spirits, possession, miracles, and magic flourished. Groups of peasants came together to establish their own Christian communities, at times without the blessing of the church or even without the participation of any clergy. In the cities workers, too, took an interest in their spiritual well-being, flocking to mystics and popular preachers promising salvation.”<sup>594</sup>

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<sup>594</sup> Douglas Smith, *Rasputin*, London: Pan Books, 2016, pp. 90-91.

## 45. THE ACTORS IN THE REVOLUTION: (1) THE JEWS

If The root of the revolution was a nihilistic-messianic-chiliastic kind of faith built out of many strands of European and Jewish thought, the actual composition of forces that brought about the revolution was no less varied. The revolution took place on three levels. First was that of the out-and-out revolutionaries, often *intelligenty* who were supported by many from the industrial proletariat and the revolutionary-minded peasantry. They were aiming to destroy Russian tsarism and Russian Orthodox civilization completely before embarking on a world revolution that would dethrone God and traditional authority from the hearts and minds of all men everywhere. This level was led by Lenin, Trotsky and Stalin; its ethnic composition was mainly Jewish, but there were also Russians, Latvians, Georgians, Poles and others. They were possessed by the revolutionary faith to the greatest extent, and owed no allegiance to any nation or traditional creed or morality. Secondly, there was the level of the Freemasons, mainly aristocratic and middle-class Duma parliamentarians and their supporters in the country at large, who were not aiming to destroy Russia completely, but only to remove the tsar and introduce a constitutional government on the English model. This level was led by Guchkov, Rodzyanko and Kerensky; it was composed mainly of Russians, but also contained most of the intelligentsia of the other nations of the empire. They believed in the revolutionary faith, but still had moral scruples derived from their Christian background. Thirdly, there were the lukewarm Orthodox Christians, the great mass of ordinary Russians, who did not necessarily want either world revolution or a constitutional government, but who lacked the courage and the faith to act openly in support of Faith, Tsar and Fatherland. It is certain that if very many Russians had not become lukewarm in their faith, God would not have allowed the revolution to take place. After the revolution, many from this level, as well as individuals from the first two levels, seeing the terrible devastation that their lukewarmness had allowed to take place, bitterly repented and returned to the ranks of the confessing Orthodox Christians.

The extraordinary prominence of Jews in the revolution is a fact that must be related, at least in part, to the traditionally anti-Russian and anti-Christian attitude of Jewish culture, which is reflected in both of its major political offspring – Bolshevism and Zionism. The theist Jews who triumphed in Israel in 1917, and especially in 1948 after the foundation of the State of Israel, came from the same region and social background – the Pale of Settlement in Western Russia – as the atheist Jews who triumphed in Moscow in 1917, and sometimes even from the same families. One such family was that of Chaim Weitzmann, the first president of Israel, who in his *Autobiography* wrote that his own mother was able to witness her sons' triumph both in Bolshevik Moscow and Zionist Jerusalem...<sup>595</sup>

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<sup>595</sup> Weitzmann, *Trial and Error: The Autobiography of Chaim Weitzmann*, New York: Harper, 1949.

The simultaneous triumph of the Jews in Russia and Palestine was indeed an extraordinary “coincidence”: Divine Providence drew the attention of all those with eyes to see this sign of the times when, in one column of newsprint in the London *Times* for November 9, 1917, there appeared two articles, the one announcing the outbreak of revolution in Petrograd, and the other – the promise of a homeland for the Jews in Palestine (the Balfour declaration). M. Heifetz also points to the coincidence in time between the October revolution and the Balfour declaration. “A part of the Jewish generation goes along the path of Herzl and Zhabotinsky. The other part, unable to withstand the temptation, fills up the band of Lenin and Trotsky and Stalin.” “The path of Herzl and Bagritsky allowed the Jews to stand tall and immediately become not simply an equal nation with Russia, but a privileged one.”<sup>596</sup>

Indeed, the Russian revolution may be regarded as one branch of that general triumph of Jewish power which we observe in the twentieth century in both East and West, in both Russia and America and Israel. The mainly Jewish nature of the world revolution cannot be doubted.

Thus Winston Churchill wrote: “It would almost seem as if the Gospel of Christ and the gospel of anti-Christ were designed to originate among the same people; and that this mystic and mysterious race had been chosen for the supreme manifestations, both of the Divine and the diabolical... From the days of ‘Spartacus’ Weishaupt to those of Karl Marx, and down to Trotsky (Russia), Bela Kun (Hungary), Rosa Luxembourg (Germany) and Emma Goldman (United States), this worldwide conspiracy for the overthrow of civilization and for the reconstitution of society on the basis of arrested development, of envious malevolence and impossible equality, has been steadily growing. It played, as a modern writer, Mrs. Nesta Webster, has so ably shown, a definitely recognizable part in the tragedy of the French Revolution. It has been the mainspring of every subversive movement during the nineteenth century; and now at last this band of extraordinary personalities from the underworld of the great cities of Europe and America have gripped the Russian people by the hair of their heads and have become practically the undisputed masters of that enormous empire. There is no need to exaggerate the part played in the creation of Bolshevism and in the bringing about of the Russian Revolution by these international and for the most part atheistical Jews. It is certainly a very great one; it probably outweighs all others.”<sup>597</sup>

Liberals ascribed the revolutionary character of the Jews to antisemitism, and, in the Russian case, to pogroms and the multitude of restrictions placed on the Jews by the Russian tsars. However, as we have seen, far fewer Jews died in the pogroms than Russian officials in terrorist attacks (1845 by the year 1909), while the restrictions were placed on the Jews in order to protect the Russian peasant, who was ruthlessly exploited by them. As the future

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<sup>596</sup> Heifetz, “Nashi Obschie Uroki”, 22, 1980, N 14, p. 162; in Solzhenitsyn, *op. cit.*, p. 112.

<sup>597</sup> Churchill, *Illustrated Sunday Herald*, February 8, 1920; quoted in Douglas Reed, *The Controversy of Zion*, Durban, S.A.: Dolphin Press, 1978, pp. 272-273.

Hieromartyr John Vostorgov said in 1906: "The Jews are restricted in their rights of residence not as a confessional unit, but as a predatory tribe that is dangerous in the midst of the peaceful population because of its exploitative inclinations, which... have found a religious sanction and support in the Talmud... Can such a confession be tolerated in the State, when it allows its followers to practise hatred and all kinds of deceit and harm towards other confessions, and especially Christians? ... The establishment of the Pale of Settlement is the softest of all possible measures in relation to such a confession. Moreover, is it possible in this case not to take account of the mood of the masses? But this mood cannot be changed only by issuing a law on the complete equality of rights of the Jews. On the contrary, this can only strengthen the embitterment of the people..."<sup>598</sup>

"Let us remember," writes Solzhenitsyn: "the legal restrictions on the Jews in Russia were never racial [as they were in Western Europe]. They were applied neither to the Karaites [who rejected the Talmud], nor to the mountain Jews, nor to the Central Asian Jews."<sup>599</sup>

In other words, restrictions were placed only on those Jews who practised the religion of the Talmud, because of its vicious anti-Christianity and double morality. Moreover, the restrictions were very generously applied. The boundaries of the Pale (a huge area twice the size of France) were extremely porous, allowing large numbers of Jews to acquire higher education and make their fortunes in Great Russia.

Indeed, so great was the Jewish domination of Russian trade and, most ominously, the Russian press by the time of the revolution that Stolypin wanted to remove the restrictions on the Jews. But in this case the Tsar resisted him, as his father had resisted Count Witte before him...<sup>600</sup>

This was not because the Tsar felt no responsibility to protect the Jews; he spoke about "my Jews", as he talked about "my Poles", "my Armenians" and "my Finns". And his freedom from anti-semitism is demonstrated by his reaction to the murder of Stolypin by a Jewish revolutionary, Bogrov, in Kiev on September 1, 1911. As Robert Massie writes: "Because Bogrov was a Jew, the Orthodox population was noisily preparing a retaliatory pogrom. Frantic with fear, the city's Jewish population spent the night packing their belongings. The first light of the following day found the square before the railway station

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<sup>598</sup> Vostorgov, in Fomin, S. and Fomina, T., *Rossia pered vtorym prishestviem* (Russia before the Second Coming), Moscow, 1994, vol. II, p. 624.

<sup>599</sup> Solzhenitsyn, *op. cit.*, p. 292.

<sup>600</sup> As Witte recorded in his *Memoirs*: "'Are you right to stand up for the Jews?' asked Alexander III. In reply Witte asked permission to answer the question with a question: 'Can we drown all the Russian Jews in the Black Sea? If we can, then I accept that resolution of the Jewish question. If not, the resolution of the Jewish question consists in giving them a chance to live. That is in offering them equal rights and equal laws.'" (Edvard Radzinsky, *The Last Tsar*, London: Arrow, 1993, p. 69). But Witte's reply misses the point, as if the choice lay between killing all the Jews or giving them complete equality. No State can give complete freedom to a section of the population that does not respect the law and endangers the lives or livelihoods of the majority.

jammed with carts and people trying to squeeze themselves on to departing trains. Even as they waited, the terrified people heard the clatter of hoofs. An endless stream of Cossacks, their long lances dark against the dawn sky, rode past. On his own, Kokovtsev had ordered three full regiments of Cossacks into the city to prevent violence. Asked on what authority he had issued the command, Kokovtsev replied: 'As head of the government.' Later, a local official came up to the Finance Minister to complain, 'Well, Your Excellency, by calling in the troops you have missed a fine chance to answer Bogrov's shot with a nice Jewish pogrom.' Kokovtsev was indignant, but, he added, 'his sally suggested to me that the measures which I had taken at Kiev were not sufficient... therefore I sent an open telegram to all governors of the region demanding that they use every possible means - force if necessary - to prevent possible pogroms. When I submitted this telegram to the Tsar, he expressed his approval of it and of the measure I had taken in Kiev.'"<sup>601</sup>

In the end, the Pale of Settlement was destroyed, not by liberal politicians, but by right-wing generals. In 1915, as the Russian armies retreated before the Germans, some Jews were accused of spying for the enemy and were shot, while the Jewish population in general was considered unreliable. And so a mass evacuation of the Jews from the Pale was ordered by the authorities. But the results were disastrous. Hordes of frightened Jews fleeing eastwards blocked up vital roads along which supplies for the front were destined. Landing up in large cities such as Moscow and Petrograd where there had been no large Jewish population before, these disgruntled new arrivals only fuelled the revolutionary fires. And so was created precisely the situation that the Pale of Settlement had been designed to avert. As the Jews poured from the western regions into the major cities of European Russia, they soon acquired prominent executive positions in all major sectors of government and the economy...

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<sup>601</sup> Massie, *Nicholas and Alexandra*, p. 229.

## 46. THE ACTORS IN THE REVOLUTION: (2) THE FREEMASONS

If the October revolution was largely engineered by Bolshevik Jews, the February revolution which preceded it and made it possible was engineered by Masonic Russians under the directions of the Grand Orient of Paris.

The Bolsheviks were not in general Masons (after the revolution they suppressed Masonry in Russia), but played the same role in relation to the Russian Masons as did the Illuminati to the French Masons in the French revolution – that of ultimate victors. But the question arises: were any of the leading Bolsheviks also Masons? According to Subdeacon Konstantin Preobrazhensky, formerly a lieutenant-general of the KGB: “One of the leaders of the KGB Intelligence, Colonel Lolliy Zamoisky, was also a famous journalist and writer. He was studying masons on his own. Once I invited him to read a lecture on them for us, less than ten officers, members of Group ‘A’ of Directorate ‘T’ of the KGB First Directorate. Group ‘A’ was a group of assistants to the head of scientific and technical intelligence, Major General Leonid Zaitsev. Zamoisky told a lot of interesting things. In particular, he said that Lenin has left his signature in the visitors book of one of the Masonic lounges in Switzerland, introducing himself as ‘brother-visitor’.”<sup>602</sup>

I.L. Solonevich sees the Masonic aristocracy as no less guilty of the revolution than the Jews: “The whole of the nineteenth century was filled with the struggle of the autocracy against the aristocratic elite. In this struggle both warring sides perished. However, the monarchy perished with some chance of resurrection, but the aristocracy – with absolutely no chance (I am speaking of the destruction of the aristocracy as a ruling class).

“The roots of this struggle go deep into the past – perhaps as far as Kalita and the Terrible one. But we shall not descend to the depths of the ages. We shall only recall that while the mystical beginning of the Russian revolution is usually ascribed to the Decembrists, there were no Jews among them. Then there came Belinsky and Chernyshevsky and Bakunin and Herzen and Plekhanov and Lavrov and Milyukov and Lenin and many other sowers of ‘the rational, the good and the eternal’. In the course of a whole century they shook and undermined the building of Russian statehood. All this work was covered by the moral authority of Prince Peter Alexeyevich Krapotkin, who had not been bought by the Jews, and Count Leo Nikolayevich Tolstoy, who, although taking no bribes from the Jews, undermined both the State and the Church and even the family very thoroughly.

“And any Berdichev chemist from the [Jewish] Bund or from the Bolsheviks, in his struggle against the order created by history, could have taken me by the lapel and said: ‘Listen, are you an intelligent person? Can’t you see that I am walking in the steps of the best lights of Russian thought?’

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<sup>602</sup> Preobrazhensky, personal communication, July 26, 2014.

“And what could I as ‘an intelligent person’ reply to this chemist? Truly he was walking in their steps! And Chernyshevsky really was a ‘light’...

“If we, out the whole of this extraordinarily complicated combination of factors that was making and supporting the revolution, concentrate our fire only on one – on Jewry, - then we have lost the plot. It’s all not so simple. They say: the Jew Jacob Schiff gave money for the Russian revolution. Yes, he did. But [the Old Ritualist] Savva Morozov also gave money for the same revolution. And Germany gave more than any – not the Germany of Weimar and Ebert, and still less Hitler, but the Germany of the Hohenzollerns... It’s no secret for anybody that all these ‘entrenched truths’ were published on German money, while in the Kseshinskaya palace German marks were valued above all... But if you simplify the matter to such a degree that one can make a revolution in the world with money, then the October revolution was made on German money. *À la guerre comme à la guerre*. However, it was with the closest and most powerful participation of almost the whole of Russian Jewry...

“And so: the elite of the aristocracy laid the main weight of the struggle against the monarchy on their own shoulders. Then they were joined by the ‘*raznochintsy*’, and by the very last decades of the past century this anti-monarchist front received powerful support from the whole of Russian Jewry.”<sup>603</sup>

Fr. Lev Lebedev writes: “Soon after the manifesto of October 17, 1905 which gave certain freedoms, legal Masonic lodges, which before had been banned, began to appear. And although, practically speaking, secret Masonry never ceased to exist in Russia, the absence of legal lodges was for the Masons a great obstacle... A ‘reserve’ was being prepared in France by the ‘Grand Orient’. Already in the 60s some Russians had entered French Masonry in Paris. Among them was the writer I.S. Turgenev, later – Great Prince Nicholas Mikhailovich (the ‘Bixiot’ lodge), and then the philosopher V. Vyrubov, the psychiatrist N. Bazhenov, the electrophysicist P. Yablochkov, the historian M. Kovalevsky. In 1887 the ‘Cosmos’ (no. 288) lodge was founded for Russians – the writer A. Amphiteatrov, the *zemstvo* activist V. Maklakov and the activist of culture V.N. Nemirovich-Danchenko. From 1900 the Masonic Russian School of social sciences began its work in Paris, and there arose yet another Russian lodge, ‘Mount Sinai’.<sup>604</sup> At the beginning of 1906, with the agreement of the ‘Grand Orient of France’, M. Kovalevsky opened a lodge of French obedience in Russia. The first such lodge was joined by the already mentioned Kovalevsky, Bazhenov, Maklakov, Nemirovich-Danchenko, and also new people such as S. Kotlyarovsky, E. Kedrin (the jurist), the historian V.O. Klyuchevsky, Prince S. Urusov, the Jewish doctor and lawyer M. Margulies, the diplomat I. Loris-

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<sup>603</sup> Solonevich, “*Rossia, Revoliutsia i Yevrejstvo*” (Russia, the Revolution and Jewry), *Rossia i Revoliutsia* (Russia and the Revolution), Moscow, 2007, pp. 26-27.

<sup>604</sup> Both ‘Cosmos’ and ‘Mount Sinai’ were under the Supreme Council of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite, according to the Mason Boris Telepneff, Russian Assistant Consul in Paris in 1922 (*An Outline of the History of Russian Freemasonry*). (V.M.)

Melikov and others. This lodge had two main affiliates: in Moscow – ‘Regeneration’, and in St. Petersburg – ‘Polar Star’. They were ‘opened’ by two high-ranking Masons, Sencholle and Boulet, who came specially from France. Later, in 1908, they gave ‘Polar Star’ the right to open new lodges in Russia without the prior agreement of the French. Many lodges with various names appeared [such as ‘the Iron Ring’ in Nizhni], but the leading role continued to be played by ‘Polar Star’, which was led by Count A. Orlov-Davydov, and only Masons of no lower rank than the 18<sup>th</sup> degree were admitted into it. The Masons were also joined by the Cadet A. Kolyubakin, Prince Bebutov, Baron G. Maidel, the public library worker A. Braudo, the historians N. Pavlov-Silvansky and P. Schegolev, the lawyers S. Balavinsky and O. Goldovsky, the Octobrist A.I. Guchkov, his comrade in the party M.V. Rodzyanko, the Cadet N.V. Nekrasov, the workers’ party A.F. Kerensky (in 1912, through the ‘Ursa Minor’ lodge<sup>605</sup>), the Mensheviks A. Galpern, Chkheidze, the Bolsheviks Trotsky, Lunacharsky, Skvortsov-Stepanov, Krasin, Boky, Sereda, Chicherin, the millionaires N.I. Tereschenko, A. Konovalov, P.P. Ryabushinsky (with his two brothers), Prince V. Obolensky, Countess S.V. Panina, Baron V. Meller-Zakomelsky (not to be confused with the general), M. Gorky, his wife E. Peshkova, his godson the Jew Zenobius Peshkov (the brother of Ya. Sverdlov), their friend E.D. Kuskova (a female Mason of the higher degrees), her husband S. Prokopovich, Prince G. Lvov (president of the Zemstvo and City Unions), Prince A. Khatistov (the city commandant of Tiflis), Prince P. Dolgorukov, Major-General P. Popovtsev (of the 33<sup>rd</sup> degree), Mark Aldanov, Fyodorov, Chelnokov, the Menshevik G. Aronson, the artist Mark Chagall, the cadet V. Velikhov and very many other prominent activists of that time. The lists of Russian Masons do not contain the name of the Cadet historian P. Milyukov (he even concealed his Masonry), but only because he had for a long time been in purely French Masonry... Masonic lodges appeared and functioned also, besides Moscow and Petersburg, in Kiev, Odessa, Nizhni-Novgorod, Minsk, Vitebsk, Tver, Samara, Saratov, Tiflis, Kutaisi and other cities. In the words of Kuskova, before 1917 the whole of Russia was covered by a net of Masonic lodges of which many thousands of people were members.”<sup>606</sup>

The Mason Boris Telepneff wrote: “The existence of Masonic Lodges was discovered by the Russian Government in 1909; it also became known to the authorities that they were of French origin. It was then decided by the Russian Lodges to suspend work... This was done accordingly until 1911, when some of their members decided to renew their activities with due prudence. One would not call these activities Masonic in any sense, as their chief aim was purely political – the abolition of the autocracy, and a democratic regime in

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<sup>605</sup> According to George Sprukts, Kerensky also belonged to the “Grand Orient of the Peoples of Russia” and the Scottish Rite (32<sup>nd</sup> degree) (“Re: [paradosis] Re: White army”, [orthodox-tradition@yahoo.com](mailto:orthodox-tradition@yahoo.com), June 9, 2004). (V.M.)

<sup>606</sup> Lebedev, *op. cit.* “Telepneff reported that two Russian Lodges had been formed in Paris under the auspices of the Grand Lodge of France while a Russian Lodge existed in Berlin, the Northern Star Lodge, under a warrant of the Grand Lodge of the Three Globes.” (Richard Rhoda, “Russian Freemasonry: A New Dawn”, a paper read at the Orient Lodge no. 15 on June 29, 1996, <http://members.aol.com/houltonme/rus/htm>).

Russia; they acknowledged allegiance to the Grand Orient of France. This political organization comprised about forty Lodges in 1913. In 1915-1916 disagreements arose between their members who belonged to two political parties (the constitutional democrats and the progressives) and could not agree on a common policy. Ten Lodges became dormant. The remaining thirty Lodges continued to work, and took part in the organization of the 1917 March revolution and in the establishment of the Provisional Government. Their political aim being attained, the organisation began to decay; twenty-eight Lodges existed on the eve of the Bolshevik revolution, and since then most of their members have left Russia."<sup>607</sup>

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Lebedev continues: "Besides lodges of the 'Polar Star' structure there also existed lodges of a mystical tendency. Among them were the *Martinists* (old-style) headed by a 'Great Master', Count Musin-Pushkin, which was joined by many from the aristocracy and even from the Imperial Family - Great Princes Nicholas Nikolayevich [supreme commander of the Russian armed forces in 1914-15], Peter Nikolayevich and George Mikhailovich.<sup>608</sup> Among them at one time was the noted Mason and occultist Papius, who was very active. Papius even hoped to draw his Majesty Nicholas II, but was not successful! Among the mystics were the Masons *Philaletes*, who were joined by Great Prince Alexander Mikhailovich (the brother of George) and a string of aristocrats, about one thousand people in all. Their main occupation was spiritist séances (supposed 'communion' with the spirits and souls of the dead), which quite a lot of the intelligentsia were interested in at that time.<sup>609</sup> Finally, there was the directly *Satanist* lodge 'Lucifer', which included many from the 'creative' sort, basically decadents such as Vyacheslav Ivanov, V. Bryusov and A. Bely...

"On the direct *orders* of the 'Grand Orient of France', Masonry extended its tentacles into the State apparatus, into the diplomatic corps. Thus according to

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<sup>607</sup> Telepneff, *op. cit.*

<sup>608</sup> Telepneff also reported that "an independent lodge of the so-called Martiniste Rite was formed among the entourage of Czar Nicholas II under the name of 'The Cross and the Star',... which suspended its work in 1916." Perhaps Great Prince Nicholas Mikhailovich Romanov, the Chairman of the Russian History Society, was a member of this lodge. Edvard Radzinsky (*The Last Tsar*, London: Arrow Books, 1993, p. 111) writes that he "was a mystic, a mason, and a freethinker... In the family he was called Monsieur Egalité, as the eighteenth-century liberal, the Duc d'Orléans, was called." (V.M.)

<sup>609</sup> "Other Martiniste lodges opened ... 'Apollonius' in St Petersburg (1910), 'St John' in Moscow (1911), 'St Andrew' in Kiev (1912). A very curious lodge existed among the Russian Navy League, calling themselves 'Philaletes'; beside philanthropic and intellectual work, it pursued a political aim in opposition to that of the Grand Orient lodges, namely the support of the monarchy of Nicholas II. Probably this movement arose in connection with the Paris branch of the Swiss Order of the Chevaliers 'Philaletes' which established two lodges in St Petersburg: 'The Pyramid of the North' and 'The Star of the North'. Both pursued studies of mysticism and symbolism." (Telepneff, quoted in "Russian Freemasonry" by Worshipful Brother Dennis Stocks, Barron Barnett Lodge. <http://www.casebook.org/dissertations/freemasonry/russianfm.html>). (V.M.)

the data of N. Verberova in her book, *People and Lodges*<sup>610</sup>, the Masons in the diplomatic service were: K.D. Nabokov (England), A.D. Kandaurov (France), G.P. Zabello (Italy), A.V. Nekludov (Sweden), I.G. Loris-Melikov (Norway), K.M. Onu (Switzerland), B.A. Bakhmetev (USA), N.A. Kudashev (China), A.I. Scherbatsky (Brazil), etc.

“All the Masonic lodges in Russia were linked and communicated with each other and with foreign centres, first of all with the ‘Grand Orient of France’. And all of them together were ruled by the *purely Jewish* community (called sometimes a ‘lodge’ and sometimes an ‘order’) *Bnai Brith*, which was at the head of united world Zionism, with its centre in the USA.

“For the western centres, the most important thing from a political point of view was Russian *political Masonry* of the ‘Polar Star’ structure. In 1909 it declared that it was liquidating itself. This was a manoeuvre, well-known from the times of [the Decembrist] P. Pestel, whose aim, on the one hand, was to get rid of ‘ballast’ and spies that had penetrated into its midst, and on the other hand, to create a new secret union for the political struggle that would not be subject to the suspicion and danger its legal ‘brothers’ were in...

“As we can see, Masonry contained prominent activists and members of the leadership of almost *all the parties* and major organizations. Kerensky later recalled that in Masonry they almost never allowed themselves to violate the unity of the ‘brotherhood’ by party disagreements. But ‘in public’ a sharp polemic between the parties went on, a struggle that sometimes seemed irreconcilable to the public (the ‘profanes’)! So that whatever party came to power in the event of the revolution, there would *in any case* be ‘brother-masons’ at the helm of this power!”<sup>611</sup>

Yana Sedova writes: “This group of Masons – about 300 people – had absolutely no interest in the aims of Masonry and rituals. They had their own clearly defined aim – to gain political power in the Russian Empire...”<sup>612</sup> Their numbers were too small to effect a revolution on their own; but they were hoping that a coming Great War would make their task easier...

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<sup>610</sup> Nina Berberova, *Liudi i Lozhi: russkie masony XX stoletia*, New York, 1986. (V.M.)

<sup>611</sup> Lebedev, *op. cit.*, pp. 448-451.

<sup>612</sup> Sedova, “Byl li masonskij zagovor protiv russkoj monarkhii?” (Was there a masonic plot against the Russian Monarchy?), *Nasha Strana*, November 24, 2006, N 2808, p. 4.

## 47. THE ACTORS IN THE REVOLUTION: (3) THE CHRISTIANS

Long before the Jews began to join terrorist organizations, or the Masonic intelligentsia to weave plots against the tsar, the Russian people began to fall away from the faith. This was mentioned by Saints Seraphim of Sarov and Tikhon of Zadonsk; and St. Ignaty Brianchaninov spoke about “hypocrisy”, “scribes and Pharisees” and “the salt losing its savour”. By the eve of the revolution this decline was still more noticeable. “Are many Orthodox Christians firm in the faith which they confess?” asked St. Joseph of Optina. “Do not the greater portion of them have something of a weak faith, like a tiny spark which might be extinguished at any moment?”<sup>613</sup>

The Church hierarchy was corrupted by renovationists such as Archbishop Sergei (Stragorodsky) and Bishop Antonin (Granovsky). There were few bishops who spoke out openly against the revolutionary madness... The reputation of the hierarchs had plummeted, being seen as mere executors of the will of the state.” Thus the future Metropolitan Benjamin (Fedchenko) wrote: “We had ceased to be ‘salted with salt and therefore were not able to salt others’.”<sup>614</sup>

As a result, people of all classes – from the peasants to the grand dukes and tsars – sought religious enlightenment outside the official Orthodox Church. As in the 1870s, there was a “going to the people”, in search of “elders” and “healers” and “prophets”, of whom the most famous was Rasputin...

In the monasteries it was the same story. In the years 1908-13 there was a series of rebellions against the abbots and elders of some of the best monasteries in Russia: Optina, Solovki, Glinsk. These were usually linked with monks who had entered the monasteries during the revolutionary years 1905-07. The future Elder Gabriel of Seven Lakes was warned by St. Ambrose of Optina “to go wherever he please, so as only not to live in Moscow”, where monasticism was at such a low level.<sup>615</sup> A generation later, in 1909, Archbishop Nikon (Rozhdenstvensky) pointed to many serious failings of contemporary monasticism at an All-Russian Monastic Conference.<sup>616</sup> In the same year, St. Barsanuphius of Optina said: “Contemporary monasticism strives in all things to fulfil its own will. Abba Dorotheus says: ‘I know of no other fall for a monk than as a consequence of his own will.’”<sup>617</sup>

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<sup>613</sup> Holy Transfiguration Monastery, Boston, *The Elder Joseph of Optina*, Boston, Mass.: Holy Transfiguration Monastery, 1984, p. 284.

<sup>614</sup> Fedchenko, in Sergei Firsov, *Russkaia Tserkov' Nakanune Peremenov* (The Russian Church on the Eve of the Changes), Moscow, 2002, p. 450.

<sup>615</sup> Fr. Simeon Kholmogorov, *One of the Ancients*, Platina, Ca.: St. Herman of Alaska Brotherhood, 1988, p. 67.

<sup>616</sup> <http://www.pravoslavie.ru/sm/30988.htm>.

<sup>617</sup> St. Barsanuphius, in Fomin & Fomina, *op. cit.*, p. 409.

Elder Gerasimus of Alaska relates how Elder Joasaph of St. Tikhon's monastery, Kaluga province, would often say in those pre-revolutionary years: "Misha, you see how monks are complaining - either the food is bad or something else is not good enough! Misha, grumbling is a frightful sin. For grumbling, God punished the chosen Israelite people not just once. Palestine is not far from Egypt, but the Lord led the Jews a whole forty years, and not many of them reached the Promised Land. See what a terrible sin it is - grumbling against God. And why should monks grumble? They usually have a warm cell, decent food, and enough bread to eat any time they want it. They have both shoes and clothing. While our peasant, having a family, often lacks those things, and then there are crop failures, and they have to pay taxes. And yet many of them are bearing this horrendous burden. Oh Misha, you'll see, the Lord will send terrible trials. He will take everything away from us, and then we will say, "Bad times have come; we have nothing to eat." Misha, this will inevitably take place if we do not repent; for such a sin God will not spare either our luxurious temples or the beautiful belfries, or the bells, or even the whole of our brotherhood - everything, everything will be taken away for our sinful grumbling."<sup>618</sup>

Churchmen were particularly guilty of failing to support the monarchical principle. Thus in May, 1913, the Holy Synod took the important decision to forbid clergy from taking part in political movements. However, since most clergy affected by this decree were working in the monarchist "Black Hundreds" movement, this was, in effect, an anti-monarchist move; it was hardly consistent with the Epistle that the Synod issued in February, 1913 on the occasion of the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Romanov dynasty, in which they declared that "only in an unbroken union of the Church with the state is the strength and might of our native Rus'". As a result of the May decree, such prominent monarchist clergy as Archimandrite Vitaly (Maximenko) and Protopriest John Vostorgov were forced to abandon the "Black Hundreds" movement. As a result, the movement went into a sharp decline...

Again, in 1916 all 45 priests who were deputies in the Duma and were considered "rightists" presented the Tsar with a petition to re-establish "conciliarity" in the Church and stop using the clergy "as an instrument of the government's internal politics". At such a critical moment in the country's life such a petition was more than a little misplaced... When the liberal "Progressive Bloc" had been formed in 1915, more than half of these priests joined it.

All this demonstrated how the revolutionary spirit had penetrated even into the very heart of Holy Rus', the church hierarchy.<sup>619</sup>

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<sup>618</sup> Fr. Leonid Kavelin, *Elder Macarius of Optina*, Platina, Ca.: St. Herman of Alaska Brotherhood Press, 1995, pp. 276-277.

<sup>619</sup> Hieromonk Simeon (Kalugin), "Optinskaia Smuta 1910-1912 gg. V kontekste istoricheskikh sobytij" (The Optina disturbances of 1910-1912 in the context of historical events), <http://cliuchinskaya.blogspot.co.uk/2016/01/1910-1912.html>

A particular characteristic of the pre-revolutionary period - and a propaganda gift for the revolutionaries - was the extravagance of the rich and their flagrant immorality. The Romanovs - with the shining exceptions of the Tsar and Tsarina, Grand Duke Sergei Alexandrovich, his wife Grand Duchess Elizabeth and some others - were among the worst sinners. Thus, as Nils Johanssen writes, there was the Tsar's uncle, Grand Duke Alexei Alexeyevich - General-Admiral and head of the whole fleet. "His lover, the French dance Eliza Baletta, quickly became one of the richest women in Russia. Thus the money that had been assigned to buy new cruisers in England was spent by the prince on diamonds... After the Tsushima catastrophe the theatre public whistled both at him and at his passion. 'Prince Tsushima!' they cried at the courtier. 'The blood of our sailors is on your diamonds!' - this was directed at the Frenchwoman. On June 2, 1905 Alexis Alexeyevich was forced to go into retirement. He took his stolen capital and together with Baletta set off for France."<sup>620</sup>

The increasing hard-heartedness of wealthy Russian Christians to the poor was bewailed by many leading churchmen, such as St. John of Kronstadt. Almost the only thing shared by St. John and his ideological opposite, Lev Tolstoy, was their condemnation of the rich. Thus Tolstoy wrote already in 1886 in *What Then Must We Do?*: "The hatred and contempt of the oppressed masses are increasing, and the physical and moral forces of the wealthy classes are weakening; the deception on which everything depends is wearing out, and the wealthy classes have nothing to console themselves with in this mortal danger.

"To return to the old ways is not possible; only one thing is left for those who do not wish to change their way of life, and that is to hope that 'things will last my time' - after that let happen what may. That is what the blind crowd of the rich are doing, but the danger is ever growing and the terrible catastrophe draws near..."<sup>621</sup>

Both rich and poor tended to forget the Christian teaching on social inequality, namely, that it is an opportunity for the rich to show compassion and for the poor to display patience. For, as Bishop Nikolai Velimirovich wrote, "it is God's desire that men be unequal in externals: riches, power, status, learning, position and so forth. But he does not recommend any sort of competitiveness in this. God desires that men compete in the multiplying of the inner virtues."<sup>622</sup>

But the rich in every age have been corrupt. What of the poor?...

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<sup>620</sup> Johansen, "Lovushka dlia Imperatora" (A Trap for the Emperor), *Kul'tura*, January 8, 2015.

<sup>621</sup> Tolstoy, in A.N. Wilson, *Tolstoy*, London: Atlantic Books, 2012, pp. 362-363.

<sup>622</sup> Velimirovich, *Homilies*, Birmingham: Lazarica Press, volume 2.

In the villages and factories, as we have seen, revolutionary propaganda made deep inroads. Although only a minority of peasants took part in the burning of landowners' estates in the 1905 revolution, by 1917 the experience of the war and the lying propaganda directed against the Tsar and his family had sapped trust in the authorities, increasing the numbers of deserters, thieves and arsonists. In the elections to the Constituent Assembly in 1918 no less than 80% of the population voted for socialist deputies.<sup>623</sup> Moreover, support for the Bolsheviks in the elections, as Richard Pipes writes, "came not from the region of Jewish concentration, the old Pale of Settlement, but from the armed forces and the cities of Great Russia, which had hardly any Jews".<sup>624</sup> So blame for the Russian revolution must fall on Russians as well as Jews, and not only on the aristocratic or Masonic Russians, but on large swathes of the Christian working population.

What of "the vanguard of the revolution", the industrial workers? In 1917, writes Smith, "there were still only 3.6 million workers in Russia's factories and mines, yet their concentration in particular regions and in relatively large enterprises gave them a political clout out of all proportion to their numbers, Mainly recruited from the peasants - 'snatched from the plough and hurled into the factory furnace' in L.D. Trotsky's memorable phrase - they varied considerably in the extent to which they were tied to the land, involved in urban culture, educated, and skilled. There were big differences, for example, between the skilled metalworkers of Vyborg district in Petrograd, the textile-workers of the Moscow industrial region, and the workers from the mining settlements of the Urals. Nevertheless the proportion of workers who had severed their ties with the village and who were becoming socialized into the urban industrial environment was increasing. Towns provided workers with cultural opportunities, such as evening classes, clubs, libraries, theatres, and mass entertainment, and exposed them to the subversive political ideas of Social Democrats and Socialist Revolutionaries. The wretched conditions in which workers lived, the drudgery of their work and their pitiful wages heightened their sense of separateness not only from the government but from privileged society in general.

"Following the general strike of 1905, the autocracy conceded limited legalization of trade unions, but employers showed little desire to reform the authoritarian system of industrial relations. Moreover, since the response of the authorities to strikes and demonstrations was to send in police and Cossacks, workers were easily politicized, seeing in the state and capitalists a single mechanism of oppression. Deprived the change to pursue improvement by gradualistic means, Russian workers became the most strike-prone in Europe:

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<sup>623</sup> Edward Roslof, *Red Priests: Renovatism, Russian Orthodoxy, and Revolution, 1905-1946*, Indiana University Press, 2002, p. 15.

<sup>624</sup> Pipes, *op.cit.*, p. 113.

in 1905-06 and again in 1912-14, the annual number of strikers was equivalent to almost three-quarters of the factory workhouse..."<sup>625</sup>

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The Tsar was blamed for everything, although, as we have seen, he did much to help the peasants, and did his best for the workers with good labour legislation. However, the problems associated with rapid industrialization were virtually insoluble in all countries, and were hardly the Tsar's fault. He just had the extra problem of very rapid demographic expansion, shortage of funds (income tax was not introduced until 1916, whereas it had been introduced in England during the Napoleonic Wars) and a constant barrage of anti-tsarist propaganda from all classes at home and from the Jewish press at home and abroad...

The fact is, as F. Vinberg writes: "Everyone was guilty! Both the higher circles of the nobility, and the major and minor merchants, and the representatives of science, and the servant classes, and in particular the adulterers of the word, the corrupters of thought, many Russian writers of the last decades, lawyers and professors: for all these categories of Russian citizens there can be no forgiveness for the great crime they committed."<sup>626</sup>

And so Ivan Solonevich's words applied to all sections of the Christian population: "With the substitution of faith in absolute Good with faith in relative sausages, everything else also begins to take on a relative character, including man. With the loss of faith in God, loss of faith in man is also lost. The Christian principle, 'love your neighbour as yourself', for your neighbour is *also* a part of absolute Good, is exchanged for another principle: 'man is a means for the production of sausages'. The feeling of absolute morality is lost... Consequently faith ceases to exist not only in man generally, but also in one's 'neighbour' and even in the neighbour himself. And then begins mutual extermination..."<sup>627</sup>

A particular vice of the simple people was drunkenness. The future hieromartyr Bishop Herman (Ryashentsev) of Vyazniki wrote: "The most evil infirmity of our countryside and the strongest brake on all real enlightenment and spiritual growth is alcohol. If in antiquity 'Rus' used to drink with gladness', now it has turned into a passion and a chronic illness, and our people not only drinks away its last substance, an excess of which destiny never spoiled them with, but, what is worst of all, it drinks away its mind, its conscience, its soul, the man himself. On the soil richly watered with alcohol there develop card games, interspersed with pearls of foul language, and there grow quarrels and fights, those eternal companions of drunkenness.

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<sup>625</sup> Smith, *op. cit.*, pp. 10-11.

<sup>626</sup> Vinberg, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

<sup>627</sup> I.L. Solonevich, *Narodnaia Monarkhia* (The People's Monarchy), Minsk, 1998, pp. 384, 385.

“And new infirmities are added to these: the sowing of our political innovators brings forth abundant shoots: they develop lack of respect to the person and to parents, an easy attitude to other people’s property. Instances of thievery and violence become more frequent. Add to that a distorted manifestation of an incorrectly understood notion of the freedom of the personality, which is reflected in the fall of morality among the young, and you receive quite a full picture of the spiritual life in the countryside...”<sup>628</sup>

The general condition of the Russian Christian people on the eve of the Great War was described by Dmitri Merezhkovsky as follows: “If you asked me what is the main characteristic of Russian people in our days, I would reply: loneliness. Never and nowhere have there been so many lonely people as now in Russia. Even those who not long ago were sociable, have suddenly become solitary. People are dispersing like iron filings bound together by a magnet when the magnet has lost its strength: they are falling out of society like a fish out of a holy sweepnet...”<sup>629</sup>

And the loneliest of all was the Tsar, upon whom fell the whole weight of the preservation of the Orthodox commonwealth and the lives of tens of millions of people. While he might consult with many, very few, if any, could comprehend the huge complexity of the questions that faced him. And only he could take the momentous decisions: to fight or not to fight, to rule or not to rule...

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<sup>628</sup> *Pis'ma Vladyki Germana* (The Letters of Bishop Herman), Moscow: St. Tikhon Theological Institute, Moscow, 2004, p. 13.

<sup>629</sup> Merezhkovsky, *Bylo i Budet* (It was and shall be).

## 48. THE BEILIS TRIAL

In 1911, a Christian boy, Andrei Yushchinsky, a student at a theological school, was killed in Kiev. "He had been killed in a bestial and unusual manner," writes Solzhenitsyn. "He had been stabbed 47 times, moreover with an evident knowledge of anatomy - into the cranial vein, into the veins and arteries of the neck, into the liver, the kidneys, the lungs and the heart, with the evident aim of draining him of all blood. Moreover, judging from the blood flows, he had been alive and in a standing position (and, of course, bound and with his mouth gagged). Only a very skilled criminal could have done this - and not on his own. The murdered [child] was discovered a week later in a cave on the territory of the factory of Zaitsev. But the cave was not the site of the murder... The murder coincided with the approach of the Jewish Pascha and, supposedly, of the laying of the foundation of a new synagogue on the territory of Zaitsev (a Jew). Four months after the murder a worker at Zaitsev's factory, Menachem Mendel Beilis, 37 years old, was arrested."<sup>630</sup>

The police seriously bungled the investigation, and there were many serious irregularities. For example, the barn in which the murder was suspected to have taken place was burned to the ground, and two important witnesses, the sons of Vera Cheberiak, who were friends of Yushchinsky, mysteriously died. The trial, which became an international *cause célèbre*, eventually began over two years later with a multitude of expert and non-expert witnesses (many who were called did not turn up). The jury was split (6 to 6), and Beilis was acquitted. However, it was established that the murder had been carried out in a ritual manner...<sup>631</sup>

In order to understand the significance of this trial, it is necessary briefly to review the roots of "the Jewish question" in Russia and of the so-called Jewish "blood libel".

By 1914 there were about seven million Jews in the Russian empire - the largest non-Slavic ethnic minority. Most of them lived in the Pale of Settlement, a very large area in the west of Russia approximately the size of France and Germany combined. Russian law, very loosely observed, confined them to this area, but on religious, not racial grounds - the sacred book of the Jews, the Talmud, is so hostile to Christ and Christians that those who follow it were deemed to be a threat to the lives and livelihoods of Christians. That these restrictions were indeed religious and not racial is proved by the fact that the Karaite Jews, who did not accept the Talmud, the Mountain Jews of the Caucasus, who were strongly tainted with paganism, and Jews who became

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<sup>630</sup> Solzhenitsyn, *Dvesti Let Vmeste* (Two Hundred Years Together), Moscow, 2001, vol. 1, p. 445.

<sup>631</sup> See M.V. Danilushkin, *Istoria Russkoj Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi, 1917-70* (A History of the Russian Orthodox Church, 1917-70, St. Petersburg, 1997, vol. 1, pp. 784-793; Alexander Solzhenitsyn, *op. cit.*, pp. 444-451; Oleg Platonov, *Ternovij Venets Rossii* (Russia's Crown of Thorns), Moscow, 1998, ch. 35.

Christians of any denomination, were given equal rights with the rest of the population.<sup>632</sup>

Moreover, permission to live outside the Pale was given to various categories of Jews: Siberian colonists, domestic servants, artisans, university graduates (one-fifth of the students of Kharkov university were Jews), businessmen, industrialists, bankers and others. This meant that in spite of the discriminatory laws there were considerable colonies of Jews throughout the empire and even in the capital, which enabled them to play a prominent role in the cultural and commercial life of pre-revolutionary Russia. In all, Jews made up about a third of Russia's total trading community.

In spite of the considerable opportunities thus presented to Jews in the Russian Empire, the traditionalist, rabbi-dominated Talmudic Jews of the Pale continued to think of Christians and Christian society as unclean and despicable. "The eminent Jewish-Russian lawyer, Genrikh Sliozberg," write Kyril Fitzlyon and Tatiana Browning, "never forgot the 'real grief' of his family and relations when they discovered that his father had sent him to a Russian grammar school. His school uniform they found particularly irritating, sinful even. It was, they thought, 'an apostate's garb', and his mother and grandmother cried bitterly every time they saw him in it.' Again, 'the Russian-Jewish revolutionary, Lev Deutsch, writing in 1923, clearly remembered the time when the Jews 'considered it sinful to learn Russian, and its use was allowed only if absolutely essential and, of course, only for speaking to Christians (the *goyim*).'"<sup>633</sup>

It was in this fanatical atmosphere that both Communist and Zionist propaganda made inroads into Jewish youth. As Chaim Weitzmann recalled in his *Autobiography*, zealots of both types were to be found in his own family, being united only in their hatred of Orthodox Russia.<sup>634</sup> Such sentiments were bound to lead to a reaction on the part of the surrounding population. Moreover, Jewish money-lenders exploited Russian peasants who wished to buy their freedom after Alexander II's emancipation of the serfs in 1861. The government tried to help with generous, low-interest loans, and on several occasions cancelled the debts outright; but the remaining need was filled by less generous Jews, who stepped in with much tougher, high-interest loans.

The pogroms of the oppressed Ukrainian peasantry against the oppressor Jewish money-lenders provided the excuse which international Jewry, together with its "Christian" front, the secularised intelligentsia of Russia and the West, needed. Soon a vast campaign was being whipped up against "the sick man of Europe", the so-called "prison of the peoples". Jewish and Socialist propaganda distorted the significance of these events, obscuring their causes,

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<sup>632</sup> "Let us remember," writes Solzhenitsyn: "the legal restrictions on the Jews in Russia were never racial [as they were in Western Europe]. They were applied neither to the Karaites [who rejected the Talmud], nor to the mountain Jews, nor to the Central Asian Jews." (*op. cit.*, p. 292).

<sup>633</sup> Fitzlyon and Browning, *Russia Before the Revolution*, London: Penguin books, 1977, p. 46.

<sup>634</sup> Weizmann, *Trial and Error: The Autobiography of Chaim Weitzmann*, New York: Harper, 1949.

hiding the extremely provocative behaviour of Jewish gangs, and quite unjustly accusing the Church and the State, and in particular the Tsar, of complicity in these crimes.

The innocence of the government and Tsar is illustrated by their reaction to the assassination by the Jewish revolutionary Bogrov of Prime Minister A.A. Stolypin in Kiev Opera House in 1911. Robert Massie writes: "Because Bogrov was a Jew, the Orthodox population was noisily preparing a retaliatory pogrom. Frantic with fear, the city's Jewish population spent the night packing their belongings. The first light of the following day found the square before the railway station jammed with carts and people trying to squeeze themselves on to departing trains. Even as they waited, the terrified people heard the clatter of hoofs. An endless stream of Cossacks, their long lances dark against the dawn sky, rode past. On his own, Kokovtsev had ordered three full regiments of Cossacks into the city to prevent violence. Asked on what authority he had issued the command, Kokovtsev replied: 'As head of the government.' Later, a local official came up to the Finance Minister to complain, 'Well, Your Excellency, by calling in the troops you have missed a fine chance to answer Bogrov's shot with a nice Jewish pogrom.' Kokovtsov was indignant, but, he added, 'his sally suggested to me that the measures which I had taken at Kiev were not sufficient... therefore I sent an open telegram to all governors of the region demanding that they use every possible means - force if necessary - to prevent possible pogroms. When I submitted this telegram to the Tsar, he expressed his approval of it and of the measure I had taken in Kiev.'"<sup>635</sup>

In 1906 the future Hieromartyr Fr. John Vostorgov said: "The Jews are restricted in their rights of residence not as a confessional unit, but as a predatory tribe that is dangerous in the midst of the peaceful population because of its exploitative inclinations, which... have found a religious sanction and support in the Talmud... Can such a confession be tolerated in the State, when it allows its followers to practise hatred and all kinds of deceit and harm towards other confessions, and especially Christians? ... The establishment of the Pale of Settlement is the softest of all possible measures in relation to such a confession. Moreover, is it possible in this case not to take account of the mood of the masses? But this mood cannot be changed only by issuing a law on the complete equality of rights of the Jews. On the contrary, this can only strengthen the embitterment of the people..."<sup>636</sup>

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Now stories of ritual murder of Christian children by Jews have surfaced in many countries, leading to many formal trials and convictions.<sup>637</sup> These are

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<sup>635</sup> Massie, *Nicolas and Alexandra*, London: Book Club Associates, 1967, p. 229.

<sup>636</sup> Vostorgov, in Fomin and Fomina, *Rossia pered Vtorym Prishestviem* (Russia before the Second Coming), Sergiev Posad, 1993, vol. II, p. 624.

<sup>637</sup> For ritual murders demonstrated in court, see Dal', V. *Rozyskanie o ubiyenii evreev khristianskikh mladentsev i upotreblenii krovi ikh* (Investigation into the Killing by Jews of Christian Children and the Use of their Blood), St. Petersburg, 1844; Rozanov, V. *Oboniatel'noe*

completely dismissed by western authors, who speak about the “blood libel” against the Jews.

However, the Orthodox Church has canonized at least one victim of such a murder, Child-Martyr Gabriel of Zverki, Belorussia, to whom Archbishop Anthony (Khrapovitsky) wrote a service in 1908.<sup>638</sup> And in 2007 the Israelite Professor Ariel Toaff, the son of the Chief Rabbi of Rome, published *Confirming Judaic Ritual Murder*, in which he confirms that ritual murder was practiced in medieval Italy.<sup>639</sup>

In 1855 Bishop Porphyrius (Uspensky) of Chigirinsk wrote to the director of the Department of foreign confessions, Khrushchev: “Just as the Christian peoples have retained many pagan superstitions, so the Jews – it goes without

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*i osyazatel'noe otnoshenie evreev k krovi* (The Senses of Smell and Touch of the Jews towards Blood), St. Petersburg, 1913; O. Platonov, *Ternovij venets Rossii* (Russia's Crown of Thorns), Moscow, 1998.

<sup>638</sup> Born in 1684 in the village of Zverki, in the Grodno province, to pious Orthodox parents. He suffered as a six-year-old child from a fanatic - a Jew. The tenant of the village of Zverke, a Jew named Šcutko, stole Gavriilo's child in the absence of his parents, and took him to the town of Bjeli Stok. There, the fanatical Jews crucified Saint Gabriel and stabbed him with various deeds until they shed all his blood, and the child died. The dead body would be thrown into the field, but would soon be found. After thirty years, the relics of St. Gabriel proved to be incorruptible, and are in the Slutsk monastery.' (Google Translated from <https://svetosavlje.org/zitija-svetih-5/21/>) S.V. Bulgakov, *Nastol'naia Kniga dlya Svyashchenno-Tserkovno-Sluzhitelia* (Handbook for Church Servers), Kharkov, 1900, p. 143. It is significant that in 1919 the Bolsheviks banned the chanting of hymns to the Child-Martyr Gabriel, whose relics reposed in the church of St. Basil the Blessed on Red Square (Vladimir Rusak, *Pir Satany* (Satan's Feast), London, Ontario: Zarya, 1991, p. 13).

<sup>639</sup> Lisa Palmieri-Billig (“Historian gives credence to blood libel”, *The Jerusalem Post*, February 7 and 8, 2007) writes: “An Israeli historian of Italian origin has revived ‘blood libel’ in an historical study set to hit Italian bookstores on Thursday. Ariel Toaff, son of Rabbi Elio Toaff, claims that there is some historic truth in the accusation that for centuries provided incentives for pogroms against Jews throughout Europe.

“Toaff’s tome, *Bloody Passovers: The Jews of Europe of Ritual Murders*, received high praise from another Italian Jewish historian, Sergio Luzzatto, in an article in the *Corriere della Serra* entitled ‘Those Bloody Passovers’.

“Luzzatto describes Toaff’s work as a ‘magnificent book of history... Toaff holds that from 1100 to about 1500... several crucifixions of Christian children really happened, bringing about retaliations against entire Jewish communities – punitive massacres of men, women, children. Neither in Trent in 1475 nor in other areas of Europe in the late Middle Ages were Jews always innocent victims.’

“‘A minority of fundamentalist Ashkenazis... carried out human sacrifices,’ Luzzatto continued.

“Toaff offers as an example the case of Saint Simonino of Trent in March 1475, shortly after a child’s body was found in a canal near the Jewish area of Trent, the city’s Jews were accused of murdering Simonino and using his blood to make mazot.

“After a medieval trial in which confessions were extracted by torture, 16 members of Trent’s Jewish community were hanged.

“Toaff reveals that the accusations against the Jews of Trent ‘might have been true’.

“Toaff refers to kabbalistic descriptions of the therapeutic uses of blood and asserts that ‘a black market flourished on both sides of the Alps, with Jewish merchants selling human blood, complete with rabbinic certification of the product – kosher blood.’” (<http://www.revisionisthistory.org/page10.page10.html>)

saying, not all of them – continue to shed the blood of children and youths who are not of their tribe according to very ancient tradition, which points to the redemption of their whole race in a bloody human sacrifice... In the East everyone is convinced that the killing of Christian boys by the Jews is ordered in such a way that this evil is accomplished in one year in Thessalonica, for example, in another in Damascus, in a third in Spain, or Russia, or Wallachia, etc., and that the towels soaked in the blood of the unfortunate victim are burned, and their ashes are scattered to all the synagogues so that they can be baked into the paschal bread... Judge, after this, how difficult it is to catch the terrible crime... I sorrow over the existence of such a horror among the Jews... And Jews have penetrated onto Athos, and one of them in the rank of hieromonk and spiritual father killed monks coming to him for confession, and hid their corpses under his floor..."<sup>640</sup>

It is the tendency of pro-semitic authors to dismiss all this as "anti-semitic lies". However, even if all the historical evidence of Jewish atrocities could be dismissed, it would be surprising indeed if a religion steeped in such hatred against Christ and Christians as Talmudic Judaism did not produce *acts* of hatred. As long as incitement to such acts exists in the "sacred" book of the Judaistic religion, there must be a presumption that some of its followers may be tempted to carry them out.

On the other hand, it cannot be denied that Christians also acted with hatred and committed atrocities, as in the pogroms in the Rhineland in 1096 or in Spain leading to the expulsion of all the Jews from Spain in 1492, or in Russia before the revolution. Hatred of enemies is forbidden by the Gospel of Christ; so such acts, whether or not they were provoked by hatred on the Jews' side, cannot be condoned. But the justified horror at Christian antisemitism which has become so *de rigueur* in the modern world, must always be balanced by a similar horror at the antigentilism and antichristianity of the Talmud, the most hateful of all "sacred" books.

Over a hundred well-documented cases of the murder of Christian children by the Jews for ritual purposes in various countries are cited by Oleg Platonov. Especially important is the evidence of Monk Neophytus, who was until the age of 38 a Jewish rabbi but then joined the Greek Church. He exposed, not only the real existence of this horrific practice, but also the religious rationale behind it. His book, entitled *A Refutation of the Religion of the Jews and their Rites from the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments*, originally appeared in Moldavian in 1803 and was translated into Russian in 1913, the year of the Beilis trial:-

"The secret use of blood, which the Jews collect from Christians killed by them is a rite which they consider to have been commanded by God Himself and indicated in certain mysterious expressions in the Scriptures.

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<sup>640</sup> Uspensky, in Fomin and Fomina, *op. cit.*, vol. II, p. 632.

“Many scholars have written works aimed at proving, with the help of the Bible, the appearance of the true Messiah promised by God to our fathers, Who is the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the All-Pure Virgin Mary. An innumerable quantity of works have also been written to refute the superstitious beliefs of the Jews and their false teachings. Many of these authors were native Jews who converted to the Christian Faith. Meanwhile, nobody has yet published anything serious concerning this barbaric mystery of blood, which is kept and used by the synagogue. If some book hinting at this mystery happens to fall into the hands of Christians, and they make reference to it, the Jews never reply in any other way than with feigned mockery or evasions, like the following: ‘But how would we kill Christians if the law forbids us to eat blood?’

“In my opinion, the reason preventing the Jews, even those converted to Christianity, from clearly exposing this is hidden either in the fact that they really were not initiated into the mystery, or in the fact that they still foolishly pity our unfortunate people, and fear to attract to it the powerful vengeance of the Christian peoples.

“But I, having by the mercy of God received Holy Baptism and monasticism, have no fear, in the interest of Christians, to declare everything that I know about these rites, which I myself zealously carried out and kept in the strictest secrecy all the time that I was a haham, or rabbi.

“But first of all it is necessary to explain that the mystery of blood is not known to all Jews, but only to the hahams, or rabbis, the scribes, or Pharisees, who for that reason are called the keepers of the mystery of the blood - a mystery which, moreover, is not contained in clear words in any of their books and which they pass on exclusively by oral tradition.

“The fathers of families initiated into the mystery pass it on only to that one of their sons whose secrecy they have tested. Also, they insist that he is obliged to pass on the mystery only under those condition and in that form, and that he should never disclose it to a Christian, even in the cruellest woes, and even for the saving of life. This revelation is accompanied by the most terrifying curses on anyone who gives away the secret. Here, for example, is how I was initiated into it myself.

“When I reached the age of thirteen, - the age at which the Jews have the custom of laying a wreath called the wreath of glory on the heads of their sons, - my father went apart with me and had a long talk with me, instilling hatred for the Christians into me as a duty laid down by God. This hatred was to go as far as killing them. Then he told me of the custom of collecting the blood of the murdered, and he added, embracing me: ‘So, my son, in this way I have made you confidant and as it were my second I.’ Then he put the wreath on my head and in great detail explained to me the mystery of the blood as the holiest of the holies and the important rite of the Jewish religion. ‘My son,’ he continued, ‘I abjure you by all the elements of heaven and earth always to keep this secret in your heart and not to entrust it to anyone, neither your brothers,

nor your sisters, not your mother, nor, later, your wife, - not to any mortal, and especially women. If God gives you even eleven grown sons, do not reveal the secret to all of them, but only to one - the one whom you recognise to be the cleverest and the most capable of keeping the secret, just as I am now acting with you. You must take great care that this son of yours should be devoted and zealous for our faith. Once more I adjure you: beware of trusting women, even your daughters, your wife and your mother, but trust only the son whom you consider worthy of trust.' 'O my son,' he cried finally, 'may the whole earth refuse to accept your corpse and thrust you out from its depths, if, even in conditions of the most extreme necessity, you reveal this secret of blood to anyone besides him of whom I have spoken. Even if you become a Christian for the sake of profit or for other reasons. See that you do not betray your father by giving away this divine secret which I have revealed to you today. Otherwise may my curse strike you at the very hour at which you sin, and may it accompany you all the days of your life until death and to the ages of ages.'

"May the Father Whom I have acquired in heaven and Who is the Lord Jesus Christ turn away these curses from the head of him who writes exclusively for the sake of the benefit of the Church and the triumph of the Truth.

"The bases of this barbaric custom are the following: 1) hatred for Christians, 2) superstition, and 3) faith in the spiritual reality of Christian blood. I shall explain each of these points.

"On the first reason, which is hatred for Christians.

"The Jews as it were from their mother's breast instil hatred of Christianity into their sons from the earliest childhood. On receiving these convictions from their fathers over a whole series of generations, they are really and sincerely convinced that to despise Christians and even to kill them is very pleasing to God, thereby exactly justifying the words of Divine redemption: 'everyone who kills you will think that he is thereby serving God' (John 16.20).

"On the second reason, which is superstition.

"The second reason is based on the superstitious beliefs which the Jews hold and which relate to the sphere of magic, sorcery, the kabbala and other mysterious rites. They believe that Christian blood is necessary for these diabolical operations. Out of all these superstitions I will indicate only one, which concerns the curse of God that fell on the unhappy people of Israel and which was prophesied by Moses himself in the following expressions: 'the Lord will strike you with Egyptian leprosy... a foul leprosy on the knees and shins from which you will not be able to be healed' (Deuteronomy 28.27, 35).

"This terrible illness always was and is very common among the Jews - much more common than they think... And when the haham visits the sick who have been struck down by it, and gives them medicines, he at the same

time sprinkles them with Christian blood, if he has any, as the only means of healing...

“On the third and principal reason, which is the faith of the Jews in the spiritual reality of Christian blood.

“The main reason which compels the Jews to kill Christians and collect their blood is the faith, secretly preserved especially by the hahams, or rabbis, that Jesus Christ, the Son of Mary from Nazareth, who was condemned by our ancestors to death on the Cross, is, in all probability, the true Messiah who was for so long expected and invoked by the patriarchs and prophets. There are enough prophecies to convince them of this; especially important is the passage from Jeremiah: ‘Be amazed, O heavens, tremble and be seized with horror, says the Lord, for two evils have My people committed: they have abandoned Me, the source of living water, and have cut out for themselves broken cisterns which cannot hold water’ (Jeremiah 2.12,13).

“This prophecy is well-known and is understood in its true meaning by many rabbis, as it was very well known by Annas and Caiaphas. But, like them, from pride and hardness of heart, the rabbis do not want to recognise it, and therefore, resorting to pitiful interpretations, they have composed new rules – a real parody on the most important mysteries of the Church, so as to be saved by Christian blood, in which they see the blood of the Messiah Himself.

“In consequence of their conviction... the Jews use Christian blood at circumcision, which represents baptism; at marriage, which corresponds to this mystery among the Christians; in the unleavened bread of Pascha, which represents the Eucharist; at burials, imitating holy unction; in their lament over the destruction of Jerusalem, which represents the mystery of repentance. This is the basis of the secret, which I knew and sometimes applied with extraordinary zeal. I shall stop on each of these explanations.

“Marriage. When a marriage is concluded between Jews, the bride and bridegroom prepare for it with a strict fast for 24 hours, abstaining even from water until the setting of the sun. It is then that the rabbi appears. He takes a just-boiled egg, removes the shell and divides it in half. Then he sprinkles it, not with salt, but with a special ash, which I will say more about later. He gives half of this sprinkled egg to each spouse.

“Let us now say what this ash is. It is used not instead of salt, but instead of fresh Christian blood, being in actual fact changed Christian blood. It is precisely with the blood left over from the sacrifices carried out for the feast of unleavened bread, the more the better, that the rabbis infuse a corresponding quantity of flax or cotton thread, then they dry it and burn it. The ash is kept in bottles that are carefully sealed and given to the synagogue’s treasurer. The latter distributes it gradually to the rabbis who ask for it, or for their own use, or for sending to those countries where it is impossible to obtain Christian

blood, whether because there are no Christians there or because the police have been roused to be more watchful and the Christians more careful.

“In any case, fresh blood is always preferable, but it is necessary only for the unleavened bread, and in the case of insurmountable obstacles the indicated dark ash represents an acceptable substitute.

“Circumcision. A rabbi also appears for the circumcision of children on the eighth day after birth. He puts into a cup some of the best wine he can get hold of and pours one drop of Christian blood into it. It has been collected from torture, but if that is not available, some of the above-mentioned ash is used, into which a drop of the blood of the circumcised child is added. When this is well mixed with the wine, the rabbi immerses the finger of the child into the cup and says: ‘I declare to you, child: your life is in your blood.’ And he twice repeats this rite and these words.

“Here is a superstitious explanation which the rabbis give for this ceremony amongst themselves. The Prophet Ezekiel twice said: “‘Live in your blood!’” Thus I say to you: “Live in your blood!’” (Ezekiel 16.6). By these words the prophet perhaps wanted to indicate the blood of Jesus Christ, Who freed from bonds the souls of the holy fathers who did not receive a water baptism; and in such a case the souls of the Jews, although also themselves deprived of the water of baptism, will be saved by the blood of a Christian baptised in water. But one of the reasons why this blood must be collected amidst the cruel sufferings of the victim is precisely the necessity of representing thereby the Passion of Christ. On the contrary, if the Prophet Ezekiel wanted to speak only about every man’s blood of circumcision, then the Jewish child will be saved by the power of the single drop of blood mixed by the rabbi in the wine with the Christian blood. What a pitiful nation!

“The anniversary of the taking of Jerusalem. The Jews again use the ash of which I have spoken on the ninth day of July, when they weep over the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus. On this anniversary they use it in two ways: first, they wipe their forehead with it, which they thought would be unseemly to do with fresh blood, and secondly, they sprinkle an egg with it, and on that day every son of Israel without exception must eat a hard-boiled egg sprinkled with this ash...

“Death. A haham immediately goes to the house of him of whose death he just learned. He takes the white of an egg, mixes into it some Christian blood and a little ash and puts this mixture into the breast of the corpse, uttering the supposed words of Ezekiel: ‘I shall sprinkle you with pure blood and you will be cleansed from all your filthiness’ (Ezekiel 36.25). Ezekiel, it is true, said, not ‘pure blood’, but ‘pure water’... But by dint of this corruption of the text the Jews convince themselves that the dead man will undoubtedly be admitted to paradise.

“The feasts of Pascha and Purim. These two feasts demand the same blood ritual.

“On paschal days the Jews must eat unleavened bread, small breads prepared only by hahams, into which Christian blood has been poured. Everyone, nobles and simple people, young and old, even those without teeth, must taste of this bread, even if it only a crumb the size of an olive...

“The feast of Purim was established in memory of the deliverance from the dominion of Haman by means of Esther and Mordecai, as this is recounted in the book of Esther. As is known, this feast comes in February. The initiated Jews are then occupied, wherever they can, with seizing as many Christians as possible, especially children. However, in this night they sacrifice only one, reproducing the torments of Haman. But for this reason, while the body is hanging, all those present cover it with thousands of insults, as if they were addressing Haman himself. The collected blood is poured out by the rabbi into flour that has already been dissolved with honey, from which he then makes small breads in the form of a triangle for the sake of ridiculing the mystery of the Holy Trinity. These breads are meant, not for the Jews, but through boundless cunning they are distributed to the most eminent families, which must give them away – and these gifts are considered the height of kindness – to their friends from among the Christians. This rite is called the Bread of Purim.

“We should note that this rite does not require the application of too heavy tortures to the victim precisely because the collected blood does not have any other purpose than the one I have indicated.

“The rest of kidnapped Christians, however, are kept in secret hiding-places until the day of Pascha, which comes shortly after Purim. At this time they are all offered in sacrifice in the cruellest and most barbaric manner, and they collect their blood partly for the unleavened bread and partly for other necessities which come up in the course of the year and have been indicated above. These torments at Pascha have a definite aim – to renew the sufferings of Christ, and for that reason they must be carried out mainly on children who through their innocence and virginity better symbolise the Saviour.

“In these depressing pourings out of blood the words of Jeremiah written in prophecy about the Jews are justified: ‘Even on the hems of your clothes is found the blood of poor innocent people’ (Jeremiah 2.34), and still better the words of Ezekiel: ‘You eat with blood... and shed blood’ (Ezekiel 33.25). In consequence of these innumerable murders Israel was expelled from various states, in particular from Spain, thereby justifying another prophecy of Ezekiel: ‘Blood calls you to court’ (Ezekiel 30.6).”<sup>641</sup>

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<sup>641</sup> Platonov, op. cit., pp. 748-754.

Archbishop Anthony (Khrapovitsky)'s attitude to Jewish blood rituals in general, and the Beilis trial in particular, was expressed in an interview he gave to A. Chizhevsky. After reminding his readers of how, at the request of Rabbi Skomorovsky, he had twice, in 1903 and 1905, spoken up against the antisemite pogroms in Zhitomir, he went on: "But in both of the above-mentioned cases of my conversation with the rabbi, I decisively refused to say that I did not recognize the existence of ritual murders carried out by Jews, but on the contrary I expressed to my interlocutor my conviction that these murders exist, perhaps as belonging to one or another sect of the Jewish religion, perhaps as a secret of the highest spiritual government of the Jews, but there undoubtedly have been cases of ritual murders both in recent times and in antiquity.

"When my Jewish academic acquaintances pointed to the fact that Jewish law forbids the drinking of the blood even of animals, so that the thought of their mixing Christian blood with the paschal matsa was absurd, I replied that what seemed more probable to me was the link between the ritual killings and, not the Jewish feast of Pascha, but the feast that precedes it of 'Purim', in which the story of Esther, Haman and Mordecai is remembered, when the Persian king, having executed the enemy of the Jews, Haman, allowed them, who had not long before been condemned to general killing, to kill their enemies themselves. Purim in 1911 [the year of the ritual killing of Andrew Yuschinsky] took place on March 14 and 15, while the Jewish Pascha was from March 15-18...

"Already in deep antiquity the Jews were causing various disorders against various symbols hostile to them during this feast. Thus in 408 and 412 the Byzantine emperor issued two special decrees forbidding the Jews from celebrating Purim and mocking Christian crosses instead of Haman. I think that Christian children were also killed on this feast..."<sup>642</sup>

The Beilis trial polarized Russian society and, through the Jewish press, had international ramifications. Liberal opinion throughout the world pilloried Russia, which was now the country, supposedly, not only of the cruellest tyranny and retrograde religion, but also of systematic persecution and slander of the Jews. Unfortunately, these criticisms, though unjust<sup>643</sup>, helped to create the very phenomenon they decried. Racial anti-semitism, as opposed to religious anti-Judaism and anti-Talmudism, had been rare in Russia – rarer than in most western countries. But in the decade that followed the Beilis trial,

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<sup>642</sup> Archbishop Anthony, in *Zhizn' Volynii* (The Life of Volhynia), N 221, 2 September, 1913.

<sup>643</sup> As regards freedom, it is a paradoxical but true fact that Russia in the last decades before the revolution was one of the freest countries in the world. Thus Duma deputy Baron A.D. Meyendorff admitted: "The Russian Empire was the most democratic monarchy in the world" (Lebedev, *op. cit.*, p. 405). This view was echoed by foreign observers, such as Sir Maurice Baring: "There is no country in the world, where the individual enjoys so great a measure of personal liberty, where the 'liberté de moeurs' is so great, as in Russia; where the individual man can do as he pleases with so little interference or criticism on the part of his neighbours, where there is so little moral censorship, where liberty of abstract thought or aesthetic production is so great." (in Eugene Lyons, *Our Secret Allies*, 1953).

under the stress of war and revolution and the undoubted fact that the revolution was led mainly by Jews, real anti-semitism took root in Russia during the Civil War, with massacres far exceeding anything seen in the times of the tsars...

*IV. EAST AND WEST: THE COUNTDOWN TO WORLD  
WAR*

## 49. THE BALKAN WARS

The murder of Stolypin in September, 1911 introduced a dangerous element of instability and indecision into Russian foreign policy. Stolypin had stood for a policy of avoidance of war and the rapid building up of Russia's financial and economic resources. His successor as prime minister, Kokovtsov, followed the same line, but lacked Stolypin's authority in keeping his ministers in order – especially the War Minister Sukhomlinov, who, together with important military figures such as the Tsar's uncle, Grand Duke Nikolai Nikolaievich, advocated a belligerent, anti-German and pro-Serbian foreign policy.

The Tsar himself, with his foreign minister Sazonov, wavered between the parties of peace and war (for that is what they amounted to). On the one hand, he recognized the enormous risks in allowing the extreme nationalism of the Balkan Orthodox to express itself unchecked. On the other hand, with the humiliation suffered at the hands of the Austrians in 1908-09 still fresh in his mind, his sympathies were with Serbia; and he knew that Russian public opinion would not tolerate another such humiliation.

Indeed, it was just after that humiliation, in 1909, that a passionate nationalist, Nicholas Hartwig, was appointed Russian ambassador in Belgrade. "A militant pan-Slav, with long service in and knowledge of the Balkans and the Middle East, Hartwig 'used the Serb cause as a weapon in his struggle against his own government,' according to the well-informed French minister in Belgrade. 'With the support of conservative and orthodox circles at St. Petersburg' he battled Sazonov, the foreign minister, and he 'dragged Russian diplomacy toward the Balkan evolution of the last two years which he had the merit of conceiving and carrying out.'

"It was Hartwig who had brought the Balkan states together for a time against both Turkey and Austria..."<sup>644</sup>

"Hartwig was running something close to a rogue operation. Izvolsky and other leaders of the Russian government 'denounced the dangers of Hartwig's "incurable Austrophobia"', and what the historian Dominic Lieven has recently called 'his disloyalty to overall Russian foreign policy.'"<sup>645</sup>

However, the current of opinion was running in Hartwig's favour: between 1907 and 1914, writes Lieven, "the outlines of a coalition between sections of Russia's economic, political and intellectual élites based on a combination of liberal and nationalist ideas began to emerge. It encompassed a number of leading Moscow industrialists, some of Russia's greatest liberal intellectuals and many Duma leaders. By 1914 this shadowy coalition had important friends in both the army and the bureaucracy. Prince Grigori Trubetskoy, who ran the Foreign Ministry's department of Near Eastern and Balkan affairs, was closely

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<sup>644</sup> David Fromkin, *Europe's Last Summer*, London: Vintage, 2005, pp. 129-130.

<sup>645</sup> Fromkin, *op. cit.*, p. 84.

linked to the Moscow industrialists and to Peter Struve, the leading intellectual spokesman for the coalition of the liberal-conservative and nationalist elites. Even Alexander Krivoshein, the Minister of Agriculture, was a potential ally of this coalition. His ministry, and indeed he himself, maintained cordial relations with the Duma and the zemstva. On the whole, they enjoyed a good press. And Krivoshein was not merely inclined towards pro-Slav nationalist sympathies, he had also married a daughter of one of Moscow's leading industrialist families [the Morozovs]. It needs to be stressed that this coalition was still in embryo in 1907-9 and that Germany's own aggressive policies played a role in bringing it to life in later years. Nevertheless the Germans were not wrong to watch Russian domestic developments with great concern in the pre-war era. The idea that the liberal-nationalist, anti-German and pro-Slav coalition represented the wave of the future was not unreasonable and was widely believed both in Russia and abroad..."<sup>646</sup>

In the same fateful month of September, 1911 the long-expected carve-up of the Ottoman empire, "the sick man of Europe", began. Italy, which had resented Austria's annexation of Bosnia, decided to claim her share by invading the Ottoman territories of Libya and the Dodecanese islands. The Italians felt that they had a right to Libya since the French had recently taken control of Morocco. And the British, the French and the Russians encouraged them insofar as they hoped to detach Italy from her alliance with Austria and Germany... But when the Turks twice closed the Straits during their war with Italy, causing massive damage to Russia's export trade, the Russians began to see possession of the Straits as a foreign policy priority...

The invasion of Libya triggered the break-up of the Ottoman empire in Europe. The Balkan Orthodox States began preparing for war by rapidly rearming themselves. As a result, all fell deeply into debt to western arms manufacturers - the Serbs to French ones, the Bulgarians to German ones. They also made several bilateral agreements amongst themselves - first of all, the Serb-Bulgarian alliance of March, 1912.

But this did not mean that the Serbs and Bulgarians were friends... As Lieven writes, "Nobody believed that the status quo in Macedonia could survive for much longer. Within Macedonia, Muslims (mostly but by no means only Albanians), Greeks and Slavs were often in conflict. Grigorii Trubetskoy wrote that the great majority of Macedonian Slavs were currently neither truly Bulgarian nor truly Serbian. Which direction their identity took would depend on whether the Bulgarian or the Serbian government and intelligentsia came to control the region. This gave an added twist to the rivalry of the regimes in Sofia and Belgrade. All the governments in the region were nationalist through and through. This was the source of their legitimacy and of most local politicians' sense of their own personal identity. Where governments did try to show statesmanship and moderation, however, they could rely on being denounced by wide sections of their country's intelligentsia. Worst of all, the

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<sup>646</sup> Lieven, *Nicholas II*, pp. 191-192

officer corps of all states in the region were shot through with extreme and aggressive nationalist assumptions and loyalties. The monarchs of Greece, Romania, and Bulgaria were foreigners: they were especially vulnerable to accusations of betraying the national cause. But even in Serbia and Turkey, two countries with native dynasties, monarchs were overthrown by military coups in these years..."<sup>647</sup>

The Russians were prepared to support a defensive alliance among the Balkan states in order to prevent an Austrian advance towards Salonica. But they were not prepared to support an offensive alliance that would finally destroy the Ottoman empire and lead, in all probability, to a general European war. The problem was, as Macmillan writes, that "politicians who had ridden to power by playing on nationalism and with promises of national glory found that they were in the grip of forces they could not always control. Secret societies, modelling themselves on an eclectic mix which included Freemasonry, the underground Carbonari, who had worked for Italian unity, the terrorists who more recently had frightened much of Europe, and old-style banditry, proliferated throughout the Balkans, weaving their way into civilian and military institutions of the states. The Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organisation (IMRO) talked about Macedonia for the Macedonians but was widely suspected of working with Bulgarian nationalists for a greater Bulgaria which would include Macedonia. In Serbia, the government and the army were riddled with supporters of *Narodna Odbrana* (National Defence), which had been set up during the Bosnian crisis, and its even more extreme offshoot the Black Hand. In the First Balkan War, officers disobeyed their own government on several occasions, seizing, for example, the town of Monastir (which Serbia had promised to Bulgaria in a secret treaty) in the hopes that it would then be impossible to hand it over...."<sup>648</sup>

Now not only the Balkan Orthodox, but also the Muslim Albanians, stirred by similar nationalist dreams, were in more or less open rebellion against the Turks. In August, 1912 20,000 Albanian troops occupied Skopje. The Turks resorted to bloody reprisals, but were forced to grant autonomy to this mainly Albanian-occupied region. Nor did any of the larger Balkan powers pay much attention to the Great Powers. "Balkan leaders complained openly that they could no longer trust the great powers to protect the Christians under Ottoman rule and hinted that they might have to take action. Why maintain the status quo in the Balkans, a leading politician in Serbia asked Trotsky. 'Where was the status quo when Austria annexed Bosnia and Herzegovina? Why didn't the powers defend the status quo when Italy seized Tripoli?' And why should the Balkan states be treated as though they were somehow not European but like Morocco? There was the chance, the Foreign Minister of Serbia admitted to the British ambassador in Belgrade, that Austria-Hungary would intervene if any of the Balkan nations moved to seize Ottoman territory but, as far as he,

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<sup>647</sup> Lieven, *Towards the Flame. Empire, War and the End of Tsarist Russia*, London: Allen Lane, 2015, p. 241.

<sup>648</sup> Macmillan, *The War that Ended Peace*, London: Profile, 2014, pp. 439-440.

Milovan Milovanović, was concerned, it was better for Serbia to die fighting. If Austria-Hungary itself expanded further southwards into the Balkans, Serbia was finished anyway as an independent kingdom..."<sup>649</sup>

Many in Russia were calling for war in support of the Balkan Slavs. One of the few who preached the opposite was Rasputin... Douglas Smith writes: "That Rasputin kept Russia from going to war in the Balkans has become part of his mythology, and although it is beyond any doubt that Rasputin was against the war and let everyone know he was – a fact much to his credit – it is less clear that his was the determining voice for peace. Indeed, other, more powerful figures were saying the same thing. Foreign Minister Sergei Sazonov, for example, who was not entirely blameless in the war's outbreak, was adamant that it remain a local, Balkan matter and that neither Russia nor Austria permit themselves to be dragged into it. Even more importantly, Nicholas had told his ambassador in Bulgaria in early 1911 never to forget for an instant that Russia would not be ready for war for at least another five or six years..."<sup>650</sup>

On October 8, 1912, the Tsar persuaded all the European Great Powers to send a warning to the Balkan States and Turkey that if war should break out, the Powers would not agree to any change in the territorial *status quo*. But as if cocking a snook at all the Great Powers, tiny Montenegro under her warmongering King Nikolai declared war on Turkey the very next day! The Montenegrins invaded Albania, and besieged the fortress of Shkodra (Scutari). Edvard Radzinsky writes: "The tsar understood how that impudent disruption of the status quo in the Balkans would ignite an explosion of indignation among the great powers. The minister of foreign affairs was instructed to persuade Montenegro to end its occupation of the fortress. But [King Nikolai] knew of the bellicose mood in Petersburg and of the support of [his son-in-law] Grand Duke Nikolai, the 'dread uncle', and he callously continued the siege of Scutari."<sup>651</sup>

On October 18, Serbia and Bulgaria entered the war against Turkey; Greece joined them on October 19. The Orthodox forces outnumbered the Turks, and were soon, contrary to expert military opinion, advancing on all fronts. The Greeks got to Salonika before the Bulgarians (on October 26, the feast of the patron of the city, St. Demetrius), but Bulgarian forces were approaching Constantinople...

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There was wild rejoicing in Russia (as, of course, among the Balkan Orthodox); the age-old dream that "Constantinople will be ours" appeared close to fulfilment. There were calls for Russia to enter the war, including from

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<sup>649</sup> Macmillan, *op. cit.*, p. 441.

<sup>650</sup> Smith, *Rasputin*, p. 303.

<sup>651</sup> Radzinsky, *The Last Tsar*, London: Hodder, 1992, p. 188.

M.V. Rodzianko, the president of the Fourth Duma. On November 10 Grand Duke Nicholas reported excitedly to the tsar in Spala in Russian Poland (where the Tsarevich Alexei was gravely ill). On November 12, Prince Gregory Trubetskoy, head of the Near Eastern department in the Foreign Ministry, issued a detailed memorandum explaining why Russia should take control of Constantinople and the Straits. However, the head of the Navy, Admiral Lieven rejected Trubetskoy's arguments in a counter-memorandum dated December 8.<sup>652</sup>

But it was the Bulgars, not the Russians, who were now at the gates of Constantinople – and Russia was determined to stop Bulgaria gaining too much. For, as Alexander Bokhanov writes, she was worried “that Bulgaria, whose ruling classes supported a pro-German orientation [King Ferdinand had been an Austrian officer], should take control of Stambul and the Black Sea straits. Petersburg demanded from Sophia in harsh expressions that she stop her advance. Austria and Germany, which stood behind her, refused to be reconciled with Serbia's increased strength, and Austrian armies began to concentrate on the frontier...”<sup>653</sup>

The Serbs, too, were making great gains – but also at great cost to their moral reputation. Misha Glenny writes: “As the Serb soldiery moved to Skopje and beyond, they visited destruction and murder on the local Albanian population. Fired by tales of atrocities committed on Christian peasants during the unrest in the Albanian territories, the Serbs unleashed the full force of nationalist hatred against defenceless villages. A Serb Social Democrat, serving as a reservist, described how ‘the horrors actually began as soon as we crossed the old frontier. By five p.m. we were approaching Kumanovo. The sun had set, it was starting to get dark. But the darker the sky became, the more brightly the fearful illumination of the fires stood out against it. Burning was going on all around us. Entire Albanian villages had been turned into pillars of fire... In all its fiery monotony this picture was repeated the whole way to Skopje... For two days before my arrival in Skopje the inhabitants had woken up in the morning to the sight, under the principal bridge over the Vardar – that is, in the very centre of the town – of heaps of Albanian corpses with severed heads. Some said that these were local Albanians, killed by the *komitadjis* [četniks], others that the corpses had been brought down to the bridge by the waters of the Vardar. What was clear was that these headless men had not been killed in battle.’ In Skopje, the chief instigator of the massacres was the Black Hand, which set up its headquarters close to the Russian consulate in a building soon known as the Black House. The Black Hand, with its network of agents, had escaped the control of the military authorities and was increasingly assuming the role of an informal government of ‘liberated Old Serbia’. After several weeks, the government in Belgrade started to appoint civilian administrators to these territories, but those who refused to submit to the demands of the Black Hand and the *četniks* were scared. Branislav Nušić, the writer who had

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<sup>652</sup> Lieven, *Towards the Flame*, pp. 253-256.

<sup>653</sup> Bokhanov, *Imperator Nikolaj II*, Moscow, 1998, pp. 319-320.

welcomed the war with such enthusiasm, resigned as governor of Bitola in fear and disgust at the activities of these units.”<sup>654</sup>

In mid-November the Bulgarians were halted in their march on Tsargrad by desperate Turkish resistance and dysentery in their own ranks. “The battle for Adrianople,” writes Misha Glenny, “which fell to the allies after five months’ heroic defence by the Turks on 26 March 1913, was the crowning misery of the Balkan Wars. The figures for those who died during the siege have never been properly collated, and estimates vary between 40,000 and 60,000.”<sup>655</sup>

“The point of crisis,” writes Lieven, now “shifted to the Albanian provinces on the Adriatic coast that the Serbs (and Montenegrins) were determined to seize. In the typical language of pre-war Europe, the Serbian premier, Nikola Pašić, claimed that without an Adriatic coastline ‘the country’s existence is unthinkable’. The Austrians, on the other hand, were determined to establish a client Albanian state in their own strategic backyard and to block further Serbian expansion. Some circles in Vienna still hoped to turn Serbia into an economic dependency and saw Serb possession of an Adriatic port as a fatal blow to this goal. The fear existed that a Serbian port might one day become a Russian naval base. If failure to acquire an Adriatic port encouraged the Serbs to demand more territory in Macedonia and thereby come into conflict with the Bulgarians, Vienna could only rejoice in having helped to split the hated Balkan League. Fairly enough, the Austrians took delight in pointing out the fact that Serbian and Montenegrin demands to swallow the Albanian-speaking territories flew in the face of their proclaimed allegiance to the ethno-nationalist principle. Because Serb and Montenegrin troops were committing widely reported and numerous atrocities against Albanian civilians as they marched toward the Adriatic coast, pious claims that the two countries’ constitutions guaranteed the rights of minorities were greeted throughout Europe with what might politely be described as scepticism. The retort by Nikolai Hartwig, the Russian ambassador in Belgrade, that the Serbs were behaving no worse than the Greeks and the Bulgarians was probably true but did not help matters.

“Initially, Sazonov backed the Serbian claim at least for a small stretch of the Adriatic coast and a port. Once he realised that not just the Austrians but also the Italians and the Germans flatly opposed this, he changed tack and allowed that secure commercial access through Albanian territory would suffice. In support of his more moderate line, the foreign minister submitted a memorandum to Nicholas II on November 12 pointing out that all members of the Triple Alliance were determined to create an autonomous Albanian polity controlling the whole Adriatic coastline and were willing ‘to defend their point of view by extreme methods’...

“Unfortunately, Nicholas II did not agree, writing on the memorandum, ‘I am against an autonomous Albania’. This goes far to explain why Sazonov’s

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<sup>654</sup> Glenny, *The Balkans, 1804-1999*, London: Granta, 2000,, pp. 233-234.

<sup>655</sup> Glenny, *The Balkans*, p. 244.

support for Serbia then stiffened once again, much to the alarm of Austrian and other diplomats. Only when further efforts to secure a compromise more favourable to the Serbs had failed and the danger of war loomed increasingly large did Sazonov revert to his earlier line and attempt again to bring Belgrade to order. Inevitably, his attempts to do so were not aided by his zigzags..."<sup>656</sup>

On November 12, writes Glenny, Austria and Italy insisted to the Serbs and Montenegrins that they withdraw from Albania and put an end "to Montenegro's siege of Skutari. Vienna and Rome both argued quite reasonably that Serbia and Montenegro had no business in the region because it was inhabited almost exclusively by Albanians. Belgrade and Cetinje asked why, since this principle applied neither in Bosnia nor in Tripolitania, territories annexed by Austro-Hungary and Italy respectively, it should apply to Albania.

"States or nationalist ideologues could conjure up a territorial claim in an instant. But the key to realizing these claims lay in a mixture of astute politics and naked force. The most effective political weapon the Balkan states could employ was that of divide and rule. Both Serbia and Montenegro incited the Albanians of Kosovo and northern Albania to rebel against the Turks on the eve of the Balkan Wars, thus setting current and future enemies against each other. When Montenegro invaded northern Albania, its armies were initially supported by the Mallasori, a tribe of Albanian Catholics. King Nikola had persuaded the Mallasori that their rights and traditions would be better protected under the wing of a Christian, albeit Orthodox and Slav, ruler than under Muslim Albanians, but it did not take the Mallasori long to realize they had made a mistake..."<sup>657</sup>

On November 20, Austria-Hungary increased its war readiness in Bosnia and Dalmatia, and also on the border with Russia in Galicia. On November 22 Tsar Nicholas responded by ordering mobilisation in the Kiev district and preparations for mobilisation in the Odessa and Warsaw districts. The next day Kokovtsov and Sazonov persuaded him to shelve these plans, but the number of active troops was increased...

As for the Germans, writes Hew Strachan, they "saw it as a war fought by Russia by proxy, and on 2 December 1912 Bethmann-Hollweg announced in the Reichstag that, if Austria-Hungary was attacked by a third party while pursuing its interests, Germany would support Austria-Hungary and fight to maintain its own position in Europe. The British responded on the following day, warning the Germans that if war broke out between France and Germany they would not accept a French defeat. The Kaiser was furious, and summoned a "war council" of his military and naval chiefs on 8 December. He said that, if Russia came to Serbia's aid, Germany would fight. He assumed that in such a war Bulgaria, Romania, Albania and Turkey would all side with the Triple

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<sup>656</sup> Lieven, *Towards the Flame*, pp. 256-258.

<sup>657</sup> Glenny, *The Balkans*, pp. 240-241.

Alliance [Germany, Austria and Italy], and take the main role against Serbia, so leaving Austria-Hungary to concentrate against Russia..."<sup>658</sup>

According to the famous German historian Franz Fischer in his *War of Illusions* (1975) this was the moment when Germany showed for the first time her readiness to go to a general war to solve its international problems... But the British threat to intervene stopped them. Less than two years later, in 1914, the British were less clear that they would intervene against the Germans – and world war was the result...

According to Fromkin, "the Kaiser and Moltke wanted immediate war. Tirpitz, speaking for the navy, agreed in part but wanted 'postponement of the great fight for one and a half years'"<sup>659</sup> – which, hardly coincidentally, was exactly what happened! The fact was: the German navy was not ready to challenge the Royal Navy, and would not be ready for the foreseeable future, so unassailable was Britain's lead. So the Germans switched to increasing funding for the army: the German army bill for 1913 was the largest in history. According to Fromkin, "The only thing that could justify military expenditures at the 1913 level was to go to war in the immediate future. But German public opinion was not ready for it. Moltke wrote to Conrad, chief of the Austrian general staff, in February 1913 that it would be hard to find a rallying cry that would persuade the German public to go to war – yet..."<sup>660</sup>

However, German military spending was not excessive by European standards. "In 1913 – after two major army bills – the Reich was spending 3.9 per cent of net national product on defence, more than her own ally Austria and more than Britain (3.2 per cent) but significantly less than France (9.8 per cent) and Russia (5.1 per cent)." <sup>661</sup>

Meanwhile, on December 3, an armistice between the Balkan states and Turkey was agreed; but the situation remained very tense. The British Foreign Secretary Sir Edward Grey organized a conference of ambassadors in London, which continued until August, 1913. The main result was to legitimize the substantial territorial gains made by the Balkan Orthodox; the Serbs gave up their claim for an Adriatic port, while the Turks remained in control of a small corner of Europe close to Constantinople. On December 20, the Great Powers, under Austrian pressure, agreed to create an independent principality of Albania. The Russians accepted this only reluctantly, and in exchange secured most of Kosovo and its mixed Serb and Albanian population for Serbia.

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<sup>658</sup> Strachan, *The First World War*, London: Pocket Books, 2006, p. 42.

<sup>659</sup> Fromkin, *op. cit.*, p. 92.

<sup>660</sup> Fromkin, *op. cit.*, p. 93.

<sup>661</sup> Ferguson, *op. cit.*, p. 111.

But the Montenegrins were refusing to give up their corner of Albania – which placed the whole agreement in jeopardy. “And then,” writes Radzinsky, “the tsar suddenly demonstrated character: he resolutely moved against public opinion. He demanded that the minister of foreign affairs put pressure on Montenegro. And on 21 April 1913 the Montenegrin king, after many hours of persuasion, consented to withdraw from Scutari in return for monetary indemnification [six million francs]. And the Russian foreign minister, Sergius Sazonov, announced with relief, ‘King Nikola was going to set the world on fire to cook his own little omelette.’ This was in reply to the constant reproaches that Russia had once again betrayed its Balkan brothers.”<sup>662</sup>

Radzinsky attributes the tsar’s firmness to the fact that Rasputin and the Empress were against the war, “and the tsar was forced to submit.” A more likely cause was Sazonov’s tenacious peace-making efforts in the face of a rabidly belligerent press, for which he was rewarded on June 18, 1913, “when an unprecedented official statement by Tsar Nicholas praised Sazonov and stressed the tsar’s grateful public recognition of his minister’s sterling work throughout the Balkan crisis, as well as Nicholas’s strong support for solving all disputes through peaceful compromise with the European great powers.”<sup>663</sup> In any case, whatever the views and influence of ministers and diplomats, the final decision rested with the tsar, whose final decision in favour of peace – in spite of partial mobilization on the Galician border – was consistent with his expressed belief that it was not in Russia’s interests to go to war to defend the territorial ambitions of the Balkan Slavs. Only in 1914 would he be forced to submit to the call for war. But the situation then, as we shall see, was different: Russia was not called to help the Serbs in some madcap aggression, but to *defend* them from annihilation...

There was another problem... While the Bulgarians had been advancing on Constantinople, the Serbs had taken large areas in Macedonia, including Bitola (Monastir), that had been reserved for the Bulgarians in the secret treaty of 1912. When the Bulgarians asked for these territories back, the Serbs refused. On June 30, 1913, on the initiative of King Ferdinand, Bulgaria suddenly attacked Greece and Serbia without declaring war and “just as all sides had agreed to hold negotiations under the chairmanship of Tsar Nicholas”.<sup>664</sup>

This led to the outbreak of the Second Balkan War, which “lasted only a month. Once again, the peasants of Macedonia were the unwilling martyrs. Most instructive, however, is the ease with which those directing this was could manipulate the image of the enemy in the minds of their troops. Less than a month before the outbreak of the war, Serbs and Greeks had been fighting with the Bulgarians. Now, Greeks and Serbs invited local Turks to join them in atrocities against the Bulgarian peasantry. The Greek and Serbian armies swept

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<sup>662</sup> Radzinsky, *The Last Tsar*, p. 189.

<sup>663</sup> Lieven, *Towards the Flame*, p. 263.

<sup>664</sup> Glenny, *The Balkans*, p. 146.

through the Macedonian and Thracian hinterland, murdering the defenceless...

'Nationalist violence knows no eternal enemy. The current enemy is always eternal.

"Under the terms of the Treaty of Bucharest concluded in mid-August 1913, Bulgaria was forced to surrender almost everything for which tens of thousands of its citizens had been required to sacrifice their lives. The Romanians occupied the southern Dobrudja. Large parts of Macedonia became southern Serbia. Viscount Grey, the British Foreign Secretary during the Balkan Wars, later recalled that the Treaty of Bucharest 'left Bulgaria sore, injured, and despoiled of what she believed belonged to her. Any future Balkan peace was impossible so long as the treaty of Bucharest remained. Turkey, of course, was also sore and despoiled. Thus when the great war came a year later, there were two Powers. Bulgaria and Turkey, hungering for a revanche and ready to take whatever side would give them a prospect of obtaining it. This naturally was the side of Austria and Germany...'"<sup>665</sup>

"The Second Balkan War," concludes Douglas Smith, "was bloody and brief: Bulgaria was defeated and sued for peace by August. 'The first round is won,' a radiant and emboldened Serbian prime minister crowed, 'now we must prepare for the second against Austria.' Nicholas, however, was left with dark thoughts, writing to his mother: 'There is no such thing as European unity - merely Great Powers distrusting each other.'"<sup>666</sup>

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It has been customary to blame the Second Balkan War on the Bulgarian King Ferdinand, a wily and ambitious man<sup>667</sup>, who was heartily disliked by his allies. But these allies must take part of the blame for the desertion of the Bulgarians to the Triple Alliance in the First World War, which cost them - and especially the Serbs - dearly...

Robert Cooper writes that "while the first Balkan war was mostly a military-to-military affair, in the second the target was often the civilian population. If you could establish that a piece of territory was inhabited by your people - Serbs, Bulgarians or Greeks, - then you could claim it as a part of your national territory. This was therefore a war about people as well as territory: whether a

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<sup>665</sup> Glenny, *The Balkans*, pp. 147, 148.

<sup>666</sup> Smith, *Rasputin*, p. 303.

<sup>667</sup> Barbara Tuchman writes that at the funeral of King Edward VII in 1910 Ferdinand had "annoyed his fellow sovereigns by calling himself Czar and kept in a chest a Byzantine Emperor's full regalia, acquired from a theatrical costumer, against the day when he should reassemble the Byzantine dominions beneath his sceptre" (*The Guns of August*, New York: Ballantine Books, 1962, 1994, p. 3).

village was Serb or Bulgarian might decide whether its inhabitants lived or died..."<sup>668</sup>

As Tim Judah, writes, "ethnic cleansing" was common during the Second Balkan War: "The Carnegie Endowment's account of the crushing of the Albanian revolt in Kosovo is also important because in 1913 as in 1941 or the 1990s it was quite clear to all involved what the purpose of ethnic cleansing was: 'Houses and whole villages are reduced to ashes, unarmed and innocent populations massacred *en masse*, incredible acts of violence, pillage and brutality of every kind – such were the means which were employed by the Serbo-Montenegrin soldiery, with a view to the entire transformation of the ethnic character of regions inhabited exclusively by Albanians.

"We thus arrive at the second characteristic feature of the Balkan wars, a feature which is the necessary correlative of the first. Since the population of the countries about to be occupied knew, by tradition, instinct and experience, what they had to expect from the armies of the enemy and from the neighbouring countries to which these armies belonged, they did not await their arrival, but fled. Thus generally speaking, the army of the enemy found on its way nothing but villages which were either half deserted or entirely abandoned. To execute the orders for extermination, it was only necessary to set fire to them. The population, warned by the glow from these fires, fled all in haste. There followed a veritable migration of peoples, for in Macedonia, as in Thrace, there was hardly a spot which was not, at a given moment, on the line of march of some army or other. The Commission everywhere encountered this second fact. All along the railways interminable trains of carts drawn by oxen followed one another; behind them came emigrant families and, in the neighbourhood of the big towns, bodies of refugees were found encamped.'

"Just as conversion had been accepted as a means to escape death in earlier times, in some places it once again became an issue. When the Montenegrins captured the village of Plav, Rebecca West, whose pro-Serbian bent somewhat undermines her otherwise masterly account of Yugoslavia in the 1930s, characteristically dismisses a major massacre as an 'unfortunate *contretemps*'. During this little misunderstanding a former Muslim cleric, now converted to Orthodoxy and a major in the Montenegrin Army, demanded that his former congregation convert. They refused and so 500 of them were shot. In another little misunderstanding, some Macedonian villagers had their church surrounded by Serbian soldiers during the Sunday service. On emerging they found that a table had been set up on which was a piece of paper and a revolver. Either they could sign that they were Serbs rather than Bulgarians – or they could die. They chose the former option."<sup>669</sup>

This latter incident shows that rivalry and hatred among the Orthodox, especially in Macedonia, had by no means been removed by their alliances

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<sup>668</sup> Cooper, "Balkan Ghosts", *New Statesman*, October 4-10, 2013, p. 31.

<sup>669</sup> Judah, *The Serbs*, pp. 85-86.

against the Turks. The Russian minister in Montenegro in 1912-13, Alexander Giers, "once wrote to Serge Sazonov that there was little to choose between the Serbs, the Greeks, the Bulgarians and the Romanians. 'They all hate each other and show little inclination to settle the accounts accumulated between them over the centuries by means of reasonable compromises.' In April 1913 he wrote that not merely were the Balkan peoples at each other's throats as always but their attitude to Russia was entirely manipulative. They wanted the backing of Russian power but had no genuine loyalty to Russian culture or ideals, let alone any inclination to follow Russian advice. The Serbs were most dangerous because Russia was being pushed into the position of acting as the defender of the Serbian national cause. In Giers's opinion, the nationalist project of uniting all Serbs, let alone all southern Slavs, was in itself 'very doubtful', because even the Serbs in the Habsburg empire differed substantially from their co-ethnics in the Serbian kingdom. Far greater still was the gap between Belgrade and the Croats, Slovenes, and other Slav subjects of the Habsburgs. It was, however, very dangerous that 'the Serbs of the kingdom have become convinced in recent times that whatever paths their struggle with Austria might take they would find in the Russian government both sympathy and support.' With increasing frequency, Belgrade had sought to draw Russia into Serbia's struggle with Austria.

"In Giers's opinion, this was wholly contrary to Russian interests. Austria could be an important ally for Russia in achieving a tolerable compromise on the question of the Straits. Above all, Russia risked being sucked into a European war caused by the Austrian dispute with Serbia..."<sup>670</sup>

"Day after day," wrote a Carnegie Endowment report, "the Bulgarians were represented as a race of monsters, and public feeling was roused to a pitch of chauvinism which made it inevitable that war, when it should come, should be ruthless. In talk and in print one phrase summed up the general feeling of the Greeks towards the Bulgarians. '*Dhen einai anthropoi!*' (They are not human beings). In their excitement and indignation the Greeks came to think of themselves as the appointed avengers of civilization against a race which stood outside the pale of humanity.

"... Deny that your enemies are men, and presently you will treat them as vermin. Only half realizing the full meaning of what he said, a Greek officer remarked to the writer, 'When you have to deal with barbarians, you must behave like a barbarian yourself. It is the only thing they understand.' The Greek army went to war, its mind inflamed with anger and contempt. A gaudily coloured print, which we saw in the streets of Salonika and the Piraeus, eagerly bought by the Greek soldiers returning to their homes, reveals the depth of the brutality to which this race hatred had sunk them. It shows a Greek *evzone* (highlander) holding a living Bulgarian soldier with both hands, while he gnaws the face of the victim with his teeth, like some beast of prey. It is entitled *Bulgarophagos* (Bulgar-eater), and is adorned with the following verses:

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<sup>670</sup> Lieven, *Towards the Flame*, p. 142.

*The sea of fire which boils in my breast  
And calls for vengeance with the savage waves of my soul,  
Will be quenched when the monster of Sofia is still,  
And thy life blood extinguishes my hate.”<sup>671</sup>*

It is sometimes asserted that the Christian commandment to love our enemies cannot be applied in a war situation. Certainly, it is necessary to obey lawful authorities and fight the enemies of the State. At the same time, personal hatred and unnecessary cruelty are forbidden both in war and peace. Even in the Old Testament, and even in relation to non-Jews, cruelty was forbidden: “You shall not wrong a stranger or oppress him, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt. You shall not afflict any widow or orphan. If you do afflict them, and they cry out to Me, I will surely hear their cry, and My wrath will burn, and I will kill you with the sword, and your wives shall become widows, and your children fatherless” (Exodus 22.21-24).

In ten weeks’ fighting during the two Balkan wars of 1912-13 about 200,000 soldiers were killed. This constituted a undoubted political and military victory for the Balkan Orthodox, but a major spiritual defeat for Orthodoxy, with each Orthodox nation fighting for its own power and glory, not only against the Turkish oppressors but also against the Albanians – and even against each other. Russia had managed to avoid a world war while not betraying her co-religionists; but internal as well as external factors were making it increasingly difficult for the Tsar to hold the twin monsters of revolutionary nationalism and internationalist revolution at bay.

As Bokhanov writes, “in spite of the fact that the Balkan wars did not grow into a pan-European conflict, the tension in the international arena did not abate. Germany and France had already for several years been carrying out rearmament programmes. Russia was also drawn into this world arms race. Nationalist tendencies increased. In the spring of 1913 the German chancellor Bethmann-Holweg, while arguing in the Reichstag for the necessity of new credits for the army, declared that Germany was threatened by ‘a Slavic wave’. But he was only repeating his Kaiser, who declared after the First Balkan War that he thought ‘a struggle between the Slavs and Germans’ inevitable.

“By contrast with ‘dear Willy’, the Russian tsar was of another opinion and did not consider a large-scale military conflict to be inevitable. In May 1913 Nicholas II arrived in Berlin for the wedding of the Kaiser’s daughter, Princess Victoria-Louise, who was marrying the duke of Braunstein. The tsar was intending to come to an agreement with William II about improving Russian-German relations. He conducted negotiations with the Kaiser and told him that Russia was ready to renounce her claims on the Black Sea straits and agreed to leave Turkey in the role of ‘gate-keeper’ if Germany, on her part, would keep Austria from an expansionist policy in the Balkans. There was no reaction to

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<sup>671</sup> Judah, *The Serbs*, pp. 84-85.

these suggestions in Berlin, and William confined himself only to talking about generalities..."<sup>672</sup>

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The Balkan Wars, writes Niall Ferguson, "had revealed both the strengths and the limits of Balkan nationalism. Its strength lay in its ferocity. Its weakness was its disunity. The violence of the fighting much impressed the young Trotsky, who witnessed it as a correspondent for the newspaper *Kievskaiia mysl*. Even the peace that followed the Balkan Wars was cruel, in a novel manner that would become a recurrent feature of the twentieth century. It no longer sufficed, in the eyes of nationalists, to acquire foreign territory. Now it was peoples as well as borders that had to move. Sometimes these movements were spontaneous. Muslims fled in the direction of Salonika as the Greeks, Serbs and Bulgarians advanced in 1912; Bulgarians fled Macedonia to escape from invading Greek troops in 1913; Greeks chose to leave the Macedonian districts ceded to Bulgaria and Serbia by the Treaty of Bucharest. Sometimes populations were deliberately expelled, as the Greeks were from Western Thrace in 1913 and from parts of Eastern Thrace and Anatolia in 1914. In the wake of the Turkish defeat, there was an agreed population exchange: 48,570 Turks moved one way and 46,764 Bulgarians the other across the new Turkish-Bulgarian border. Such exchanges were designed to transform regions of ethnically mixed settlement into the homogeneous societies that so appealed to the nationalist imagination. The effects on some regions were dramatic. Between 1912 and 1915, the Greek population of (Greek) Macedonia increased by around a third; the Muslim and Bulgarian population declined by 26 and 13 per cent respectively. The Greek population of Western Thrace fell by 80 per cent; the Muslim population of Eastern Thrace rose by a third. The implications were distinctly ominous for the many multi-ethnic communities elsewhere in Europe..."<sup>673</sup>

The major political result of the Balkan Wars was that the Balkan Orthodox states now regarded themselves as completely independent of their Russian protector. *Formally speaking*, this was certainly not envisaged by, for example, the Serbian-Bulgarian Treaty of 1912, which ascribed to Russia the role of arbiter in all disputes.<sup>674</sup> But the reality was quite different... As a French diplomat in St. Petersburg put it: "For the first time in the history of the Eastern question the small states have acquired a position of such independence of the Great Powers that they feel able to act completely without them and even to take them in tow..."<sup>675</sup>

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<sup>672</sup> Bokhanov, *op. cit.*, p. 321.

<sup>673</sup> Ferguson, *The War of the World*, London: Penguin, 2007, pp. 76-77.

<sup>674</sup> Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, p. 298.

<sup>675</sup> Macmillan, *The War that Ended Peace*, London: Profile, 2014, p. 444. A certain Bulgarian statesman told the journalist Leon Trotsky soon after the First Balkan War: "We must, of course, say this in all politeness to all the other diplomats from Europe, as they labour in the sweat of their brows for our happiness. 'Neither honey nor thorns,' dear sirs! We ourselves will settle with Turkey, without any interference from Europe, and all the more firmly and satisfactorily.

It has been often glibly asserted that the wars in the Balkans down the centuries have been mainly the fault of Great Power interference. But in this era, at any rate, Great Power intervention was largely ignored by the Little Powers who went their own, exceedingly belligerent and independent way regardless of agreements entered into and the very real threat of world war. This independence was revealed in, for example, the way in which the Serbs remained on Albanian territory for a full six months after agreeing to withdraw from it, leaving only after the Austrians issued an ultimatum on October 17.

But the new-found independence of the Balkan states came at a price – a price that was to be paid in 1914. Thus the Serbian refusal, contrary to their promise, to leave Albania, and their leaving only under the threat of war, convinced the Austrians, first, that the only way they could exert any influence over the Serbs was through ultimatums. And secondly, as Clark writes, “that Serbia would only ever ultimately understand force...”<sup>676</sup> As Max Hastings writes, “western statesmen regarded [Serbia] with impatience and suspicion. Its self-assertiveness, its popular catchphrase ‘Where a Serb dwells, there is Serbia’, destabilized the Balkans. Europe’s chancelleries were irritated by its ‘little Serbia’, proud-victim culture. Serbs treated their own minority subjects, especially Muslims, with conspicuous and often murderous brutality. Every continental power recognised that the Serbs could achieve their ambition to enfold in their own polity two million brethren still under Habsburg rule only at the cost of bringing down Franz Joseph’s empire.”<sup>677</sup>

This was the fundamental problem of Balkan politics, and the reason why it was precisely in the Balkans that the fuse was lit that led to the First World War. The Balkan States of Greece, Serbia, Montenegro, Bulgaria and Romania were Orthodox, but they did not recognize the guidance of Russia, the senior and most powerful Orthodox state. (In March, 1912, the Serbs and Bulgars had agreed to accept the arbitration of the Tsar in case of territorial quarrels. But this did not happen...) In spite of the fact that Russia, over the centuries, had expended millions of lives and vast financial resources in order to protect and liberate the Balkans from the oppression of Muslim and Catholic powers, they did not feel obliged to show gratitude to “the Third Rome” or submit to her

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Europe puts on an air of being afraid that we shall be excessively demanding. And this from Europe – that is to say, from Austria-Hungary, who annexed Bosnia; from Italy, who seized Tripolitania; from Russia, who never takes her eyes off Constantinople... This is the Europe that comes to us preaching moderation and restraint. Truly, a sight for the gods on Olympus!... Your diplomats are sulking. They would not be averse to freezing the Balkans for another ten years, in expectation of better days sometime. How is it that they cannot understand that less and less is it possible in our epoch to direct the destinies of the Balkans from the outside? We are growing up, gaining confidence, and becoming independent... In the very first years of our present phase of existence as a state, we told our would-be guardians: ‘Bulgaria will follow her own line.’... And so Messrs. Privy Councillors of all the diplomatic chancelleries would do well to get used to the idea that the Balkan Peninsula ‘will follow its own line’...” (Glenny, *The Balkans*, pp. 225-226)

<sup>676</sup> Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, p. 288.

<sup>677</sup> Hastings, *Catastrophe: Europe goes to War 1914*, London: William Collins, 2014, p. 17.

leadership in any way. They were determined to pursue their own, egotistical ends, expanding their territories regardless of the consequences for world peace or the interests of the Orthodox commonwealth as a whole, let alone the interests of the other Orthodox states in the region.

As for the Tsar, as Autocrat of the Third Rome and protector of the whole of Orthodoxy, he was bound to have the interests of the Orthodox as a whole at heart. But he was faced with a very difficult dilemma. On the one hand, he could not ignore the majority nationalist opinion in Russia, which wanted him to support the Orthodox Balkan states when they came into conflict with Ottoman Turkey or Austria-Hungary. He had been outraged by Austrian behaviour in annexing Bosnia in 1908; he had certainly noted the aggressiveness of Germany in December, 1912; and he would be more than outraged when Austria threatened to wipe Serbia off the map in July, 1914. So, while trying as hard as he could to prevent a general war by diplomatic means, the Tsar supported the Defence Secretary Sukhomlinov in his requests for increased military spending. But on the other hand, he knew that defending the interests of one Balkan state risked alienating another - which is precisely what happened when he came down on the side of Serbia as against Bulgaria.<sup>678</sup> Still more serious, because of the new system of alliances in which the Entente supported Serbia while the Triple Alliance supported Bulgaria, any serious involvement on the side of Serbia threatened to ignite a wider conflict between the two alliance blocs. And this would most likely bring down Russia herself and with her the whole of the Orthodox commonwealth - which, again, is precisely what happened...

And so God allowed the *hubris* of the Balkan states to result in *nemesis* for the Orthodox world as a whole. Judgement was about to descend upon the whole European world. But it would begin at the House of God, the Orthodox Church (I Peter 4.17)...

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<sup>678</sup> Clark, *Sleepwalkers*, pp. 271-282.

## 50. ORTHODOXY IN TRANSCARPATHIA

Although Russia's conflict with Austria-Hungary centred on Serbia, there were other issues between the neighbouring empires that were perhaps even more important, if not quite so acute. After all, Serbia was an independent state with no border contiguous with Russia. But Poland and Ukraine were parts of the Russian empire and bordered on Austria-Hungary. Moreover, there were substantial minorities of Poles and Ukrainians on both sides of the border, making the area fertile ground for nationalist agitation.

Was it really conceivable that the Ukrainians would prefer to be within the German or Austrian rather than the Russian empires? The answer to this question depended partly on which part of Ukraine we are talking about. As Figes writes, "in Belorussia and the northern Ukraine there was so much ethnic and religious intermingling – in an area the size of Cambridgeshire there might be a mixture of Belorussian, Ukrainian, Russian, Polish, Jewish and Lithuanian settlements – that it was difficult for anything more than a localized form of ethnic identity to take root in the popular consciousness. One British diplomat... concluded that this was still the case as late as 1918: 'Were one to ask the average peasant in the Ukraine his nationality he would answer that he is Greek Orthodox; if pressed to say whether he is a Great Russian, a Pole, or an Ukrainian, he would probably reply that he is a peasant; and if one insisted on knowing what language he spoke, he would say that he talked 'the local tongue'..."<sup>679</sup>

"The Ukrainian problem," writes Lieven, "was greatly complicated by the fact that although three-quarters of all those whom we would nowadays define as Ukrainians lived in the Russian Empire in 1900, the remaining quarter lived in Austria-Hungary. Of the latter, 3.5 million lived in Austrian Galicia, and over 400,000 dwelled in Hungary. The Hungarian 'Ukrainians' are usually described by historians as Rusyns, though they often called themselves Russians and saw themselves as members of a single Russian community, albeit with local peculiarities. As the confusion of names suggests, there was no agreement on Ukrainian identity. The battle to define this identity went on simultaneously in three different countries, each of which had its own distinct context. Nevertheless, this battle was widely seen – not least by Russians – as a single war to determine the fate of the whole Ukrainian region. The potential stakes were therefore immense. It was largely for this reason that a nationalist member of the Duma, Count Vladimir Bobrinsky, founded the Carpatho-Russian Society and mobilized support to defend the small Hungarian Rusyn community against attempts to weaken its sense of a common Russian identity.

"Bobrinsky's support for the Rusyns caused difficulties for Austrian-Russian relations, but the group was too small for them to play a key role in the region's fate. The 3.5 million Austrian Ukrainians, at the time generally described as Ruthenes, were far more crucial because by 1914 Austrian Galicia

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<sup>679</sup> Figes, *A People's Tragedy*, London: Pimlico, 1996, pp. 75-76.

was the centre of Ukrainian nationalism. The basic reason for this was that the Austrian authorities, unlike either their Russian or their Hungarian counterparts, put no constraints on civil society's freedom nor on the evolution of a sense of national identity among Austria's many peoples. Vienna had indeed encouraged the development of Ukrainian identity as a check both on Polish power within the monarchy and on Russian attempts to claim leadership of the Slav world. Galicia became a refuge for Ukrainian nationalist émigrés from Russia. With their help, there grew up a literary language and a national historical narrative completely divorced from Russian literature and opposed to key aspects of Russians' understanding of their country's history. After 1867, Austrian political life became increasingly democratic, with universal male suffrage introduced in 1907. Ukrainian nationalism organized itself politically and put down deep roots in Galician society. Even in Galicia, the battle over Ukrainian identity was not over in 1914: a substantial minority that still saw itself as Little Russian survived. Nevertheless, Ukrainian nationalism was clearly on top, and many of its tribunes dreamed of the day when all Ukrainians would be united in a single nation outside the Russian Empire..."<sup>680</sup>

Oliver Figes confirms that Galicia's "relatively liberal rights of self-government... had allowed the Ukrainians, or 'Ruthenians' (dog-Latin for 'Russians') as they were known by the Austrians, to promote their own Ukrainian language in primary schools and public life, to publish native-language newspapers and books, and to advance the study of Ukrainian history and folk culture. Galicia became a sort of 'Ukrainian Piedmont' for the rest of the national movement in tsarist Ukraine: a forcing-house of national consciousness and an oasis of freedom for nationalist intellectuals. Lviv, its capital, also known as Lemberg (by the Germans) and as Lvov (by the Russians), was a thriving centre of Ukrainian culture. Although subjects of the Tsar, both the composer Lysenko and the historian Hrushevsky had found their nation in Galicia. The nationalist intellectuals who pioneered the Ukrainian literary language in the middle decades of the nineteenth century all borrowed terms from the Galician dialect, which they considered the most advanced, although later, as they tried to reach the peasantry with newspapers and books, they were forced to base it on the Poltavan folk idiom, which, as the dialect of the central Ukraine, was the most commonly understood. The seminal texts of this national literary renaissance were published by the Brotherhood of Saints Cyril and Methodius prior to its dissolution by the tsarist authorities in 1847. The romantic poetry of Taras Shevchenko, which played the same role as Mickiewicz's poetry in Poland in shaping the intelligentsia's national consciousness, was the most important of these. Ukrainian-language publications continued to appear, despite the legal restrictions on them. Many were published by the Kiev section of the Russian Geographical Society, whose nationalist members devoted themselves to the study of Ukrainian folk culture, language and history."<sup>681</sup>

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<sup>680</sup> Lieven, *Towards the Flame*, pp. 52-53, 56-57.

<sup>681</sup> Figes, *A People's Tragedy*, p. 74.

Austrian Galicia was a seedbed of anti-Russian nationalist discontent, in which Orthodox were persecuted by Catholics. This was, of course, a long-running story. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the Catholics, led by the Poles and the Jesuits, had been on the offensive. But as the Russian empire expanded westwards in the nineteenth century, millions of Catholic uniates returned to the faith of their fathers. There was also a large emigration of uniates of Russia origin, Galicians and Carpatho-Russians, to the USA and Canada, where, from 1890, they encountered representatives of the Russian Orthodox Mission, which until 1907 was headed by future Patriarch of Moscow Tikhon (Bellavin). First the Minneapolis priest Fr. Alexis Toth was converted, and then, through him, about 300 Uniate parishes were united to Holy Orthodoxy.<sup>682</sup>

The Pochaev Lavra in Galicia had for centuries, since the time of St. Job of Pochaev in the seventeenth century, been a stronghold of Orthodoxy in a sea of uniatism. Now, in the early twentieth century, Archbishop Anthony (Khrapovitsky) of Volhynia was the main defender of Orthodoxy against the Catholic heretics both within his own diocese and also further west, in Austrian Galicia and Carpatho-Russia, where the Hungarian government and the uniates tried by all means to prevent the return of the Carpatho-Russians to their ancestral Orthodox faith.

Jurij Danilets writes: “In his account of Antony Khrapovitskii’s ministry as Archbishop of Volhynia, Archbishop Nikon (Rklitskii) made note of the former’s special concern for the Orthodox movement in Austria-Hungary. Understanding the complexity of the situation in the church, the Metropolitan appealed to the Patriarch of Constantinople to extend his jurisdiction to Galicia and Transcarpathia: ‘For political reasons, the Russian Synod could officially not extend its influence to regions under Austro-Hungarian rule,’ Archbishop Nikon noted. Further on in the text, we encounter the information that the Patriarch appointed Archbishop Antony ‘Exarch of Galicia and Carpathian Ruthenia’. It is important that the Holy Synod of the Ecumenical Patriarchate did not protest against this step, and after the death of Joachim III, his successor Patriarch Germanos ratified the decision. We must agree with Archbishop Nikon that this new appointment, although symbolic in nature, provided a canonical basis for Archbishop Antony’s guardianship of the Orthodox in Galicia and Transcarpathia.”<sup>683</sup>

Fr. Andrew Phillips writes: “One of the first to launch the return to Orthodoxy movement in Carpatho-Russia was Archimandrite Vladimir (Terletsky) (born 1808). At first a Uniate priest, he eventually became Orthodox in Kiev in 1872 after Hungarian persecution at home. In Kiev he wrote of the national awakening in Carpatho-Russia. A second personality was the Uniate

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<sup>682</sup> “Fr. Alexis Toth and the Return of the Emigrant Uniates to the Holy Church”, *Orthodox Life*, July-August, 1973.

<sup>683</sup> Danilets, “The ROCOR and Orthodoxy in Subcarpathian Ruthenia in the 1920s”, *ROCOR Studies*, November, 2021.

priest Ioann Rakovsky (+1885),... from the village of Iza near Khust (now in the Ukraine). Although he remained a Uniate until his death-bed, after him others actually joined the Orthodox Church, despite the fact that in the Austro-Hungarian Empire it was possible to join any religion – except Orthodoxy.

“Thus, when in 1903 the villagers of Iza announced their intention to become Orthodox, their Golgotha began. Once the villagers had for the first time sung the Creed without the notorious *filioque*, Iza was flooded with Hungarian police. There were house searches and liturgical books and icons were confiscated. The police stayed in their village for several months, extorting food from the villagers, oppressing them and mocking the womenfolk. Eventually, the police began arrests and put 22 men on trial.

“This trial, known as the ‘First Maramorosh-Sighet Trial’ took place in 1904. The accusation was ‘Treason’, later changed to ‘Incitement against the Hungarian Nationality’. Three peasants, Joachim Vakarov, Vasily Lazar and Vasily Kamen were sentenced to fourteen months imprisonment and had to pay a huge fine with equally huge costs. Land, homes, cattle and domestic gear were auctioned off to pay these fines. The peasants were released from prison as paupers and their families were looked after by relatives with the help of the parish of Iza. However Joachim Vakarov and his friends were not daunted. Soon the Hungarians built a police station in the village, which was only three miles from another police garrison. Joachim Vakarov was seized and tortured to death. The peasants, priestless, buried him themselves, singing the funeral hymn.

“Joachim's martyrdom only increased resistance. Several villages, Luchki, Tereblia and others, decided to return to Orthodoxy. The peasants searched for an Orthodox priest so they could be received into the Church, but at that time it was impossible for Russian priests to cross the border. It was only later that the great friend of Carpatho-Russia,... Archbishop Antony (Khrapovitsky) (1863-1936), later Metropolitan of Kiev and First Hierarch of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside Russia, managed to obtain jurisdiction in the Carpathians.

“Therefore the peasants approached the Serbian bishop in Budapest. The latter was afraid of the Hungarian authorities and refused to see the delegation.<sup>684</sup> The peasants then went to the Serbian Patriarch in Karlovtsy,

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<sup>684</sup> In fairness to the bishop, however, he had a real problem caused by the rejection of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy by the Carpatho-Russians. A priest of Hungarian origin, a member of the True Orthodox Church of Russia, Fr. Istvan Nemeth, explains: “How is it possible that in the Austrian-Hungarian Monarchy Orthodox people could freely practice their religion under the protection of the Serbian Orthodox Church and only the Russians were persecuted by the Carpathian Russians? The Hungarian authorities decided thus because these people wanted to get away from the monarchy. If some of the Russians had not behaved like this, they could have practiced their religion without any problem, just like the other Orthodox Christian citizens of the empire... We should remember the answer to the Serbian bishop of Buda when these Carpathian rebels wanted to get their own priest? The Serbian bishop of Buda

since his Church cared for all Orthodox in the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Although he received them, he too was fearful of Austro-Hungarian terror. The peasants replied that if he refused, then he would have to answer for this at the [Last Judgement](#). The Patriarch decided to send a priest [Fr. Alexis Kabaliuk]. When the Uniate bishop of the nearby town of Mukachevo heard this, he rushed to Vienna to denounce it, saying that if it were allowed, then his whole diocese would go over to Orthodoxy and he would be unemployed. His denunciation was heard favourably.

“Meanwhile, the peasants of Iza began holding their own services, until they were able to cross the border secretly to Romanian Bukovina, where a priest baptized their children. The peasants built a chapel in the village, but this was demolished by the Hungarian police, who forbade them to pray together. Nevertheless, other villages began to follow Iza in the great return to Orthodoxy. It was only in 1910 that Carpatho-Russia at last received a spiritual leader in the person of Hieromonk Alexis (Kabaliuk). It was in that year that he arrived in their village secretly, in a hay cart.

“This confessor of Orthodoxy was born on 1 September 1875 in the Carpatho-Russian village of Yasinie, to the pious family of a wood-cutter, Ivan Kabaliuk and his very devout wife Hannah. The child, one of eight, was named after the holy Prince Alexander Nevsky. As a child he began parish school at the age of six and showed both piety and intelligence, reading all he could about Orthodoxy. He frequently visited the Orthodox monasteries in neighbouring Bukovina, and also the Uniate monastery of Kish-Baran. As a young man, he completed his military service only to return home and find his father on his death-bed. He then visited the Monastery of Biskad, now in Romania, to ask the clairvoyant Elder Arcadius whether he should marry or become a monk. The answer was monasticism.

“Since this sensitive soul could not accept the lie of Uniatism, in 1905 and 1906 Alexander visited the Lavras in Kiev and Pochaiev, where he met both the elderly Metropolitan of Kiev, Flavian, and the dynamic Archbishop Antony (Khrapovitsky), who was to play a vital role in Fr. Alexis’ later life. In 1908 he decided to go on pilgrimage to Mt Athos and Jerusalem. He became Orthodox in July 1908 at the Russian monastery of St. Panteleimon on Mt Athos and then returned to Russia, with the gift of an icon of the Mother of God of the Akathist, which was to accompany him for the rest of his life. In early 1910 he became a monk at the Yablochino monastery (now in Poland), took the name Alexis and undertook theological studies. On 15 August 1910, again with the support of Archbishop Antony, he was ordained hieromonk, with the name of Alexis. From there he was invited to Iza. He celebrated secretly here, also in Mukachevo and elsewhere.

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refused to give them a priest and only after a long plea at the Serbian Patriarch, they sent them a priest in the person of [Fr. Alexei] Kabaliuk...” (V.M.)

“In his homeland Fr. Alexis’ first enemy, and that of Carpatho-Russian spiritual identity, was Uniatism. The Austro-Hungarian policy of divide and rule meant separating the inhabitants of the Russian borderlands (the meaning of the word ‘Ukraine’) from the Russian motherland. This meant the religious artifice of Uniatism, which would later lead to the invention of a separate nationalist identity through ‘ukrainianization’. This weapon was especially used in the west of Little Russia (now the Ukraine), known as Galicia, which had long been under Polish influence. However, the lie was given to this Austro-Hungarian invention by the Carpatho-Russian Orthodox. Their own name for themselves, ‘Rusiny’, clearly showed that they were not some entirely different nationality and their whole history was in fact part of Russian Orthodoxy. They are not ‘Carpatho-Ukrainians’, but Carpatho-Russians This explains why the Austro-Hungarians were so frightened of Rusin Orthodoxy and tried to suppress it.

“However, nothing could stop Fr. Alexis, neither torture, nor persecution. His strong faith, zeal and desire to serve his people were such that he worked as a wood-turner, for he was unwilling to live off poor peasants. He went around all the villages that had returned to Orthodoxy, celebrating the sacraments, teaching and strengthening in the faith. In one day he baptized 200 children and gave communion to over 1,000 faithful. According to a Hungarian newspaper, in the area of Maramorosh around Iza over 14,000 people became Orthodox.

“Within two years Fr. Alexis had set up 28 Orthodox communities in various villages. He searched for help everywhere, returning again to Athos and also meeting the Patriarchs of Constantinople and Serbia. The persecutions worsened and Fr. Alexis was arrested several times. The police surrounded churches, searched homes, confiscating prayer-books, icons, crosses and religious literature. Huge fines were imposed on the peasants, the area was flooded with police and chapels were closed. Those who had become Orthodox were imprisoned. In reply, even more villages became Orthodox.

“Fr. Alexis was hunted by the Hungarian Catholic authorities like a wild animal. In mid-1912 he was forced to leave first for Yablochino, then in the spring of 1913 for Russia, finally for America, where there was a large Carpatho-Russian colony. There, together with Fr. Alexander Khotovitsky, he continued his missionary exploits and hundreds of thousands of Carpatho-Russians returned to the Orthodoxy of their forebears. From here Fr. Alexis corresponded unceasingly with his flock and the Austro-Hungarians began arresting anyone with a letter bearing an American stamp. Several hundred were imprisoned, including all of Fr. Alexis' relatives.”<sup>685</sup>

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<sup>685</sup> Phillips, “Carpatho-Russia and the Struggle for the Russian Orthodox Tradition outside Russia”, <https://orthochristian.com/108811.html>. A close friend of the Tsar, General Vladimir Voeikov, wrote: “One of the symptoms for the openly aggressive politics of Austro-Hungary against Russia was the following incident: In the middle of February, 1914, Hieromonk Alexis Kabaliuk was sentenced, according to newspaper reports, by a Marmarosh-Sagetsky court to four and a half years in prison and a fine of a thousand crowns for, in the words of the sentence,

There were even martyrdoms, such as that of the priest Maximus Sandovich, who had been ordained by Vladyka Anthony.

“Vladyka Anthony struggled with the unia and both by the printed word and in his sermons he often addressed this theme. He tried by all means to destroy the incorrect attitude towards the unia which had been established in Russia, according to which it was the same Orthodoxy, only commemorating the Pope of Rome. With profound sorrow and irritation he said: ‘They can in no way accept this simple truth, that the unia is a complete entry into the Roman Catholic church with the recognition of the Orthodox Church as a schism., with the recognition of all the Latin saints and with a condemnation of the Orthodox saints as having been schismatics outside the true Church...’

“... Vladyka Anthony also laboured much to establish in Russian society an Orthodox attitude towards Catholicism. In educated Russian society and in ecclesiastical circles in the Synodal period of the Russian Church the opinion was widespread that Catholicism was one of the branches of Christianity which, as V.S. Soloviev taught, was bound at the end of time to unite into one Christianity with the other supposed branches – Orthodoxy and Protestantism, about which the holy Church supposedly prayed in her litanies: ‘For the prosperity of the Holy Churches of God and for the union of all’.

“The correct attitude towards Catholicism as an apostate heresy was so shaken that the Holy Synod under the influence of the Emperor Peter I and with the blessing of his favourite, the protestantising Metropolitan Theophan Prokopovich, allowed Swedish prisoners-of-war in Siberia to marry Russian girls without the obligatory conversion to Orthodoxy. Soon this uncanonical practice of mixed marriages became law and spread, especially in the western regions. In his diocese Vladyka Anthony strictly forbade the clergy to celebrate mixed marriages.

“Vladyka Anthony well knew that Catholic influence in the midst of the Russian clergy was introduced through the theological schools: ‘We have lost (an Orthodox attitude towards Catholicism) because those guides by which we studied in school and which constitute the substance of our theological, dogmatic and moral science, are borrowed from the Catholics and Protestants; we are left only with straight heterodox errors which are known to all and have been condemned by ecclesiastical authorities...’

“Seeing the abnormal situation of church life in subjugated Carpathian Rus’, Vladyka Anthony turned to the Ecumenical Patriarch Joachim III with a request to accept the Orthodox Galicians and Carpatho-Russians under his omophorion, since the Russian Synod for political reasons was unable to

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spreading Russian Orthodox teaching, praising the Russian tsar and Russia and thereby inciting hatred against the Hungarian authorities, supposedly encroaching on the rights of the Hungarian king.” (*So Tsarem i Bez Tsaria* (With and Without the Tsar), Moscow, 1995, p. 41)

spread its influence there. The patriarch willingly agreed and appointed Vladyka Anthony as his exarch for Galicia and Carpathian Rus'. The Galicians, after finishing work in the fields and in spite of the great obstacles involved in crossing the border, sometimes with a direct danger to their lives, made pilgrimages in large groups to the Pochaev Lavra. Many Carpatho-Russians and Galicians entered the Volhynia theological seminary.

“Under the influence of all these undertakings, the Orthodox movement in these areas began to grow in an elemental manner with each year that passed. This elicited repressions on the part of the Austro-Hungarian government, which tried to suppress the movement. The persecution grew and soon Vladyka was forced to speak out in defence of the persecuted Christians. In August, 1913 he published an encyclical letter in which he eloquently portrayed all the woes and persecutions of the Orthodox population of the western regions. In going through the various instances of Catholics humiliating Orthodox, he cited the following example of the firmness of the persecuted and the cruelty of the persecutors: ‘Virgins who had gathered together to save their souls in fasting and prayer were stripped in winter and driven out onto a frozen lake, like the 40 martyrs of Sebaste, after which some of them soon died. Thus do they torture our Russians in Hungary and Austria in broad daylight in our civilized age...’

“But when massive arrests and tortures of the Orthodox began, and there was a trial of 94 Orthodox in Sihet, Vladyka Anthony composed a special prayer and petitions in the litanies, which were read in all the churches of the Volhynia diocese in the whole period of the trial, which lasted for two months.

“This was the only voice raised in defence of the persecuted, not only in Russia but also throughout Europe.

“The Austro-Hungarian political circles, in agreement with the Vatican, took decisive measures to suppress the incipient mass return to Orthodoxy of the Carpatho-Russians and Galicians. It seems that they undertook diplomatic negotiations in St. Petersburg in order to remove the main cause of the movement that had arisen, Vladyka Anthony, from his Volhynian see.”<sup>686</sup>

On May 20, 1914 Archbishop Anthony was duly transferred to Kharkov...

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<sup>686</sup> *Holy New Hieromartyr Maximus Sandovich*, Liberty, Tennessee: St. John of Kronstadt Press, 1998, pp. 48-50.

## 51. THE LAST YEARS OF PEACE

The relative peace of the Russian empire was shattered in February, 1912 by a major strike at the gold mines 1000 miles north-east of Irkutsk on the Lena River. The gold mine workers “struck against the fifteen-to-sixteen hour workdays, meagre salaries (which were often garnished for ‘fines’), watery mines (miners were often soaked to the bone), trauma (around 700 incidents per 1,000 miners), and the high-cost and low-quality of their food. Rancid horse penises, sold as meat at the company store, triggered the walkout. The authorities refused the miners’s demands and a stalemate ensued. In April, as the strike went into its fifth week, government troops subsidized by the gold mine arrived and arrested the elected strike committee leaders (political exiles who, ironically, wished to end the strike). This prompted not the strike’s dissipation but a determined march for the captives’ release. Confronted by a peaceful crowd of perhaps 2,500 gold miners, a line of 90 or so soldiers opened fire at their officer’s command, killing at least 150 workers and wounding more than 100, many shot in the back trying to flee...”<sup>687</sup>

As the outrage at this echoed around the country, a number of important anniversaries were celebrated to commemorate the historical triumphs of the Romanov dynasty. The first was the centenary of the victory over Napoleon in 1812. As Lubov Millar writes, “A solemn ‘Te Deum’ was held in the presence of the Imperial Family at the Kazan Cathedral in St. Petersburg, where General Field Marshal Koutouzov, commander of the Russian forces in the 1813 Patriotic War, was buried... The Tsar was also present at Borodino, site of the decisive battle against the French. A special train was arranged for this purpose and remained standing on the railway tracks near Borodino throughout the ceremonies. The final part of the jubilee festivities was the arrival of the Tsar in Moscow from Borodino. On the day of his arrival in the ancient capital, a Divine Liturgy was celebrated in the Cathedral of Christ the Saviour, built to commemorate Russia’s victory over Napoleon.”<sup>688</sup>

In May 1913, there took place the glorification of Patriarch Hermogen of All Russia, who had been martyred by the Poles during the Time of Troubles in 1612.

If the Borodino celebration commemorated the military might of Russia, which had built up the greatest land empire in history, the glorification of St. Hermogen reminded the people that the liberation of Russia from foreign invaders both in 1612 and again in 1812, had been critically dependent on the support and spiritual leadership of the Church, without whose loyalty to the Throne the Empire would have perished a long time ago. Both lessons were very appropriate in 1912, when Russia stood on the eve of the First World War and another foreign invasion. Would the Church continue to support the Tsar

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<sup>687</sup> Stephen Kotkin, *Stalin. Paradoxes of Power, 1878-1928, vol. I*, London: Penguin, 2014, p. 126.

<sup>688</sup> Millar, *Grand Duchess Elizabeth of Russia*, Richfield Springs, N.Y.: Nikodemos Orthodox Publication Society, 1993, pp. 203, 206.

in the hour of his greatest need? And would the people again remain faithful to the Tsar and the Church? These were the critical questions on which the survival of Russia depended.

“Later that same year, 1913, saw yet another significant anniversary, the Tercentenary of the House of Romanov. It was in 1612, after the Time of Troubles, that the first of the Romanovs, Michael, was elected Tsar of Russia. To mark this anniversary, the Emperor gave orders to draw up an important program of festivities throughout the land. A special jubilee coin – a silver rouble with the heads of two rulers, Michael and Nicholas II – was minted and circulated throughout the country.

“The Imperial Family visited various cities, driving through streets lined with troops, school children and enthusiastic crowds. A thanksgiving service was held in the Kazan Cathedral of St. Petersburg. In order to attend the services, Elizabeth Feodorovna left the administration of her Convent to her deputy and, entrusting its well-being to the mercy of God, took a train for St. Petersburg. She joined the Imperial Family in their trips to various ancient cities, centers where national consciousness had grown: Nizhni Novgorod, Vladimir, Kostroma, Yaroslavl and Rostov...

“The tour had considerable importance. Everywhere, fitting ceremonies and religious services marked the visits of the Imperial Family. Popular enthusiasm throughout the Sovereign’s trip was so spontaneous, so universal, that one would have thought that Monarchy, Orthodoxy and all the Russian people were closely united and would form an unbreakable union for many years to come. But such was not the case. Revolutionary activity was already widespread...”<sup>689</sup>

The year 1913 witnessed two important events outside Russia which tended to give the false impression that all was well with the world and that world war was both mad and highly unlikely. The first was an international trade fair in Ghent in Belgium, which showed how globalized the world had become. The second, in May, was the marriage between the Kaiser’s only daughter and Prince Ernst August of Cumberland, whose guests included not only the Kaiser but also King George V of England and Tsar Nicholas of Russia, together with “a galaxy of princes”.

“The presence of the three rulers,” writes Charles Emmerson, “confirmed, perhaps, the value of monarchy in a conciliatory, if waning, force in European politics.”<sup>690</sup> “Perhaps” is the word. Inter-monarchical relationships had some conciliatory effect in the Balkan Wars (when the Tsar and the Austrian Emperor worked together for peace), but catastrophically failed to prevent war in 1914...

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<sup>689</sup> Millar, *op. cit.*, p. 212.

<sup>690</sup> Emmerson, 1913, London: Vintage, 2013, p. 12.

New flashpoints were emerging among the subject nations especially of the Austro-Hungarian empire...

“The Balkan wars of 1912-13,” writes Dominic Lieven, “had greatly enlarged Serbian and Rumanian territory, together with the ambitions and self-confidence of Serbian and Rumanian nationalists. The Habsburg Monarchy contained large and discontented Serbian and Rumanian minorities. In 1914 Vienna feared that it would soon lose all its influence over the independent Balkan states, which in turn would contribute to its inability to control the Slav and Rumanian populations of the Monarchy. In more general terms, the rulers of the Habsburg state believed that a reassertion of the empire’s power and vitality was essential in order to overawe its potential foreign and domestic enemies, and to contradict the widely prevalent assumption that the Monarchy was moribund and doomed to disappear in the era of nationalism and democracy.”<sup>691</sup>

The problem of the persecution of Orthodox minorities in the Hungarian dominions was becoming an important source of tension. Thus the Romanians of the Romanian kingdom complained that the Romanian inhabitants of Transylvania were being maltreated by their Hungarian overlords. “Tisza, the Hungarian Prime Minister, recognised the problem and tried to appease the Rumanian nationalists, who were mainly concentrated in Transylvania, by offering them autonomy in such areas as religion and education but this was not enough for the Rumanians within Hungary and negotiations broke off in February 1914...”<sup>692</sup>

The other hotspot, as we have seen, was Galicia. Providentially, however, the outbreak of the First World War, and the success of the Russian offensive in Galicia in 1915, removed many of the dangers that Archbishop Anthony had warned about. Patriotic emotion and reverence for the Tsar revived, and concern for the fate of the Orthodox Christians in Serbia and Galicia made the struggle, in the minds of many, into a holy war in defence of Orthodoxy against militant Catholicism and Protestantism.

Relations between Vienna and Belgrade continued to be tense.

As Christopher Clark writes, “Austrian hostility to Belgrade’s triumphant progress was reinforced from the autumn of 1913 by dark tidings from the areas conquered by Serbian forces. From Austrian Consul-General Jehlitschka in Skopje came reports in October 1913 of atrocities against the local inhabitants. One such spoke of the destruction of ten small villages whose entire population had been exterminated. The men were first forced to come

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<sup>691</sup> Lieven, “Russia, Europe and World War I,” in Edward Acton, Vladimir Cherniaev, William Rosenberg (eds.), *A Critical Companion to the Russian Revolution, 1914-1921*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997, p. 42.

<sup>692</sup> Macmillan, *The War that Ended Peace*, London: Profile, 2014, p. 506.

out of the village and shot in lines; the houses were then set on fire, and when the women and children fled from the flames, they were killed with bayonets. In general, the consul-general reported, it was the officers who shot the men; the killing of the women and children was left to the enlisted men. Another source described the behaviour of Serbian troops after the taking of Gostivar, one of the towns in an area where there had been an Albanian uprising against the Serbian invaders. Some 300 Gostivar Muslims who had played no role in the uprising were arrested and taken out of the town during the night in groups of twenty to thirty to be beaten and stabbed to death with rifle butts and bayonets (gunshots would have woken the sleeping inhabitants of the town), before being thrown into a large open grave that had been dug beforehand for that purpose. These were not spontaneous acts of brutality, Jehlitschka concluded, but rather 'a cold-blooded and systematic elimination or annihilation operation that appeared to have been carried out on orders from above.'

"Such reports, which accord... with those of the British officials in the area, inevitably affected the mood and attitude of the political leadership in Vienna. In May 1914, the Serbian envoy in Vienna, Jovanović, reported that even the French ambassador had complained to him about the behaviour of the Serbs in the new provinces; similar complaints were forthcoming from Greek, Turkish, Bulgarian and Albanian colleagues, and it was to be feared that the damage to Serbia's reputation could have 'very bad consequences'. The glib denials of Pašić and his ministers reinforced the impression that the government was either itself behind the atrocities or unwilling to do anything to prevent or investigate them. The Austro-Hungarian minister in Belgrade was amused to see leader articles in the Viennese press advising the Serbian government to go easy on the minorities and win them over by a policy of conciliation. Such advice, he observed in a letter to Berchtold, might well be heeded in 'civilised states'. But Serbia was a state where 'murder and killing have been raised to a system'. The impact of these reports on Austrian policy is difficult to measure - they were hardly surprising to those in Vienna who already subscribed to a grossly stereotypical view of Serbia and its culture. At the very least, they underscored in Vienna's eyes the political illegitimacy of Serbian territorial expansion.

"Nevertheless: a war between Austria and Serbia did not appear likely in the spring and summer of 1914. The mood in Belgrade was relatively calm in the spring of that year, reflecting the exhaustion and sense of satiation that followed the Balkan Wars. The instability of the newly conquered areas and the civil-military crisis that racked Serbia during May gave grounds to suspect that the Belgrade government would be focusing mainly on tasks of domestic consolidation for the foreseeable future. In a report on 24 May 1914, the Austro-Hungarian minister in Belgrade, Baron Giesl, observed that although Serbian troop numbers along the Albanian border remained high, there seemed little reason to fear further incursions. And three weeks later, on 16 June, a dispatch from Gellinek, the military attaché in Belgrade, struck a similarly placed note. It was true that officers on holiday had been recalled, reservists asked not to

leave their current addresses and the army was being kept at a heightened state of readiness. But there were no signs of aggressive intentions towards either Austro-Hungary or Albania. All was quiet on the southern front..."<sup>693</sup>

Meanwhile, on May 4/16, 1914 there took place, as N.Yu. Selishchev writes, "the signing of the document widely known in Greece as 'the Corfu protocol'. The Corfu protocol gave the Orthodox Greeks a broad autonomy and sealed their religious, civil and social rights. The international control commission of the great powers (Russia was represented by the consul-general M. Petriaev) acted as a mediator in the quarrel and became the trustee of the fulfilment of the Corfu accord. In Russia the Corfu protocol... was known as the 'Epirot-Albanian accord'. That is, the question of Epirus was not reduced to the level of an 'internal affair' of the newly created Albania, but was raised to the significance of an international agreement when the Orthodox Greek Epirots and the Muslim Albanians were recognized as parties to the agreement having equal rights. Our [Russian] press at that time - *Pravitel'stoennij Vestnik, Sankt-Peterburgskie Vedomosti* and the conservative *Novoe Vremia* - looked at the events in Epirus in precisely this way."

Later, in the spring of 1915 the government of Albania was entrusted to an International Commission of Control. They appointed the German Prince Wilhelm of Wied as ruler. But an uprising by the Muslims of Central Albania drove him out in September...

"Unfortunately," continues Selishchev, "to this day the protocol of Corfu has not been fulfilled and is not being fulfilled by the Albanian side, neither in the part relating to the religious, nor in the part relating to the civil and educational rights of the Greek Epirots. In this sense the unchanging character of Albanian hostility is indicative. In 1914 the Albanian prime-minister Turkhan Pasha declared to the Rome correspondent of *Berliner Tageblatt* that 'there can be no discussion' of the autonomy of Epirus, and 'for us there are no longer any "Epirots", but there are only the inhabitants of provinces united to us by the London conference."<sup>694</sup>

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For the Russian aristocrats, as Douglas Smith writes, "Nineteen fourteen would prove to be society's last season and, even if only in retrospect, its brightest. Baroness Meyendorff later recalled that she had seen many sparkling social seasons, but 'the last one, in 1914, 'was by far the most brilliant'. Princess Marie Gagarin remembered that last season as one of wild partying. 'As if foreseeing the approach of catastrophe and striving to stifle a growing apprehension, all Petersburg nervously indulged in amusement and merrymaking.' It was a time of 'unprecedented luxury and eloquence';

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<sup>693</sup> Clark, *The Sleepwalkers. How Europe Went to War in 1914*, London: Penguin, 2013, pp. 112-114.

<sup>694</sup> Selishchev, "Chto neset Pravoslaviu proekt 'Velikoj Albanii'?", *Pravoslavnaia Rus'*, N 2 (1787), January 15/28, 2005, p. 11.

everywhere were champagne and fresh roses, lilacs and mimosas imported from the south of France. The highlight of the season was the black and white ball at the home of Countess Betsy Shuvalov, with the officers of the Chevaliers Gardes resplendent in their uniforms. Six months later, nearly all these young men lay dead, killed in the first battles of the First World War. Grand Duke Alexander Mikhailovich cast these days in florid tones: 'The gypsies cried, the glasses clinked, and the Romanian violinists, clad in red, hypnotized inebriated men and women into a daring attempt to explore the depths of vice. Hysteria reigned supreme...'"<sup>695</sup>

"The atmosphere," writes Montefiore, "was now overshadowed by a wild foreboding. The poets, playboys, dilettantes and aesthetes of the Silver Age – Blok called them 'the children of Russia's dreadful years' – sensed the coming apocalypse and reacted in doom-laden carnival of reckless if morbid hedonism, seeking the essence of salvation, art and freedom in opium, Satanism and the transformative orgasm. The Symbolist poet-novelist Andrei Belyi warned 'great will be the strife, strife the likes of which has never been seen in this world. Yellow hordes of Asiatics... will encrimson the fields of Europe in oceans of blood', while Petersburg 'will sink'. As strikes spread and war-clouds darkened, Blok felt the rumblings of a volcano:

*And over Russia I see a quiet  
Far-spreading fire consuming all."*<sup>696</sup>

The nationalists wanted war to uphold the power and glory of their nation; while some internationalists wanted it in order to overthrow the thrones of kings and introduce universal democracy. But many informed people understood that nothing good could come from the rapid growth of armaments on all sides. The mood was particularly belligerent in Berlin, from where President Woodrow Wilson's emissary, Colonel Edward House, wrote: "The situation is extraordinary. It is militarism run stark mad. Unless someone acting for you can bring about a different understanding there is some day to be an awful cataclysm..."<sup>697</sup>

Indeed, "there is no doubt," writes Clark, "that, viewed from across the Atlantic, pre-war Europe presented a curious spectacle. Senior statesmen, emperors and kings attended public occasions wearing military uniform; elaborate military reviews were an integral part of the public ceremonial of power; immense illuminated naval displays drew huge crowds and filled the pages of the illustrated journals; conscript armies grew in size until they became male microcosms of the nation; the cult of military display entered the public and the private life of even the smallest communities..."<sup>698</sup>

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<sup>695</sup> Smith, *Former People: The Last Days of the Russian Aristocracy*, London: Macmillan, 2012, p. 59.

<sup>696</sup> Montefiore, *The Romanovs*, London: Vintage, 2016, p. 560.

<sup>697</sup> House, in Macmillan, *op. cit.*, p. 509.

<sup>698</sup> Clark, *op. cit.*, pp. 214-215.

But what were the real prospects of war?

In retrospect, the new European alliances created in 1904-07 - the Anglo-French Entente of 1904 and the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907 - seemed to some commentators (for example, the French diplomat Maurice Paléologue) to foreshadow and even cause the subsequent aggressiveness of the Triple Alliance and hence the cataclysm of 1914. However, as Clark writes: "It was still far from clear in 1907 that the new alliances would take Europe to war. The weakness of Russia after the disaster of 1904 obliged the policy-makers in St. Petersburg in the first instance to seek good relations with Germany, and it was widely accepted in St. Petersburg, for the time being at least, that Russia's domestic frailty ruled out any focus of international adventurism. It was hard to imagine the circumstances in which France might be willing to chance its arm for the Russians in the Balkans and even harder to imagine Russians marching to Berlin for the sake of Alsace and Lorraine. In 1909, Paris underscored its independence by signing an accord in Morocco with Germany, a 'striking instance of the crossing of lines' between the Alliance blocs. Then, in November 1910, Russian and German leaders met in Potsdam and Berlin to reconcile German and Russian interests in Turkey and Persia. There was no question of loosening the Franco-Russian bond, to be sure, but this was a significant gesture in the direction of détente. As for the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907, it may have muted the tensions between Russia and Britain but it did not remove their cause, and right through until 1914 there were voices in the Foreign Office warning of the Russian threat to Britain's far-flung empire..."<sup>699</sup>

In July, 1911 "Germany sent a gunboat, the *Panther*, to the port of Agadir, in Morocco, where the French had recently and illegally sent troops claiming they were needed to quell a local rebellion. By the terms of the Algeciras conference, Germany was entitled to compensation if the French changed the nature of their presence in Morocco. With the *Panther*... positioned threateningly on the coast, the Germany Foreign Office demanded the French hand over the whole of the French Congo, adding that if they did not respond positively Germany might be forced to extreme measures."<sup>700</sup> The British saw this as a threat to their naval supremacy, and reacted strongly.

Eventually, the Germans backed down and were given a small part of the Congo in compensation. But the blow to their pride was considerable. "Senior German army officers sighed that the All Highest was so pusillanimous about taking supreme measures - Moltke had privately hoped for a 'reckoning with the English'. The German colonial minister resigned..."<sup>701</sup>

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<sup>699</sup> Clark, op. cit., pp. 166-167.

<sup>700</sup> Carter, op. cit., p. 392.

<sup>701</sup> Carter, op. cit., p. 393.

Germany was by now completely isolated diplomatically; she could look only to Turkey as a potential ally. Moreover, her sabre-rattling and armaments build-up had only encouraged the Entente and Russia to respond in kind. "In 1913, Britain, France and Russia spent in total more than twice as much on armaments as Germany..."<sup>702</sup>

Also in 1913, writes J.M. Roberts, "the Kaiser confided to the Austrian chief of staff that he was no longer against a great war (by which he meant one between several powers) in principle. One of his ministers even felt able to talk to members of parliament of the 'coming world War'. In an atmosphere of excited patriotism (it was the centenary of the so-called 'War of Liberation' with Napoleonic France) a special army bill was introduced that year into the Reichstag. The Russian modernization and rearmament programme (to be completed by 1917) had certainly alarmed the German soldiers. But by itself this can hardly explain the psychological deterioration in Germany that had brought about so dangerous a transformation of German policy as the acceptance of the inevitability of conflict with Russia - and therefore with France - if Germany's due weight in Europe was to be assured.

"Many Germans felt that 'encirclement' frustrated the exercise of German power, and should be broken, if only for reasons of prestige, and that such a step must involve a confrontation - though not necessarily war - with Great Britain. But this was not all that was happening in Germany in the decade before 1914. There had been a major inflammation of nationalist (and conservative) thinking and agitation in those years. It showed in the growth of societies and pressure-groups with different aims - safeguarding of the social hierarchy, anti-Semitism, patriotic support for armaments - but all contributing to a xenophobic and authoritarian atmosphere. Some Germans thought positively of possible territorial and material gains in the east and brooded on a supposed historic mission of Teuton to dominate over Slavs. Some were troubled by the colonial questions that had been so contentious and prickly before 1900 (yet colonies had proved disappointing and colonial rivalry played virtually no part in the final approach to war). Germany was dangerously ready psychologically for conflict, even if, when war came at last, it was to find its detonator in the South Slav lands..."<sup>703</sup>

Lieven points out that "whereas German discussions of American or British power were expressed in the coolly rational language of political economy and academic history, where Russia was concerned a much more vivid and sometimes even an apocalyptic tone was often present. This derived partly from a long-standing German sense of cultural superiority but also fear about a more primitive people who were often defined as semi-European at best. Most western Europeans shared the cultural arrogance but were less fearful than the Germans for the simple reason that Russian power lay further from their borders.

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<sup>702</sup> Simms, *op. cit.*, p. 294.

<sup>703</sup> Roberts, *The Penguin History of the Twentieth Century*, London: Penguin, 2000, pp. 205-206.

“Dislike of Russia was reinforced in the nineteenth century by liberal and socialist Germany’s distaste for the tsarist regime. The German Jews had a particular dislike for the land of the pogrom, but German émigrés in Berlin from Russia’s Baltic Provinces (today’s Estonia and Latvia) probably had a bigger overall impact on German perceptions of Russia. They brought to Germany a vision of racial conflict between Slavs and Germans that could then be applied to struggles between the German and the Slav peoples of the Austrian monarchy as well. This played a big role in pan-German thinking but had an influence beyond their ranks. Paul Rohrbach was a key ‘public intellectual’ of Baltic origin who strongly influenced German opinion about international relations and Russia. He disliked both tsarism and Russians. He stressed the glaring weaknesses of the Russian economy and society and argued that an aggressive foreign policy was almost the only means for the regime to cling to its fading legitimacy. But although he expected major convulsions in the near future in Russia, he did not doubt that in the longer run the country would be a formidable world power, noting that on current projections by the second half of the twentieth century Germany would face an eastern neighbour with a population of more than 300 million...”<sup>704</sup>

“A vein of fatalism,” writes Clark, “underlay the bellicism of the German military. When they spoke of war, the German military tended to speak less of victory than of the ‘twin threats of defeat and annihilation’...”

“As for the Kaiser, though prone to outbursts of belligerent rhetoric, he panicked and counseled caution whenever a real conflict seemed likely, to the endless frustration of the generals. Wilhelm remained hopeful of a long-term accommodation with Britain. His remarks during 1913 suggest that he continued to regard an Anglo-German war as ‘unthinkable’. He also remained confident that German military prowess would deter Russia from an armed intervention in a conflict between Austria and Serbia. This complacency prompted the hawkish General Falkenhayn, soon to become minister of war, to observe in a letter of January 1913 that the deluded faith of the political leadership – including Wilhelm – in the possibility of a lasting peace left Moltke ‘standing alone’ in his ‘struggle’ with the Kaiser for a more aggressive foreign policy.”<sup>705</sup>

There was not only a certain fatalistic acceptance of the probability of war in both Germany and Russia. The Germans had been preparing to start one for a long time. Thus as early as 1905 they had already decided on the Schlieffen campaign plan, involving the violation of Belgium’s neutrality, the conquest of France and then the attack on Russia.

This was in fact a very stupid plan, because the invasion of Belgium was the one event guaranteed to bring Britain into the war against Germany in defence

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<sup>704</sup> Lieven, *Towards the Flame*, p. 29.

<sup>705</sup> Clark, *op. cit.*, pp. 333, 334.

of a country with which it had a specific defence treaty. But, as Barbara Tuchman writes, "A hundred years of German philosophy went into the making of this decision in which the seed of self-destruction lay embedded, waiting for its hour. The voice was Schlieffen's, but the hand was the hand of Fichte who saw the German people chosen by Providence to occupy the supreme place in the history of the universe, of Hegel who saw them leading the world to a glorious destiny of compulsory *Kultur*, of Nietzsche who told them that Supermen were above ordinary controls, of Treitschke who set the increase of power as the highest moral duty of the state, of the whole German people, who called their temporal ruler the 'All-Highest'...

"[This] body of accumulated egoism... suckled the German people and created a nation fed on 'the desperate delusion of the will that deems itself absolute'."<sup>706</sup>

These "desperate delusions" were nurtured by Russia's programme of military reconstruction, which still had three years to run. This appeared to be confirmation of Stolypin's remark some years earlier, that if Russia were given just twenty years of peace she would become unrecognizable – that is, unrecognizably stronger... Indeed, seen from Germany's point of view, the growth in Russia's military power was both impressive and threatening. As Hew Strachan writes, "between 1908 and 1913 [Russia's] industrial production increased by 50 per cent, an expansion that was largely fuelled by defence-related output. Russia's army was already the biggest in Europe. By 1917 it would be three times the size of Germany's..."<sup>707</sup> "By 1916-17, German strategists believed, the striking power of Russia would be sufficient to nullify the calculations embodied in the Schlieffen Plan."<sup>708</sup>

That is why the chief of the German general staff, von Moltke, who had a healthy respect for Russia's improving military capabilities,<sup>709</sup> was in favour of a preventive war against her. In the spring of 1914 Moltke held talks with the Foreign Minister, Gottlieb von Jagow. "Jagow noted that Moltke told him that in two or three years the 'military superiority of our enemies would... so great that he did not know how he could overcome them. Today we would still be a match for them. In his opinion there was no alternative to making preventive war in order to defeat the enemy while there was still a chance of victory. The Chief of the General Staff therefore proposed that it should conduct policy with the aim of provoking a war in the near future..."<sup>710</sup> Such talks were the "smoking gun" that, in the eyes of many, pointed to Germany as the main instigator of World War One... Critical here was the suicidal attitude of the Germany military, who not only saw war as inevitable, but seemed to prefer the prospect of a ruinous war to that of continuing peace.

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<sup>706</sup> Tuchman, *The Guns of August*, New York: Ballantine Books, 1962, 1994, p. 26.

<sup>707</sup> Strachan, *The Outbreak of the First World War*, Oxford University Press, 2004, p. 78.

<sup>708</sup> Clark, *op. cit.*, p. 332.

<sup>709</sup> Oldenburg, *Tsarstvovanie Imperatora Nikolaia II* (Reign of Emperor Nicholas II), Belgrade, 1939, vol. II, p. 113.

<sup>710</sup> Fromkin, *op. cit.*, p. 110.

In May, 1914, while the Tsar was visiting Romania, the German Kaiser met the heir to the Austrian throne, Archduke Franz Ferdinand. Colonel Vladimir Voeikov, a close friend of the Tsar, wrote: "At this meeting, the question was supposedly discussed of the necessity of beginning a war against Russia and the Entente in 1914, on the presupposition that the Russian army would grow significantly with each year and the struggle would become more difficult. They said that the only voice that sounded out against the war at that time belonged to Archduke Franz Ferdinand..."<sup>711</sup>

The Archduke was also against a war against Serbia, which made his murder by Serbian terrorists only a few weeks later both ironic and tragic. He didn't like the Serbs, and thought that the Austrians could easily defeat them. "But what then?" he asked in 1913. "First of all Europe would fall on us and see us as disturber of the peace. And God help us if we annex Serbia..."<sup>712</sup>

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<sup>711</sup> Voeikov, *So Tsarem i Bez Tsaria* (With and Without the Tsar), Moscow, 1995, p. 62.

<sup>712</sup> Macmillan, *op. cit.*, p. 215.

## 52. DURNOVO'S MEMORANDUM

Europe was dividing into two alliances of major powers: on the one hand, the Austrians and the Germans and the Turks, and on the other, the French, the British and the Russians. But how strong were these alliances, and in particular the Franco-British-Russian one?

Anglo-Russian relations, though much improved by the Convention of 1907, were beginning to look fragile again in the period 1912-14. On the one hand, after the Germans threw in the towel in the Naval Arms Race, their perceived threat to the British became smaller, so some in London began to think about a possible alliance with Berlin instead of St. Petersburg. And on the other hand, the Russians began expanding their zones of influence in Persia, in Tibet and on the Russo-Chinese border, which threatened to reignite the "Great Game" and the fires of Anglo-Russian global rivalry.<sup>713</sup>

The tide among Russian politicians was moving in a nationalist direction and in favour of intervention in the Balkans in the right circumstances. This is probably why Prime Minister Kokovtsov, an opponent of intervention, had been forced out by the nationalists late in 1913. In January, 1914, the Tsar offered the vacant post to the interior minister Peter Nikolayevich Durnovo, the hero of 1905 - in Clark's words "a forceful and determined man who was adamantly opposed to Balkan entanglements of any kind"<sup>714</sup>. But Durnovo turned down the offer. So the post passed to Goremykin, an old man who did not have the strength to oppose the majority of his ministerial colleagues - and would not in any case have opposed the Tsar himself, who was also moving towards the nationalist position. With this change, then, there probably also passed the last chance for the Russian government to abandon the fateful "tripwire" system.

Although he had refused the premiership (perhaps for health reasons - he died some 18 months later), in February Durnovo took the opportunity to express his views on the international situation in a memorandum to the tsar and fifty others that argued strongly for an alliance with Germany, not Britain, and foretold that a war with Germany would probably be lost by Russia. Moreover, "a social revolution in its most extreme form will be unavoidable if a war goes badly..." He counselled an alliance with Germany instead of England, but without breaking the alliance with France.

Durnovo's predictions were so accurate that Kotkin admiringly writes: "Nothing penned by Vladimir Lenin, not even his later celebrated polemic *State and Revolution* (August 1917) approached the clairvoyance of Durnovo."<sup>715</sup>

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<sup>713</sup> Clark, *op. cit.*, pp. 322-325.

<sup>714</sup> Clark, *op. cit.*, p. 557.

<sup>715</sup> Kotkin, *Stalin*, p. 135.

In view of the incisiveness of its analysis and the accuracy of its forecasts, we cite the memorandum in full:-

### **A Future Anglo-German War Will Become an Armed Conflict between Two Groups of Powers**

The central factor of the period of world history through which we are now passing is the rivalry between England and Germany. This rivalry must inevitably lead to an armed struggle between them, the issue of which will, in all probability, prove fatal to the vanquished side. The interests of these two powers are far too incompatible, and their simultaneous existence as world powers will sooner or later prove impossible. On the one hand, there is an insular State, whose world importance rests upon its domination of the sea, its world trade, and its innumerable colonies. On the other, there is a powerful continental empire, whose limited territory is insufficient for an increased population. It has therefore openly and candidly declared that its future is on the seas. It has, with fabulous speed, developed an enormous world commerce, built for its protection a formidable navy, and, with its famous trademark, "Made in Germany," created a mortal danger to the industrial and economic prosperity of its rival. Naturally, England cannot yield without a fight, and between her and Germany a struggle for life or death is inevitable. The armed conflict impending as a result of this rivalry cannot be confined to a duel between England and Germany alone. Their resources are far too unequal, and, at the same time, they are not sufficiently vulnerable to each other. Germany could provoke rebellion in India, in South Africa, and, especially, a dangerous rebellion in Ireland, and paralyze English sea trade by means of privateering and, perhaps, submarine warfare, thereby creating for Great Britain difficulties in her food supply; but, in spite of all the daring of the German military leaders, they would scarcely risk landing in England, unless a fortunate accident helped them to destroy or appreciably to weaken the English navy. As for England, she will find Germany absolutely invulnerable. All that she may achieve is to seize the German colonies, stop German sea trade, and, in the most favorable event, annihilate the German navy, but nothing more. This, however, would not force the enemy to sue for peace. There is no doubt, therefore, that England will attempt the means she has more than once used with success, and will risk armed action only after securing participation in the war, on her own side, of powers stronger in a strategical sense. But since Germany, for her own part, will not be found isolated, the future Anglo-German war will undoubtedly be transformed into an armed conflict between two groups of powers, one with a German, the other with an English orientation.

### **It Is Hard to Discover Any Real Advantages to Russia in Rapprochement with England**

Until the Russo-Japanese War, Russian policy had neither orientation. From the time of the reign of Emperor Alexander 111, Russia had a defensive alliance with France, so firm as to assure common action by both powers in the event of attack upon either, but, at the same time, not so close as to obligate either to

support unflinchingly, with armed force, all political actions and claims of the ally. At the same time, the Russian Court maintained the traditional friendly relations, based upon ties of blood, with the Court of Berlin. Owing precisely to this conjuncture, peace among the great powers was not disturbed in the course of a great many years, in spite of the presence of abundant combustible material in Europe. France, by her alliance with Russia, was guaranteed against attack by Germany; the latter was safe, thanks to the tried pacifism and friendship of Russia, from revanche ambitions on the part of France; and Russia was secured, thanks to Germany's need of maintaining amicable relations with her, against excessive intrigues by Austria-Hungary in the Balkan peninsula. Lastly, England, isolated and held in check by her rivalry with Russia in Persia, by her diplomats' traditional fear of our advance on India, and by strained relations with France, especially notable at the time of the well-known Fashoda incident, viewed with alarm the increase of Germany's naval power, without, however, risking an active step. The Russo-Japanese War radically changed the relations among the great powers and brought England out of her isolation. As we know, all through the Russo-Japanese War, England and America observed benevolent neutrality toward Japan, while we enjoyed a similar benevolent neutrality from France and Germany. Here, it would seem, should have been the inception of the most natural political combination for us. But after the war, our diplomacy faced abruptly about and definitely entered upon the road toward rapprochement with England. France was drawn into the orbit of British policy; there was formed a group of powers of the Triple Entente, with England playing the dominant part; and a clash, sooner or later, with the powers grouping themselves around Germany became inevitable. Now, what advantages did the renunciation of our traditional policy of distrust of England and the rupture of neighborly, if not friendly, relations with Germany promise us then and at present? Considering with any degree of care the events which have taken place since the Treaty of Portsmouth, we find it difficult to perceive any practical advantages gained by us in rapprochement with England. The only benefit - improved relations with Japan - is scarcely a result of the Russo-English rapprochement. There is no reason why Russia and Japan should not live in peace; there seems to be nothing over which they need quarrel. All Russia's objectives in the Far East, if correctly understood, are entirely compatible with Japan's interests. These objectives, in their essentials, are very modest. The too broad sweep of the imagination of overzealous executive officials, without basis in genuine national interests, on the one hand, and the excessive nervousness and impressionability of Japan, on the other, which erroneously regarded these dreams as a consistently executed policy - these were the things that provoked a clash which a more capable diplomacy would have managed to avoid. Russia needs neither Korea nor even Port Arthur. An outlet to the open sea is undoubtedly useful, but the sea in itself is, after all, not a market, but merely a road to a more advantageous delivery of goods at the consuming markets. As a matter of fact, we do not possess, and shall not for a long time possess any goods in the Far East that promise any considerable profits in exportation abroad. Nor are there any markets for the export of our products. We cannot expect a great supply of our export commodities to go to industrially and agriculturally developed America, to poor, but likewise

industrial, Japan, or even to the maritime sections of China and remoter markets, where our exports would inevitably meet the competition of goods from the industrially stronger rival powers. There remains the interior of China, with which our trade is carried on, chiefly overland. Consequently, an open port would aid the import of foreign merchandise more than the export of our own products. Japan, on her part, no matter what is said, has no desire for our Far Eastern possessions. The Japanese are by nature a southern people, and the harsh environment of our Far Eastern borderland cannot attract them. We know that even within Japan itself northern Yezo is sparsely populated, while apparently Japanese colonization is making little headway even in the southern part of Sakhalin Island, ceded to Japan under the Treaty of Portsmouth. After taking possession of Korea and Formosa, Japan will hardly go farther north, and her ambitions, it may be assumed, will turn rather in the direction of the Philippine Islands, Indo-China, Java, Sumatra, and Borneo. The most she might desire would be the acquisition, for purely commercial reasons, of a few more sections of the Manchurian railway. In a word, peaceable coexistence, nay, more, a close rapprochement, between Russia and Japan in the Far East is perfectly natural, regardless of any mediation by England. The grounds for agreement are self-evident. Japan is not a rich country, and the simultaneous upkeep of a strong army and a powerful navy is hard for her. Her insular situation drives her to strengthen her naval power, and alliance with Russia would allow her to devote all her attention to her navy, especially vital in view of her imminent rivalry with America, leaving the protection of her interests on the continent to Russia. On our part, we, having the Japanese navy to protect our Pacific coast, could give up once for all the dream, impossible to us, of creating a navy in the Far East. Thus, so far as our relations with Japan are concerned, the rapprochement with England has yielded us no real advantage. And it has gained us nothing in the sense of strengthening our position in Manchuria, Mongolia, or even the Ulianghai territory, where the uncertainty of our position bears witness that the agreement with England has certainly not freed the hands of our diplomats. On the contrary, our attempt to establish relations with Tibet met with sharp opposition from England. In Persia, also, our position has been no better since the conclusion of this agreement. Every one recalls our predominant influence in that country under the Shah Nasr-Eddin, that is, exactly at a time when our relations with England were most strained. From the moment of our accord with the latter, we have found ourselves drawn into a number of strange attempts to impose upon the Persian people an entirely needless constitution, with the result that we ourselves contributed to the overthrow, for the benefit of our inveterate enemies, of a monarch who was devoted to Russia. That is, not only have we gained nothing, but we have suffered a loss all along the line, ruining our prestige and wasting many millions of rubles, even the precious blood of Russian soldiers, who were treacherously slain and, to please England, not even avenged. The worst results, however, of the accord with England - and of the consequent discord with Germany - have been felt in the Near East. As we know, it was Bismarck who coined that winged phrase about the Balkan problem not being worth to Germany the bones of a single Pomeranian grenadier. Later the Balkan complications began to attract much more attention

from German diplomacy, which had taken the "Sick Man" under its protection, but even then Germany, for a long time, failed to show any inclination to endanger relations with Russia in the interests of Balkan affairs. The proofs are patent. During the period of the Russo-Japanese War and the ensuing turmoil in our country, it would have been very easy for Austria to realize her cherished ambitions in the Balkan peninsula. But at that time Russia had not yet linked her destinies with England, and Austria-Hungary was forced to lose an opportunity most auspicious for her purposes. No sooner had we taken the road to closer accord with England, however, than there immediately followed the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, a step which might have been taken so easily and painlessly in 1905 or 1906. Next came the Albanian question and the combination with the Prince of Wied. Russian diplomacy attempted to answer Austrian intrigue by forming a Balkan league, but this combination, as might have been expected, proved to be quite unworkable. Intended to be directed against Austria, it immediately turned on Turkey and fell apart in the process of dividing the spoils taken from the latter. The final result was merely the definite attachment of Turkey to Germany, in whom, not without good reason, she sees her sole protector. In short, the Russo-British rapprochement evidently seems to Turkey as tantamount to England's renouncing her traditional policy of closing the Dardanelles to us, while the creation of the Balkan league, under the auspices of Russia, appeared as a direct threat to the continued existence of Turkey as a European power. To sum up, the Anglo-Russian accord has brought us nothing of practical value up to this time, while for the future, it threatens us with an inevitable armed clash with Germany.

### **Fundamental Alignments in the Coming War**

Under what conditions will this clash occur and what will be its probable consequences? The fundamental groupings in a future war are self-evident: Russia, France, and England, on the one side, with Germany, Austria, and Turkey, on the other. It is more than likely that other powers, too, will participate in that war, depending upon circumstances as they may exist at the war's outbreak. But, whether the immediate cause for the war is furnished by another clash of conflicting interests in the Balkans, or by a colonial incident, such as that of Algeciras, the fundamental alignment will remain unchanged. Italy, if she has any conception of her real interests, will not join the German side. For political as well as economic reasons, she undoubtedly hopes to expand her present territory. Such an expansion may be achieved only at the expense of Austria, on one hand, and Turkey, on the other. It is, therefore, natural for Italy not to join that party which would safeguard the territorial integrity of the countries at whose expense she hopes to realize her aspirations. Furthermore, it is not out of the question that Italy would join the anti-German coalition, if the scales of war should incline in its favor, in order to secure for herself the most favorable conditions in sharing the subsequent division of spoils. In this respect, the position of Italy is similar to the probable position of Rumania, which, it may be assumed, will remain neutral until the scales of fortune favor one or another side. Then, animated by normal political self-interest, she will attach herself to the victors, to be rewarded at the expense of

either Russia or Austria. Of the other Balkan States, Serbia and Montenegro will unquestionably join the side opposing Austria, while Bulgaria and Albania (if by that time they have not yet formed at least the embryo of a State) will take their stand against the Serbian side. Greece will in all probability remain neutral or make common cause with the side opposing Turkey, but that only after the issue has been more or less determined. The participation of other powers will be incidental, and Sweden ought to be feared, of course, in the ranks of our foes. Under such circumstances, a struggle with Germany presents to us enormous difficulties, and will require countless sacrifices. War will not find the enemy unprepared, and the degree of his preparedness will probably exceed our most exaggerated calculations. It should not be thought that this readiness is due to Germany's own desire for war. She needs no war, so long as she can attain her object - the end of exclusive domination of the seas. But, once this vital object is opposed by the Coalition, Germany will not shrink from war, and, of course, will even try to provoke it, choosing the most auspicious moment.

### **The Main Burden of the War Will Fall on Russia**

The main burden of the war will undoubtedly fall on us, since England is hardly capable of taking a considerable part in a continental war, while France, poor in man power, will probably adhere to strictly defensive tactics, in view of the enormous losses by which war will be attended under present conditions of military technique. The part of a battering-ram, making a breach in the very thick of the German defense, will be ours, with many factors against us to which we shall have to devote great effort and attention. From the sum of these unfavorable factors we should deduct the Far East. Both America and Japan - the former fundamentally, and the latter by virtue of her present political orientation - are hostile to Germany, and there is no reason to expect them to act on the German side. Furthermore, the war, regardless of its issue, will weaken Russia and divert her attention to the West, a fact which, of course, serves both Japanese and American interests. Thus, our rear will be sufficiently secure in the Far East, and the most that can happen there will be the extortion from us of some concessions of an economic nature in return for benevolent neutrality. Indeed, it is possible that America or Japan may join the anti-German side, but, of course, merely as usurpers of one or the other of the unprotected German colonies. There can be no doubt, however, as to an outburst of hatred for us in Persia, and a probable unrest among the Moslems of the Caucasus and Turkestan; it is possible that Afghanistan, as a result of that unrest, may act against us; and, finally, we must foresee very unpleasant complications in Poland and Finland. In the latter, a rebellion will undoubtedly break out if Sweden is found in the ranks of our enemies. As for Poland, it is not to be expected that we can hold her against our enemy during the war. And after she is in his power, he will undoubtedly endeavor to provoke an insurrection which, while not in reality very dangerous, must be considered, nevertheless, as one of the factors unfavorable to us, especially since the influence of our allies may induce us to take such measures in our relations with Poland as will prove more dangerous to us than any open revolt. Are we prepared for so

stubborn a war as the future war of the European nations will undoubtedly become? This question we must answer, without evasion, in the negative. That much has been done for our defense since the Japanese war, I am the last person to deny, but even so, it is quite inadequate considering the unprecedented scale on which a future war will inevitably be fought. The fault lies, in a considerable measure, in our young legislative institutions, which have taken a dilettante interest in our defenses, but are far from grasping the seriousness of the political situation arising from the new orientation which, with the sympathy of the public, has been followed in recent years by our Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The enormous number of still unconsidered legislative bills of the war and navy departments may serve as proof of this: for example, the plan of the organization of our national defense proposed to the Duma as early as the days of Secretary of State Stolypin. It cannot be denied that, in the matter of military instruction, according to the reports of specialists, we have achieved substantial improvements, as compared with the time before the Japanese War. According to the same specialists, our field artillery leaves nothing to be desired; the gun is entirely satisfactory, and the equipment convenient and practical. Yet, it must be admitted that there are substantial shortcomings in the organization of our defenses. In this regard we must note, first of all, the insufficiency of our war supplies, which, certainly, cannot be blamed upon the war department, since the supply schedules are still far from being executed, owing to the low productivity of our factories. This insufficiency of munitions is the more significant since, in the embryonic condition of our industries, we shall, during the war, have no opportunity to make up the revealed shortage by our own efforts, and the closing of the Baltic as well as the Black Sea will prevent the importation from abroad of the defense materials which we lack. Another circumstance unfavorable to our defense is its far too great dependence, generally speaking, upon foreign industry, a fact which, in connection with the above noted interruption of more or less convenient communications with abroad, will create a series of obstacles difficult to overcome. The quantity of our heavy artillery, the importance of which was demonstrated in the Japanese War, is far too inadequate, and there are few machine guns. The organization of our fortress defenses has scarcely been started, and even the fortress of Reval, which is to defend the road to the capital, is not yet finished. The network of strategic railways is inadequate. The railways possess a rolling stock sufficient, perhaps, for normal traffic, but not commensurate with the colossal demands which will be made upon them in the event of a European war. Lastly, it should not be forgotten that the impending war will be fought among the most civilized and technically most advanced nations. Every previous war has invariably been followed by something new in the realm of military technique, but the technical backwardness of our industries does not create favorable conditions for our adoption of the new inventions.

### **The Vital Interests of Germany and Russia Do Not Conflict**

All these factors are hardly given proper thought by our diplomats, whose behavior toward Germany is, in some respects, even aggressive, and may

unduly hasten the moment of armed conflict, a moment which, of course, is really inevitable in view of our British orientation. The question is whether this orientation is correct, and whether even a favorable issue of the war promises us such advantages as would compensate us for all the hardships and sacrifices which must attend a war unparalleled in its probable strain. The vital interests of Russia and Germany do not conflict. There are fundamental grounds for a peaceable existence of these two States. Germany's future lies on the sea, that is, in a realm where Russia, essentially the most continental of the great powers, has no interests whatever. We have no overseas colonies, and shall probably never have them, and communication between the various parts of our empire is easier overland than by water. No surplus population demanding territorial expansion is visible, but, even from the viewpoint of new conquests, what can we gain from a victory over Germany? Posen, or East Prussia? But why do we need these regions, densely populated as they are by Poles, when we find it difficult enough to manage our own Russian Poles? Why encourage centripetal tendencies, that have not ceased even to this day in the Vistula territory, by incorporating in the Russian State the restless Posnanian and East Prussian Poles, whose national demands even the German Government, which is more firm than the Russian, cannot stifle? Exactly the same thing applies to Galicia. It is obviously disadvantageous to us to annex, in the interests of national sentimentalism, a territory that has lost every vital connection with our fatherland. For, together with a negligible handful of Galicians, Russian in spirit, how many Poles, Jews, and Ukrainian Uniates we would receive! The so-called Ukrainian, or Mazeppist, movement is not a menace to us at present, but we should not enable it to expand by increasing the number of turbulent Ukrainian elements, for in this movement there undoubtedly lies the seed of an extremely dangerous Little Russian separatism which, under favorable conditions, may assume quite unexpected proportions. The obvious aim of our diplomacy in the rapprochement with England has been to open the Straits. But a war with Germany seems hardly necessary for the attainment of this object, for it was England, and not Germany at all, that closed our outlet from the Black Sea. Was it not because we made sure of the cooperation of the latter power, that we freed ourselves in 1871 from the humiliating restrictions imposed upon us by England under the Treaty of Paris? Also, there is reason to believe that the Germans would agree sooner than the English to let us have the Straits, in which they have only a slight interest, and at the price of which they would gladly purchase our alliance. Moreover, we should not cherish any exaggerated hopes from our occupation of the Straits. Their acquisition would be advantageous to us only as they served to close the Black Sea to others, making it an inland sea for us, safe from enemy attack. The Straits would not give us an outlet to the open sea, however, since on the other side of them there lies a sea consisting almost wholly of territorial waters, a sea dotted with numerous islands where the British navy, for instance, would have no trouble whatever in closing to us every inlet and outlet, irrespective of the Straits. Therefore, Russia might safely welcome an arrangement which, while not turning the Straits over to our direct control, would safeguard us against a penetration of the Black Sea by an enemy fleet. Such an arrangement, attainable under favorable circumstances without any war, has the additional advantage

that it would not violate the interests of the Balkan States, which would not regard our seizure of the Straits without alarm and quite natural jealousy. In Trans-Caucasia we could, as a result of war, expand territorially only at the expense of regions inhabited by Armenians, a move which is hardly desirable in view of the revolutionary character of present Armenian sentiment, and of its dream of a greater Armenia; and in this region, Germany, were we allied to her, would certainly place even fewer obstacles in our way than England. Those territorial and economic acquisitions which might really prove useful to us are available only in places where our ambitions may meet opposition from England, but by no means from Germany. Persia, the Pamir, Kuldja, Kashgar, Dzungaria, Mongolia, the Ulianghai territory—all these are regions where the interests of Russia and Germany do not conflict, whereas the interests of Russia and England have clashed there repeatedly. And Germany is in exactly the same situation with respect to Russia. She could seize from us, in case of a successful war, only such territories as would be of slight value to her, and because of their population, would prove of little use for colonization; the Vistula territory, with a Polish-Lithuanian population, and the Baltic provinces, with a Lettish-Estonian population, are all equally turbulent and anti-German.

#### **Russia's Economic Advantages and Needs Do Not Conflict with Germany's**

It may be argued, however, that, under modern conditions in the various nations, territorial acquisitions are of secondary importance, while economic interests take first rank. But in this field, again, Russia's advantages and needs do not conflict with Germany's as much as is believed. It is, of course, undeniable that the existing Russo-German trade agreements are disadvantageous to our agriculture and advantageous to Germany's, but it would be hardly fair to ascribe this circumstance to the treachery and unfriendliness of Germany. It should not be forgotten that these agreements are in many of their sections advantageous to us. The Russian delegates who concluded these agreements were confirmed protagonists of a development of Russian industry at any cost, and they undoubtedly made a deliberate sacrifice, at least to some extent, of the interests of Russian agriculture to the interests of Russian industry. Furthermore, we ought not to forget that Germany is far from being the direct consumer of the greater share of our agricultural exports abroad. For the greater share of our agricultural produce, Germany acts merely as middleman, and so it is for us and the consuming markets to establish direct relations and thus avoid the expensive German mediation. Lastly, we should keep in mind that the commercial relations of States depend on their political understandings, for no country finds advantage in the economic weakening of an ally but, conversely, profits by the ruin of a political foe. In short, even though it be obvious that the existing Russo-German commercial treaties are not to our advantage, and that Germany, in concluding them, availed herself of a situation that happened to be in her favor - in other words, forced us to the wall - this action should have been expected from Germany and thought of. It should not, however, be looked upon as a mark of hostility toward us, but rather as an expression of healthy national self-interest, worthy of our emulation. Aside from that, we observe, in the case of Austria-Hungary, an

agricultural country that is in a far greater economic dependence upon Germany than ours, but nevertheless, is not prevented from attaining an agricultural development such as we may only dream of. In view of what has been said, it would seem that the conclusion of a commercial treaty with Germany, entirely acceptable to Russia, by no means requires that Germany first be crushed. It will be quite sufficient to maintain neighborly relations with her, to make a careful estimate of our real interests in the various branches of national economy, and to engage in long, insistent bargaining with German delegates, who may be expected to protect the interests of their own fatherland and not ours. But I would go still further and say that the ruin of Germany, from the viewpoint of our trade with her, would be disadvantageous to us. Her defeat would unquestionably end in a peace dictated from the viewpoint of England's economic interests. The latter will exploit to the farthest limit any success that falls to her lot, and we will only lose, in a ruined Germany without sea routes, a market which, after all, is valuable to us for our otherwise unmarketable products. In respect to Germany's economic future, the interests of Russia and England are diametrically opposed. For England, it is profitable to kill Germany's maritime trade and industry, turning her into a poor and, if possible, agricultural country. For us, it is of advantage for Germany to develop her sea-going commerce and the industry which serves it, so as to supply the remotest world markets, and at the same time open her domestic market to our agricultural products, to supply her large working population. But aside from the commercial treaties, it has been customary to point out the oppressive character of German domination in Russian economic life, and the systematic penetration of German colonization into our country, as representing a manifest peril to the Russian State. We believe, however, that fears on these grounds are considerably exaggerated. The famous 'Drang nach Osten' was in its own time natural and understandable, since Germany's land could not accommodate her increased population, and the surplus was driven in the direction of the least resistance, i.e., into a less densely populated neighboring country. The German Government was compelled to recognize the inevitability of this movement, but could hardly look upon it as to its own interests. For, after all, it was Germans who were being lost to the influence of the German State, thus reducing the man power of their own country. Indeed, the German Government made such strenuous efforts to preserve the connection between its emigrants and their old fatherland that it adopted even the unusual method of tolerating dual citizenship. It is certain, however, that a considerable proportion of German emigrants definitely and irrevocably settled in their new homes, and slowly broke their ties with the old country. This fact, obviously incompatible with Germany's State interests, seems to have been one of the incentives which started her upon a colonial policy and maritime commerce, previously so alien to her. And at present, as the German colonies increase and there is an attendant growth of German industry and naval commerce, the German colonization movement decreases, in a measure, and the day is not remotewhen the 'Drang nach Osten will become nothing more than a subject for history. In any case, the German colonization, which undoubtedly conflicts with our State interests, must be stopped, and here, again, friendly relations with Germany cannot harm us. To express a preference for a German

orientation does not imply the advocacy of Russian vassalage to Germany, and, while maintaining friendly and neighborly intercourse with her, we must not sacrifice our State interests to this object. But Germany herself will not object to measures against the continued flow of German colonists into Russia. To her, it is of greater benefit to turn the wave of emigration toward her own colonies. Moreover, even before Germany had colonies, when her industry was not yet sufficiently developed to employ the entire population, the German Government did not feel justified in protesting against the restrictive measures that were adopted against foreign colonization during the reign of Alexander III. As regards the German domination in the field of our economic life, this phenomenon hardly justifies the complaints usually voiced against it. Russia is far too poor, both in capital and in industrial enterprise, to get along without a large import of foreign capital. A certain amount of dependence upon some kind of foreign capital is, therefore, unavoidable, until such time as the industrial enterprise and material resources of our population develop to a point where we may entirely forego the services of foreign investors and their money. But as long as we do require them, German capital is more advantageous to us than any other. First and foremost, this capital is cheaper than any other, being satisfied with the lowest margin of profit. This, to a large extent, explains the relative cheapness of German products, and their gradual displacement of British products in the markets of the world. The lower demands of German capital, as regards returns, have for their consequence Germany's readiness to invest in enterprises which, because of their relatively small returns, are shunned by other foreign investor;. Also, as a result of that relative cheapness of German capital, its influx into Russia is attended by a smaller outflow of investors' profits from Russia, as compared with French and English investments, and so a larger amount of rubles remain in Russia. Moreover, a considerable proportion of the profits made on German investments in Russian industry do not leave our country at all, but are spent in Russia. Unlike the English or French, the German capitalists, in most cases, come to stay in Russia, themselves, with their money. It is this very German characteristic which explains in a considerable degree the amazing number of German industrialists, manufacturers, and mill owners in our midst, as compared with the British and French. The latter live in their own countries, removing from Russia the profits produced by their enterprises, down to the last kopek. The German investors, on the contrary, live in Russia for long periods, and not infrequently settle down permanently. Whatever may be said to the contrary, the fact is that the Germans, unlike other foreigners, soon feel at home in Russia and rapidly become Russianized. Who has not seen Frenchmen and Englishmen, for example, who have spent almost their whole lives in Russia and yet do not speak a word of Russian? On the other hand, are there many Germans here who cannot make themselves understood in Russian, even though it be with a strong accent and in broken speech? Nay, more - who has not seen genuine Russians, Orthodox, loyal with all their hearts, dedicated to the principles of the Russian State, and yet only one or two generations removed from their German emigrant ancestry? Lastly, we must not forget that Germany herself is, to a certain extent, interested in our economic well-being. In this regard, Germany differs, to our advantage, from

other countries, which are interested exclusively in obtaining the largest possible returns from capital invested in Russia, even at the cost of the economic ruin of this country. Germany, however, in her capacity of permanent - although, of course, not unselfish - middleman for our foreign trade, has an interest in preserving the productive resources of our country, as a source of profitable intermediary operations for her.

### **Even a Victory over Germany Promises Russia an Exceedingly Unfavorable Prospect**

In any case, even if we were to admit the necessity for eradicating German domination in the field of our economic life, even at the price of a total banishment of German capital from Russian industry, appropriate measures could be taken. It would seem, without war against Germany. Such a war will demand such enormous expenditures that they will many times exceed the more than doubtful advantages to us in the abolition of the German [economic] domination. More than that, the result of such a war will be an economic situation compared with which the yoke of German capital will seem easy. For there can be no doubt that the war will necessitate expenditures which are beyond Russia's limited financial means. We shall have to obtain credit from allied and neutral countries, but this will not be granted gratuitously. As to what will happen if the war should end disastrously for us, I do not wish to discuss now. The financial and economic consequences of defeat can be neither calculated nor foreseen, and will undoubtedly spell the total ruin of our entire national economy. But even victory promises us extremely unfavorable financial prospects; a totally ruined Germany will not be in a position to compensate us for the cost involved. Dictated in the interest of England, the peace treaty will not afford Germany opportunity for sufficient economic recuperation to cover our war expenditures, even at a distant time. The little which we may perhaps succeed in extorting from her will have to be shared with our allies, and to our share there will fall but negligible crumbs, compared with the war cost. Meantime, we shall have to pay our war loans, not without pressure by the allies. For, after the destruction of German power, we shall no longer be necessary to them. Nay, more, our political might, enhanced by our victory, will induce them to weaken us, at least economically. And so it is inevitable that, even after a victorious conclusion of the war, we shall fall into the same sort of financial and economic dependence upon our creditors, compared with which our present dependence upon German capital will seem ideal. However, no matter how sad may be the economic prospects which face us as a result of union with England, and, by that token, of war with Germany, they are still of secondary importance when we think of the political consequences of this fundamentally unnatural alliance.

### **A Struggle Between Russia and Germany Is Profoundly Undesirable to Both Sides, as It Amounts to a Weakening of the Monarchist Principle**

It should not be forgotten that Russia and Germany are the representatives of the conservative principle in the civilized world, as opposed to the democratic

principle, incarnated in England and, to an infinitely lesser degree, in France. Strange as it may seem, England, monarchistic and conservative to the marrow at home, has in her foreign relations always acted as the protector of the most demagogical tendencies, invariably encouraging all popular movements aiming at the weakening of the monarchical principle.

From this point of view, a struggle between Germany and Russia, regardless of its issue, is profoundly undesirable to both sides, as undoubtedly involving the weakening of the conservative principle in the world of which the above-named two great powers are the only reliable bulwarks. More than that, one must realize that under the exceptional conditions which exist, a general European war is mortally dangerous both for Russia and Germany, no matter who wins. It is our firm conviction, based upon a long and careful study of all contemporary subversive tendencies, that there must inevitably break out in the defeated country a social revolution which, by the very nature of things, will spread to the country of the victor. During the many years of peaceable neighborly existence, the two countries have become united by many ties, and a social upheaval in one is bound to affect the other. That these troubles will be of a social, and not a political, nature cannot be doubted, and this will hold true, not only as regards Russia, but for Germany as well. An especially favorable soil for social upheavals is found in Russia, where the masses undoubtedly profess, unconsciously, the principles of Socialism. In spite of the spirit of antagonism to the Government in Russian society, as unconscious as the Socialism of the broad masses of the people, a political revolution is not possible in Russia, and any revolutionary movement inevitably must degenerate into a Socialist movement. The opponents of the government have no popular support. The people see no difference between a government official and an intellectual. The Russian masses, whether workmen or peasants, are not looking for political rights, which they neither want nor comprehend. The peasant dreams of obtaining a gratuitous share of somebody else's land; the workman, of getting hold of the entire capital and profits of the manufacturer. Beyond this, they have no aspirations. If these slogans are scattered far and wide among the populace, and the Government permits agitation along these lines, Russia will be flung into anarchy, such as she suffered in the ever-memorable period of troubles in 1905-1906. War with Germany would create exceptionally favorable conditions for such agitation. As already stated, this war is pregnant with enormous difficulties for us, and cannot turn out to be a mere triumphal march to Berlin. Both military disaster, partial ones, let us hope-and all kinds of shortcomings in our supply are inevitable. In the excessive nervousness and spirit of opposition of our society, these events will be given an exaggerated importance, and all the blame will be laid on the Government. It will be well if the Government does not yield, but declares directly that in time of war no criticism of the governmental authority is to be tolerated, and resolutely suppresses all opposition. In the absence of any really strong hold on the people by the opposition, this would settle the affair. The people did not heed the writers of the Vyborg Manifesto, in its time, and they will not follow them now. But a worse thing may happen: the government authority may make concessions, may try to come to an agreement with the opposition, and thereby weaken itself just when the Socialist elements

are ready for action. Even though it may sound like a paradox, the fact is that agreement with the opposition in Russia positively weakens the Government. The trouble is that our opposition refuses to reckon with the fact that it represents no real force. The Russian opposition is intellectual throughout, and this is its weakness, because between the intelligentsia and the people there is a profound gulf of mutual misunderstanding and distrust. We need an artificial election law, indeed, we require the direct influence of the governmental authority, to assure the election to the State Duma of even the most zealous champions of popular rights. Let the Government refuse to support the elections, leaving them to their natural course, and the legislative institutions would not see within their walls a single intellectual, outside of a few demagogic agitators. However insistent the members of our legislative institutions may be that the people confide in them, the peasant would rather believe the landless government official than the Octobrist landlord in the Duma, while the workingman treats the wage-earning factory inspector with more confidence than the legislating manufacturer, even though the latter professes every principle of the Cadet party. It is more than strange, under these circumstances, that the governmental authority should be asked to reckon seriously with the opposition, that it should for this purpose renounce the role of impartial regulator of social relationships, and come out before the broad masses of the people as the obedient organ of the class aspirations of the intellectual and propertied minority of the population. The opposition demands that the Government should be responsible to it, representative of a class, and should obey the parliament which it artificially created. (Let us recall that famous expression of V. Nabokov: 'Let the executive power submit to the legislative power!' In other words, the opposition demands that the Government should adopt the psychology of a savage, and worship the idol which he himself made.

### **Russia Will be Flung into Hopeless Anarchy, the Issue of Which Will be Hard to Foresee**

If the war ends in victory, the putting down of the Socialist movement will not offer any insurmountable obstacles. There will be agrarian troubles, as a result of agitation for compensating the soldiers with additional land allotments; there will be labor troubles during the transition from the probably increased wages of war time to normal schedules; and this, it is to be hoped, will be all, so long as the wave of the German social revolution has not reached us. But in the event of defeat, the possibility of which in a struggle with a foe like Germany cannot be overlooked, social revolution in its most extreme form is inevitable. As has already been said, the trouble will start with the blaming of the Government for all disasters. In the legislative institutions a bitter campaign against the Government will begin, followed by revolutionary agitations throughout the country, with Socialist slogans, capable of arousing and rallying the masses, beginning with the division of the land and succeeded by a division of all valuables and property. The defeated army, having lost its most dependable men, and carried away by the tide of primitive peasant desire for land, will find itself too demoralized to serve as a bulwark of law and order.

The legislative institutions and the intellectual opposition parties, lacking real authority in the eyes of the people, will be powerless to stem the popular tide, aroused by themselves, and Russia will be flung into hopeless anarchy, the issue of which cannot be foreseen.

**Germany, in Case of Defeat, is Destined to Suffer Social Upheavals No Less than those of Russia**

No matter how strange it may appear at first sight, considering the extraordinary poise of the German character, Germany, likewise, is destined to suffer, in case of defeat, no lesser social upheavals. The effect of a disastrous war upon the population will be too severe not to bring to the surface destructive tendencies, now deeply hidden. The peculiar social order of modern Germany rests upon the at present predominant influence of the agrarians, Prussian Junkerdom and propertied peasants. These elements are the bulwark of the profoundly conservative German regime headed by Prussia. The vital interests of these classes demand a protective economic policy towards agriculture, import duties on grain, and consequently, high price for all farm products. But Germany, with her limited territory and increasing population, has long ago turned from an agricultural into an industrial State, so that protection of agriculture is, in effect, a matter of taxing the larger part of the population for the benefit of the smaller. To this majority, there is a compensation in the extensive development of the export of German industrial products to the most distant markets, so that the advantages derived thereby enable the industrialists and working people to pay the higher prices for the farm products consumed at home. Defeated, Germany will lose her world markets and maritime commerce, for the aim of the war - on the part of its real instigator, England - will be the destruction of German competition. After this has been achieved, the laboring masses, deprived not only of higher but of any and all wages, having suffered greatly during the war, and being, naturally, embittered, will offer fertile soil for anti-agrarian and later anti-social propaganda by the Socialist parties. These parties, in turn, making use of the outraged patriotic sentiment among the people, owing to the loss of the war, their exasperation at the militarists and the feudal burgher regime that betrayed them, will abandon the road of peaceable evolution which they have thus far been following so steadily, and take a purely revolutionary path. Some part will also be played, especially in the event of agrarian troubles in neighboring Russia, by the class of landless farmhands, which is quite numerous in Germany. Apart from this, there will be a revival of the hitherto concealed separatist tendencies in southern Germany, and the hidden antagonism of Bavaria to domination by Prussia will emerge in all its intensity. In short, a situation will be created which (in gravity) will be little better than that in Russia.

**Peace Among the Civilized Nations is Imperiled Chiefly by the Desire of England to Retain Her Vanishing Domination of the Seas**

A summary of all that has been stated above must lead to the conclusion that a rapprochement with England does not promise us any benefits, and that the English orientation of our diplomacy is essentially wrong. We do not travel the same road as England; she should be left to go her own way, and we must not quarrel on her account with Germany. The Triple Entente is an artificial combination, without a basis of real interest. It has nothing to look forward to. The future belongs to a close and incomparably more vital rapprochement of Russia, Germany, France (reconciled with Germany), and Japan (allied to Russia by a strictly defensive union). A political combination like this, lacking all aggressiveness toward other States, would safeguard for many years the peace of the civilized nations, threatened, not by the militant intentions of Germany, as English diplomacy is trying to show, but solely by the perfectly natural striving of England to retain at all costs her vanishing domination of the seas. In this direction, and not in the fruitless search of a basis for an accord with England, which is in its very nature contrary to our national plans and aims, should all the efforts of our diplomacy be concentrated. It goes without saying that Germany, on her part, must meet our desire to restore our well-tested relations and friendly alliance with her, and to elaborate, in closest agreement with us, such terms of our neighborly existence as to afford no basis for anti-German agitation on the part of our constitutional-liberal parties, which, by their very nature, are forced to adhere, not to a Conservative German, but to a liberal English orientation.”<sup>716</sup>

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From the purely political and economic points of view, Durnovo’s arguments were powerful, even irrefutable (if we exclude his exaggeration of the case against England). But he omitted the *spiritual* threat that Lutheran Germany and Catholic Austria posed to the faith of Orthodox Russia and the Balkans, the Nietzschean spirit that had come to possess the ruling circles of Germany, and the moral obligation that the Emperor of the Third Rome had to protect the Orthodox commonwealth against that threat... The fact was: the Germanic peoples were infected, as we have seen, by the diseases of Social Darwinism and Nietzscheanism, which, as it turned out, would require the sacrifices of not one, but two world wars to extinguish finally...

In any case the French under President Poincaré were putting pressure on the Russians to remain in the Entente, offering the tantalizing bait of generous loans to build strategic railways to the German frontier. (In 1915 the British and French added the most tempting bait of all – that of the Straits and Constantinople itself.) And although, according to Witte, 90% of Russians did not want to go to war<sup>717</sup>, the remaining 10% included most of the decision-making elites, who considered Russia obliged to intervene on Serbia’s side in

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<sup>716</sup> <http://novaonline.nvcc.edu/eli/evans/his242/documents/Durnovo.pdf>. See also Professor Paul Robinson, “How Russia might have stopped World War I”, *The American Conservative*, February 4, 2014, <http://www.theamericanconservative.com/articles/how-russia-might-have-stopped-world-war-i/>

<sup>717</sup> Clark, *op. cit.*, p. 355.

any Austro-Serbian war... Durnovo, as we have seen, argued that “official policy exaggerated the importance of the Straits and Russia’s supposed ‘mission’ to lead the Slavs at a time when its overriding priorities needed to be peace and good relations with its German and Austrian neighbours. But the options open to Russia were difficult, and there were powerful and rational arguments to justify the foreign policy adopted by Petersburg.”<sup>718</sup>

So for the time being the unnatural Entente between autocratic Russia and democratic France and Britain remained. The Russians sought a stronger, military alliance with their traditional enemies, France and Britain, in order to defend themselves against Germany, whose boorish intervention in the Bosnian crisis was still deeply resented and who would most likely support Austria in any war between Russia and Austria over Serbia. And while the British under their canny Foreign Secretary Sir Edward Grey never committed themselves to the French and Russians as much as the French and Russians did to each other (Germany might never have declared war if he had), there was never any real question about whose side they were on.

The Tsar himself was far from wanting war with Germany, and made several attempts to mend fences with the Emperors of Germany and Austria in the pre-war years. Thus he had a friendly meeting with the Kaiser in Estonia in 1912, and again in Berlin in May, 1913. However, in December, 1913, the Ottomans appointed the German Lieutenant-General Liman von Sanders to oversee the training of the Ottoman army, and to be in charge of the First Army Corps, making him responsible for the defence of the Straits and of Constantinople itself. At the same time, one of Turkey’s triumvirate of pashas, Enver Pasha, had ordered two new battleships from Britain that would dominate the Black Sea. The Russians were thoroughly alarmed: free passage through the Straits was a priority of their foreign policy in view of its importance for the vital grain export trade (that trade had been seriously damaged after Italy declared war on Turkey a year earlier). For, “in the years 1903-12, 37 per cent of Russian exports passed through the Dardanelles, the figure for wheat and rye exports, both vital to Russia’s cash-hungry industrializing economy, was much higher, at about 75-80 per cent.”<sup>719</sup>

“But neither the French nor the British responded as the Russians had hoped to the appointment of von Sanders. For neither the French, with their huge financial investment in the Ottoman empire, nor the British with their traditional desire to control all major seaways (a British admiral was in charge of the training of the Ottoman navy), wanted to replace the Ottomans with the Russians as the masters of the Straits...”<sup>720</sup>

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<sup>718</sup> Lieven, *Towards the Flame*, p. 366.

<sup>719</sup> Clark, *op. cit.*, p. 340. It should be remembered that Turkey had ordered two battleships from England, and they were about to arrive...

<sup>720</sup> Clark, *op. cit.*, pp. 338-345.

Although the Germans backed down over the Liman von Sanders affair, it turned out to be a significant turning point. First, it led to a conference in January, 1913 that showed a majority of Russian ministers in favour of “a sequence of increasingly coercive actions against Constantinople”<sup>721</sup>, which in turn led to the sacking of Prime Minister Kokovtsev, the most powerful member of the peace party. Secondly, it led to a hardening of the Tsar’s own position and his rejection of Durnovo’s arguments in favour of a more Germanophobic policy.

In a conversation with [British] Ambassador Buchanan at the beginning of April 1914,” writes Clark, “he observed that ‘it was commonly supposed that there was nothing to keep Germany and Russia apart.’ This, however, ‘was not the case: there was the question of the Dardanelles,’ where the Tsar feared that the Germans were working to shut Russia into the Black Sea. Should Germany attempt such a thing, it was essential that the three powers of the Entente unite together more closely to make it clear to Berlin that ‘all three would fight together against German aggression.’ For the Germans, on the other hand, the ferocity of the Russian reaction to the Liman mission coupled with bitterness over the German capitulation to Russian demands created the sense that an unbridgeable gulf now separated Berlin from St. Petersburg. ‘Russian-Prussian relations are dead for all time!’ lamented the Kaiser. ‘We have become enemies!’ ...

“A forward policy in the Balkans did not by any means entail the abandonment of Russia’s ultimate interest in the Straits. On the contrary, it represented a longer and more winding road to the same destination. Russian strategic thinking tended increasingly in 1912-14 to view the Balkans as the hinterland to the Straits, as the key to securing ultimate control of the Ottoman choke-point on the Bosphorus...”<sup>722</sup>

For an assault on the Straits in any other circumstances than a general war in Europe was too risky in view of likely opposition from France and Britain. This became clear at a Special Strategic Conference in February, when Foreign Minister Sazonov, War Minister Sukhomlinov and Naval Minister Zhilinsky came to accept that “the objective of securing access to or control of the Straits, though agreed to be of profound importance to Russia’s economic and strategic future, would have to be subordinated to the task of prevailing in the European conflict against the central powers, not just or even primarily because of the fear that Germany might acquire a controlling interest in the Straits, but because the Entente powers were themselves as yet unready to support a direct Russian bid for the crucial strategic asset. Indeed, so diverse were the perspectives of the three Entente powers on the Straits that the Russian ministry of foreign affairs came to see a general war – which in effect meant a

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<sup>721</sup> Clark, *op. cit.*, p. 346

<sup>722</sup> Clark, *op. cit.*, pp. 345, 347.

war begun in the Balkans – as the only context in which Russia could be sure of acting with the support of its western partners.”<sup>723</sup>

In the event, it was not Russia, but Britain that attempted to take the Straits in the ill-fated Gallipoli expedition of 1915. And three years later, after the fall of the Russian empire, it was Britain that occupied the City. So Dostoyevsky’s prophecy, “Constantinople shall be ours!”, remained unfulfilled (for the time being), as did the dream of Archbishop Anthony (Khrapovitsky) of Kharkov that the Ecumenical Patriarch should become the first-hierarchy of the Russian Church... And yet the lure of Christendom’s ancient capital remains undimmed to this day. Like a magnet it draws Russian tsars and presidents to attempt to replace the crescent on Hagia Sophia with the Cross of Christ...

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<sup>723</sup> Clark, *op. cit.*, p. 353.

## 53. GUCHKOV'S PLOT

In Russia, the situation was beginning to become revolutionary again, although not on the scale of 1905. In 1912, as we have seen, there was a major strike in the Lena gold fields in Siberia. In October 1913 the Ministry of the Interior reported: "Sudden strikes flare up sometimes for the most trivial causes and embracing with extraordinary rapidity wide areas with tens of thousands of workers. But apart from that, the strike movement we are now experiencing has a yet more threatening social significance in that it arouses hostility and bitterness between employer and worker, unites the workers on the basis of an irreconcilable relationship to the existing state and social structure and in this way creates among the workers ready cadres to reinforce the revolutionary parties. Under the influence of agitators and the printed organs of the Social-Democratic press, with the moral and material support of different workers' circles, there has recently developed among the workers a harmony of action such as indicates their close solidarity and organized nature. The places where strikes take place are put under a boycott, those workers who approach are exposed to bitter persecution and are excluded from work. Orders at strike-bound factories and plants are also placed under a boycott and any factory that might accept them risks a strike among its own workers."<sup>724</sup>

Nevertheless, Robert Service is probably right in arguing that at this time the government, though under pressure, "was not doomed to undergo the root-and-branch revolution of 1917. What made that kind of revolution possible was the protracted, exhausting conflict of the First World War."<sup>725</sup> But the government's attempts - following Stolypin's foreign policy - to avoid war were being undermined by notable Freemasons in the Duma...

Now at the beginning of the war national loyalties proved stronger than brotherhood in Masonry in all the belligerent nations. Thus Oleg Platonov points out "that all the main Masonic orders of the warring countries were in favour of war: the Great national lodge of England, the Grand Orient of France, the Grand Orient of the nations of Russia, the Old Prussian lodges and the Great lodge of Hamburg. The latter was the foundation of the Great Serbian lodge, members of which were involved in the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand in Sarajevo."<sup>726</sup>

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<sup>724</sup> Norman Lowe, *Mastering Twentieth-Century Russian History*, Houndmill: Palgrave, 2002, p. 60.

<sup>725</sup> Service, *The Russian Revolution, 1900-1927*, London, 1999, pp. 3-4.

<sup>726</sup> Platonov, *Ternovij Venets Rossii* (Russia's Crown of Thorns), Moscow, 1998, p. 344. "In the course of the investigation into the case of the murder of the Archduke Ferdinand it emerged that the assassins Princip and Gavrilovich were Masons. The plan of the assassination was worked out by the political organization, 'The People's Defence'. Later, already in 1926, a representative of the Masonic circles of Serbia, Lazarevich, at a masonic banquet in the House of the Serbian Guard in Belgrade, officially recognized that 'Masonry and "The People's Defence" are one and the same'" (*op. cit.*, p. 344). See also V.F. Ivanov, *Russkaia Intelligentsia i Masonstvo ot Petra I do nashikh dnei* (The Russian Intelligentsia and Masonry from Peter I to our days), Moscow, 1997, pp. 395-398.

However, whatever their personal nationalisms, the Masons of different countries were united in their desire to destroy the monarchy in its traditionally Orthodox, autocratic form. Shtormakh considers that the main Masonic plotters in Russia were A.I. Guchkov, Prince G.E. Lvov, N.V. Nekrasov and M.I. Tereshchenko. All of them became ministers in the Provisional Government.<sup>727</sup> To these we must add A.F. Kerensky, also a Mason and also a member of the Provisional Government.

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The leading plotter was the industrialist Alexander Ivanovich Guchkov, leader of the Octobrists, a supposedly monarchist fraction in the Duma. Douglas Smith writes that he “was born in 1862 into a wealthy Moscow merchant family. Educated at Moscow University in history, he was a brilliant student and went on study to Berlin and Heidelberg. Undeniably talented and a serial adulterer, whose daughter later ruefully reminisced that the Guchkov family ‘never returned to the same sea-side resort two summers running, because the second summer all the babies in prams looked embarrassingly like me.’ Touchy, vainglorious, and insecure about his honor, Guchkov challenged several men to duels. He imagined himself to be a terribly important global figure and had to be present at all the world’s hot spots fighting for the Boers in South Africa in 1899, and the nationalist revolt in Macedonia in 1905 [and was at the front in the Russo-Japanese war]. He liked to boast of his vast experience on military matters, and always sought the limelight on such discussions whenever they came up in the Duma.”<sup>728</sup>

He was a Freemason. Thus Lebedev writes that in 1909 “a deeply conspiratorial ‘Military lodge’ was formed headed by A.I. Guchkov, and in 1910 – the ‘Ursa Minor’ lodge for work with ‘state’ society, in which the main roles gradually came to be played by Prince G. Lvov [the Grand Master of the Russian lodges], M.V. Rodzyanko, A.F. Kerensky, N.V. Nekrasov, P.P. Ryabushinsky, M.I. Tereshchenko and A. Konovalov... Over them, that is, over the whole of Russian Masonry of this tendency, there weighed the Masonic *oath of fidelity* to the ‘Grand Orient of France’, which was given already in 1908 in the form of a special document called ‘Obligation’. This oath-obligation was kept faithfully both before and after the ‘self-liquidation’ and the emergence of a new leadership and a new structure. In 1910 this leadership declared its formal *independence* from Russian Masonry – but with the *agreement* of the French of the ‘Grand Orient’. The new leadership significantly simplified the reception of new members, it rejected (for conspiratorial reasons) many elements of Masonic symbolism and ritual, and thereby became, in the language of the Masons, ‘unlawful’. But all this was part of the conspiracy (so that in the event of something World Masonry could declare its complete ‘non-involvement’ in the conspirators and the conspiracy). In actual fact the whole course of the conspiracy was led and controlled precisely through *foreign Masons* (through the embassies of Germany, England and France in Russia). In 1910 Guchkov, a long-time member of the State Council and the

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<sup>727</sup> <http://rushistory.3dn.ru/forum/4-86-1>

<sup>728</sup> Smith, *Rasputin*, London: Pan, 2017, pp. 272-273.

Third State Duma, became the president of the Duma. However, in 1911 he voluntarily resigned from this post, which was immediately taken by his 'brother' Rodzyanko. In 1913 Guchkov and other 'brothers' created a secret 'Supreme Council of Peoples of Russia', which was joined by up to 400 members. But the presidents of the lodges knew only its secretaries – Nekrasov, Kerensky, Tereschenko. Each new lodge consisted of no more than 12 members. The Council and its 'Convent' coordinated the actions of the 'Military Lodge' and the structures of 'Ursa Minor'. At this time Guchkov headed the military committee of the State Duma, and was in charge of defence questions. 'In accordance with service obligations', he was linked with the General Staff, and the most prominent military men, diplomats and industrialists. Gradually, one by one, Guchkov attracted into his 'Military Lodge' Generals N.N. Yanushkevich, A.S. Lukomsky, A.A. Polivanov, A.Z. Myshlayevsky, V.I. Gurko, Colonel Baron Korf, and then Generals A.V. Alexeyev, N.V. Ruzsky, A.M. Krymov, L.G. Kornilov, A.A. Brusilov, A.A. Manikovsky, V.F. Dzhunkovsky and many other eminent officers.

"In essence, in the years 1909-1913 Guchkov had already prepared a general plan of action, which he borrowed from the 'Young Turk' Masons in 1908 in Turkey, where he went specially to study the experience of the Turkish revolution. The essence of the plan consisted in the higher military officers, including those in the Tsar's closest entourage, being able, at the necessary moment, to *isolate* their Monarch from all the levers of administration and *force* him to whatever deed or word the conspirators needed at that moment."<sup>729</sup>

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"The views of Guchkov," wrote General Vladimir Voeikov, "were a secret for nobody: already in 1908 he had shown enthusiasm for the work of the Young Turks, and he found it necessary to correct the mistake of the fighters for freedom in 1905, who before their planned movement had not paid enough attention to the army, whose faithfulness at that time they had not succeeded in shaking."<sup>730</sup>

Yana Sedova writes: "Already in 1906, after a meeting with the Emperor, A.I. Guchkov came to the unexpected conclusion: 'We are in for still more violent upheavals'. Then he wanted 'simply to step aside'. But already in those years he began to talk about a 'coup d'état'.

"In the next few years Guchkov's attention was temporarily occupied by work in the State Duma. But in 1911 after the murder of Stolypin, as he later recalled, there arose in him 'an unfriendly feeling' towards the Emperor Nicholas II.

This manifested itself in his taking an important part in the campaign to discredit the Tsar and the Church for tolerating Rasputin. When the tsar tried (unsuccessfully) to silence the press, Guchkov had a letter by Michael

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<sup>729</sup> Lebedev, *op. cit.*, pp. 448-451.

<sup>730</sup> Voeikov, *So Tsarem i Bez Tsaria* (With the Tsar and Without the Tsar), Moscow, 1995, p. 131.

Novoselov condemning the Church and State leaders for not getting rid of Rasputin published in his *Voice of Moscow* on January 24, 1912. He himself helped to distribute supposed intimate letters between Rasputin and the Tsaritsa, and made a fiery speech in the Duma on March 9, suggesting that Rasputin was not alone, but was part of "a whole gang, a motley group behind his back that has taken his person and his charms into their own hands... These are the ones who prompt what he has to whisper further along. It is an entire commercial enterprise, deftly and skillfully playing its game. Facing such a scenario, it is our duty to shout the words of warning: the church is in danger and the state is in danger! Because no revolutionary or anti-church propaganda for several years has managed to do what has been done during the past days!"

The truth was that nobody did more for the revolutionaries' cause than Guchkov's exploitative blowing up of the Rasputin scandal. According to gossip in Moscow, when the tsar read this speech, he said, "Hanging Guchkov is not enough." "The speech marked the point at which Guchkov became a personal and not just a political enemy of the tsar and tsaritsa."<sup>731</sup>

"At the beginning of 1913, at a meeting in his Petersburg flat, Guchkov talked about a military coup in Serbia. The discussion moved to a coup in Russia. At this point one of the participants in the meeting said that 'the party of the coup is coming into being'.

"Several months later, at a congress of his [Octobrist] party in Petersburg, Guchkov proclaimed the principle by which he was governed in the next four years: 'the defence of the monarchy against the monarch'.<sup>732</sup>

"The next year, during the 'great retreat', Guchkov created the Military-Industrial Committee, an organization whose official task was to help provide the army with ammunition. In fact, however, the committees turned out to be an instrument for the preparation of a coup.

"However, Guchkov would probably have continued to the end of his life only to 'platonically sympathize' with the coup, and do nothing himself, if once there had not appeared in his flat the leader of Russian masonry, N.V. Nekrasov.

"The two of them became the 'initiators' of a plan: 'a palace coup, as a result of which his Majesty would be forced to sign his abdication passing the throne to his lawful Heir'.

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<sup>731</sup> Smith, *Rasputin*, p. 273.

<sup>732</sup> At the conference he declared: "The attempt made by the Russian public, as represented by our party, to effect a peaceful, painless transition from the old condemned system to a new order has failed. Let those in power make no mistake about the temper of the people: never were the Russian people so profoundly revolutionized by the actions of the government, for day by day faith in the government is steadily waning, and with it is waning faith in the possibility of a peaceful issue of the crisis..." (V.M.)

“Soon another Mason, M.I. Tereshchenko, joined the plot, and, as Guchkov recalled, ‘the three of us set about a detailed working out of this plan’.”<sup>733</sup>

On September 8, 1915 a “Committee of National Salvation” issued “Disposition Number 1”. “It affirmed,” writes N. Yakovlev, “that there were two wars going on in Russia – one against a stubborn and skilful enemy from outside and a no less stubborn and skilful enemy from inside. The attainment of victory over the external enemy was unthinkable without a prior victory over the internal enemy. By the latter they had in mind the ruling dynasty. For victory on the internal front it was necessary... immediately to appoint a supreme command staff, whose basic core consisted of Prince G.E. Lvov, A.I. Guchkov and A.F. Kerensky.”<sup>734</sup>

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“Armis”, a pseudonym for a Duma delegate and a former friend of Guchkov, wrote: “Already in 1909, in the Commission of State Defence, its president, the well-known political and social activist Guchkov declared that it was necessary to prepare by all means for a future war with Germany.

“In order to characterize this activist it is necessary to say that in order to achieve his ends he was never particularly squeamish about methods and means. In the destruction of Russia he undoubtedly played one of the chief roles.

“In the following year, 1910, the newspaper *Novoe Vremia* became a joint-stock company, and a little later Guchkov was chosen as president of its editorial committee. From this moment there began on the columns of *Novoe Vremia* a special campaign against the Germans and the preparation of public opinion for war with Germany.

“Guchkov wrote to the workers of *Novoe Vremia*, *Golos Moskovy* and *Golos Pravdy*, which were unfailingly ruled by his directives:

“‘Rattle your sabres a little more, prepare public opinion for war with the Germans. Write articles in such a way that between the lines will already be heard peals of weapon thunder.’

“People who know Guchkov well say that in his flat, together with the well-known A. Ksyunin, he composed articles of the most provocative character in relation to Germany.

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<sup>733</sup> Sedova, “Byl li masonskij zagovor protiv russkoj monarkhii?” (Was there a masonic plot against the Russian Monarchy?), *Nasha Strana*, November 24, 2006, N 2808, p. 3.

<sup>734</sup> Yakovlev, *1 Avgusta, 1914*, Moscow, 1974, p. 13. Tereshchenko, according to Yakobi, was “a colourless young man from the Kievan sugar barons, eaten up with vainglory, who had previously bought for himself, so they said, a ministerial portfolio in the future revolutionary government for his contribution of five million rubles” (*op. cit.*, p. 133).

“In 1912, during a reception for an English military mission, Guchkov turned to those present with the following toast:

“‘Gentlemen! I drink to the health of the English army and fleet, who are not only our friends, but also our allies.’

“And within the close circle of the members of the Commission of State Defence, he declared: ‘Today Germany has suffered a decisive defeat: war is inevitable, if only the Tsar does not stop it.’

“In March, 1914, Guchkov at one dinner warned his acquaintances that they should not go abroad in the summer, and in particular – not to Germany.

“‘I don’t advise you to go abroad. War will unfailingly break out this summer: it has been decided. Germany can turn as she wants, but she cannot turn away from war.’ And at these words Guchkov smiled.

“To the question of one of those present: who needed a war?, Guchkov replied:

“‘France must have Alsace-Lorraine and the Rhine; Russia – all the Slavic lands and an exit from the Black Sea; England will lap up the German colonies and take world trade into her hands.’

“To the objection that the Russian and German emperors would hardly enter such a dangerous world war, there followed Guchkov’s bold reply:

“‘We have foreseen this... and we shall arrange it so that both of them will find themselves before a *fait accompli*.

“Then it was pointed out to Guchkov that the Triple Alliance represented a formidable military power, to which Guchkov objected:

“‘Italy, in accordance with a secret agreement with England, will not be on the side of Germany and Austria, and if the war goes well can stab them in the back. The plan of the future war has already been worked out in detail by our allied staffs (English, French and Russian), and in no way will the war last for more than three months.’

“Then Guchkov was asked: ‘Tell us, Alexander Ivanovich, don’t you think that the war may be prolonged contrary to your expectations? It will require the most colossal exertion of national nerves, and very possibly it will be linked with the danger of popular discontent and a coup d’etat.’

“Smiling, Guchkov replied: ‘In the extreme case, the liquidation of the Dynasty will be the greatest benefit for Russia...’”<sup>735</sup>

The accuracy of Guchkov’s prognosis leads us to conclude that war in Europe and revolution in Russia were, if not “inevitable”, as many thought, at any rate to a large degree decided upon by the Masonic solidarity of the elites in all the combatant powers. Only one human actor, as Guchkov admitted, could have stopped the war – the Tsar. And only the one Divine Actor could have prevented it if the peoples had been worthy of it – He Who said of Himself: “I am He Who makes peace and creates wars...” (Isaiah 45.7)

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<sup>735</sup> “Skrytaia Byl’” (A Hidden Story), *Prizyv’* (Summons), N 50, Spring, 1920; in F. Vinberg, *Krestnij Put’* (The Way of the Cross), Munich, 1920, St. Petersburg, 1997, pp. 167-168.

## 54. GERMANY, NIETZSCHE AND THE FIRST WORLD WAR

To a significant degree, as we have seen, Germany's path to war was paved, as befitted the most educated nation in Europe, by philosophical ideas such as Social Darwinism and Nietzscheanism. Let us look more closely at this philosophical leaven, which was to remain a very significant factor in world politics right until 1945.

In 1912 Friedrich von Bernhardi wrote: "Either Germany will go into war now or it will lose any chance to have world supremacy... The law of nature upon which all other laws are based is the struggle for existence. Consequently, war is a biological necessity."<sup>736</sup> Again, the Austrian Chief of Staff Conrad von Hötzendorff considered the struggle for existence to be "the basic principle behind all the events on this earth". Militarism was the natural consequence of this philosophy (if the philosophy was not an attempt to justify the militarism): "Politics consists precisely of applying war as method", said von Hötzendorff.<sup>737</sup>

Niall Ferguson writes: "A student of philosophy like Bethmann Hollweg's private secretary, Kurt Riezler, could see the inevitable 'conflict between nations for power' in terms derived from Schopenhauer. For others, racial theories provided a justification for war. Admiral Georg von Müller spoke of 'upholding the German race in opposition to Slavs and Romans', as did Moltke; while it was university Germanists who held a 1913 conference on the subject of 'The extermination of the Un-German... and the Propagation of the Superiority of the German "Essence"'.<sup>738</sup>

Archimandrite Cyril (Govorun) writes: "One of the most vivid commanders of the German empire and its co-founder was Field-Marshal Helmut von Moltke (1800-1891). Once he expressed himself as follows: 'Eternal peace is a dream, and not the most beautiful of dreams. War is part of the Divine world-order. In it we find the development of the best human virtues: courage, self-abnegation, faithfulness to duty and the readiness to offer one's own life in sacrifice. Without war the world would descend into the abyss of materialism.' This expresses the quintessence of the development of one of the directions of German idealism and German theology, which turned out to be very much in demand in the circle of German actors to which von Moltke belonged. Two basic postulates of this direction were, first, that war has its justification and is even necessary, if it is undertaken for the sake of lofty goals. And secondly, the most lofty goal is the struggle against the errors of the neighbouring peoples in their insufficient 'spirituality' – faithfulness to the Spirit (*der Geist*).

"For Germany, such a nation was first of all France, which had been infected, in the opinion of the Germans, by the virus of republicanism – 'democratism'.

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<sup>736</sup> Von Bernhardi, *Germany and the Next War*.

<sup>737</sup> Von Hötzendorff, in Strachan, *The First World War*, London: Pocket Books, 2006, pp. 10-11.

<sup>738</sup> Ferguson, *The Pity of War*, London: Penguin, 1998, pp. 18-19.

The victory of Prussia in the Franco-Prussian war of 1870-71 became for her a sign of election – of God’s having predestined her to be ‘God’s hammer’ in history, placing her in the centre of ‘the history of the salvation’ of the European peoples. This victory allowed Germany to accomplish, in the expression of the German history Martin Greschat, ‘a quantum jump’ from the soulless ‘national industry of war’ (that was how Count Mirabeau put it about Prussia in the 18<sup>th</sup> century) to a messianic state. In this state the life of each citizen and his rights were subject to a higher goal, and the state was the incarnation of this goal and the fullest manifestation of what Hegel had called *Zeitgeist*.

“In the state’s self-consciousness it was surrounded by enemies who could not understand it or accept its lofty mission because of their corruption. For that reason the given state had to count only on its army and fleet. At the slightest opportunity this state considered that it had the right to violate international agreements, insofar as it had a higher goal and higher authorization – God.

“The Churches of Germany in every way supported this ‘self-consciousness’ of the German people. By 1914 what Karl Hammer called ‘the German theology of war’ (*Deutsche Kriegstheologie*) had been formed. In the opinion of the investigator John Moses, the majority of German theologians before 1914 supported the military messianism, including such authorities as Albrecht Richl and Adolf von Harnak. Several generations of theologians, beginning with Friedrich Schleiermacher, who thought that in the war with Napoleon God had been on the side of Prussia, developed the thought that the German nation was chosen by God (*Ausgewähltheit*). From Schleiermacher’s idea that God was with the Germans at the loftiest moments of their history, the theologians passed to the conviction that the German state was itself a Divine institution.

“Patriotism as an unconditional justification of the state became practically a religious postulate. In 1902 the Kiel theologian Otto Baumgarten published a sermon that immediately became exceptionally popular: *Jesu Patriotismus*. In it he tried to prove that the religious duty of every person should become higher than his individual interests and that he should be ready to give everything for the homeland. His colleagues in every way supported the *Weltpolitik* – the colonial and imperialist strivings – of Kaiser Wilhelm and the growth, for the sake of this, of the military and naval might of Germany. Some, for example Friedrich Naumann (1860-1919), tried to unite the ideas of German nationalism and socialism. Naumann supposed that Germany’s struggle to acquire a leading position in the world in the conditions of imperial competition had to have its value and justification, *die Ethisierung der Machtkämpfe*.

“One other authoritative theologian of the time, Ferdinand Kattenbusch (1851-1935), in his pamphlet *Das sittliche Recht des Kreiges* (The Moral Right to go to War), suggested, for the sake of justifying German imperialism, an idiosyncratic interpretation of the words of Christ on love for one’s neighbour. In his words, individual people living in this world cannot fully carry out the

commandment on love. Nevertheless, to the degree accessible to each the spirit of love for one's neighbour could be realized by the Christian in his desire to correct his neighbour. And this it was possible to do through compulsion. If it was necessary to correct one's neighbours in large numbers, then one could and should apply military force. Military force applied for the sake of correcting the infirmities and sins of one's neighbour, according to Kattenbusch, is the fulfilment of Christ's commandment on love. Kattenbusch believed that nations each have their soul. In some nations their soul is infected by vice, and so they need military intervention for the sake of their own correction. But the German soul was the purest and most radiant of all the European souls and for that reason had the right to judge who needed correction, including through military chastisement.

"As Klaus Fondung concludes in his very interesting study, *Deutsche Apokalypse 1914*: 'At the centre of the 'German Apocalypse' of the 1914 vintage lay a conception of war as the tribunal of the world (*Weltgericht*) - a tribunal at which God judged Germany's enemies. How God judged we know from the following sequence of events. The world paid too high a price for the path to 'the tribunal over Germany's enemies' until the 'Nuremburg tribunal'..."<sup>739</sup>

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The most influential German writer of the age was Nietzsche. He had been opposed to the new post-1871 Germany, but many of his nihilist ideas had penetrated deep into the German consciousness. Not for nothing have they been seen to foreshadow and influence the coming of Hitler, who visited his archive in 1934, and whose ferocious will to power - but not his anti-Semitism - was significantly influenced by Nietzsche...

What drove Nietzsche, writes Margaret Macmillan, "was a conviction that Western civilization had gone badly wrong, indeed had been going wrong for the past two millennia, and that most of the ideas and practices which dominated it were completely wrong. Humanity, in his view, was doomed unless it made a clear break and started to think clearly and allow itself to feel deeply. His targets included positivism, bourgeois conventions, Christianity (his father was a Protestant minister) and indeed all organized religion, perhaps all organization itself. He was against capitalism and modern industrial society, and 'the herd people' it produced. Humans, Nietzsche told his readers, had forgotten that life was not orderly and conventional, but vital and dangerous. To reach the heights of spiritual reawakening it was necessary to break out of the confines of conventional morality and religion. God, he famously said, is dead... Those who embraced the challenge Nietzsche was throwing down would become the Supermen. In the coming century, there would be a 'new party of life' which would take humanity to a higher level, 'including the merciless destruction of everything that is degenerate and

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<sup>739</sup> Govorun, "Zavtra byla Vojna" (Tomorrow there was War), *Religia v Ukraine*, March 10, 2014, *Portal-Credo.ru*, March 12, 2014.

parasitical'. Life, he said, is 'appropriation, injury, conquest of the strange and weak, suppression, severity...' The young Serbian nationalists who carried out the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand and so precipitated the Great War were deeply impressed by Nietzsche's views...<sup>740</sup>

Peter Watson writes: "Throughout the nineteenth century there had been endless arguments about what actually was and was not German (its borders did keep changing), and Nietzsche was press ganged into this debate. During the 1890s and thereafter more and more people began to adapt his Germanness and the Nietzsche-German relationship into an ideology. By this account, Germanness was an exclusive precondition for truly understanding him and what he was saying. Here, for example, is Oswald Spengler on Nietzsche:

"Goethe's life was a full life, and that means it brought something to completion. Countless Germans will honour Goethe, live with him, and seek his support; but he can never transform them. Nietzsche's effect is a transformation, for the melody of his vision did not end with his death... His work is not a part of our past to be enjoyed; it is a task that makes servants of us all... In an age that does not tolerate otherworldly idols... when the only thing of recognizable value is the kind of ruthless action that Nietzsche baptized with the name of Cesare Borgia – in such an age, unless we learn to act as real history wants us to act, we will cease to exist as a people. We cannot live without a form that does not merely console in difficult situations, but helps one get out of them. This kind of hard wisdom made its first appearance in German thought with Nietzsche."

"Carl Jung was no less impressed. He viewed Nietzsche as a development beyond Protestantism, just as Protestantism was itself an outgrowth beyond Catholicism. Nietzsche's idea of the Superman was, he believed, 'the thing in man that takes the place of the God.'

"Notwithstanding the enthusiasm of these and other luminaries, it was the youth and avant-garde of the 1890s who made up the bulk of Nietzsche's followers. This had a lot to do with the state of the Kaiserreich, which was perceived then to be both spiritually and politically mediocre. To these people, Nietzsche was seen as a pivotal, turn-of-the-century figure, 'a man whose stature was comparable only to Buddha, Zarathustra or Jesus Christ.' Even his madness was endowed by supporters with a spiritual quality. For here was Nietzsche like the madman in his own story, someone who had been driven crazy by his vision and the alienation of a society not yet able to comprehend him. The German Expressionists had a fascination with madness for its allegedly liberating qualities, as they did for all extreme forms of life, and they identified Nietzsche as both a spokesman and an exemplar. Opponents dismissed him, quite wrongly as it turned out, as a 'degenerate' who would 'rave for a season, and then perish'.

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<sup>740</sup> Macmillan, *The War that Ended the Peace*, London: Profile, 2014, pp. 237-238.

“Despite the divisions he aroused, his popularity grew. Novels and plays tried to capture and dramatize his already dramatic ideas. People all over Europe started to have ‘intoxicating’ Zarathustra experiences. Le Corbusier had a *Zarathustra-Erlebnis* (a Zarathustra ‘experience’ or ‘insight’) in 1908. Nietzschean concepts like the *will to power* and *Übermensch* entered the vocabulary. Richard Strauss’s tone poem, *Also Sprach Zarathustra* was premiered in Frankfurt-am-Main in November 1896, the most famous but not the only major artwork stimulated by Nietzsche – Mahler’s *Third Symphony* was another, originally entitled *The Gay Science*.

“The glossy illustrated magazine *Pan* featured Nietzschean poems in his honor but also printed drawings and sculptures of him, seemingly whenever they got the chance. Between 1890 and 1914 his portrait was everywhere, his bushy moustache becoming a widespread visual symbol, making his face as famous as his aphorisms. From the mid-1890s, encouraged by the Nietzsche archives (under the control of his sister), ‘Nietzsche-cult products’ were made available in generous amounts, a move that would certainly have maddened him had he been capable of such feelings. Hermann Hesse was just one well-known writer who had two images of Nietzsche on his study wall in Tübingen. His face was also a popular device on bookplates, one image showing him as a latter-day Christ, with a crown of thorns. The working-class press appropriated his image as a familiar and succinct way to mock the capitalist commercialization of culture.

“Some even adopted what they called Nietzschean ‘lifestyles’, the most striking example being the designer/architect Peter Behrens. Behrens designed his own ‘Zarathustrian’ villa as a centrepiece of the experimental Darmstadt artists’ colony. The house was adorned with symbols such as the eagle, and Zarathustra’s diamond, which radiated ‘the virtues of a world that is not yet here’. Behrens surpassed even this in the German pavilion he designed for the Turin 1902 Exposition. In a surreal cavern, light flooded the interior in which the industrial might of the Second Reich was on display. Zarathustra, cited explicitly, progresses toward the light.

“Bruno Taut (1880-1938), an Expressionist architect, became a prominent exponent of a cult of mountains that emerged and was associated with Nietzsche. Taut’s ‘Alpine Architecture’ attempted to envision an entire chain of mountains transformed into ‘landscapes of Grail-shrines and crystal-lined caves’, so that, in the end, whole continents would be covered with ‘glass and precious stones in the form of “ray-domes” and sparkling palaces.’

“In a similar vein was the Zarathustrian cult of *Bergeinsamkeit*, ‘the longing to escape the crowded cities and to feel the pristine mountain air’. Giovanni Segantini, a painter and another enthusiastic Nietzschean, specialized in views of the Engadine, the mountain region that inspired Nietzsche when he was writing *Also Sprach Zarathustra*. So popular did his work prove that pilgrims and tourists flocked to these mountains: ‘The *Einsamkeitserlebnis* – the experience of being alone – was transferred into a mass business!’ The

flourishing of a Nietzschean-kitsch industry, which would have horrified Nietzsche himself, was another ironic indication of his popularity among the 'philistines'. Paul Friedrich's play *The Third Reich* was one of several that put Zarathustra onstage, in this case clad in a silver-and-gold costume flung insouciantly over his shoulder. At times, people worried that the Nietzsche cult was outdoing Nietzsche himself. In 1893, Max Nordau wrote about the Nietzsche Jugend – the Nietzsche youth – as if they were an identifiable group.

“As time went by it became increasingly clear that Germany, and to a lesser extent the rest of Europe, was now populated by Nietzsche generations – in the plural. Thomas Mann was one who recognized this:

“‘We who were born around 1870 are too close to Nietzsche, we participate too directly in his tragedy, his personal fate (perhaps the most terrible, most awe-inspiring fate in intellectual history). Our Nietzsche is Nietzsche militant. Nietzsche triumphant belongs to those born fifteen years after us. We have from him our psychological sensitivity, our lyrical criticism, the experience of Wagner, the experience of Christianity, the experience of ‘modernity’ – experiences from which we shall never completely break free... They are too precious for that, too profound, too fruitful.’

“Nietzsche was in particular looked upon as a new type of challenge, paradoxically akin to the forces of socialism, a modern ‘seducer’, whose advocacy was even more persuasive than the ‘odious equalizing of social democracy’. Georg Tantzcher thought Nietzscheanism fitted neatly the needs of the free-floating intelligentsia, trapped as they were ‘between isolation and a sense of mission, the drive to withdraw from society and the drive to lead it.’ In his 1897 book on the Nietzsche cult, the sociologist Ferdinand Tönnies accused Nietzscheanism of being ‘pseudo-liberational’. People, he said, ‘were captivated by the promise of the release of creative powers, the appeal to overcome narrow-minded authority and conventional opinions, and free self-expression.’ But he condemned Nietzscheanism as superficial, serving elitist, conservative and ‘laissez-faire functions’ that went quite against the social-democratic spirit of the age.

“A little later, in 1908, in *The Nietzsche Cult: A Chapter in the History of the Aberrations of the Human Spirit*, the philosopher Wolfgang Becker also appeared puzzled that so many ‘cultured luminaries’ were attracted to the Nietzschean message, but he agreed with Mann that it meant different things to different people. To the young, Nietzsche’s analysis seemed ‘deep’; but the German colonial officials in Africa employed his *Herrenmoral* ideal practically every day, as they felt it was suited perfectly to ‘the colonial mode of rule’.

“The sociologist and philosopher Georg Simmel also took his color from Nietzsche. His central concept, *Vornehmheit*, the ideal of ‘distinction’, owed everything to Nietzsche. Simmel looked upon *Vornehmheit* as the defining quality by which individuals ‘could be separated from the crowd and endowed with “nobility”’. For Simmel, this was a new ideal stemming from the dilemma

of how to create personal values in a money economy. Nietzsche had encouraged the pursuit of specific values – *Vornehmheit*, beauty, strength – each of which he said enhanced life and which, ‘far from encouraging egoism, demanded greater self-control’.

“Marxists thought that Nietzscheanism nakedly served capitalism, imperialism and afterward fascism, and that Nietzscheans were no more than the ultimate in bourgeois pseudo-radicalism, never touching on the underlying exploitation, and leaving the socioeconomic class structure intact.

“People liked to observe the irony that Nietzsche was dead long before God, but Aschheim maintains that he was simply ‘unburialable’. ‘Nietzsche was not a piece of learning,’ wrote Franz Servis in 1895, but a part of life, ‘the reddest blood of our time’. He has not died: ‘Oh, we shall all still have to drink of his blood! Not one of us will be spared that.’...

“Even the choice of Weimar as the location of the Nietzsche archive was intended to emulate – if not surpass – the similar shrine of that other self-styled protector of Germany spirituality, at Bayreuth. Nietzsche’s sister, Elizabeth Förster-Nietzsche, and her colleagues played a deliberate role in the monumentalization and mythologizing of the philosopher. For example, his sister sought to create an ‘authorized’ Nietzsche, her main object being to ‘depathologize’ her brother, and in so doing remove the subversive from his ideas, making him – as she thought – ‘respectable’.

“The most grandiose and monumental of plans – much more so than the archive – came from the more enlightened and cosmopolitan adherents. In 1911, for instance, Harry Graf Kessler, the Anglo-German patron of the arts and author of *Berlin in Lights*, envisaged building a huge festival area as a memorial, comprising a temple, a large stadium and an enormous sculpture of Apollo. In this space, intended to hold thousands, art, dance, theatre and sports competitions would be combined into a ‘Nietzschean totality’. Aristide Maillol agreed to build the statue, using none other than Vaslav Nijinsky as the model. André Gide, Anatole France, Walther Rathenau, Gabriele d’Annunzio, Gilbert Murray and H.G. Wells joined the fund-raising committee. The project failed only when Elizabeth Förster-Nietzsche withdrew her support in 1913.

“Until the First World War, Nietzsche exerted a wide influence on the arts. However, the Great War... totally changed public attitudes toward Nietzsche and the impact of his ideas.

“Probably, Nietzsche’s most explosive and enduring impact was on the intellectual, artistic and literary avant-garde – his invitation ‘to *be* something new, to *signify* something new, to *represent* new values’ was emblematic of what Steven Aschheim also calls the ‘Nietzschean generation’. Nietzsche gave point to the *avant garde’s* alienation from the high culture of the establishment. The two forces he favoured were radical, secular self-creation and the Dionysian imperative of self-submersion. This led to several attempts to fuse the

individualist impulse within a search for new forms of 'total' community, the redemptive community...

"While Nietzsche's identification of the nihilist predicament was a starting point, people swiftly moved on. They sought a transformed civilization that encouraged and reflected a new *übermenschlich* type, creating excitement, authenticity, intensity, and in all ways superior to what had gone before. 'What I was engaged in,' recalled Ernst Blass, the Expressionist poet, referring to café life in imperial Berlin, was 'a war on the gigantic philistinism of those days... What was in the air? Above all Van Gogh, Nietzsche, Freud too, and Wedeking. What was wanted was a post-rational Dionysos.'

"Freud and Nietzsche had in common that both sought to remove the metaphysical explanation of experience, and both stressed 'self-creation' as the central meaningful activity of life. While Freud strained for respectability, Nietzscheanism reveled in notoriety; but in most ways they were compatible, being stridently... anti-rationalist; and, with its Dionysian rhetoric, the artistic production of the Nietzscheans sought to unlock the wild reaches of the unconscious. *Übermensch* strongmen feature prominently in the novels of Gabriele d'Annunzio and Hermann Conrad, where the characters are involved in often brutal searches for innocence and authenticity, as often as not destroying in order to create..."<sup>741</sup>

In 1914, continues Watson, "a London bookseller denounced the war as 'the Euro-Nietzschean war'. He was referring to the (for him) surprising fact that the outbreak of war saw a marked rise in the sale of works by Nietzsche. This was partly because many of Germany's enemies thought that the German philosopher was the chief villain, the man most to blame for the war in the first place, and the individual responsible, as time wore on, for its brutalities.

"In his book *Nietzsche and the Ideals of Germany*, H.I. Stewart, a Canadian professor of philosophy, describes the Great War as a battle between 'an unscrupulous Nietzschean immoralism' and 'the cherished principles of Christian restraint'. Thomas Hardy was similarly incensed, complaining to several British newspapers: 'I should think there is no instance since history began of a country being so demoralized by a single writer'. Germany was seen as a nation of would-be supermen who, in Romain Rolland's words, had become a 'scourge of God'. To many it seemed as if the abyss had been plumbed, that the death of God, so loudly advertised by Nietzsche, had finally brought about the apocalypse many had predicted.

"In Germany, the theologian and historian Theodor Kappstein admitted that Nietzsche *was* the philosopher of the world war because he had educated a whole generation toward 'a life-endangering honesty, towards a contempt for death... to a sacrifice on the altar of the whole, towards heroism and quiet, joyful greatness.' Even Max Schuler, a better-known philosopher (and later a favourite

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<sup>741</sup> Watson, *The Age of Atheists*, London: Simon & Schuster, 2014, pp.34-39.

of Pope John Paul II), in *The Genius of War and the German War* (1915) praised the 'ennobling' aspects of conflict. He welcomed the war as a return to 'the organic roots of human existence... We were no longer what we had been - alone! The sundered living contact between the series individual-people-nation-world-God was restored in an instant.' The communal 'we', Schuler said, 'is in our consciousness before the individualized self', the latter 'an artificial product of cultured tradition and a historic process'.

"Though the claims - both for and against Nietzsche's influence - may have been overblown, they were not without foundation. In Germany, together with Goethe's *Faust* and the New Testament, *Thus Spake Zarathustra* was the most popular work that literate soldiers took into battle, 'for inspiration and consolation'. More than that, according to Steven Aschheim, 150,000 copies of a specially durable wartime edition were distributed to the troops. Even one or two literate non-German soldiers took the book with them, notably Robert Graves and Gabriele d'Annunzio. Nor should we forget that the assassin of Archduke Franz Ferdinand, Gavrilo Princip, whose action precipitated the crisis of 1914, was fond of reciting Nietzsche's poem *Ecce Homo*: 'Insatiable as a flame, I burn and consume myself.'

"Whatever we make of all that, the second point still takes some getting used to. This is the fact that in 1914 so many people *welcomed* the war. This, too, had certain Nietzschean overtones, in that war was seen as the ultimate test of one's heroic qualities, a test of will and an unrivalled opportunity for ecstatic experience. But it was more than that - far more. For many, the war was seen as *redemptive*.

"But redemption from what? One might ask. In fact, there was no shortage of candidates. Before 1914, the very appeal of Nietzsche lay in his widespread critique of the decadence people saw everywhere about them. Stefan George... argued in *Der Stern des Bundes* that a war would 'purify' a spiritually moribund society, while the German dramaturge Edwin Piscator agreed, claiming that the generation that went to war was 'spiritually bankrupt'. Stefan Zweig saw the conflict as some kind of spiritual safety valve, referring to Freud's argument that the release of 'the instinctual' could not be contained by reason alone. Typically, the Expressionists looked forward to the death of bourgeois society, 'from whose ashes a nobler world would arise'."<sup>742</sup>

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The vital importance of Nietzschean ideas was emphasized by the famous Serbian Bishop Nikolai Velimirovič, who was sent by Serbia as an unofficial Serbian ambassador to England and the United States during the First World War, and became very popular there.

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<sup>742</sup> Watson, *op. cit.*, pp. 187-189.

The real struggle, said Velimirovič, was between the All-Man, Christ, and the Superman of Nietzsche, between the doctrine that Right is Might and the opposite one that might is right. For German Christianity with its all-devouring scientism and theological scepticism had already surrendered to Nietzscheanism.

“I wonder,” he wrote, “that Professor Harnack, one of the chief representatives of German Christianity, omitted to see how every hollow that he and his colleagues made in traditional Christianity in Germany was at once filled with the all-conquering Nietzscheanism. And I wonder... whether he is now aware that in the nineteen hundred and fourteenth year of our Lord, when he and other destroyers of the Bible, who proclaimed Christ a dreamy maniac [and] clothed Christianity in rags, Nietzscheanism arose [as] the real religion of the German race.”<sup>743</sup>

In another place Bishop Nikolai spread the blame more widely on Europe as a whole: “The spirit was wrong, and everything became wrong. The spirit of any civilization is inspired by its religion, but the spirit of modern Europe was not inspired by Europe’s religion at all. A terrific effort was made in many quarters to liberate Europe from the spirit of her religion. The effort-makers forgot one thing, i.e. that no civilization ever was liberated from religion and still lived. Whenever this liberation seemed to be fulfilled, the respective civilization decayed and died out, leaving behind barbaric materialism in towns and superstitions in villages. Europe had to live with Christianity, or to die in barbaric materialism and superstitions without it. The way to death was chosen. From Continental Europe first the infection came to the whole white race. It was there that the dangerous formula [of Nietzsche] was pointed out: ‘Beyond good and evil’. Other parts of the white world followed slowly, taking first the path between Good and Evil. Good was changed for Power. Evil was explained away as Biological Necessity. The Christian religion, which inspired the greatest things that Europe ever possessed in every point of human activity, was degraded by means of new watchwords: individualism, liberalism, conservatism, nationalism, imperialism, secularism, which in essence meant nothing but the de-christianization of European society, or, in other words, the emptiness of European civilization. Europe abandoned the greatest things she possessed and clung to the lower and lowest ones. The greatest thing was – Christ.

“As you cannot imagine Arabic civilization in Spain without Islam, or India’s civilization without Hinduism, or Rome without the Roman Pantheon, so you cannot imagine Europe’s civilization without Christ. Yet some people thought that Christ was not so essentially needed for Europe, and behaved accordingly without Him or against Him. Christ was Europe’s God. When this God was banished from politics, art, science, social life, business, education,

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<sup>743</sup> Velimirovič, “The Religious Spirit of the Slavs”, in *Sabrana Dela* (Collected Works), volume 3, 1986, Khimelstir, 1986, pp. 221-222.

everybody consequently asked for a God, and everybody thought himself to be a god... So godless Europe became full of gods!

“Being de-christianized, Europe still thought to be civilized. In reality she was a poor valley full of dry bones. The only thing she had to boast of was her material power. By material power only she impressed and frightened the unchristian (but not antichristian) countries of Central and Eastern Asia, and depraved the rustic tribes in Africa and elsewhere. She went to conquer not by God or for God, but by material power and for material pleasure. Her spirituality did not astonish any of the peoples on earth. Her materialism astonished all of them... What an amazing poverty! She gained the whole world, and when she looked inside herself she could not find her soul. Where has Europe’s soul fled? The present war will give the answer. It is not a war to destroy the world but to show Europe’s poverty and to bring back her soul. It will last as long as Europe remains soulless, Godless, Christless. It will stop when Europe gets the vision of her soul, her only God, her only wealth.”<sup>744</sup>

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As the Expressionists, Futurists and others wished, the old, spiritually moribund world did go up in flames. But out of its ashes there arose, not a nobler world, but an even more savage one. For the German soldiers had to make a choice between the two books they took with them into battle: the New Testament or *Also Sprach Zarathustra*. And the tragedy was that, it was the latter, antichristian work that triumphed in the minds of many, thereby making the age that followed truly that of the collective Antichrist...

It triumphed, most importantly, in the soul of Kaiser Wilhelm, who served as both an exemplar and a symbol of the Nietzschean pathology of the Germans. For, as Felix Ponsonby said, he “was the creation of the Germans themselves. They wanted a sabre-rattling autocrat with theatrical ways, attempting to dominate Europe, sending telegrams and making bombastic speeches, and he did his best to supply them with the superman they required.”<sup>745</sup> Again, “the real problem was that he was too typical of the new state which he was now called upon to rule. A very complex personality with a rather stunted body and a withered arm, he was very insecure and unsure of himself and over-compensated for these inadequacies with bumptious aggressiveness and flamboyant posing. ‘Psychological’ versions of history can be very dangerous, but it is not difficult to see the problems and responses of the Kaiser and the state as being identical.”<sup>746</sup>

Wilhelm had had a difficult birth that gave him a withered arm; and he developed a hatred for his English mother and all things English. Mary Greene

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<sup>744</sup> Velimirovič, “The Agony of the Church”, in *Sabrana Dela* (Collected Works), volume 3, 1986, Khimelstir, pp. 83-84.

<sup>745</sup> Ponsonby, in Miranda Carter, *The Three Emperors*, London: Penguin, 2010, p. 365.

<sup>746</sup> Stuart Miller, *Mastering Modern European History*, London: Palgrave, 1997, p. 226.

writes: "By the time his father died of cancer in 1888 at their palace in Potsdam, Wilhelm was set in his anglophobia and loathing for his mother and her liberal ideas. An English doctor had crippled his arm, he declared, and an English doctor had killed his father after misdiagnosing his cancer as benign: 'One cannot have enough hatred for England' ..." <sup>747</sup>

"Envy of the older nations gnawed at him. He complained to Theodore Roosevelt that the English nobility on continental tours never visited Berlin but always went to Paris.<sup>748</sup> He felt unappreciated. 'All the long years of my reign,' he told the King of Italy, 'my colleagues, the Monarchs of Europe, have paid no attention to what I have to say. Soon, with my great Navy to endorse my words, they will be more respectful.' The same sentiments ran through his whole nation, which suffered, like their emperor, from a terrible need of recognition. Pulsing with energy and ambition, conscious of strength, fed upon Nietzsche and Treitschke, they felt entitled to rule, and cheated that the world did not acknowledge their title. 'We must,' wrote Friedrich von Bernhardi, the spokesman of militarism, 'secure to German nationality and German spirit throughout the globe that high esteem which is due them... and has hitherto been withheld from them.' He frankly allowed only one method of attaining the goal; lesser Bernhardis from the Kaiser down sought to secure the esteem they craved by threats and show of power. They shook the 'mailed fist', demanded their 'place in the sun', and proclaimed the virtues of the sword in paeans to 'blood and iron' and 'shining armor'. In German practice Mr. Roosevelt's current precept for getting on with your neighbors was Teutonized into: 'Speak loudly and brandish a big gun'. When they brandished it, when the Kaiser told his troops departing for China and the Boxer Rebellion to bear themselves as the Huns of Attila (the choice of Huns as German prototypes was his own), when Pan-German Societies and Navy Leagues multiplied and met in congresses to demand that other nations recognize their 'legitimate aims' towards expansion, the other nations answered with alliances, and when they did, Germany screamed *Einfreisung!* – Encirclement! The refrain *Deutschland gunzlich einsuzkreisen* grated over the decade..."<sup>749</sup>

Unbalanced and aggressive to the point of illness (Tsar Nicholas II said he was "raving mad"), Wilhelm had much to do with souring the relations between Germany and England, on the one hand, and between Germany and Russia, on the other. Some blamed the outbreak of war on the dominance of the Prussian spirit that he embodied. Thus just after the declaration of war, the Tsaritsa, - a non-Prussian German princess - told Pierre Gilliard: "Prussia has destroyed the unique character of Germany, and German citizens have been

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<sup>747</sup> Greene, "Did Kaiser Bill's mother spark the Great War?", *Weekend*, November 16, 2013, p. 9.

<sup>748</sup> After meeting the Kaiser in 1910, Roosevelt wrote to his wife: "I'm absolutely certain now, we're all in for it" (in Kotkin, *Stalin*, vol. I, p. 139).(V.M.)

<sup>749</sup> Tuchman, *op. cit.*, pp. 7-8.

led astray. People have been imbued with feelings of hatred and vengefulness."<sup>750</sup>

"The monarch," writes W.H. Spellman, was moving Germany "into an aggressive and expansionist posture. In language reminiscent of eighteenth-century divine-right absolutism, he informed the Provincial Diet of Brandenburg in 1891, 'that I regard my whole position and my task as having been imposed on me from heaven, and that I am called to the service of a Higher Being, to Whom I shall have to give a reckoning later.' To Bismarck's successor William confided in 1892 that he was not interested in personal popularity (although his actions belied this), 'for, as the guiding principles of my actions, I have only the dictates of my duty and the responsibility of my clear conscience towards God'. In 1900 William told the future George V of England that as Kaiser he alone 'was master of German policy and my country must follow me wherever I go'. In the judgement of one recent observer the emperor personified the dynastic culture of later eighteenth-century Europe: 'He was a monarch by Divine Right yet always the parvenu; a medieval knight in shining armour and yet the inspiration behind that marvel of modern technology, the battle fleet; a dyed-in-the-wool reactionary yet also - for a time at least - the Socialist Emperor who supported basic accident and retirement insurance for the industrial worker.'"<sup>751</sup>

Only the more pacifist and internationalist tendency of the powerful Social Democratic party stood out as a significant exception to the general mood. But in Germany's fractured political system the Social Democrats were not able to prevent the Kaiser and the Army from taking control of the general direction of German foreign policy.

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<sup>750</sup> She went on: "This will be a monstrous, improbable struggle; humanity will have to pass through heavy trials" (Baroness Sophia Bukshoeveden, *Ventsenosnaia Muchenitsa* (The Crown-Bearing Martyr), Moscow, 2020, pp. 302-303).

<sup>751</sup> Spellman, *Monarchies*, London: Reaktion Press, 2001, p. 218.

## 55. SARAJEVO

“‘It was the rise of Athens and the *fear* that this inspired in Sparta that made war inevitable,’ the ancient Greek historian Thucydides wrote. Back in the fifth century B.C., a clash among peripheral states, Corinth and Corcyra, sparked a showdown that each had sought and that each would come to regret. Bismarck called such decisions rolling ‘the iron dice’. In the case of 1914, the British did not reckon fully with the consequences of the rivalry they had helped set up. But while the Anglo-German antagonism was the underlying cause of the Great War [if we exclude German fear of Russia] and Russia the critical complicating factor, the deonator was supplied not by rivalries over African colonies, where the leftists and others expected it, but in Eastern Europe, where Bismarck had warned in 1888 that war might happen over ‘some damned foolish thing in the Balkans’. Here, as the Ottoman empire contracted, the other big land empires – Austria-Hungary, Russia, Germany – ground up against one another like tectonic plates, which is how the fault of tiny Serbia precipitated a world war and, on the eastern front, a revolution in the Russian empire...”<sup>752</sup>

By the summer of 1914 the Orthodox commonwealth of nations had reached its zenith from an external, political and economic point of view. The great Russian empire, in which the majority of Orthodox Christians lived, stretched from the Baltic to the Pacific, and its influence spread more widely still, from the *de facto* protectorate it exercised over the Orthodox of the Balkans and the Middle East, to its important ecclesiastical missions in Persia, China, Japan, and the United States. It was making mighty strides economically, and was modernizing and strengthening its military capacity to a significant degree. Meanwhile, the Orthodox Balkan states had just driven the Turks out of Europe (almost), and Serbia, Romania and Greece had reached their greatest territorial extent since their foundation as states in the previous century. Serbia's population growth, in particular, was remarkable: from 2.9 million subjects before the Balkan Wars to 4.4 million after them.

However, this was a bubble that was about to burst. All the Orthodox states had very serious internal problems of both a political and a religious nature. Anti-monarchism had taken over the minds and hearts of the wealthier classes in Russia and other Orthodox countries, and western heresies, spiritualism and even atheism were making deep inroads into the Church. In the Balkans, the recent victories over the Turks caused over-confidence and an increase in militarism and nationalism, with the military establishments ascendant over the civil administrations. In Serbia, in particular, the military contested with the government over control of the newly-acquired territories in Macedonia, and “Apis” (after the pagan Egyptian god), Colonel Dragutin Dmitrijevič, the leading regicide of 1903 and inspirer of the terrorist “Black Hand” organization, was in charge of military intelligence!...

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<sup>752</sup> Kotkin, *Stalin*, p. 141.

Besides taking part in the regicide of 1903, Apis confessed to participation in plots to murder King Nicetas of Montenegro, King Constantine of Greece, Kaiser Wilhelm of Germany and King Ferdinand of Bulgaria!<sup>753</sup> That such a murderous fanatic should be in charge of Serbia's military intelligence tells us much about the influence within Serbia of the nationalist-revolutionary heresy. "In fact," as David Stevenson writes, "Serbia's army and intelligence service were out of control".<sup>754</sup>

Lieven writes: "Because Apis and the Black Hand were partly responsible for the murder of Archduke Franz Ferdinand and thereby for the First World War, the Serbian government's failure to control them was of huge significance. The Russians knew a good deal about this organization. In the winter of 1911-12, the Russian military attaché in Belgrade, Colonel Victor Artamanov, sent detailed reports back to Petersburg concerning the origins and activities of the Black Hand, as well as the newspaper associated with it called *Piedmont*. As the newspaper's name suggests, the aim of the Black Hand was to follow the example of Piedmont and unite all Serbs in a kingdom ruled from Belgrade. With all the Balkan Serbs now ruled by Belgrade after the wars of 1912-13, the remaining task was to gather in the Serbs who currently lived under Habsburg rule, largely but not exclusively in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Artamanov sympathized with the patriotic ideals of the Black Hand but not with the organization itself. He believed too that its leaders were often driven by purely selfish and personal motives. He wrote that those behind the Black Hand should have set up a political party, not a secret organization partly within the army that threatened military discipline and political stability in Serbia. Artamanov reported in January, 1912 that he had been approached by the Black Hand through an intermediary, 'but of course I immediately and flatly refused the invitation to have conversations with members of a secret organization, so as not to give them the opportunity to connect Russia's name with their agitation.'

"Nevertheless, wrote Artamanov, it was not hard to discover information about the Black Hand, because many people in Belgrade were eager to talk to Russia's representatives and gain their sympathy. Artamanov's narrative of the Black Hand's activities is far too long and complex to reproduce here. He began with the military conspiracy that had murdered King Alexander Obrenović in 1903 and had brought the Karageorgevićs back to the Serbian throne in the person of King Peter. Since then, the army had been divided between 'conspirators' and 'anti-conspirators', and this division had also affected civilian political life. Military and party-political factions had become entwined but in a manner that was hard to follow because factions split and mutated over time and in response to specific issues, corruption scandals, and the everyday struggle for power and position in Belgrade's political and military worlds. Within the army, for example, matters had been complicated both by the split within the 'conspirators' over issues of promotion and corruption and by the

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<sup>753</sup> West, *Black Lamb and Grey Falcon*, Edinburgh: Canongate, 2006, p. 369.

<sup>754</sup> Stevenson, *1914-1918: The History of the First World War*, London: Penguin, 2005, p. 12.

entry into the military political arena of the young, intelligent, and ambitious crown prince Alexander. At times, Colonel Dimitrijević and the Black Hand were allies of Pašić's Radical Party, at other times enemies. In January, 1912, Artamanov interpreted the current situation as reflecting the fact that the civilian government either felt itself too weak to move against the Black Hand and other ultranationalists or actually believed it could exploit Apis's support for its own purposes. A deal seemed to have been struck whereby the Black Hand stayed out of domestic politics and concentrated entirely on 'patriotic activities'."<sup>755</sup>

However, according to David Frumkin "in May 1914, Apis persuaded the reigning monarch, King Peter, that Pašić ought to be dismissed. Then Russia intervened. As Serbia's sponsor among the Great Powers, Russia could, to some extent, lay down the law. Nicolai Hartwig, the Russian minister in Belgrade, intervened to retain Pašić as Prime Minister, having recognized that Serbia needed years of rest in which to recover from the Balkan wars and to consolidate its gains. It was no time for reckless adventurism..."<sup>756</sup>

According to Max Hastings, Pašić and Apis were enemies, and in 1913 there were even discussions about murdering Apis. "The prime minister and many of his colleagues regarded the colonel as a threat to the country's stability and even existence; internal affairs minister Milan Protić spoke of the Black Hand to a visitor on 14 June as 'a menace to democracy'. But in a society riven by competing interests, the civilian government lacked authority to remove or imprison Apis, who was protected by the patronage of the army chief of staff."<sup>757</sup> Although there is evidence that Pašić was trying to control the Black Hand, he had definitely not succeeded by 1914. Moreover, being himself a Great Serbian nationalist, at no point in his career did he make a determined effort to quench that nationalist-revolutionary *mentality* which ultimately led to the shots in Sarajevo.

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In June, 1914 the Austro-Hungarians were holding military manoeuvres in Bosnia, and Archduke Franz Ferdinand, who in addition to being heir to the Habsburg throne was also Inspector General of the Armed Forces of the Empire, came to observe them with his wife. Ironically, Franz Ferdinand was known for his warnings about a world war<sup>758</sup>; he had pro-Slav political views;

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<sup>755</sup> Lieven, *Towards the Flame*, pp. 280-281.

<sup>756</sup> Fromkin, *Europe's Last Summer*, London: Vintage, 2005, pp. 124-125.

<sup>757</sup> Hastings, *Catastrophe: Europe goes to War 1914*, London: William Collins, 2014, p. xxxv.

<sup>758</sup> "I will never wage a war against Russia. I will sacrifice everything to avoid this, because a war between Austria and Russia would have ended either with the overthrow of the Romanovs, or the overthrow of the Habsburgs, or maybe the overthrow of both dynasties. A war with Russia would mean our end. If we do something against Serbia, Russia will take its side, and then we will have to fight the Russians. The Austrian and Russian emperors should not push each other off the throne and open the way for revolution."

he wanted to bring the Slav peoples of the Empire into its governing structure as the third main bloc together with the Germans and the Hungarians. This idea was known as "Trialism".

"His ideas," writes Simon Winder, "were well known, so when he arrived in Bosnia-Herzegovina he was by a long way the most desirable imaginable candidate for assassination for any Serbian nationalist group. This was not just because any day now he could become a harsh, cold and effective Emperor but because Trialism could create a form of Slav solidarity which explicitly excluded the Kingdom of Serbia itself."<sup>759</sup>

The Archduke had also opposed the annexation of Serbia; of all the Austrian leaders, he was the most pro-Serbian. Moreover, as Fromkin writes, if he had lived, "he would have repaired the breach with Russia that dated from the last half of the nineteenth century and would once again combine with the Czar and the King of Prussia to promote the cause of monarchism and traditional values in European and world affairs, as they had, for example, in 1815 as the Holy Alliance."<sup>760</sup> But the age of "traditional values", already gravely weakened, came to a final end with his murder...

"With overwhelming stupidity," as Sir Noel Malcolm writes, "his visit to Sarajevo was fixed for 28 June, the anniversary of the Battle of Kosovo and therefore the most sacred day in the mystical calendar of Serb nationalism."<sup>761</sup>

As Clark writes: "The commemorations across the Serb lands were set to be especially intense in 1914, because this was the first St. Vitus's Day since the 'liberation' of Kosovo during the Second Balkan War in the previous year. 'The holy flame of Kosovo, which has inspired generations [of Serbs] has now burst into a mighty fire,' the Black Hand journal *Pijemont* announced on 28 June 1914. 'Kosovo is free! Kosovo is avenged!' For Serb ultra-nationalists, both in Serbia itself and across the Serbian irredentist network in Bosnia, the arrival of the heir apparent in Sarajevo on this of all days was a symbolic affront that demanded a response."<sup>762</sup>

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The Archduke also said to the chief of the general staff, Konrad von Gotzendorff: "War with Russia must be avoided, because France is inciting it, especially the French Freemasons and anti-monarchists who seek to provoke a revolution in order to overthrow the monarchs from their thrones." (Paul Gilbert, at

[https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story\\_fbid=2667052446943585&id=100009165662629](https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=2667052446943585&id=100009165662629)

<sup>759</sup> Winder, *Danubia*, London: Picador, 2013, p. 481. "By 1914, however," writes Christopher Clark, "it appears he had dropped this plan in favour of a far-reaching transformation by which the empire would become a 'United States of Great Austria', comprising fifteen member states, many of which would have Slav majorities." (*Sleepwalkers: How Europe went to war in 1914*, London: Penguin, 2012, p. 108) But such a plan was similar to Trialism in excluding the Kingdom of Serbia from structures of Slav solidarity.

<sup>760</sup> Fromkin, *op. cit.*, pp. 113-114.

<sup>761</sup> Malcolm, *Bosnia: A Short History*, London: Papermac, 1996, p. 155.

<sup>762</sup> Clark, *op. cit.*, pp. 368-369.

The assassination was the work of the terrorist organization, “The Black Hand”, and the real leader was probably “Apis”, who had already assassinated several world leaders, including the King of Serbia. As Niall Ferguson points out, it “precipitated a war that destroyed the Austro-Hungarian Empire and transformed Bosnia and Herzegovina from one of its colonies into a part of a new South Slav state. These were in fact the things Princip had hoped to achieve, making the assassination perhaps the single most effective act of terrorism in history.”<sup>763</sup>

Malcolm “firmly rejects” the idea that the Serbian government itself had planned the assassination. “Even the Austro-Hungarian government did not accuse Serbia of direct responsibility for what had happened. Their ultimatum of 23 July complained merely that the Serbian government had ‘tolerated the machinations of various societies and associations directed against the monarchy, unrestrained language on the part of the press, glorification of the perpetrators of outrages, participation of officers and officials in subversive agitation’ – all of which was essentially true.”<sup>764</sup>

The terrorists were armed by Major Vojin Tankosić of the Black Hand, and according to Max Hastings were guided into Bosnia by “a Serbian government informer, who passed word about their movements, and about the bombs and pistols in their luggage, to the Interior Ministry in Belgrade. His report, which the prime minister read and summarized in his own hand, made no mention of a plot against Franz Ferdinand. Pašić commissioned an investigation, and gave orders that the movement of weapons from Serbia to Bosnia should be stopped; but he went no further. A Serbian minister later claimed that Pašić told the cabinet at the end of May or the beginning of June that some assassins were on their way to Sarajevo to kill Franz Ferdinand. Whether or not this is true – no minutes were taken of cabinet meetings – Pašić appears to have instructed Serbia’s envoy in Vienna to pass on to the Austrian authorities only a vague general warning, perhaps because he was unwilling to provide the Habsburgs with a fresh and extremely serious grievance against his country.”<sup>765</sup>

Seven assassins from *Mlada Bosna* were waiting for the Archduke and his wife. The first attempt to kill them failed, but the second, by the Nietzschean Gavrilo Princip<sup>766</sup>, was successful.

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<sup>763</sup> Ferguson, *Doom. The Politics of Catastrophe*, London: Allen Lane, 2021, p. 162.

<sup>764</sup> Malcolm, *op. cit.*, pp. 156-157.

<sup>765</sup> Hastings, *op. cit.*, p. xxxvi. According to Margaret Macmillan, Pašić “got wind of what was up but was either unable or unwilling to do anything. In any case it was probably too late; the conspirators had arrived safely in Sarajevo and linked up with local terrorists...” (*op. cit.*, p. 515).

<sup>766</sup> Princip “owned a small library of anarchist literature that included the works of Michail Bakunin and Peter Kropotkin. The verses of Nietzsche often were on his lips. A solitary figure, he lived among books rather than people... He rejected religion, fought with his teachers, and attended school only fitfully.” (Fromkin, *op. cit.*, pp. 120, 121) In 2014, the Serbs erected a monument to Princip in Belgrade. On the significance of that event, see Anton Grigoriev,

The news of the assassination was greeted with jubilation in Serbia. Nor did the Serbian government led by Pašić do anything to calm Serbian passions or reassure Austrian opinion – quite the reverse.<sup>767</sup> So whatever judgement one forms of the Austrian actions, there is no doubt that they were sorely provoked... Moreover, the Russians did little to rein in the Serbs' nationalist passions, and, together with the French, accepted the Serbian account of the Sarajevo assassination without argument...<sup>768</sup>

Elsewhere, the reaction was muted, even in Austria, where the archduke was not popular. Many thought that war would be averted as it had been averted several times in recent years. But it was different this time.

The Kaiser, who had been a personal friend of the Archduke, and shared his pacific views, was furious, saying: "Now or never. The Serbs must be disposed of and that right soon!"<sup>769</sup> The Austrian Foreign Minister Berchtold echoed this, speaking of the need for "a final and fundamental reckoning with Serbia."<sup>770</sup> The Austrians, and especially the chief of staff Conrad, had wanted to do this for some years. Now they had the excuse they were looking for.

For "in October 1913," writes Dominic Lieven, "the Austro-Hungarian Common Ministerial Council had agreed that Serbia had to be destroyed as an independent state in order to restore Austria's position in the Balkans and stop the danger which South Slav nationalism's undermining Habsburg authority within the empire's borders. As Berchtold explained at that time, the key difficulty was to obtain German support for this policy. The Austrian premier, Count Karl von Stürgkh, added that the precondition for success had to be 'that we have been clearly injured by Serbia, because that can lead to a conflict which entails Serbia's execution'. Without such a pretext and without Berlin's support, military action against Serbia was impossible, which explains why in early June 1914 the Austrian Foreign Ministry's key 'strategy paper' outlining future short-term policy in the Balkans confined itself to advocating not military but purely diplomatic measures. But the circumstances surrounding Franz Ferdinand's assassination provided exactly the scenario that the October 1913 ministerial conference had desired..."<sup>771</sup>

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"Stoletinij spor o tom..." (The 100-year quarrel about...), <http://anton-grigoriev.livejournal.com/1668823.html?view=17288663#t17288663>).

Elizabeth Durham wrote in *The Sarajevo Crime*: During the trial of Archduke Ferdinand's killer, Gavrilo Princip testified that his colleague, Ciganovity, 'told me he was a Freemason' and 'on another occasion told me that the Heir Apparent had been condemned to death by a Freemason's lodge.' Moreover, another of the accused assassins, Chabrinovic, testified that Major Tankosic, one of the plotters, was a Freemason."

<sup>767</sup> Clark, *op. cit.*, pp. 387-391.

<sup>768</sup> Clark, *op. cit.*, pp. 407-412.

<sup>769</sup> Fromkin, *op. cit.*, p. 149.

<sup>770</sup> Fromkin, *op. cit.*, p. 155.

<sup>771</sup> Lieven *Towards the Flame*, p. 316.

As Fromkin writes, "What the killings gave Vienna was not a reason, but an excuse for taking action. They provided the Austrians with grounds for destroying Serbia – a pretext that Europe would accept and believe, and with which Europe might well even sympathize. It was a justification that might bring Germany to support them and prevent Russia from opposing them. In the past two men, Franz Ferdinand and Wilhelm II, had stood in the way of mounting a crusade against Serbia, and the assassinations had, though in different ways, removed them both: the Archduke killed, and the Kaiser carried away by a desire for revenge and caught up in unthinking rage..."<sup>772</sup>

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<sup>772</sup> Fromkin, op. cit., p. 154.

## 56. THE JULY CRISIS

The Austrians were under strong pressure from the Germans to make their reaction to the assassination as strong as possible. "The official documents," writes Fritz Fischer, "afford ample proof that during the July crisis the Emperor, the German military leaders and the Foreign Ministry were pressing Austria-Hungary to strike against Serbia without delay, or alternatively agreed to the dispatch of an ultimatum to Serbia couched in such sharp terms as to make war between the two countries more than probable, and that in doing so they deliberately took the risk of a continental war against Russia and France."<sup>773</sup> Thus the Germans, according to the Austrian ambassador to Berlin, Szogyeny, "Emperor and Chancellor alike, were pressing most vigorously for Austria to take immediate military action against Serbia - Szogyeny believed that this 'absolute' insistence on war against Serbia was based on the two considerations already mentioned: firstly, that Russia and France 'were not yet ready' and, secondly, that Britain 'will not at this juncture intervene in a war which breaks out over a Balkan state *even if this should lead to a conflict with Russia, possibly also France...* Not only have Anglo-Russian relations so improved that Germany feels that she need no longer fear a directly hostile attitude by Britain, but above all, Britain at this moment if anything but anxious for war, and has no wish whatever to pull the chestnuts out of the fire for Serbia, or in the last instance, for Russia."<sup>774</sup>

The first three points of the ultimatum, writes Clark, "focused on the suppression of irredentist organs and of the anti-Austrian propaganda they generated. Points 4, 6 and 8 addressed the need to take action against persons implicated in the Sarajevo outrage, including compromised military personnel and frontier officials and 'accessories to the plot of 28 June who are on Serbian territory'. Point 7 was more specific: it demanded the arrest 'without delay' of Major Voja Tankosić and Milan Ciganović. Tankosić was, unbeknownst to the Austrians, a Black Hand operative close to Apis; it was he who had recruited the three youths who formed the core of the assassination team. Ciganović was known to the Austrians only as 'a Serbian state employee implicated by the findings of the preliminary investigation at Sarajevo', but he was also, according to the later testimony of Ljuba Jovanović, a member of the Black Hand who doubled as an agent working directly for Pašić. Point 9 requested that Belgrade furnish Vienna with explanations regarding the 'unjustifiable utterances of high Serbian officials, both in Serbia and abroad, who notwithstanding their official position have not hesitated since the outrage of 28 June to express hostility towards the Austro-Hungarian monarchy. This point referred among other things to the interviews given by [Serbian Ambassador] Spakajović in St. Petersburg; it also reminds us of how deeply Austrian attitudes were affected by Serbian responses to the outrage. Point 10 simply requested official notification 'without delay' of the measures undertaken to meet the preceding points.

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<sup>773</sup> Fischer, *Germany's Aims in the First World War*, New York: W.W. Norton, 1967, p. 91.

<sup>774</sup> Fischer, *op. cit.*, p. 58.

“The most controversial points were 5 and 6. Point 5 demanded that the Belgrade government ‘accept the collaboration in Serbia of organs of the Imperial and Royal Government [of Austria-Hungary] in the suppression of the subversive movement directed against the territorial integrity of the monarchy’ and point 6 stated that ‘organs delegated’ by Austria-Hungary would ‘take part in the investigations’ relating to accessories in the crime. As usual in Vienna, this text was composed by many hands, but it was Berthold who had insisted on incorporating a reference to Austrian involvement. The reason is obvious enough: Vienna did not trust the Serbian authorities to press home the investigation without some form of Austrian supervision and verification. And it must be said that nothing the Serbian government did between 28 June and the presentation of the ultimatum gave them any reason to think otherwise.

“This was the demand irreconcilable with Serbian sovereignty that had already been identified in Paris, St. Petersburg and Belgrade as the prospective trigger for a broader confrontation...”<sup>775</sup>

The Serbs were given only forty-eight hours to accept all the Austrians’ demands. “The Belgrade government’s reply, delivered just within the forty-eight hours deadline, accepted nearly every demand but consented to Austrian involvement in a judicial inquiry only if that inquiry was subject to Serbia’s constitution and to international law. The Austrian leaders in Vienna seized on this pretext to break off relations immediately, and on 28 July declared war. The ultimatum impressed most European governments by its draconian demands...”<sup>776</sup>

Crucial would be the attitude of the Russians. As recently as October, 1913 “St. Petersburg had been willing to leave Belgrade to its own devices... when the Austrians had issued an ultimatum demanding [the Serbs’] withdrawal from northern Albania.”<sup>777</sup> But Sarajevo and the Austrians’ reaction to it swung the Russians firmly back behind the Serbs. And in the third quarter of July the Tsar and Poincare met in St. Petersburg, where they agreed to defend the Serbs. The Russian foreign minister Sergei Sazonov “condemned the Austro-Hungarian ultimatum with disgust”, declaring that no state could accept such demands without “committing suicide”.<sup>778</sup>

As Stevenson admits, “the summary time limit gave the game away, as did the peremptory rejection of Belgrade’s answer. The ultimatum had been intended to start a showdown...”

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<sup>775</sup> Clark, *op. cit.*, pp. 454-455.

<sup>776</sup> Stevenson, *op. cit.*, pp. 10-11.

<sup>777</sup> Clark, *op. cit.*, p. 484.

<sup>778</sup> Clark, *op. cit.*, p. 462. Again, Winston Churchill called it “the most insolent document of its kind ever devised”.

“The Serbian evidence confirms that Austria-Hungary had good grounds for rigorous demands. But it also shows that the Belgrade government was anxious for a peaceful exit from the crisis whereas the Austrians meant to use it as the pretext for violence. Austria-Hungary’s joint council of ministers decided on 7 July that the ultimatum should be so stringent as to ‘make a refusal almost certain, so that the road to a radical solution by means of a military action should be opened’. On 19 July it agreed to partition Serbia with Bulgaria, Albania, and Greece, leaving only a small residual state under Habsburg economic domination.”

In the end, the Austrians went to war so as to save the honour of Austria as they understood it and destroy the main threat to their state as they saw it. As Conrad put it: they now had to fight Serbia (and probably Russia) “since an old monarchy and a glorious army must not perish without glory”.<sup>779</sup> In this motivation they were not so different from that of the other Great Powers: the First World War was fought above all for the sake of honour...

However, before going to war the Austrians needed the unconditional support of Germany, which they obtained in the famous “blank cheque” given them by the Kaiser and his government on July 6. In fact, this was not the first “blank cheque” that the Austrians had received. On November 28, 1912 the German foreign minister had told parliament: “If Austria is forced, *for whatever reason*, to fight for its position as a Great Power, then we must stand by her side.”<sup>780</sup>

Documents referred to in the German-Jewish law professor Kantorowicz’s work, *Gutachten zur Kriegsschuldfrage*, “include Wilhelm II’s ‘Blanco-Vollmacht’ (blank cheque) for Austria-Hungary to take any action considered necessary against the Kingdom of Serbia, and the Kaiser’s subsequent confirmation that the German empire would honour its alliance obligation to Habsburg should tsarist Russia declare war. He also pointed out that under article three of the Triple-Alliance agreement, Germany had not been obliged to come to Austria-Hungary’s assistance in July 1914. Article 3 stipulated that the *casus foederis* (*Bundnispflicht*) in the Triple Alliance would come into existence only if one of the partners were the victim of an unprovoked attack by two major powers. This was not the case in July 1914. Russia had not attacked the Danube Monarchy; instead, the Austrian government declared war on Russia on 6 August on German insistence. In the absence of an unprovoked attack, Kantorowicz lamented that the German people ‘had been led to the slaughter’ via a treaty obligation that did not exist...”<sup>781</sup>

Clark argues that the Germans’ “blank cheque” of July 6 was a miscalculation based on the false assumption that the Russians would not intervene on the side of the Serbs - first of all, because they were not yet ready

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<sup>779</sup> Strachan, *The First World War*, London: Pocket Books, 2006, p. 11.

<sup>780</sup> Fromkin, *op. cit.*, p. 90.

<sup>781</sup> Jurgen Tampke, *A Perfidious Distortion of History*, London: Scribe, 2018, pp. 200-201.

for war, and secondly because, as the Kaiser repeatedly said, he could not imagine that the Tsar would side “with the regicides” (the Serbs had killed their king in 1903) against two monarchical powers.

However, this is understating the case against Germany. There is weighty evidence that the German military had been planning a preventive war against Russia for years – the “War Council” of December, 1912 is a clear example. Nevertheless, according to Clark, in July, 1914, the German civilian leadership – that is, the Kaiser, the Chancellor Bethmann and the Foreign Minister Jagow – were encouraging the Austrians to deal with the Serbs and *leave it at that*. They wanted them to act *quickly* in the hope that a quick Austrian victory would present the other Great Powers with a *fait accompli* that would deter them from intervening. In other words, they wanted a *localized* war that finished quickly enough to prevent the other Great Powers from intervening, whether militarily or through diplomatic initiatives. But the Austrians dithered and delayed; the *fait* was not *accompli*. This changed the calculus; for it raised the probability of Russian military intervention.

Not that the civil leaders were not prepared for Russian intervention. They accepted that risk, and thought that they could win. Thus Jagow, the German Foreign Minister, said: “If the conflict cannot be localised, and Russia attacks Austria-Hungary, this gives us the *casus foederis*.”<sup>782</sup> Jagow’s and Bethmann’s only proviso was that the Russians should appear to be in the wrong – that is, that they, and not the Germans, should begin the fateful process of mobilization.<sup>783</sup>

The German military thought only a little differently from the civil leadership. They not only were not afraid of Russian intervention: they *welcomed* it; for they had been waiting for the opportunity to have an excuse to destroy their main geopolitical rival in war. They welcomed the appearance of this opportunity *now*, in the summer of 1914, because Russia’s rearmament programme, according to the Germans’ calculations, was not due to be completed before 1917. That being the case, thought the Germans, so be it – better that the war begin now rather than later, when the advantage would be with the Russians.<sup>784</sup> The Germans were prepared to give their support in the war against Serbia, not so much because they wanted to destroy Serbia (that was the Austrians’ goal) as because they needed the Austrians’ support in any wider, *European* war against France and Russia. In particular, they needed the Austrians to hold the Russians at bay in the east while they executed the first part of the Schlieffen-Moltke plan by invading Belgium and France in the west. “If war came, Austria would have to subordinate its conflict with Serbia in order to devote itself entirely to the combat on the Russian front.”<sup>785</sup>

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<sup>782</sup> Fischer, *op. cit.*, p. 60.

<sup>783</sup> Fromkin, *op. cit.*, pp. 210, 203.

<sup>784</sup> Clark, *op. cit.*, pp. 415-423.

<sup>785</sup> Fromkin, *op. cit.*, p. 204.

But it was be admitted that it was not only German leaders who welcomed the outbreak of war: important figures in both the French, the Russian and the British leadership did not want the conflict to be localized, but *wanted* a wider conflict because they thought war was inevitable and/or that this was the only way to deal with the perceived threat of German domination of Europe. This was particularly the position of the French President Poincaré, who travelled to Russia in the fourth week of July in order to stiffen the resolve of the Russians. It was also true of Russian Agriculture Minister Krivoshein and of British First Lord of the Admiralty Winston Churchill, who rejoiced on hearing that the Austrians had declared war on the Serbs on July 28.<sup>786</sup> However, we may safely say that there were more doves than hawks in the higher reaches of the governments of the Triple Entente, while the opposite was the case in the ruling circles of the Germanic powers.

The fact that the Austro-Serbian conflict did not remain localized, but spread to engulf the whole of Europe was the result, according to Clark, of the structure of the alliance between Russia and France, in which an Austrian attack on Serbia was seen as a “tripwire” triggering Russian intervention on the side of Serbia and Germany on the side of Austria, followed immediately by French intervention on the side of Russia. This theory is not unreasonable, but let us not forget who actually and deliberately “tripped the wire” and “pulled the trigger”: Germany and Austria. It was they who wanted war and actually declared war before the Entente; the smoking gun was in their hands. Thus Austria declared war on Serbia on July 28, and Germany declared war on Russia on August 1, followed by invasions of Luxembourg on August 2 and of Belgium on August 4. The actions of the Triple Entente powers, meanwhile, were essentially precautionary rather than aggressive.

And with good reason... Neither France nor Britain was ready for war, unlike Germany. France in particular had every reason to dread another war with her more populous and powerful rival. As for Britain, she was not fully committed to the tripwire scenario. For her links with France and Russia were not as strong as those between France and Russia; they did not constitute a full military alliance. In fact, it was only at the very last minute that a majority in the British cabinet accepted the case for intervention. As Tempke writes, “the United Kingdom did not declare war on Germany [on August 4] because of the Triple Entente, but because the German empire violated Belgian neutrality.”<sup>787</sup> It was her treaty with Belgium, rather than her Ententes with France and Russia, that constituted Britain’s “tripwire”.

Russia, of course, was committed to the tripwire scenario through her alliances with France and Serbia. And yet in view of Durnovo’s warning of the extreme danger to the Russian empire that any war with Germany entailed, how could any such guarantee to Serbia or France be unconditional? Lieven writes that it is necessary “to grasp the values and mentality of the Russian

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<sup>786</sup> Clark, *op. cit.*, p. 552.

<sup>787</sup> Tempke, *op. cit.*, p. 256.

ruling elites... In old regime Europe the nobleman was brought up to defend his public reputation and honour at all costs, if necessary with sword in hand. The ethic of the duel still prevailed in aristocratic and, in particular, military circles. No crime was worse than cowardice. Kings, aristocrats and generals were not used to being pushed about or humiliated. In contemporary parlance, they had a short fuse. In pre-1914 Europe, war was still widely regarded not only as honourable and even romantic, but also as a sometimes necessary and legitimate means by which great powers could defend their interests and achieve national goals unobtainable by peaceful measures. Victory was a meaningful concept even as regards wars between great powers in a way that makes little sense in the nuclear age. The catastrophe of 1914 is incomprehensible unless these underlying realities are taken into account."<sup>788</sup>

Much was said, on the German side of the "war guilt" argument, concerning the fact that the Russians mobilised before they did. But, as we have seen, the Germans were waiting and hoping for the Russians to initiate their slow and ponderous process of mobilisation in order that they could initiate their much swifter and deadlier plan to invade Western Europe while claiming that they were reacting to Russian aggression. In any case, as Jurgen Treppe writes, partial mobilisation may be "a precautionary measure. Indeed, even full mobilisation is merely the act of assembling and making troops and supplies ready for war (the Schlieffen Plan provided an exception, as mobilisation was tied to immediate combat action). Mobilisation can also be seen as a last warning that a country is ready for war should [diplomatic] means to avoid it fail. Russia's mobilisation on 30 July 1914 did not necessarily mean that the tsar was bent on war. Switzerland and the Netherlands mobilised on the same day. Bethmann-Hollweg himself did not see in the Russian mobilisation an intention to go to war..."<sup>789</sup>

Russia's rulers, writes Lieven, "did not want war. Whatever hankering Nicholas II may ever have had for military glory had been wholly dissipated by the Japanese war. That conflict had taught the whole ruling elite that war and revolution were closely linked. Though war with Germany would be more popular than conflict with Japan had been, its burdens and dangers would also be infinitely greater. Russian generals usually had a deep respect for the German army, to which on the whole they felt their own army to be inferior. Above all, Russian leaders had every reason to feel that time was on their side. In strictly military terms, there was good reason to postpone conflict until the so-called 'Great Programme' of armaments was completed in 1917-18. In more general terms, Russia already controlled almost one-sixth of the world's land surface, whose hitherto largely untapped potential was now beginning to be developed at great speed. It was by no means only Petr Stolypin who believed that, given 20 years of peace, Russia would be transformed as regards its wealth, stability and power. Unfortunately for Russia, both the Germans and the Austrians were well aware of all the above facts. Both in Berlin and Vienna

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<sup>788</sup> Lieven, *Nicholas II*, p. 190.

<sup>789</sup> Tempke, *A Perfidious Distortion of History*, London: Scribe, 2018, p. 257.

it was widely believed that fear of revolution would stop Russia from responding decisively to the Austro-German challenge: but it was also felt that war now was much preferable to a conflict a decade hence.

“In fact, for the Russian government it was very difficult not to stand up to the Central Powers in July 1914. The regime’s legitimacy was at stake, as were the patriotism, pride and self-esteem of the key decision-makers. Still more to the point was the conviction that weakness would fatally damage Russia’s international position and her security. If Serbia became an Austrian protectorate, that would allow a very significant diversion of Habsburg troops from the southern to the Russian front in the event of a future war. If Russia tamely allowed its Serbian client to be gobbled up by Austria, no other Balkan state would trust its protection against the Central Powers. All would move into the latter’s camp, as probably would the Ottoman Empire. Even France would have doubts about the usefulness of an ally so humiliatingly unable to stand up for its prestige and its vital interests. Above all, international relations in the pre-1914 era were seen to revolve around the willingness and ability of great powers to defend their interests. In the age of imperialism, empires that failed to do this were perceived as moribund and ripe for dismemberment. In the judgement of Russian statesmen, if the Central Powers got away with the abject humiliation of Russia in 1914 their appetites would be whetted rather than assuaged. At some point in the near future vital interest would be threatened for which Russia would have to fight, in which case it made sense to risk fighting now, in the hope that this would deter Berlin and Vienna, but in the certainty that if war ensued Serbia and France would fight beside Russia, and possibly Britain and certain other states as well.”<sup>790</sup>

One could argue that the Tsar should have imposed his will – that is, his will to *avoid* war - on the patriots and the foreign policy establishment whether they liked it or not. But times had changed greatly since the reign of the absolutist Tsar Peter the Great. Tsar Nicholas, though far from being the weak man that western historians almost invariably make him out to be (Lieven is an honourable exception), was not in a position simply to ignore what his ministers and bureaucrats thought and impose his will on them. Like all European monarchs in this, the beginning of the age of democracy and the common man, he simply could not afford to ignore public opinion. In any case, he was running out of wise and loyal men to place in the higher reaches of government. As Lieven points out, “he could not find a prime minister competent to do the job who would obey his orders and pursue the line he required. Talented officials were no longer willing to simply assume public responsibility for executing the tsar’s commands.”<sup>791</sup>

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<sup>790</sup> Lieven, “Russia, Europe and World War I”, in Edward Acton, Vladimir Cherniaev, William Rosenberg (eds.), *A Critical Companion to the Russian Revolution, 1914-1921*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997, pp. 42-43.

<sup>791</sup> Lieven, *Towards the Flame*, p. 347.

The Tsar did not want war, and fully understood that it might lead to revolution and destroy Russia in the end - which it did. But he was determined to defend the Serbs against aggression from Austria, whatever may have been their moral responsibility for Sarajevo. Considerations of honour were important here; but the most important were those of common faith and consanguinity, which could not lightly be disregarded by a Russian Orthodox tsar, the Emperor of the Third Rome...

Other foreign policy considerations influenced him. Thus Turkey's order of two dreadnoughts to protect the northern Aegean islands against Greece constituted a direct threat to the Russian Black Sea fleet and the Russian export trade through the Straits. The dreadnoughts were due to be received at the end of July...

Again, the situation in the Straits was inextricably linked with that in the Balkans - another reason why the Tsar and his cabinet decided to defend the Serbs.

Evidence that the Tsar's sincere desire to avert war by all honourable means - that is, so long as it did not involve sacrificing the Serbs to Austrian aggression - is contained in the telegrams exchanged between Tsar Nicholas and the Serbian regent, Prince Alexander, in the last days before the catastrophe. The prince, who had commanded the First Serbian Army in the Balkan wars and later became king, wrote to the Tsar on July 23: "The demands of the Austro-Hungarian note unnecessarily represent a humiliation for Serbia and are not in accord with the dignity of an independent state. In a commanding tone it demands that we officially declare in *Serbian News*, and also issue a royal command to the army, that we ourselves cut off military offensives against Austria and recognize the accusation that we have been engaging in treacherous intrigues as just. They demand that we admit Austrian officials into Serbia, so that together with ours they may conduct the investigation and control the execution of the other demands of the note. We have been given a period of 48 hours to accept everything, otherwise the Austro-Hungarian embassy will leave Belgrade. We are ready to accept the Austro-Hungarian demands that are in accord with the position of an independent state, and also those which would be suggested by Your Majesty; everyone whose participation in the murder is proven will be strictly punished by us. Certain demands cannot be carried out without changing the laws, and for that time is required. We have been given too short a period... They can attack us after the expiry of the period, since Austro-Hungarian armies have assembled on our frontier. It is impossible for us to defend ourselves, and for that reason we beseech Your Majesty to come as soon as possible to our aid..."

To this the Tsar replied on July 27: "In addressing me at such a serious moment, Your Royal Highness has not been mistaken with regard to the feelings which I nourish towards him and to my heart-felt disposition towards the Serbian people. I am studying the present situation with the most serious attention and My government is striving with all its might to overcome the

present difficulties. I do not doubt that Your Highness and the royal government will make this task easier by not despising anything that could lead to a decision that would avert the horrors of a new war, while at the same time preserving the dignity of Serbia. All My efforts, as long as there is the slightest hope of averting bloodshed, will be directed to this aim. If, in spite of our most sincere desire, success is not attained, Your Highness can be assured that in no case will Russia remain indifferent to the fate of Serbia.”

Although the Tsar knew that resisting popular national feeling could lead to revolution, as Sazonov warned, he also knew that an unsuccessful war would lead to it still more surely. So the decisive factor in his decision was not popular opinion, but Russia’s ties of faith with Serbia. And it was right that this should have been the decisive factor; for the profoundest level of the war was not the struggle between Teutonism and Slavdom, but the struggle between Protestantism on the path to Nietzschean atheism and Orthodox Christianity...

And if one good thing came out of the First World War it was the strengthening of that religious bond. For as Prince Alexander replied to the Tsar: “Difficult times cannot fail to strengthen the bonds of deep attachment that link Serbia with Holy Slavic Rus’, and the feeling of eternal gratitude for the help and defence of Your Majesty will be reverently preserved in the hearts of all Serbs.”

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The Serbs moved fast, mobilizing on July 25. Their reply to the Austrian ultimatum was, writes Clark, “a masterpiece of diplomatic equivocation...”

“In their replies to the individual points, the drafters offered a whole cocktail of acceptances, conditional acceptances, evasions and rejections. They agreed officially to condemn all propaganda aimed at the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian Empire or the annexation of its territories (though they used a modal form of the verb that avoided the implication that there had actually been any such propaganda). On the question of irredentist organizations, the reply stated that the Serbian government possessed ‘no proof that the Narodna Obrana or other similar societies’ had as yet committed ‘any criminal act’ – nevertheless, they agreed to dissolve the Narodna Obrana and any other society ‘that may be directing its efforts against Austria-Hungary’. Point 3 stated that the government would happily remove from Serbian public education any anti-Austrian propaganda, ‘whenever the Imperial and Royal Government furnish them with facts and proofs of this propaganda’. Point 4 agreed to the removal from the military of suspect persons. But again, only once the Austro-Hungarian authorities had communicated to them ‘the names and acts of these officers and functionaries’. On the question of the creation of mixed Austro-Serbian commissions of enquiry (point 5), the reply stated that the Serbia government ‘did not clearly grasp the meaning or scope of the demand’, but that they undertook to accept such collaboration, inasmuch as it could be shown to agree with the principle of international law, with criminal

procedure and neighbourly relations'. Point 6 (on the participation of Austrian officials in the prosecution of implicated persons) was rejected outright on the grounds that this would be contrary to the Serbian constitution – this was the issue touching on Serbia's sovereignty, on which Sazonov had urged Belgrade to stand firm. As for point 7, calling for the arrest of Tankosić and Ciganović, the Serbian government stated that it had already arrested Tankosić 'on the very evening of the delivery of the note'; it had 'not yet been possible to arrest Ciganović'. Again, the Austrian government were asked to provide the 'presumptive evidence of guilt, as well as the proofs of guilt, if there were any... for the purpose of the later enquiry'. This was a somewhat devious response: as soon as the name of Ciganović had cropped up in connection with the Sarajevo enquiry, the prefecture of police in Belgrade had hustled him out of the capital on a special commission, all the while officially denying that any person by the name of Milan Ciganović existed in the city. The reply accepted without conditions points 8 and 10 regarding the prosecution of frontier officials found guilty of illegal activity and the duty to report to the Austro-Hungarian government on the measures undertaken. But point 9, under which the Austrians had demanded an explanation of hostile public comments by Serbian officials during the days following the assassination, elicited a more equivocal response: the Serbian government would 'gladly give' such explanations, once the Austrian government had 'communicated to them the passages in question in these remarks and as soon as they have shown that the remarks were acutally made by said officials'...

"This was a document fashioned for Serbia's friends, not for its enemy. It offered the Austrians little. Above all, it placed the onus on Vienna to drive ahead the process of opening up the investigation into the Serbian background of the conspiracy, without, on the other hand, accusing the king of collaboration that would have enabled an effective pursuit of the relevant leads. In this sense it represented a continuation of the policy the Serbian authorities had followed since 28 June, flatly to deny any form of involvement and to abstain from any initiative that might be taken to indicate the acknowledgement of such involvement..."<sup>792</sup>

The Austrians rejected the Serbs' reply on July 25, and began mobilization. Also on July 25, the Russian cabinet decreed pre-mobilization measures – which, however, were not put into effect until July 30. And in France, as was reported to Poincaré at Dunkirk, "the steps had been taken which, in the event of need, would permit an immediate mobilization".

The British had not yet made any decision for war, and Grey made no less than four attempts to mediate between the two blocs in order to prevent war. He "did not inspect or weigh up the Austrian case against Serbia, indeed he showed no interest in it whatsoever, not because he believed the Serbian government was innocent of the charges against it, but because he acquiesced

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<sup>792</sup> Clark, *op. cit.*, pp. 464-466.

in the Franco-Russian view that the Austrian threat to Serbia constituted a 'pretext' as Eyre Crowe put it, for activating the alliance.

"A central feature of that scenario was that Britain accepted – or at least did not challenge – the legitimacy of a Russian strike against Austria to resolve an Austro-Serbian quarrel, and the inevitability of French support for the Russian initiative. The precise circumstances of the Austro-Serbian dispute and questions of culpability were matters of subordinate interest; what mattered was the situation that unfolded once the Russians (and the French) were involved. And defining the problem in this way naturally placed the onus on Germany, whose intervention in Austria's defence must necessarily trigger French mobilization and a continental war."<sup>793</sup>

The Germans had not yet initiated mobilization, hoping that Russia would incur the guilt of making the first move while Britain remained neutral (these were the twin aims of Bethmann's diplomacy). "By 27 July it is clear that the Germans' principal concern was, as Müller put it, 'to put Russia in the wrong and then not to shy away from war' – in other words, to portray the fact of Russian mobilization as evidence of an attack on Germany."<sup>794</sup> But "as early as July 26, the Russian naval attaché in Berlin, Captain Evgenii Behrens, believed that the Germans had gone so far that that it would be impossible for them to withdraw now. Having served in Berlin throughout the Balkan Wars and the Liman von Sanders crisis, he reported that the Germans' expectation of war was far greater now than at any time in the two previous years."<sup>795</sup>

In any case, when, on July 28, the Kaiser, having just returned from a carefully timed cruise, read for the first time the Serbs' reply to the Austrians' ultimatum, he considered it to be "a capitulation of the most humiliating kind," and as a result, 'every cause for war falls to the ground.' A few sentences later he repeated himself: 'Every cause for war has vanished.'... 'Nevertheless,' he went on, 'the piece of paper, like its contents, can be considered as of little value so long as it is not translated into *deeds*. The Serbs are Orientals, therefore liars, tricksters, and masters of evasion.' So it should be agreed that the Austrian army would temporarily occupy a part of Serbia including Belgrade, as a hostage, until Serbia kept its word."<sup>796</sup>

"This was the moment," writes Fischer, "dreaded by the Foreign Ministry and by the military, the danger-hour which might see the monarch's weak nerve give way at the last moment, as it had done in 1906 and 1911, before the certainty of war. Accordingly, he was now deliberately deceived. There is no other explanation of the fact that the Chancellor passed on this new suggestion too, belatedly, without urgency, and in distorted form. The only condition laid down by the Emperor in his 'halt in Belgrade' was that Austria 'had to have a

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<sup>793</sup> Clark, *op. cit.*, p. 458.

<sup>794</sup> Ferguson, *op. cit.*, p. 150.

<sup>795</sup> Lieven, *Towards the Flame*, p. 335.

<sup>796</sup> Fromkin, *Europe's Last Summer*, London: Vintage, 2005, p. 218.

guarantee that the promises were carried out'. He thought this could be found in a 'temporary occupation of parts of Serbia'. In contradiction to this, Bethmann Hollweg emphasized to Tschirischky [German ambassador in Vienna] that the occupation must be the means of compelling 'complete fulfilment by the Serbian government of the Austrian demands'. But the real falsification of the Emperor's proposals lay in Bethmann Hollweg's express insistence to Tschirischky: 'You must carefully avoid giving any impression that we want to hold Austria back. We are committed only to find a *modus* to enable the realization of Austria-Hungary's aim *without at the same time unleashing a world war, and should this after all prove unavoidable, to improve as far as possible the conditions under which it is to be waged.*'

"This addendum of July 28 reveals on the one hand the motives behind Germany's actions and on the other the Chancellor's conscious risk of a world war. For he himself explained what he meant by 'favourable conditions': firstly, Russia must be made to appear to blame for the outbreak of war, and secondly, Britain must be kept neutral..."<sup>797</sup>

For Bethmann-Hollweg, - who, for all his European culture and sophistication, "was first and foremost a Prussian"<sup>798</sup>, - changed the wording to stress that the Austro-Hungarian occupation must be the means of compelling "complete fulfilment by the Serbian government of the Austrian demands" - something which the Serbs, who had already conceded much, would never agree to...<sup>799</sup>

On the same July 28 Bethmann Hollweg wrote in a memorandum to the Prussian delegations to the German court: "Should, contrary to our hopes, an intervention by Russia spread the conflagration, then we should be bound under our alliance to support our neighbour with the whole might of the Reich. Only under compulsion would we resort to the sword, but if we did so, it would be in calm conscience that we were guiltless of the sufferings which war might bring to the peoples of Europe... Russia alone must bear the responsibility if a European war breaks out." Finally, writes Fischer, "the Chancellor drafted a telegram from the Emperor to the Tsar which reveals more clearly still his intention of saddling Russia with the odium of a 'European conflagration'. 'If,' he told the Emperor, 'War should come after all, such a telegram would make Russia's guilt glaringly plain.'"<sup>800</sup>

At 11 a.m. on July 28, the Austrians declared war on Serbia, and there were skirmishes on the border at the rivers Danube and Save, while Belgrade was bombed the next day... Emperor Franz Joseph had been hesitant about declaring war, and his ministers were obliged to obtain his assent in order to

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<sup>797</sup> Fischer, op. cit., p. 72. This is the famous "Telegram 174".

<sup>798</sup> Sara Moore, *The Fourth Reich?* Jollies Publishing, 2016, p. 45.

<sup>799</sup> Moore, op. cit., p. 68. My italics (V.M.)

<sup>800</sup> Fischer, op. cit., p. 73.

do so.<sup>801</sup> But Berchtold obtained it by reporting – falsely – that Serbian troops had opened fire on Austrian forces. Actually – and it was only one isolated incident – it was Austrian troops who had fired on Serbs...<sup>802</sup>

“It was not until the afternoon [of July 29<sup>th</sup>] that Tschirschky appeared with the Emperor’s ‘halt in Belgrade’. Berchtold rejected any intervention as too late.”<sup>803</sup>

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On July 29, Russian Foreign Minister Sazonov received a message from the German chancellor via the German ambassador Pourtalès warning that if the Russians continued their military preparations the Germans themselves would be compelled to mobilize. This confirmed Sazonov in his belief that the Germans had instigated the Austrians’ attack on Serbia, so he ordered the chief of the Russian General Staff Yanushkevich to authorize a general mobilization. However, at 9.20 p.m. the Tsar received a telegram from the Kaiser pleading with him not to undertake military measures that would undermine his position as mediator with Austria. At 9.30, “saying ‘I will not be responsible for a monstrous slaughter’, the Tsar insisted that the order [for general mobilization] be cancelled. Yanushkevich reached for the phone to stay Dobrorolsky’s hand, and the messenger was sent running to the telegraph to explain that an order for partial mobilization was to be promulgated instead.”<sup>804</sup> Partial mobilization involved only the districts adjoining Austria (Odessa, Kiev, Moscow, Kazan); and, as Dominic Lieven points out, “so long as the Petersburg and Warsaw military districts were not mobilized, Russian preparations of war against Germany could not get very far.”<sup>805</sup>

So by the late evening of July 29, Russia had partially mobilized against Austria. Austria was at war with Serbia, but not with Russia: she could still “halt in Belgrade” as the Kaiser had wanted – but his generals and Chancellor did not want. The Germans were not yet directly involved or threatened by anybody, but their generals were massing troops on the borders of Luxembourg and France, waiting for the signal to invade, and Russia was preparing to mobilize...

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<sup>801</sup> If Archduke Ferdinand had lived, there would probably not have been a war. Ned Lebow writes: "Franz Ferdinand was the strongest spokesman for peace in Austria-Hungary. He believed that a war with Russia would lead to the downfall of both empires." (in Bethany Bell, "What if Archduke Franz Ferdinand had lived in 1914?" *BBC News*, 11 November, 2014). (V.M.)

<sup>802</sup> Fromkin, *op. cit.*, pp. 219-220.

<sup>803</sup> Fischer, *op. cit.*, p. 73.

<sup>804</sup> Clark, *op. cit.*, p. 521.

<sup>805</sup> Lieven, *Towards the Flame. Empire, War and the End of Tsarist Russia*, London: Allen Lane, 2015, p. 333. "Russian mobilization did not pose the deadly danger that German mobilization would. For Germany, mobilization meant war; for Russia, as its government explained to the Germans, it did not. 'Russia's armies,' as an academic authority recently has pointed out, could 'remain mobile behind their frontier almost indefinitely.' And the German government really knew that." (David Fromkin, *op. cit.*, p. 131)

Meanwhile, the diplomats were still at work. On the night of July 29/30<sup>th</sup>, Sir Edward Grey “sent a telegram to the German ambassador [to Austria], von Tschirschky, via Ambassador [to Britain] Lichnowsky, stating that Britain as a neutral power was prepared, with German help, to mediate between Austria-Hungary on the one side and Serbia and Russia on the other, but that the moment France was drawn into the war, Britain would not be able to stand aside.

“Bethmann Hollweg was momentarily shattered by Grey’s telegram, after all his efforts to secure British neutrality. At 3.00 a.m. on the 30<sup>th</sup> he sent the Ambassador von Tschirshky a message, telling him that circumstances had changed and he no longer supported Austria’s fight against Serbia.

“‘If therefore Austria should reject all mediation, we are faced with a conflagration in which Britain would be against us, Italy and Romania in all probability not with us. We should be two Great Powers against four. With Britain an enemy, the weight of the operations would fall on Germany... Under these circumstances we must urgently and emphatically suggest to the Vienna cabinet acceptance of mediation under the present honourable conditions. The responsibility falling on us and Austria for the consequences, which would ensure in case of refusal, would be uncommonly heavy.’

“And at 3.05 a.m. Bethmann sent another telegram ordering Austria-Hungary to stop ‘refusing any exchange of views with Russia’. He declared to the no doubt astonished Austrians: ‘We are prepared to fulfil our duty as allies, but must refuse to allow Austria to draw us into a world conflagration frivolously and without regard to our advice.’

“If Bethmann Hollweg had continued in this vein, a European war might have been averted but the generals were already clamouring for a declaration of war...”<sup>806</sup>

Meanwhile, late on July 29, the Tsar had made another appeal to the Kaiser: “I foresee that very soon I shall be overwhelmed by the pressure brought upon me and forced to take extreme measures which will lead to war.” And he wrote: “It would be right to refer the Austrian-Serbian situation to the Hague Conference. I’m counting on your support.” But his telegram received no reply...

At 7.00 a.m. on July 30, the Kaiser, having just heard about Russia’s partial mobilization, “commented on his marginal notes on the information: ‘Then I must mobilise too... He (Tsar Nicholas II) is taking on himself the guilt... I regard my attempted mediation as having failed.’

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<sup>806</sup> Moore, *op. cit.*, p. 73.

“The Foreign Ministry passed the Kaiser’s marginal notes on to the General Staff. Neither Austria-Hungary nor Serbia, let alone Russia, had seen the Kaiser’s ‘Halt in Belgrade’ before Bethmann Hollweg distorted it, but that was neither here nor there. When von Moltke saw that the Kaiser had said ‘Then I must mobilise’, he felt justified in pressing Austria-Hungary to adopt general mobilisation (without actually declaring war on Russia), and also to mobilise against Russia rather than Serbia...

“Although Bethmann Hollweg was still reluctant to proclaim an ‘imminent threat of war’, General Moltke then took independent action. He sent an urgent warning to the Chief of the Austro-Hungarian General Staff, Conrad, to mobilise immediately against Russia (letting the dispositions against Serbia take second place) and to announce as his reason the Russian proclamation of partial mobilization (so as to make Russia appear the aggressor).

“Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Sazonov declared that it was clear to everybody that Germany had decided to bring about a collision, as otherwise it would not have rejected all the peace proposals that had been made and could easily have brought her ally to reason...”<sup>807</sup>

Sazonov was right. In the 1960s by the German historian Franz Fritsch revealed, on the basis of archival evidence, that the Germans had given the “blank cheque” to the Austrians, that the wording of the Austrians’ extremely hardline ultimatum to the Serbs had been agreed with the Germans, and that the Kaiser’s call to the Austrians to “halt in Belgrade” had been distorted and delayed. The Germans’ line had been hard and consistent throughout: push the Austrians into invading Serbia without being afraid of Russian intervention, while doing their best to keep the British out of the conflict.

Thus “the evidence,” writes Ferguson, “points... persuasively to a military ‘first strike’, designed to pre-empt a deterioration in Germany’s military position – though this is by no means incompatible with the idea that the outcome of such a strike, if successful, would have been German hegemony in Europe. The only real question is whether or not this strategy deserves the apologetic name of ‘preventive war’. It is to condescend to the German decision-makers to caricature them as irrational duelists, going to war ‘in a fit of anger’, for the sake of an antiquated sense of honour. The Germans did not care about losing ‘face’; they cared about losing the arms race...”<sup>808</sup>

We have seen that the Germans’ motivation in going to war was subtly different from that of the Austrians. If the Austrians wanted to crush Serbia and/or to go down in a general war in a blaze of glory, defending their honour, this was alright with the Germans. But they cared less about honour; and more about the calculation, as Moltke said to Bethmann, that in the general war that must come soon, “we shall never again strike as well as we do now, with

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<sup>807</sup> Moore, *op. cit.*, pp. 74-75.

<sup>808</sup> Ferguson, *The War of the World*, London: Penguin, 2007, p. 153.

France's and Russia's expansion of their armies incomplete". Bethmann agreed with the generals that now was the time; he was basically on the side of the real war-mongers. But he was more concerned than they were that the diplomatic situation at the outbreak of a general war should be in Germany's favour. He believed "that he could count on the Social Democrats' support and Britain's neutrality in the coming war against France, provided that Russia appeared as the warmonger. So he refused Generals von Moltke and von Falkenhayn permission to use Russia's partial mobilization as an excuse to proclaim a state of emergency.

"Meanwhile, he continued to emphasise Germany's wish for peace to British Ambassador Sir Edward Goschen. However, the army's pressure was mounting. In the evening of the 29<sup>th</sup>, von Moltke and von Falkenhayn queued up again. Their troops were ready; they wanted to go to war and had already, that day, sent a demand to the German Minister in Brussels to allow the passage of the German armies through Belgium.

"Once again Bethmann Hollweg told them that Russia's partial mobilization did not create a *casus foederis* for them to go to war against France; they must wait until Russia's general mobilization to ensure German and British public support. But he couldn't put the army off for ever. Under Bismarck's Prussian structure for the German Reich, the leaders of the armed forces carried equal weight to the Chancellor.

"Austria had already declared war on Serbia on 28<sup>th</sup> July. On the 29<sup>th</sup> Austria bombed Belgrade. The Tsar of Russia and his advisors were racked with anxiety that if Russia mobilized partially and there was a war with Austria-Hungary, Russia would be completely unprepared for a war against Germany."<sup>809</sup>

The pressure was now on the Tsar to order a general mobilization...

At this point, "a telegram arrived from Rasputin who was at his village in Siberia. Rasputin advised to avoid war, because he 'foresaw' that it would result in the destruction of the autocracy. According to Gilliard, 'cunning and astute as he was, Rasputin never advised in political matters except with the most extreme caution. He always took the greatest care to be very well informed as to what was going on at Court and as to the private feelings of the Czar and his wife. As a rule, therefore, his prophecies only confirmed the secret wishes of the Czarina. In fact, it was almost impossible to doubt that it was she who inspired the telegram, but as her desires were interpreted by Rasputin, they seemed in her eyes to have the sanction and authority of revelation. However, the content of this telegram angered Nicholas. He considered Rasputin's involvement in such a critical political issue to be completely inappropriate, and his displeasure was intense..."<sup>810</sup>

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<sup>809</sup> Moore, *op. cit.*, pp. 69-70.

<sup>810</sup> *The Romanov Royal Martyrs*, p. 172.

The Tsar was right to be angry: to turn back now, when the Austrians were already in the capital of the Serbs, the Russians' allies and co-religionists, would have been dishonourable in a real way, and not simply in the context of medieval chivalry...

We must see God's Providence in the fact that throughout July Rasputin, recovering in a Siberian hospital from an assassination attempt, had not been able to meet the Tsar face to face. Later, he "liked to say that had he been in the capital at the tsar's side he would have been able to convince him not to go to war."<sup>811</sup> That may well be so; but God prevented it. After the declaration of war on August 1, Rasputin was unwaveringly patriotic and supportive of the war effort. His chance to change history had passed....

On the morning of 30 July, the Tsar received a telegram from the Kaiser reiterating the message from Ambassador Pourtalès on the previous day warning that if the Russians continued their military preparations the Germans themselves would be compelled to mobilize... It was at this point, it seems, that "Nicholas II abandoned any hope that a deal between the cousins could save peace and returned to the option of general mobilization..."<sup>812</sup>

For, as Sazonov hastened to tell the Tsar at Peterhof the following afternoon (July 30), the reversal of the previous order was impractical for purely military and logistical reasons. He declared that "it was clear to everybody that Germany had decided to bring about a collision, as otherwise it would not have rejected all the peace proposals that had been made and could easily have brought her ally to reason. He therefore urged Russia to adopt general mobilization."<sup>813</sup> and perhaps the loss of his throne."

With extreme reluctance, therefore, the Tsar agreed to general mobilization, giving the order on 31 July...

As he said to Sazonov: "They [the Germans] don't want to acknowledge that Austria mobilized before we did. Now they demand that our mobilization be stopped, without mentioning that of the Austrians... He [the Kaiser] is asking the impossible... If I accepted Germany's demands now, we would be disarmed against Austria."

"At 9 p.m. on the 30<sup>th</sup> Bethmann Holweg and Jagov yielded to Moltke's and Falkenhayn's insistence that 'the state of imminent war' must be proclaimed by noon on the next day at the latest. At midnight, only three hours after the evening meeting, Moltke had his adjutant, von Haeften, draft the Emperor's proclamation to his people, his army and his navy. At 9 a.m. on July 31 it was

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<sup>811</sup> Douglas Smith, *Rasputin*, London: Pan, 2017, p. 361.

<sup>812</sup> Clark, *op. cit.*, p. 513.

<sup>813</sup> Moore, *op. cit.*, p. 75.

agreed that the order for the measures of mobilization consequent to the proclamation should be issued if Russia's general mobilization was confirmed.

"The report of Russia's general mobilization was confirmed at noon on July 31. In the afternoon the Emperor, speaking from a balcony of the Palace, proclaimed a 'state of imminent threat of war', declaring that 'they are pressing the sword into our hand', Bethmann Hollweg's courage in waiting for Russia to order general mobilization had thus reaped its reward: the German people was ready for war in the conviction that it had been gratuitously assailed. Sazonov had put this trump into his hand. Bethmann Hollweg had also been able to eliminate the possibility of opposition from the Social Democrats. On the 31<sup>st</sup> Lerchenfeld reported to Munich, sarcastically but with relief, that the Social Democrats had 'in duty bound, demonstrated in favour of peace', but were now 'keeping quite quiet'. "<sup>814</sup>

At midnight on 31 July Germany issued a twelve-hour ultimatum to Russia stipulating German mobilization if Russia refused to withdraw its mobilization order."<sup>815</sup>

On 1<sup>st</sup> August the Press Office of the German Foreign Ministry lyingly declared: "Russia alone forces a war in Europe which nobody has wanted except Russia; the full force of responsibility falls on Russia alone."<sup>816</sup> 'Germany declared war on Russia. France mobilized in support of Russia the same day. Two days later, 3 August, Germany declared war on France."<sup>817</sup>

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<sup>814</sup> Fischer, *op. cit.*, pp. 85-86.

<sup>815</sup> Ian Kershaw, *To Hell and Back. Europe 1915-1949*, London: Penguin, 2015, p. 55.

<sup>816</sup> Moore, *op. cit.*, pp. 75-76.

<sup>817</sup> Kershaw, *op. cit.*, p. 56.

## 57. THE SCRAP OF PAPER

Britain tried hard to prevent the outbreak of the First World War. The Foreign Secretary, Sir Edward Grey, made several offers of mediation during the Sarajevo crisis, all of which were rejected by the Germans. At the same time he made it clear that if France were invaded by Germany, Britain would not stand idly by. German Chancellor Bethmann Hollweg's major miscalculation was that Britain would remain neutral. This was the miscalculation that determined the fate of his country. Indeed, as Niall Ferguson points out, "with hindsight, the biggest question of 1914 – the one which would decide the war – was what Britain would do."<sup>818</sup>

In fact, Britain had no formal treaty arrangement with France. But it was not in her interests that any single nation should gain hegemonic power on the continent. Moreover, she *did* have a formal treaty with Belgium. This was one of the oldest and most stable alliances in European politics, and was to become of extreme importance in 1914. For what Britain would do depended largely on the nature of her relationship with Belgium.<sup>819</sup>

Britain and Germany were not natural enemies. Moreover, Germany initially declared war on France and Russia, not on Britain. For Bethmann Hollweg thought that Britain might be persuaded to take a neutral stance. After all, she was not closely tied to any of the Great Powers through a military alliance. Moreover, with her overwhelming naval power, Britain was not directly threatened by Germany, and so could have sat out the war without fatal danger to herself. Her reputation would have been damaged, especially among the French, who increasingly counted on British intervention. But neither legal obligations nor self-interest compelled Britain to intervene – *provided Germany did not invade Belgium*, towards which Britain *did* have treaty obligations. It has been suggested that Britain's real reason for intervening was the defence of *Britain*, not Belgium, for the dominance of any single power in Europe could not fail to be a long-term threat to Britain. Be that as it may, the violation of Belgium's sovereignty was the official reason given by Britain – and a quite sufficient one – for going to war with Germany.

Bethman-Hollweg agitatedly told the British ambassador in Berlin that he considered Britain's attitude "terrible to a degree; just for a word – 'neutrality', a word which in war time had so often been disregarded – just for a scrap of paper..." But the decisive factor was the famous scrap of paper, Britain's treaty with Belgium. This, combined with the atrocities carried out by the Germans on the civilian Belgian population during their invasion (5-6000 killed, 120,000

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<sup>818</sup> Ferguson, *The Pity of War*, London: Penguin, 1999, p. 154.

<sup>819</sup> Fritz Kraemer's observation, that "England entered the war not because of Belgium but because it was France's ally" (Niall Ferguson, *Kissinger.1923-1968: The Idealist*, New York: Picador, 2016, p. 126) was not strictly correct. However important the defence of France was to the British, it was not the decisive factor; otherwise, the decision to go to war might have been much more clear-cut.

workers deported, the library at the University of Louvain destroyed), compelled Britain to war...

Violating Belgium's neutrality had long been an essential part of Germany's Schlieffen plan, so called because it was devised by Schlieffen, Chief of the German General Staff from 1891 to 1906. According to his plan for the coming war, to be fought on two main fronts, against France in the West and against Russia in the East, the Germans in their western thrust were to invade Holland and Belgium on their way to France. Schlieffen's successor Moltke decided not to invade Holland, but the invasion of Belgium remained an essential part of the plan.<sup>820</sup>

"Believing that war was a certainty," writes Barbara Tuchman, "and that Germany must enter it under conditions that gave her the most promise of success, Schlieffen determined not to allow the Belgian difficulty to stand in Germany's way..."

"A neutral and independent Belgium was the creation of England, or rather of England's ablest Foreign Minister, Lord Palmerston. Belgium's coast was England's frontier; on the plains of Belgium, Wellington had defeated the greatest enemy to England since the Armada. Thereafter England was determined to make that path of open, easily traversable territory a neutral zone and under the post-Napoleon settlement of the Congress of Vienna, agreed with the other power to attach it to the Kingdom of the Netherlands. Resenting union with a Protestant power, burning with the fever of the nineteenth-century nationalism, the Belgians revolted in 1830, setting off an international scramble. The Dutch fought to retain their province, the French, eager to reabsorb what they had once ruled, moved in; the autocratic states – Russia, Prussia, and Austria – bent on keeping Europe clamped under the vise of Vienna, were ready to shoot at the first sign of revolt anywhere.

"Lord Palmerston outmanoeuvred them all. He knew that a subject province would be an eternal temptation to one neighbor or another and that only an independent nation, resolved to maintain its own integrity, could survive as a safety zone. Through nine years of nerve, of suppleness, of never swerving from his aim, of calling out the British fleet when necessary, he played off all contenders and secured an international treaty guaranteeing Belgium as an 'independent and perpetually neutral state'. The treaty was signed in 1839 by England, France, Russia, Prussia and Austria.

"Ever since 1892, when France and Russia had joined a military alliance, it was clear that four of the five signatories of the Belgian treaty would be automatically engaged – two against two – in the war for which Schlieffen had

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<sup>820</sup> Moltke "decided instead to leave Holland alone" for two reasons. "In the first place, Dutch armed resistance might tip the scales against the invaders; in the second, if a war of attrition developed, Germany would need a neutral Netherlands as a conduit for supplies. These were both good reasons for respecting Dutch neutrality" (Fromkin, *Europe's Last Summer*, pp. 35-36)

to plan. Europe was a heap of swords piled as delicately as jackstraws; one could not be pulled out without moving the others. Under the terms of the Austro-German alliance, Germany was obliged to support Austria in any conflict with Russia. Under the terms of the alliance between France and Russia, both parties were obliged to move against Germany if either became involved in a 'defensive war' with Germany. These arrangements made it inevitable that in any war in which she engaged, Germany would have to fight on two fronts against both Russia and France.

"What part England would play was uncertain; she might remain neutral; she might, if given cause, come in against Germany. That Belgium could be the cause was no secret. In the Franco-Prussian War of 1870, when Germany was still a climbing power, Bismarck had been happy enough, upon a hint from England, to reaffirm the inviolability of Belgium. Gladstone had secured a treaty from both belligerents providing that if either violated Belgian neutrality, England would cooperate with the other to the extent of defending Belgium, though without engaging in the general operations of the war. Although there was something a little impractical about the tail of the Gladstonian formula, the Germans had no reason to suppose its underlying motive any less operative in 1914 than in 1870. Nevertheless, Schlieffen decided, in the event of war, to attack France by way of Belgium.

"His reason was 'military necessity'. In a two-front war, he wrote, 'the whole of Germany must throw itself upon *one* enemy, the strongest, most powerful, most dangerous enemy, and that can only be France.' Schlieffen's completed plan for 1906, the year he retired, allocated six weeks and seven-eighths of Germany's forces to smash France while one-eighth was to hold her eastern frontier against Russia until the bulk of her army could be brought back to face the second enemy. He chose France first because Russia could frustrate a quick victory by simply withdrawing within her infinite room, leaving Germany to be sucked into an endless campaign as Napoleon had been. France was both closer at hand and quicker to mobilize. The German and French armies each required two weeks to complete mobilization before a major attack could begin on the fifteenth day. Russia, according to German arithmetic, because of her vast distances, huge numbers, and meager railroads, would take six weeks before she could launch a major offensive, by which time France would be beaten..."<sup>821</sup>

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There was one major silver lining to the cloud of Britain's entry into the war - a consolidation of majority sentiment behind the war in *Ireland*, whose crisis until August, 1914 had been the first item on the British political agenda. Indeed, according to Sir Edward Grey, "the one bright spot in the whole of this terrible situation is Ireland." "Intending his message to get through to Berlin and Vienna, where there was reason to believe politicians thought Britain's

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<sup>821</sup> Tuchman, *op. cit.*, pp. 21-23.

freedom of action might be limited by the Irish crisis, he confirmed that 'the general feeling throughout Ireland – and I would like this to be clearly understood abroad – does not make the Irish question a consideration which we feel we have now to take into account.' It was, indeed, a moment when all the British parties closed ranks. The Conservative leader, Bonar Law, offered his party's 'unhesitating support'. John Redmond, acknowledging the existence of the [Unionist] Ulster and [Nationalist] Irish Volunteers, believed they could combine to defend Ireland. He said that the government could 'tomorrow withdraw every one of their troops from Ireland. I say that the coast of Ireland will be defended from foreign invasion by her armed sons, and for this purpose armed nationalist Catholics in the South will be only too glad to join arms with the armed Protestant Ulstermen in the North. Is it too much to hope,' he added, 'that out of this situation there may spring a result which will be good not merely for the Empire, but good for the future welfare and integrity of the Irish nation.'"<sup>822</sup>

Some of the nationalists were against the war. However, "on 18 September, the Irish Home Rule Bill [giving Southern Ireland independence] finally became law, and though its operation was suspended for the duration of the war, this was enough to allow Redmond to commit Irish nationalism, not just to the defence of Ireland at home, but to serve abroad as well..."<sup>823</sup>

Of course, this was far from the end of the story of the Irish question, even during the world war. But for the time being the United Kingdom of Britain and Ireland was still intact and on the Allied side...

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"Given the terrible permanent damage the war did," writes Tombs, "it is natural to feel that Britain should have stayed out at all costs. What would those costs have been? The Foreign Office feared both possible outcomes: '(a) Either Germany and Austria win, crush France and humiliate Russia. With the French fleet gone, Germany in occupation of the Channel, with the willing or unwilling cooperation of Holland and Belgium, what will be the position of a friendless England? (b) Or France and Russia win. What would then be their attitude towards England? What about India and the Mediterranean?' As Bethmann Hollweg put it, 'the English policy of the Balance of Power must disappear' and 'a new Europe' be created. This, feared Grey, would expose Britain and its empire to subsequent German aggression, perhaps abetted by an embittered Russia and France – which the German government did indeed intend. '[I]f we must bleed to death,' said the Kaiser on 30 June, 'at least England must lose India'.

"A few historians have taken an optimistic view of the likely consequences of a German victory. It would merely have brought about 'the Kaiser's

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<sup>822</sup> Keith Jeffrey, 1916, London: Bloomsbury, 2015, p. 107.

<sup>823</sup> Jeffrey, *op. cit.*, p. 108.

European Union,' a German-led common market 'eight decades ahead of schedule... with which Britain, with her maritime empire intact, could... have lived.' Besides, Germany might meanwhile have become a democracy. Such optimism rests on two assumptions. First, that the hegemonic war aims formulated by Germany soon after war began would not have emerged had Britain not intervened. Second, that the Kaiser's government is comparable with that of post-1945 Germany: mellowed by victory, it would have introduced democracy, handed power to its domestic enemies, and devoted itself to friendly relations with its defeated foreign rivals. It is true that Germany (like other belligerents) had no list of war aims when war broke out: not surprisingly, as all were claiming to be fighting in self-defence. In the hope of preventing or delaying British intervention, Germany offered not to annex any Belgian territory if the Belgians did not resist – a significant condition – and not to annex any French territory – though French colonies were fair game. But relative restraint promised before war had begun rapidly disappeared once battle was joined.

“So a far less optimistic vision of German victory is plausible. Even if Britain had remained neutral, war would still have broken out, Germany would have invaded Belgium and France, and the French and Belgians could have resisted – as of course they did irrespective of British action. Germany would probably have been victorious eventually without British intervention, but that victory would not have been quick or painless. As it was, the French army bloodily threw back the German invasion with minor help from the British, and the French and Russians were capable of resisting for many months at least on their own. As early as September 1914, Bethmann-Hollweg (a relative moderate) laid out his vision of the 'Kaiser's European Union' when imposed by force. Belgium would be taken over completely as a 'vassal state' with its ports 'at our military disposal', and this became the core of Germany's war aims in the west. The German navy wanted to establish bases directly threatening England – something the English had fought against for centuries. This aim was supported by nationalist politicians and newspapers, and backed by a surge of Anglophobia. To ensure 'security for the German Reich in West and East for all imaginable time,' Bethmann envisaged annexing large parts of northern France, including the Channel coast, imposing a crippling financial indemnity, making France 'economically dependent on Germany' and excluding British commerce. Holland would become 'dependent'. A European 'economic association' would be imposed to 'stabilise Germany's economic dominance'; Germany would subsequently set up a continuous 'Central African colonial empire'. Finally, Germany would detach vast territories from Russia to 'thrust [it] back as far as possible' – precisely what it did after defeating Russia in 1917.

“Germany's rulers came to see the war as a struggle against democracy, with victory the way of finally establishing their authoritarian power, which by the end of the war was practically a military dictatorship. The Kaiser, when he thought Germany had finally won in March 1918 said that 'if an English delegation comes to sue for peace it must kneel before the German standard for it was a question here of a victory of monarchy over democracy.' Democracy

would have had a bleak future in a Europe dominated by triumphant military monarchies in Berlin and Vienna. It seems unlikely that French democracy would have survived – it did not in 1940. Other vassal states would plausibly have come under harsh puppet dictatorships. What German soldiers and governors actually did is telling: over 6,000 civilians in Belgium and France were massacred in the first weeks of the war by invading troops; Belgium and occupied northern France were subjected to harsh military rule, semi-starvation, mass forced labour and systematic economic devastation in many ways worse than in the Second World War. In short, England in 1914 faced a prospect not so different from those in 1803 and in 1939. Perhaps in all three cases it could have survived as a cowed and impoverished satellite state, and it is possible to consider that a lesser evil than the carnage of the war. But in 1914 government and people chose overwhelmingly to fight against ‘militarism and aggression, defending law and order in Europe and even hoping that this would be the war to end war. They were probably right to fear what Germany might do, but they underestimated – like everyone else – the cost of preventing it. It is possible to disagree. But it was not a frivolous cause or a senseless decision...

“Grey was convinced that British security, and indeed honour, required that France should not be crushed by Germany. He also feared making an enemy of Russia – ‘If we fail her now,’ wrote the ambassador in St. Petersburg, ‘we cannot hope to maintain that friendly cooperation with her in Asia that is of such vital importance to us.’ On 28 July Austria declared war on Serbia, and on the twenty-ninth Russia ordered the mobilization of her forces. When King George V informed Asquith on 28 July that he had told Prince Henry of Prussia that Britain would try to remain neutral, Asquith pointed out the dangers: ‘Russia says to us: “If you won’t say you are ready to side with us now, your friendship is valueless, and we shall act on that assumption in the future”.’ The desperate French ambassador warned that if Britain let France down ‘those in favour of an alliance with Germany at the expense of Britain could feel justified’ – France would watch the future ruin of the British Empire ‘without a movement of sympathy’. On 30 July Germany refused to attend Grey’s conference, asking instead that Britain should promise neutrality in return for a pledge that Germany would make no territorial changes after its victory. Sir Eyre Crowe, head of the Foreign Office’s Western Department, thought this ‘cynical and dishonourable’, proving that ‘Germany wants this war’.

“Amid these pressures from all sides, the British government tried to dissuade the other states from taking fatal actions. Grey confided to a friend that he had ‘not lost all hope of a settlement,’ and he warned Paris on 31 July that Britain might have to remain neutral because its involvement would bring down the European economy. On 1 August, George V on Foreign Office advice sent a personal telegram to the tsar (addressed to ‘Dear Nicky’ and signed ‘Georgie’) urging the Russians to stop their mobilization. Later that day Grey told the German ambassador that if Germany promised not to attack France,

Britain would remain neutral and try to keep France neutral.<sup>824</sup> As German troops were already entering neutral Luxembourg, this news gave the German chief of staff a mild stroke. On 2 August the British Cabinet reluctantly consented to defend the French coast and French shipping from possible German attack. Grey made a statement to the Commons asserting that if Britain stayed neutral it would 'sacrifice our... reputation before the world, and [we] should not escape the most serious and grave economic consequences.' Both the king and the social reformer Beatrice Webb recorded in their diaries the impact of Grey's speech on public opinion: Webb thought that now 'even staunch Liberals agree that we had to stand by Belgium.' Both Lloyd George and Churchill, however, thought that if the Germans marched through only a small part of its territory, no British action would be necessary. But on 4 August the German army smashed its way into the heart of Belgium, and the Belgians [under their redoubtable King Albert] fought back. 'This simplified matters,' commented Asquith. The German ambassador in London reported to Berlin that 'the Government will have behind it the overwhelming majority of parliament [for] the protection of France and Belgium.' Britain declared war at midnight on the fourth. A month later, it signed a pact with France and Russia not to make a separate peace...<sup>825</sup>

"Ironically, Austria-Hungary, the state whose actions precipitated the crisis, was the last of the great powers to enter the conflict, declaring war on Russia only on 6 August. France declared war on Austria-Hungary five days later, and Britain, finally, a day later still..."<sup>826</sup>

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<sup>824</sup> Potentially, this meant that Russia might face Germany and Austria alone, without the support of Britain and France. That is why, as Kotkin writes, "to an elated German Kaiser. He August 1 telegram from London seemed a godsend: the splintering of the Triple Entente, and one less front. Grey *seemed* to be proposing that Britain and even France could remain neutral in Germany's support for Austria against Serbia and thus in Germany's quarrel with Russia. A nearly apoplectic von Moltke protested the great security risk and chaos involved in halting Germany's precision war plan and (somehow) shifting entire armies from west to east - 'Your majesty, it cannot be done. The employment of millions cannot be improvised' - but when a follow-up telegram arrived seeming to confirm British neutrality if Germany attacked only Russia, Wilhelm II ordered champagne. The Kaiser also called King George V, another cousin, to give his word that German troops, although continuing to mobilize in the west (for protection), would not cross the French frontier. It looked like a deal. But that very night the British king sent a stupendous reply. Drafted by Grey, it called the conversations between Grey and the German ambassador a 'misunderstanding'. Was it British treachery? No, just stupidity. Paris would never acquiesce to a German annihilation of Russia because that would drastically alter the balance of power on the continent to France's detriment, and in any case France had formal treaty obligations to Russia. Grey - who deemed Germany a battleship without a rudder but was himself acting inexplicably - belatedly specified that for Berlin a deal to avert war required that Germany had to hold back from attacking Russia too. A livid Wilhelm II ordered a relieved von Moltke to resume the occupation of Belgium. His revised 'Schlieffen Plan' was on..." (*Stalin*, p. 147).

<sup>825</sup> Tombs, *op. cit.*, pp. 610-612, 608-609.

<sup>826</sup> Kershaw, *op. cit.*, pp. 56-57.

The German invasion of Belgium was indeed the decisive factor that propelled Britain to war. In his famous speech to the Commons, Grey said that the Treaty of 1839 was “a Treaty with a history”. As Roberts writes, he mentioned “Bismarck’s promise in 1870 to respect Belgian neutrality when he attacked France during the Franco-Prussian War. Another vital difference from 1870 was that Napoleon III had hubristically precipitated the Franco-Prussian War by sending the Kaiser’s grandfather, Wilhelm I, an insulting telegram. Grey continued: ‘My own feeling is that if a foreign fleet engaged in a war with France, which France had not sought and in which she had not been the aggressor, came down the English Channel and bombarded and battered the undefended coasts of France, we could not stand aside and see this going on practically within sight of our eyes, with our arms folded, looking on dispassionately, doing nothing!’ This was especially true if France’s coast had only been left unprotected due to a secret naval agreement made by British ministers, as he had just admitted was the case. Rarely in those days did a *Hansard* reporter insert an exclamation mark on the official report of a parliamentary debate; Grey’s plea was the heartfelt one of a man who had written a blank cheque that he needed someone else to honour. With this eloquent combination of *realpolitik*, support for ‘undefended’ France, indignation over breaking of the 1839 Treaty and appeal to British honour, Grey was able, in his peroration, to call upon ‘the determination, the resolution, the courage, and the endurance of the whole country’. All four were going to be needed over the next four years...”<sup>827</sup>

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<sup>827</sup> Roberts, *op. cit.*, p. 85.

## 58. WILLY AND NICKY

Only one thing, besides Divine intervention, could have prevented world war after Austria declared war on Serbia on July 28, 1914: an agreement between the monarchs based on their family relationships. That is why, on July 31, immediately after receiving the news that Russia was mobilizing, the Kaiser cabled the Tsar that “the peace of Europe may still be maintained by you, if Russia will agree to stop the military measures which must threaten Germany and Austro-Hungary.” He offered to continue his mediation efforts (although he had never been a real mediator).

The Tsar replied: “I thank you heartily for your mediation which begins to give one hope that all may yet end peacefully. It is technically impossible to stop our military preparations which were obligatory owing to Austria’s mobilization. We are far from wishing for war. As long as the negotiations with Austria on Serbia’s account are taking place my troops shall not make any *provocative* action. I give you my solemn word for this.”

As for the third royal cousin, the British King George V, he appealed to the Tsar to stop his mobilization on August 1. But by then it was too late: the Russians had mobilized, the Germans had mobilized, and Churchill had mobilized the British fleet...

In 1914 Europe was a family of nations united by a single dynasty and a cosmopolitan elite confessing what most considered to be a single Christianity, albeit divided into Orthodox, Catholic and Protestant varieties.<sup>828</sup> The European Royal Family, headed by the matriarch Queen Victoria, was perhaps the last force resisting the centrifugal forces that seemed to be leading the continent inexorably to war.

The idea of a family of nations linked by dynastic marriages and/or a common faith as a bulwark against war is an old one. The Byzantine emperor saw himself as the head of a network of Orthodox nations in various degrees of relationship to himself, the head of the family. Of course, this idea was highly idealistic, and there were often “black sheep” who decided to make war against other members of the family against the will of the father. Nevertheless, there was enough substance in the idea to preserve a certain stability – until the very idea of a family of nations united under a single father-emperor, mother-empress or batyushka-tsar was discredited. The idea was revived in a slightly different form by Tsar Alexander I, who in 1815, fresh from his victory over Napoleon, proposed a “Holy Alliance” of Christian monarchs (one Orthodox, one Catholic and one Protestant) against the revolution to the kings of Austria and Prussia. This alliance, though mocked by Metternich and the British, and based more on a common monarchism and anti-democratism, did manage to

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<sup>828</sup> Tsar Nicholas II became the godfather of the future King Edward VIII at his Anglican baptism (Carter, *op. cit.*, p. 137), and in 1904 Kaiser Wilhelm was invited to be godfather of the Tsarevich Alexis (Niall Ferguson, *The War of the World*, p. 100).

preserve Europe against major revolutions until the Crimean War, but then foundered when Catholic France and Protestant Britain teamed up with the Muslim Ottoman empire against Russia. Thus the most serious “breach of the peace”, the Europe-wide revolution of 1848, was brought to an end by Tsar Nicholas I, invading revolutionary Hungary in 1849. But of course no European head of state seriously thought of the tsar of Russia as the head of a European family of nations. Even the monarchs of Europe regarded him with fear rather than filial love. And when Nicholas II proposed the Hague court of justice in 1899 as an arbitration mechanism for halting the arms race and preventing war, he was politely (or in the Germans’ case, not so politely) ignored...

However, there was still the European royal family. Almost all the crowned heads of Europe were united in one family, German in origin, being made up of branches of the Saxe-Coburg dynasty.<sup>829</sup> Thus the matriarch of the family, Queen Victoria of England, once told her uncle, King Leopold of the Belgians: “My heart is so German...”<sup>830</sup>

“During the Queen’s lifetime, ‘it was taken as a matter of course that German was widely and fluently spoken in the family.’”<sup>831</sup> Victoria’s son, Edward VII, reacted against this Germanism by becoming very anti-German. And the Russians and the Danes were not fans of the Germans. Nevertheless, on seeing a photo taken in 1910, after the funeral of Edward VII, in which nine reigning monarchs related to the dead Edward were present, one could be pardoned for thinking that the European Royal Family was one happy *German* royal family. The monarchs were: the British king George V; Kaiser Wilhelm of Germany; Frederick VIII of Denmark; George I of Greece; Haakon VII of Norway; Alfonso XIII of Spain, Manuel II of Portugal, Ferdinand I of Bulgaria and Albert I of Belgium. Only Nicholas II was not present for security reasons.<sup>832</sup>

As for the Russians, for many generations, the tsars and great princes had taken brides from German princely families; Nicholas II, though thoroughly Russian in spirit, had much more German blood than Russian in his veins; and the Tsaritsa Alexandra and her sister Grand Duchess Elizabeth were Hessian princesses with an English mother.<sup>833</sup> However, a divisive factor within the family was the fact that Alexandra and Minnie, the wives of King Edward VII of England and Tsar Alexander III of Russia, were sisters from the Danish dynasty who nurtured an intense dislike of the Prussians, who had invaded their country in 1864, and so moved their husbands, and later their sons, King George V and Tsar Nicholas II, closer to each other and further away from

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<sup>829</sup> Sophie Gordon, “The Web of Royalty”, *BBC History Magazine*, February, 2012, pp. 16-18.

<sup>830</sup> Ferguson, *The War of the World*, p. 97.

<sup>831</sup> Helen Rapoport, *The Race to Save the Romanovs*, London: Windmill Books, 1909, p. 11.

<sup>832</sup> Rapoport, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

<sup>833</sup> However, as Metropolitan Anastasy (Gribanovsky) pointed out, the sisters were more English than German in their tastes and upbringing, taking after their English mother rather than their German father (“Homily on the Seventh Anniversary of the Martyric End of Emperor Nicholas II and the Entire Royal Family”, *Orthodox Life*, vol. 31, no. 4, July-August, 1981).

Germany, thereby weakening the traditional hostility that existed between Russia and England and turning them against Germany. Meanwhile, the German Kaiser Wilhelm II, a cousin of George V and Nicholas II, reacted strongly against the liberalism of his English mother, and was attracted towards the militarist and fiercely anti-English monarchism of the Prussian aristocracy. In some ways, this also attracted him to autocratic Russia; but the developing alliance between Russia, Britain and France engendered in him and his circle a fear of “encirclement” and hostility against them all. Nevertheless, in the summer of 1914 many hoped that the family links between the Kaiser and the Tsar would prevent war.<sup>834</sup> For, as the London *Standard* had observed in 1894, “the influence of the Throne in determining the relations between European Power has never been disputed by those at all familiar with modern politics, it is sometimes lost sight of or ignored by the more flippant order of Democrats...”<sup>835</sup>

As Christopher Clark writes, “The European executives were still centred on the thrones and the men or women who sat on them. Ministers in Germany, Austria-Hungary and Russia were imperial appointees. The three emperors had unlimited access to state papers. They also exercised formal authority over their respective armed forces. Dynastic institutions and networks structured the communications between states. Ambassadors presented their credentials to the sovereign in person and direct communications and meetings between monarchs continued to take place throughout the pre-war years; indeed, they acquired a heightened importance.”<sup>836</sup>

Now Europe’s monarchs – especially cousins “Nicky”, “Willy” and “Georgie” – did believe in their mutual relationships. After all, they knew each other well, and Willie had often given Nicky the benefit of his advice. In 1905, as we have seen, the two had even agreed on a new treaty relationship between their countries until reluctantly dissuaded by their respective ministers... But Georgie and Nicky were much closer to each other than either was to Willy: George V told Margot Asquith that Nicky was “the best, straightest, most clear and decided man I know”.<sup>837</sup>

Let us look more closely at the relative responsibilities of the two main players, the Kaiser and the Tsar.

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Grand Duchess Elizabeth, the Tsar’s sister-in-law, said that the Tsar had not wanted war, but rather blamed her cousin, the Kaiser, “who disobeyed the

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<sup>834</sup> This in spite of the remark of the Tsarina Alexandra in a letter to her sister, Princess Victoria of Battenburg: “Family ties should not influence political considerations” (3 March, 1897).

<sup>835</sup> Miranda Carter, *The Three Emperors*, London: Penguin, 2010, p. 145.

<sup>836</sup> Clark, *The Sleepwalkers. How Europe Went to War in 1914*, London: Penguin, 2012, p. 170.

<sup>837</sup> Helen Rapoport, *The Race to Save the Romanovs*, London: Windmill Books, 2018, p. 21.

bidding of Frederick the Great and Bismarck to live in peace and friendship with Russia.”<sup>838</sup> However, the Kaiser’s real tragedy was not that he disobeyed Bismarck but that he obeyed his generals. Thus on July 28 the minister of war Falkenhayn showed who was really the boss when he reminded the Kaiser that he “no longer had control of the affair in his own hand”.

For as long ago as 1908 the Kaiser’s position, writes Fromkin, “had been precarious. In May 1914, only two months before Falkenhayn’s reminder, Edward House, President Woodrow’s envoy, had reported from Berlin that ‘the ‘military oligarchy’ were supreme, were ‘determined on war’ and were prepared to ‘dethrone the Kaiser the moment he showed indications of taking a course that would lead to peace.’ Of course, Wilhelm, whose grip on reality was fragile at best, may not have been fully alive to the perils of his position. Alternatively, House may have exaggerated.

“But there can be little doubt that much was going on of which the emperor was unaware. Indeed, among the things that Wilhelm did not know was that, the day before, [Foreign Minister] Jagow had cabled Vienna urging – indeed, practically ordering – the Austrian government to declare war on Serbia immediately. Jagow warned that the English proposal for a conference to keep the peace could not be resisted much longer. The German foreign minister neither consulted the Kaiser before sending this warning nor informed him afterwards that it had been sent.

“In Austria, too, a reluctant monarch was gotten around. In the past the Kaiser’s bombast had always given way in the end to caution. And now, on August 1, just as the German army was mobilizing in the West, the Kaiser, on the basis of some misinterpreted telegrams from the British Foreign Secretary Sir Edward Grey, again counseled caution, calling for the troops to be halted on the promise of Anglo-French neutrality. The plan had to be changed to concentrate all of Germany’s forces on Russia.

“According to Moltke, ‘the Kaiser, without asking me, turned to the aide-de-camp on duty and commanded him to telegraph immediate instructions... not to march into Luxembourg. I thought my heart would break.’ With England and France refusing to be drawn into the war, ‘The final straw,’ Moltke exploded, ‘would be if Russia now also fell away.’ Germany would be deprived of enemies!”<sup>839</sup>

Moltke “implored the Kaiser not to hinder the occupation of Luxembourg on the grounds that this would jeopardize German control of its railway route.” Wilhelm retorted: “Use other routes!” Now Moltke became “almost hysterical. In a private aside to the Minister of War Erich von Falkenhayn, the chief of the General Staff confided, close to tears, ‘that he was a totally broken man, because

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<sup>838</sup> Abbot Seraphim, *Martyrs of Christian Duty*, Peking, 1929; quoted in Lyubov Millar, *Grand Duchess Elizabeth of Russia*, Redding, Ca.: Nikodemos Publication Society, 1993, p. 176.

<sup>839</sup> Frumkin, *op. cit.*, p. 240.

the decision by the Kaiser demonstrated to him that the Kaiser still hoped for peace’.”

But when Grey’s real meaning became clearer through another telegram, and he saw that there was no question of British neutrality, the Kaiser finally surrendered, saying to Moltke: “Now you can do what you want...”<sup>840</sup>

So the Kaiser nearly prevented the catastrophe. But he bent his own sovereign will before that of his subject, the true war-monger, Moltke. In the end the Kaiser betrayed his own monarchist ideals – and paid for it with his own crown and his country’s defeat...

The situation of the Tsar was similar to that of the Kaiser but different in one critical respect: aside from the political pressures, he had a genuinely *moral* pressure imposed on him, the obligation to defend an Orthodox sister-naion (although there was no formal treaty between them) that was in extreme danger of destruction.

Nor, apart from moral considerations, was it in Russia’s own interests to allow the subjugation of Serbia. As Kotkin writes, the tsar “would never go to war out of some supposed Pan-Slavic romantic nonsense. Russian officials instructed the Serbs to respond reasonably to Austria. Nonetheless, the bottom line was that Russia would not allow German power to humiliate Serbia because of the repercussions for Russia’s reputation, especially following Russia’s inability to prevent Austria’s annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina back in 1908. Nicholas II was determined to deter Austria-Hungary, which had begun mobilization, *for the sake of Russia* not Serbia.”<sup>841</sup>

The Tsar could not escape intervening to defend Serbia for another reason: he was limited by the highly nationalist sympathies of the press and most of his ministers. This factor, combined with the general disrespect for tsarist rule created by decades of propaganda among, not only avowed revolutionaries, but also Duma deputies and *Zemstvo* officers, Grand Dukes and generals, workers and peasants, meant that even if the Tsar had decided not to intervene, he might well have been overthrown. So the choice for the Tsar was grim: avoid intervention and be overthrown, or intervene and trigger a world war against the formidable German army that was determined to destroy Russia.

He chose the latter – and was overthrown in any case...

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It was not only the European royal family ties that broke down in 1914, but also the bonds uniting the Romanov family and the family of Orthodox Russia, who disobeyed their father-tsar, and in a tide of nationalist emotion forced his

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<sup>840</sup> Clark, *op. cit.*, pp. 531, 533.

<sup>841</sup> Kotkin, *Stalin*, p. 144.

hand, compelling him to join a war that destroyed him, the state and the whole of European civilization.

“The emperor is sometimes accused,” writes Lieven, “of ‘caving in’ to his generals in 1914 and thereby bringing on the descent into war. This is unfair. Nicholas was forced by the united pressure not just of the generals but also of the Foreign Ministry, the de facto head of the domestic government, and the spokesmen of the Duma and public opinion. In many ways, the surprise is that the emperor held out on his own for so long...”<sup>842</sup>

But even if he had been able to resist these pressures and limitations, there was another pressure that the Tsar could not *and should not* have cast aside: the pressure of being the Emperor of the Third Rome, the father of a family of nations for whose spiritual and physical welfare he was responsible. Of course, these nations were sovereign states, and as often as not felt no obligation at all to obey the Emperor in Moscow. So much the worse for them and the whole of the Orthodox commonwealth of nations! Thus the Bulgarians had rebelled against Tsar Alexander III, and found themselves fighting on the German side, the losing side, in World War One. The Greeks hesitated, and eventually joined the Entente – but already after the Russian revolution. The Serbs themselves, who foolishly and criminally rejoiced at the shot in Sarajevo, as they had rejoiced at the murder of their king in 1903, suffered more than any other nation in World War One. And the worst result of all was that the disobedience of the children led directly to the death of the Father-Emperor, with catastrophic results for the whole of Orthodoxy, and indeed the whole world, which are still being felt over one hundred years later...

But the Father-Emperor himself, while pained by the rebellion of his children, did not desert them in their need, but gave himself to death that they might live. Many countries, and many statesmen, can justly be accused of some participation in the catastrophe of the First World War - but Tsar Nicholas II is not one of them. For he was the only statesman who, while striving in every way to avert war, accepted it when he saw that it could not be avoided without dishonour and disobedience to the Heavenly Father, going to war in full knowledge of its consequences.

For “anyone can rule the state,” says St. John Chrysostom, “but only the King can die for his people...”

## **CONCLUSION. EUROPE’S HUBRIS AND NEMESIS**

If the Germans tended to see the contest as a racial or cultural one between Teuton *Kultur* and Slavic barbarism, for the Russians who still had faith it was rather a religious one between Protestantism and Orthodoxy. As Archbishop

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<sup>842</sup> Lieven, *Towards the Flame*, p. 337.

Anthony (Khrapovitsky) put it: "Germany and Austria declared war on us, for which the former had already been preparing for forty years, wishing to extend its control to the East. What then? Should we quietly have submitted to the Germans? Should we have imitated their cruel and coarse manners? Planted in our country in place of the holy deeds of Orthodoxy piety the worship of the stomach and the wallet? No! It would be better for the whole nation to die than to be fed with such heretical poison!

"We have swallowed enough of it since the time of Peter the Great! And without that the Germans have torn away from the Russian nation, from Russian history and the Orthodox Church its aristocracy and intelligentsia; but in the event of a total submission to the German governmental authority, at last the simple people would have been corrupted. We already have enough renegades from the simple people under the influence of the Germans and of German money. These are above all those same Protestants who so hypocritically cry out for peace. Of course, they were not all conscious traitors and betrayers of their homeland, they did not all share in those 2,000,000 marks which were established by the German government (and a half of it from the personal fortune of the Kaiser) to be spent on the propagation of Protestant chapels in Russia..."<sup>843</sup>

At the deepest level, therefore, the First World War, at any rate on the Eastern front, was a religious war whose outcome would have huge religious consequences: if Russia won, the liberation of Russian Orthodoxy from the threat of German Protestantism, which had been weighing on Russia since Peter the Great, and if she lost, her captivity not only to Protestantism but even to militant atheism through the German agent Lenin. As Archimandrite (later Archbishop and Hieromartyr) Hilarion (Troitsky), put it, the war was "liberational in the broadest meaning of the word", and called on his students to resist German influence in theology with books and words.<sup>844</sup>

"In these days of war I appeal to you. You are liberated from military service, you sit, not in the trenches, but behind desks. Therefore do not decline from the necessary enlistment in the army of Christ, in the active, and no longer small, army of theologians! The fortress of the school is ours, it is the academic section of the general front!"<sup>845</sup>

Already, generations before, St. Theophan had warned against the influence of German "Higher Biblical Criticism": "The Germans, and our people who have followed after them and become Germanized in their mentality, immediately cry out whenever they come across a miracle in the Gospels, 'Not true; not true; this didn't happen and couldn't happen, this needs to be crossed

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<sup>843</sup> Khrapovitsky, *The Christian Faith and War*, Jordanville, 2005, pp. 8-9.

<sup>844</sup> Troitsky, "Bogoslovie i Svoboda Tserkvi" (Theology and the Freedom of the Church), *Bogoslovskij Vestnik* (Theological Herald), September, 1915, vol. 3, Sergiev Posad; reprinted in Kaluga in 2005, p. 4.

<sup>845</sup> Ilarion, in *Sviashchenomuchenik Ilarion (Troitsky), Arkhiiepiskop Verejskij. Zhitie* (Hieromartyr Ilarion (Troitsky), Archbishop of Verey. A Life), Moscow, 2006, p. 24.

out.' Is not this the same as killing? Look through the books of these clever men – in none of them will you find any indication as to why they think this way. Not one of them can say anything against what the Gospel truth proves, and not one cares to comprehend the arguments which sober-minded people use to convince their falseness..."<sup>846</sup>

However, although this was a righteous – indeed, a supremely righteous – reason for going to war, the war did not achieve the aim of saving Russia from heterodoxy. Instead, it plunged the country into captivity, if not to German Protestantism and "Higher Bible Criticism", at any rate to other western heresies and, for very many, to atheism...

In opposition to the theory that the war was, in its deepest essence, a war between Orthodoxy and the western heresies, there is the theory that the real cause was a certain prevailing *pessimism* and *fatalism*. This is most clearly evident in the German Chancellor Bethmann, whose acquiescence to the war party Lieven finds "bewildering".<sup>847</sup> After all, Bethmann had successfully opposed the military's warmongering for several years. Why did he give in to the idea of a war that he considered "a leap in the dark"?

One hypothesis is that he surrendered to the "alpha male", *machismo* culture of the Prussian warrior class. The language of Bethmann's comment in his Memoirs is revealing: "To have shrunk from supporting Austria-Hungary during the crisis of 1914 would have been an act of self-castration."<sup>848</sup> Another is that he finally accepted Moltke's argument that it was "now or never" if Germany wanted to triumph in the inevitable war with Russia – but was still pessimistic about the outcome. "He was, he confessed in 1912, 'gravely distressed by our relative strength in case of war. One must have a good deal of trust in God and count on the Russian revolution as an ally in order to be able to sleep at all.' In June 1913 he admitted to feeling 'sick of war, the clamour for war and the eternal armaments. It is high time that the great nations quieted down again... otherwise an explosion will occur which no one deserves and which will harm all.' To the National Liberal leader Bassermann, he said 'with fatalistic resignation: "If there is war with France, the last Englishman will march against us." His secretary, Kurt Riezler, recorded some of his musings in his diary for 7 July 1914: 'The Chancellor expects that a war, whatever its outcome, will result in the uprooting of everything that exists. The existing [world] very antiquated, without ideas... Thick fog over the people. The same in all Europe. The future belongs to Russia, which grows and grows and weighs upon us as an ever heavier nightmare... The Chancellor very pessimistic about the intellectual condition of Germany.' On 20 July Bethmann returned to his Russian theme: 'Russia's claims [are] growing [along with her] enormously explosive strength... In a few years no longer to be warded off, particularly when the present European constellation persists.' A week later, he told Riezler

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<sup>846</sup> St. Theophan, *Thoughts for Each Day of the Year*, Moscow: Sretensky Monastery, 2010, p. 166.

<sup>847</sup> Lieven, *Towards the Flame*, p. 317.

<sup>848</sup> Bethmann, in Clark, *op. cit.*, p. 359.

that he felt 'a fate [*Fatum*] greater than human power hanging over Europe and our own people.' The mood of near despair, sometimes attributed by cultural historians to excessive exposure to the works of Nietzsche, Wagner and Schopenhauer, becomes more intelligible when the military realities of Europe in 1914 are considered..."<sup>849</sup>

It may well have been "excessive exposure to the works of Nietzsche, Wagner and Schopenhauer", as well as his personal Theosophism, that had enslaved this most intelligent and cultured of Germans, and the whole of his highly cultured and civilized generation, to a "greater than human power", a demonic power, that was leading him and the whole of Europe like the Gadarene swine into the abyss. And even Bethmann, who saw more clearly than anyone in his nation that a war would "turn everything that exists upside down", was prepared to make this "leap in the dark"...

How different was the so-called "fatalism" of Tsar Nicholas II. The Tsar's "fatalism" should rather be called "providentialism", or simply "faith", an unwavering belief in God's omnipotence and complete control of world history. He certainly believed in the proverb: "A man's heart plans his way, but the Lord directs his steps" (Proverbs 16.9). And even more in the proverb: "The heart of the king is in the hand of the Lord. Like the rivers of water, He turns it wherever He wishes" (Proverbs 21.1). As he had prayed during his coronation: "May my heart be in Thine hand, to accomplish all that is to the profit of the people committed to my charge." It was not for him to argue with God, Who declares: "I make peace, and I create calamity: I, the Lord, do all these things" (Isaiah 45.8). For "it is not for [us] to know the times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority" (Acts 1.7).

Unlike all those around him, the Tsar had a secret, God-given knowledge, which in spite of its tragic content brought him, not despair, but peace. For he *knew* - probably from the letter he received from St. Seraphim at Sarov in 1903, but also from other sources - that all his efforts to save Russia from war and catastrophe would fail, and that he himself would die in 1918. So while he struggled bravely against what was both his and Russia's tragic destiny, he knew - in 1914, as during his abdication in 1917 - that at a certain point he would have to surrender. For he knew that "there is a tide in the affairs of men", and that the tide in European politics, all over the continent, was towards war - a tide that no man could resist indefinitely. He might have resisted the tide for a while, as he had resisted it in 1912; but it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that he felt he had no real alternative but to go to war *eventually*. The best he could do was choose a time when honour and loyalty (to his allies, to the Serbs

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<sup>849</sup> Ferguson, op. cit., pp. 98-99. "Yet Bethmann," writes Fromkin, "felt that Germany had no choice. The portrait that he painted of the country's international position showed a dark and even paranoid vision, with dangers exaggerated. As he saw it, Germany was 'completely paralyzed', and its rivals, the allied powers of Russia, France and Britain, knew it. 'The future belongs to Russia which is growing and is becoming an ever-increasing nightmare to us.' Even the Dual Monarchy would ally with Russia in order to go with the winner. Germany would be alone and helpless in the world of international politics..." (op. cit., p. 181)

and, above all, to Holy Orthodoxy) provided a moral justification for war. And that time came in July, 1914. The Tsar sincerely wanted and strove for peace, knowing better than anyone what the terrible consequences of the war would be. But he also knew that it is God Who controls the destinies of nations. Who was he – who was any man? – to resist the will of God if He wanted to punish His people and all the nations in accordance with His inscrutable judgements?

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“The decision for war in 1914,” writes David Fromkin, “was purposeful; and the war itself was not, as generations of historians have taught, meaningless. On the contrary, it was fought to decide the essential questions in international politics: who would achieve mastery in Europe, and therefore in the world, and under the banners of what faith.”<sup>850</sup>

This is an important point, especially in view of the fact that there was a tendency among several of the political and military leaders in 1914 to see their actions as in some measure determined by History or Fate, as if they were not in control of them or responsible for them. If that had been the case, then of course nobody was responsible for the enormous tragedy that unfolded in 1914, and there was no sense in attempting to ascribe war guilt, as the Conference in Versailles tried to do in 1919. And yet scholars and historians continue to “play the blame game” – and not without reason. For, however difficult it may be to ascribe blame, and however nuanced and subtle and widely spread any such verdict must be, it cannot and should not be avoided as long as we accept that the peoples of Europe in 1914 were men with reason and free will and not automata. It may well be, as Christopher Clark writes, that many, if not all, of “the protagonists of 1914 were sleepwalkers, watchful but unseeing, haunted by dreams, yet blind to the reality of the horror they were about to bring into the world”<sup>851</sup> But this makes it all the more necessary to understand *why* Europe had reached such a somnolent state – a sleep that was truly nightmarish, a sleep unto death...

It is necessary to spread the net of responsibility both widely in space, to cover all the main actors in 1914, and deeply in time, to cover the historical processes that created the false attitudes and philosophies that propelled them to do what they did. Thus if we take the first and most obvious criminals, Gavrilo Princip and his fellow conspirators, we have to go beyond them to the men who aided and abetted their conspiracy, such as “Apis” and the Black Hand. Then we can spread the net still wider to include state actors and political leaders, together with the philosophies that motivated them, such as Nietzscheanism, nationalism, imperialism, militarism and Social Darwinism, together with “tripwire” scenarios and balance-of-power ideas and considerations of personal, national and corporate honour.

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<sup>850</sup> Fromkin, *Europe's Last Summer*, London: Vintage, 2005, p. 296.

<sup>851</sup> Clark, *op. cit.*, p. 562.

This was, for example, the view of the German chancellor Bethmann Holweg: "The imperialism, nationalism, and economic materialism, which during the last generation determined the outlines of every nation's policy, set goals which could only be pursued at the cost of a general conflagration."<sup>852</sup>

Such explanations require, however, important distinctions to be made between how these factors operated in different countries – as, for example, between the quality, intensity and consequences of the different nationalisms... Thus "In Austria, the story of a nation of youthful bandits and regicides endlessly provoking and goading a patient elderly neighbour got in the way of a cool-headed assessment of how to manage relations with Belgrade. In Serbia, fantasies of victimhood and oppression by a rapacious, all-powerful Habsburg Empire did the same in reverse. In Germany, a dark vision of future invasions and partitions bedeviled decision-making in the summer of 1914. And the Russian saga of repeated humiliations at the hands of the central powers had a similar impact, at once distorting the past and clarifying the present. Most important of all was the widely trafficked narrative of Austria-Hungary's historically necessary decline, which, having gradually replaced an older set of assumptions about Austria's role as a fulcrum of stability in Central and Eastern Europe, disinhibited Vienna's enemies, undermining the notion that Austria-Hungary, like every other great power, possessed interests that it had the right robustly to defend..."<sup>853</sup>

Thus the German variety of nationalism was distinguished from the others by its highly philosophical content that made it more poisonous and dangerous in the long term (that is, the term that finally ended in the destruction of the German Reich in 1945). The German variety of the illness had developed over more than a century since the national humiliation suffered at the hands of Napoleon at Jena in 1806. It continued through the German victory over the French at Sedan in 1870 and into the building of the Second Reich from 1871. And it was exacerbated by Treitschke's glorification of war and Nietzsche's glorification of the Superman, not to mention Hegel's glorification of the Prussian State as the supreme expression of the World Spirit... As Colonel House wrote on June 13, 1914: "I have never seen the war spirit so nurtured and so glorified as it is there..."<sup>854</sup>

When we broaden the net still more to consider the antagonisms of whole blocks of nations, such as Slavism versus Teutonism or the Orthodox states of Eastern Europe versus the Catholic and Protestant states of Western Europe, then we are compelled to analyze the religious roots of the differences between the blocks, the part played by such major phenomena as the Renaissance and the Reformation, or, still further back, the Great Schism between the Orthodox East and the Catholic West of 1054, which constituted the "original sin" of European Christian civilization from which all the subsequent corruption

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<sup>852</sup> Bethmann, in Niall Ferguson, *The Pity of War 1914-1918*, London: Penguin, 1998, p. xxxviii.

<sup>853</sup> Clark, *op. cit.*, p. 558.

<sup>854</sup> See Geoffrey Hodgson, "The Schrippenfes Incident", *History Today*, July, 2003, p. 47.

proceeded.<sup>855</sup> From this long-term perspective, we can see the First World War as the culmination of many very complex processes going back at least to the Great Schism that interacted with the personal passions and beliefs of individual actors.

For example, the belief in monarchism that had been dominant throughout Europe in the year 1000, was gradually undermined over the following millenium, first by the Popes in their struggle against the Holy Roman Emperors, then by the humanist exaltation of individual freedom against Divine Right monarchy, and finally by the French revolution's undermining of all hierarchy, both secular and ecclesiastical. The final result was the weakness we have discerned among all the monarchies in 1914, which enabled "that which restrains" the coming of the Antichrist, the Orthodox Autocracy, to be swept away.

Even the fatalism that we have noted in so many of the leading actors in 1914 can be attributed to a loss of faith in Divine Providence and/or personal freedom and responsibility that is a product of the apostatic processes set in motion by the Great Schism.

The Great War of 1914-18 delivered a final verdict on the Great Schism of 1054, and on the whole development of western civilization since then as it fell further and further away from its previous unity with the Orthodox East, whose roots were in a common confession of Holy Orthodoxy during the first Christian millenium. The verdict on Catholic Austria-Hungary and Protestant Imperial Germany was: *guilty as charged*, and both were destroyed. A third infidel empire, that of Ottoman Turkey, was also destroyed.

The democracies of France, Italy, Britain and the United States were counted as the victors. But theirs was a Pyrrhic victory. Having betrayed their faithful ally, Tsar Nicholas II, in 1917, there was no way they could reap the sheaves of a merited victory and a real peace. For twenty years after the end of the Great War they languished in a turbulent sea of decadence, depression and demoralization, and only with great difficulty and at the cost of terrible moral crimes (the mass bombings of innocent civilians in Germany and Japan) did they emerge triumphant from a Second World War in 1945, while a new enemy, that of militant atheism, ruled supreme over a quarter of the world's surface, from Berlin to Vladivostok. Nor could the thin gruel of the democratic ideology of free trade and human rights satisfy the hearts of a world dying from a famine of the Word of God.

The great Serbian bishop, Nikolaj Velimirovich, who spent most of the First World War in England pleasing the cause of the Serbs, expressed God's coming judgement on Europe in the form of a dialogue: "If the history of the last three centuries - the 18th, 19th and 20th - were to be given its true name, then there

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<sup>855</sup> Fromkin traces causal lines going even further back, to the division between the Greek- and Latin-speaking worlds in the fourth century AD (*op. cit.*, p. 9).

could not be found a more fitting name than 'The Records of the Judgement between Europe and Christ', for all the significant events in Europe of the last three centuries are connected to our Lord Jesus Christ. In reality, at the judgement between Europe and Christ the following is happening. Christ reminds Europe that it is baptized in His Name and must be faithful to Him and His Gospel.

"The defendant Europe replies:

"All denominations are equal. The French Encyclopedists told us this and it is wrong to force anyone to believe in any one of them. Europe shows tolerance to all denominations as national customs, as it wishes to keep its imperialistic interests, but Europe itself is not attached to any of them. But when it has achieved its political goals, then it will swiftly settle accounts with these vain folk beliefs.'

"Then Christ asks with sorrow:

"How can you people live solely for imperialistic, that is, materialistic interests, for the animal desire solely for bodily food? I wanted to make you gods and sons of God and you wish to make yourselves equal to beasts of burden.'

"But Europe replies to this:

"You are obsolete. Instead of your Gospel, we have discovered zoology and biology. Now we know that we are descendants of orang-outangs and gorillas - monkeys, we are not yours and not of your Heavenly Father. Now we are perfecting ourselves in order to become gods, for we do not recognize any gods other than ourselves.'

"Christ replies:

"You are more obstinate than the ancient Jews. I raised you up from the darkness of barbarianism to heavenly light, but once more you rush headlong towards the darkness, just as pigs rush headlong towards the mud. I shed my blood for you, I gave you My blood, when all the angels had turned away from you, for they could not bear your hellish stench. When you turned into darkness and stench, I alone rose up for you in order to enlighten and cleanse you. Return to me, otherwise you will once more find yourself in an unbearable stench and darkness.'

"But Europe smiles mockingly:

"Leave us. We do not know you. Greek philosophy and Roman culture are closer to us. We want freedom. We have universities. Science is our guiding star. Our motto is freedom, equality, brotherhood. Our reason is the god of

gods. You are Asian, we renounce you. You are a mere fairy-tale told by our grandfathers and grandmothers.'

"Christ says with tears in His eyes:

"So, I will go away, but you will see and understand that you fell away from the path of God and took the path of the devil. Blessing and joy are taken from you. Your life and your death are in My hands, for I gave Myself up to crucifixion for you. But it is not I Who will punish you, your sins and your falling away from Me, your Saviour, will punish you. I showed the love of the Father for all people and wanted to save you all through love.'

"But Europe replies to this:

"What love? Sobriety and courageous hatred for all, who do not agree with us, this is our programme. Your love is a mere fable. We prefer nationalism and internationalism, the worship of science and culture, aesthetics, evolution and progress to your love. Our salvation is in these, but as for you, go away!'

"Oh my brothers, nowadays progress is complete. Christ has left Europe, as once before Christ left Gadara at the insistence of the Gadarenes. But as soon as He left, there started wars, misfortunes, horrors, destruction, annihilation. Pre-Christian barbarianism has returned to Europe, that of the Avars, the Huns, the Lombards, the Vandals, only nightmarishly multiplied a hundredfold. Christ has taken up His Cross and His blessing and left. Darkness and stench have spilled forth. So decide who you want to be with: with the darkness and stench of Europe, or with Christ. Amen."<sup>856</sup>

However, the greatest suffering and the greatest punishment was not inflicted on apostate Europe, neither on the losers, the Germanic monarchies, nor on the victors, the western democracies, but on the Orthodox nations of Eastern Europe who lost whether they found themselves on the losing side (like the Russians, who lost 1.8 million men) or on the winning side (like the Serbs and Romanians: "one in three Serbs and Romanians sent into battle was killed or died of injuries or disease"<sup>857</sup>).

This may at first seem paradoxical insofar as we have identified precisely the Orthodox nations as being the last bearers of truth and grace in the European continent. But if we understand the workings of Divine Providence, and the extent to which the purity of the Orthodox faith had been corrupted in the Orthodox nations, we shall not accuse God of injustice, but will agree that "God is true, but every man a liar. As it is written: 'that Thou mayest be justified in Thy words, and prevail when Thou art judged'" (Romans 3.4).

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<sup>856</sup> Velimirović, *Through a Prison Window*.

<sup>857</sup> Ian Kershaw, *To Hell and Back. Europe 1914-1949*, London: Penguin, 2015, p. 95).

For, in accordance with the principle that “to whom much is given, from him much is required”, the Orthodox nations to whom had been entrusted the riches of the Orthodox faith must be considered to have borne the major share of the responsibility for the catastrophe. It is to the Orthodox, not the heterodox, that the Lord says: “You only have I known of all the nations of the earth. *Therefore* I will punish you for all your iniquities.” (Amos 3.2) For both faith and morals were in sharp decline in the Orthodox countries. The rot had penetrated the whole of society, reaching into the nobility and even the Church hierarchy. The holy prophets and elders from St. Seraphim of Sarov to St. John of Kronstadt had warned that God’s wrath would not fail to fall upon the people if they did not repent – and the punishment duly began to be inflicted from 1914.

Of course, the most evil European teachings – those of the Nietzschean Superman or the Darwinian Apeman – had not yet penetrated into the Orthodox East as deeply as into the heterodox West. And yet we know that the Bosnian Serb terrorists who fired the shots at Sarajevo had been infected with Nietzscheanism, and that the mass of the Serbian people applauded their act, having already applauded the even worse crime of the regicide of 1903. Moreover, terrorism of a more openly atheist, internationalist kind, carried out very often by baptized Orthodox Christians, such as Lenin and Stalin, and silently condoned by many other baptized Orthodox Christians, had already counted thousands of innocent victims in Russia. Many millions more would suffer after the revolution in the greatest persecution of the Christian faith in the history of the Church....

The outbreak of war in 1914 was a call to repentance as well as a call to arms. And if the Orthodox nations had formed a united front behind the Tsar, the emperor of the Third Rome, knowing that the defeat of Russia was bound to have catastrophic effects for the whole of the Orthodox Commonwealth, the worst might have been avoided. But the Bulgarians, who owed their independence almost entirely to the Russians, decided to join the Germans.<sup>858</sup> And the Romanians (who resented the Russian takeover of Bessarabia) and the Greeks (who had a German king and saw “pan-Slavism” everywhere) remained neutral until it was too late...

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<sup>858</sup> Tsar Nicholas wrote on October 6, 1915: “Impossible as it has seemed, but treacherously preparing from the very beginning of the war, Bulgaria has betrayed the Slav cause. The Bulgarian army has attacked Our faithful ally Serbia, [which is already] bleeding profusely in a struggle with a strong enemy. Russia and Our allied Great Powers tried to warn Ferdinand of Coburg against this fatal step. The fulfilment of an age-old aspiration of the Bulgar people – union with Macedonia – has [already] been guaranteed to Bulgaria by a means more in accord with the interests of the Slav world. But appeals by the Germans to secret ambitions and fratricidal enmity against the Serbs prevailed. Bulgaria, whose [Orthodox] faith is the same as Ours, who so recently has been liberated from Turkish slavery by the brotherly love and blood of the Russian people, openly took the side of the enemies of the Christian faith, the Slav world and of Russia. The Russian people react with bitterness to the treachery of a Bulgaria which was so close to them until recently, and draw their swords against her with heavy hearts, leaving the fate of these traitors to the Slav world to God’s just retribution.” (<http://www.lib.byu.edu/~rdh/wwi/1915/nickbulg.html>)

When the Tsar wrote in his diary on the day of his abdication that all around him was “cowardice, deception and betrayal” he was referring first of all, of course, to the Russian traitors. But the Orthodox world as a whole betrayed its earthly protector, whom they liked to appeal to when in trouble but whom they did not want to rule over them. Like Christ, he was betrayed by all except a very few of those closest to him.

For all these reasons, the judgement of God fell hardest on the Orthodox, “for judgement begins at the household of God” (I Peter 4.17). So there was no place for fatalism or determinism here: God willed the war in the first place as a punishment on His people, who had sinned terribly. Thus the Russians, having murmured and plotted against their Tsar, were deprived of victory by revolution from within, and came to almost complete destruction afterwards; the Serbs, whose insatiably aggressive nationalism supplied the trigger (literally) for the war, suffered proportionately more than any other country, even though they were on the winning side; the Romanians were crushed by the Germans before also appearing on the winning side; and the Bulgarians, while adding to their huge losses in the Balkan Wars, still appeared on the losing side. Only the Greeks emerged from the war relatively unscathed – but their judgement would come only a few years later, in the Asia Minor catastrophe of 1922-23.

So the First World War was a judgement on the whole of European civilization, but first of all on the Orthodox nations who had allowed Westernism in all its forms gradually to corrupt their God-given inheritance, the one true faith of Orthodoxy....

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So were there no redeeming features for the Orthodox in this, the great watershed in modern European history? Do not “all things work together for good for those who love God” (Romans 8)? And were there no people who loved God at this time?

Of course there were. Many Orthodox soldiers “washed their clothes in the Blood of the Lamb”, redeeming their backsliding by their courage and faithfulness to Orthodoxy, the tsar and the homeland even unto death. For them, the war was a means to personal redemption and true glory.

Moreover, the war and even more the revolution that followed closely on it forced many people to reconsider the emptiness and sensuality of the lives they had been leading and return to God. For while defeat and revolution had an enormously deleterious effect on the external position of the Church, her spiritual condition improved, and her real as opposed to formal membership swelled considerably, in the post-war period. The fruits of this were twofold: worldwide, in the spreading of Russian Orthodoxy through the Russian Church in Exile, and within Russia in the emergence of a mighty choir of holy

new martyrs and confessors. At the head of this choir stands the Tsar, whose martyric life and death kept the true ideal of the Autocracy bright and untarnished. The great choir of holy new martyrs and confessors that followed the Royal Martyrs to torments and death for Christ constitute the long-term basis for hope in the resurrection of the Russian Autocracy and of Orthodox Christianity throughout the world.