

THE RESTORATION OF ROMANITY
Essays in Orthodox Political Theology

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A very interesting and important debate has arisen on the first Russian television channel. Konstantin Aranovsky, a judge of the Constitutional Court of Russia has declared that the Soviet Union was "an unlawful state" – a statement, of course, completely in accord with the judgement

of the truly Orthodox Church of Russia since 1918, and of all truly Russian (as opposed to Soviet) patriots. But Konstantin Malofeev, founder of the television channel *Tsargrad* and deputy head of the Universal Council of the Russian People, said that the judge had to clarify his position. "As a lawyer, what he said was completely absurd. Because if he asserts that the Soviet Union was an unlawfully created state, then we must say that we must restore the Russian Empire in our long-lasting illegitimacy." 565

In Malofeev's opinion, insofar as Aranovsky did not indicate this, it means that he believes that contemporary Russia "came out of the cosmos". "So it has no right of succession from the Soviet Union. Either we must recognize that we are the successors of the Soviet Union. Or we must recognize that we are the successors of the Russian Empire, without any Soviet Union. He says neither the one thing nor the other. But that means that, by contrast with the East Europeans, who have joyfully returned and say: 'Look, we lived for 20 years in the Baltic region, that was a real state, but in the last 50 years - that was not real.' But we are in a different situation: for the last one thousand years we have had one and the same state, which ended with the Russian Empire. He does not recognize that." 565

Malofeev suggests returning to the juridical aspect of the question. Russia, he notes, is without question the successor in law of the Soviet Union, and it is impossible to deny this because we were all born in the Soviet Union. 565

"We have Soviet passports, and accounts in the Sberbank, our membership in the Soviet Union has been confirmed by the United nation - all that has been confirmed for us..." 565

The only other alternative for the judge, says Malofeev, "is that Russia is a young state that was born in 1991..." 565

"I consider, and I think, that our state has lasted for a thousand years. And, whether happily or unfortunately, we had both the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union. This is our history. There were bloody episodes in it, and heroic episodes. And we shall allow nobody - neither a judge of the Constitutional Court, nor any enemy from abroad - to cut out one of these episodes," says Malofeev. 565

* 565

This issue is indeed the existential issue confronting contemporary Russia, the "to be or not to be" question. Is the contemporary Russian Federation the lawful successor of the Soviet Union or of the pre-revolutionary Russian Empire? If the former, then it is unlawful, because in 1918 the Russian Orthodox Church anathematized it (what any other body, even the United Nations, declares is irrelevant). If the latter, then it is lawful. 566

Putin has characteristically tried to muddy the waters by declaring the contemporary Russian Federation to be the successor of *both* states - both the lawful Russian Empire and the unlawful Soviet Union. But that is impossible. Not only because the True Church has upheld the first and anathematized the second (while the false church did the opposite), but also because the two states did not recognize each other. For the pre-revolutionary Russian state, the Bolsheviks were antichristian rebels, accursed by God and abhorred by all right-thinking men. For the post-revolutionary Soviet state, the tsars were blood-sucking tyrants whose overthrow and murder was both lawful and absolutely necessary. But Putin tries to have it both ways. He pretends to be the Tsar of *all* the Russias, both the Christian and the anti-Christian. 566

"Patriarch" Cyril Gundiaev's concept of "the Russian world" fits well into this programme. Putin's concept of the succession of the contemporary Russian Federation extends back in time through the Soviet period and into the pre-revolutionary period to the beginning of Russian history. Gundiaev's concept of the Russian world extends laterally in space to include not only all the former republics of the Soviet Union, but also the whole Slavic Orthodox world and even all Russians living in the West. Even non-Russians and non-Christians are given honorary

membership of this "Russian world" so long as they bow down to the myth of the legitimacy of the Soviet Union and its lawful successor, the Russian Federation. All others are cast into the outer darkness where "Russophobes" dwell... 566

But no amount of ecumenist blurring and widening of boundaries can resolve an outright contradiction, and there is no more blatant and irreconcilable contradiction in the history of the world since Christ than that between the Orthodox Christian Russian empire and the state that destroyed it, the anti-Christian Soviet empire. The fact is that all Russians, whatever passport they were born with or state to which they belong, will have to choose which set of ancestors they venerate and declare their loyalty to: the right-believing tsars or the God-hating commissars and general secretaries. As for Putin, he long ago made his choice: brought up as a Soviet patriot, he has never renounced his allegiance to that state, whose downfall he calls "the greatest geopolitical tragedy of the twentieth century"; he claims he never renounced the Communist Party, having simply put his Soviet passport into a desk drawer; he refuses to denounce Stalin and allows Lenin to remain in the mausoleum, to the continual shame and defilement of his state. 566

The resemblance of Putin's Russian Federation to its progenitor, the Soviet Union, was not obvious at first (apart from the revival of the music of the Soviet national anthem and the return of the red flag to the armed forces), as Putin tried to curry contacts with the West for the sake of his and his comrades' global business interests. But now, some twenty years since his accession to power, the family resemblance of the Russian Federation to the pre-*perestroika* Soviet Union is unmistakable. In marked contrast to the Ukraine, where the statues of Lenin have been falling everywhere, and where Soviet propaganda and symbolism is banned, in Russia there has been a revival of the Leninist cult. In the church, meanwhile, "ecclesiastical Stalinism" has flourished. Cyril Gundiaiev has even given an award to the head of the Russian Communist Party, Gennady Ziuganov, and in 2016 he had a cordial meeting with that long-time friend of the Soviet Union, Fidel Castro... 566

Recently a Moscow Patriarch protopriest, Fr. Dmitri Smirnov, incurred much abuse and even the wrath of the second most powerful metropolitan in the Soviet church, Hilarion Alfeyev, for urging Russian women to repent of their civil ("ZAGS") marriages and seek a lawful marriage in the Church. Until then, he says, they are living in sin. Something similar needs to take place in the life of the nation as a whole. There will be no salvation for the Russian Federation and its citizens until they clearly and openly recognize that the state in which they live is the bastard offspring of an unlawful union, the Soviet Union, which is Russian neither in name nor in deed. 567

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INTRODUCTION

This book brings together forty-two articles written in recent years whose common theme is the relationship between religion and politics from an Orthodox Christian point of view. Several of the articles were published in various Orthodox Christian theological journals in America and Russia in the late 1990s and early 2000s (the earliest dates to 1995).

The book takes its title from the word for the religio-political unity of Orthodox Christians under a truly Orthodox Emperor or Tsar – *Romanity* (Romanitas in Latin, Ρωμειοσυνη in Greek). Since the fall of Romanity in 1917, with the catastrophic consequences for the whole world that are plain for all to see, the *restoration* of Romanity is the fervent hope of all truly Orthodox Christians. If this book contributes in even the smallest way to the understanding and realization of that hope, it will have achieved its end.

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

July 8/21, 2021.

*Kazan Icon of the Most Holy Mother of God.
137 Woking road, Guildford, Surrey, United Kingdom.*

1. THE DOGMATIC SIGNIFICANCE OF THE ORTHODOX AUTOCRACY

It is a cliché of Western scholarship that whereas the Western Church in the Middle Ages was *papocaesarist* in structure and spirit, the Eastern Church was *caesaropapist*. That is, while Roman Catholic society was ruled by the Pope in both its political and its ecclesiastical aspects, Eastern Orthodox society was similarly ruled by the Emperor. Now it is not difficult to demonstrate that this assertion is untrue as regards the East, and that *both* papocaesarism *and* caesaropapism were western concepts and inventions. Nevertheless, the precise place of the Emperor in Orthodox society is not easy to define; the separation of Church and State in Orthodoxy is not as tidily clear-cut as the Western mind would like to have it, and there is no doubt that the Emperor, in addition to his unquestioned supremacy in the State, has an important and leading role in the Church, too. Moreover, it is precisely in the difference between the position of the Pope in Catholicism and the Emperor in Orthodoxy that the mystery and dogmatic significance of the Orthodox vision of Christian society is revealed...

Of course, the Protestants - and "Protestants of the Eastern Rite", as Fr. George Florovsky called the modernist Orthodox - deny that there is any mystery or dogmatic significance in the Orthodox Autocracy. Just as there was no infallible Pope in the early Church, they say, so there was no Emperor. And since we cannot accept any additions to the original "deposit of the faith", we must reject the doctrine of the Autocracy as unnecessary at best and antichristian at worst.

In this assertion, however, the Protestants are greatly mistaken. For while there was no doctrine of an *infallible and universal* Papacy in the early Church, there was a doctrine of Church leadership and unity at both the local and the ecumenical levels. And similarly, while there was no *Christian* Autocracy in the early Church, there was a doctrine concerning the moral and eschatological significance of the Roman Empire.

Let us examine this question in a historical context, beginning with the Nativity of the King of kings. Christ was born just as the Roman Empire was coming into being. The significance of this coincidence did not escape the Holy Fathers, whose thought was encapsulated in a verse from the Divine services for the Nativity: "When Augustus reigned alone upon earth, the many kingdoms of men came to an end: and when Thou was made man of the pure Virgin, the many gods of idolatry were destroyed. The cities of the world passed under one single rule; and the nations came to believe in one sovereign Godhead. The peoples were enrolled by the decree of Caesar; and we, the faithful, were enrolled in the Name of the Godhead, when Thou, our God, wast made man. Great is Thy mercy: glory to Thee."¹

This verse establishes a certain providential parallelism between the birth of the Church in the Body of the God-Man, and the birth of the Empire. The Church and the Empire were born and grew up together, as it were; Christ was a citizen of each while being at the same time the Lord of both. It is as if the Empire came into existence

¹ *Menaion*, December 25, Great Vespers for the Nativity of Christ, "Lord, I have cried", Glory... Both now...

precisely for the sake of the Church, creating a political unity that would help and protect the spiritual unity created by the Church.

Similarly, according to the apostolic teaching, the death of the Empire would presage the death of the Church - or rather, her apparent demise during the time of the Antichrist. For this is the meaning of St. Paul's words: "The mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only he who now restrains it will do so until he is out of the way" (II Thessalonians 2.7). According to the unanimous witness of the Holy Fathers from St. John Chrysostom to St. Theophan the Recluse and St. John of Kronstadt, "he who restrains" is the Roman Emperor, or monarchical power in general.² The Roman Emperor restrains the appearance of evil in its most radical form, the Antichrist. Therefore his removal will make possible the appearance of the Antichrist and usher in the end of the world and the Second Coming of Christ.

Since the existence of the Empire and the Church on earth are so closely linked, it is small wonder that the apostles exhort Christians to venerate and obey it in all matters that do not conflict with the Law of God. St. Paul commands Christians to give thanks for the Emperor "and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceful life in all godliness and honesty" (I Timothy 2.1-2). For it is precisely the Emperor's ability to maintain law and order, "a quiet and peaceful life", which makes him so important for the Church. "For anarchy," writes St. Isidore of Pelusium, "is always the worst of all evils... That is why, although the body is a single whole, not everything in it is of equal honour, but some members rule, while others are in subjection. So we are right to say that the authorities - that is, leadership and royal power - are established by God so that society should not fall into disorder."³

"Be subject for the Lord's sake," says St. Peter, "to every human institution, whether it be to the emperor as supreme, or to governors as sent by him to punish those who do wrong and praise those who do right... Fear God. Honour the emperor" (I Peter 2.13, 17). The Emperor is to be obeyed "not only because of wrath, but for conscience's sake" (Romans 13.5). For he is "the servant of God for good" and "wields not the sword in vain" (Romans 13.4).

Of course, the autocracy in the apostles' time was not *Christian*. But if the apostles speak with such reverence of the pagan autocracy, which is qualified as a "human institution", a fortiori they would have spoken with still greater reverence of the Christian Autocracy, created as it was by God's direct call to Constantine. Indeed, according to some of the Holy Fathers, in these passages St. Paul *was* speaking, from an eschatological perspective, precisely of the Christian Autocracy.

Thus Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow writes: "The Spirit of God in him foresaw and more or less showed him the future light of Christian kingdoms. His God-inspired vision, piercing through future centuries, encounters Constantine, who brings peace

² Archbishop Averky, *Rukovodstvo k izucheniu Sviashchennykh Pisaniy Novago Zaveta (Handbook to the Study of the Sacred Scriptures of the New Testament)*, Holy Trinity Monastery, Jordanville, vol. II, 1956, pp. 307-308.

³ St. Isidore, *Letter 6*, to Dionysius.

to the Church and sanctifies the kingdom by faith; and Theodosius and Justinian, who defend the Church from the impudence of heresies. Of course, he also goes on to see Vladimir and Alexander Nevsky and many spreaders of the faith, defenders of the Church and guardians of Orthodoxy. After this it is not surprising that St. Paul should write: I beseech you not only to pray, but also to give thanks for the king and all those in authority; because there will be not only such kings and authorities for whom it is necessary to pray with sorrow.., but also those for whom we must thank God with joy for His precious gift."⁴

*

Let us look more closely at the role of the Emperor in the Church. Historically speaking, his most important contribution was in *the convening of Church Councils*, and in the enforcing of their decisions. All of the Ecumenical Councils were convened by Emperors, as well as many of the Local Councils.

Now the Protestant-minded see no great importance in this contribution. After all, they say, the Church does not need an Emperor to convene a Council, and in the first Council of Jerusalem, as in all the Councils of the first three centuries of Christianity, no Emperor was present. For Church Councils are the affair of the Church, not of the State.

And yet the influence of the Emperor is discernible even in the first Council of Jerusalem. For it is unlikely that the Apostles and the Fathers who succeeded them would have been allowed to convene any Council by the Jews if Roman power had not existed to restrain and subdue the Jewish revolution. And later in Acts we find the Apostle Paul using his Roman citizenship to escape from the attempts of the Jews to kill him. Here already we see monarchical power restraining "the mystery of iniquity". It both restrained the dark forces that sought to scatter the flock of Christ and created the conditions which enabled the Christians to come together and reinforce their unity.⁵

As the Church grew and spread throughout the inhabited world, the problem of preserving this unity became more acute. By the beginning of the fourth century, it was no longer possible to deal with the problems that arose through Local Councils presided over by a single bishop or metropolitan. For heretics condemned by one Local Church could flee to another and spread their poison there, as when Arius was condemned by the Church of Alexandria but fled abroad. And conflicts that arose between Local Churches, as when the Churches of Rome and Asia Minor disagreed over the date of Pascha, required a higher authority to resolve them. Thus it became necessary to find a mechanism or *focus of unity* that could convene Ecumenical

⁴ Metropolitan Philaret, *Sochinenia (Works)*, vol. II, pp. 171-173.

⁵ As St. Leo the Great wrote: "Divine Providence fashioned the Roman Empire, the growth of which was extended to boundaries so wide that all races everywhere became next-door neighbours. For it was particularly germane to the Divine scheme that many kingdoms should be bound together under a single government, and that the world-wide preaching should have a swift means of access to all people, over whom the rule of a single state held sway." (*Sermon 32, P.L. 54, col. 423*).

Councils, bringing together the leaders of all the local Churches throughout the Empire.

Through the mysterious workings of Divine Providence, this focus of unity turned out to be the Emperor Constantine the Great, who convened the First Ecumenical Council in order to deal with the problems of Arianism and the Paschalion - problems that were too great for Local Councils to deal with.

Now it was at this point that the first seeds of the papist heresy appeared. For while the Popes accepted the political authority of the Emperor, it became increasingly obvious to the Roman mind that the focus of unity in the Church could only come from within the Church, and from the senior and most respected bishop of the Church - the Pope of Rome. Emperors were all very well, but they had no business interfering in the Church's business.⁶ The fact that all Seven of the Ecumenical Councils were convened by the Emperors, that the presiding bishop was not always the Pope or his legate, and that some Popes were even condemned by them (e.g. Pope Honorius by the Sixth Ecumenical Council) - all this was considered coincidental. If the Emperors had played an important role, said the Popes, it was because they were really acting as delegates or spiritual sons of the Papacy - an evident falsehood. (This argument was probably the origin of the myth that St. Constantine had been baptized by St. Sylvester, Pope of Rome.) The Popes later tried to prove, through forgeries such as *The Donation of Constantine* and *The Pseudo-Isidorean Decretals*, that they had received their universal jurisdiction from St. Constantine. But this argument defeated its own purpose, for if true, it showed that the Emperor had originally had the universal jurisdiction and was therefore a higher authority than the Pope!

A superficially more plausible argument of the Popes was that, while Constantine convened the First Ecumenical Council, its authority did not rest on his convening of it, but on the Popes' confirmation of it. For the Popes could not accept that the authority of the Council rested simply on its conformity with Sacred Tradition; the internal criterion which was considered sufficient at the first Council of Jerusalem - "it has seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us..." (Acts 15.25) - did not seem good enough to them. They wanted an external, visible "stamp" - and such a stamp could not come from a mere layman, however powerful or pious, still less an unbaptized layman, as Constantine still was at Nicaea. It had to be the stamp of a bishop at the very least. And since "ordinary" bishops could err, and synods of bishops could disagree among themselves, the only solution was to recognize that God had sealed one particular bishop with the charisma of infallibility which put him above the rest and guaranteed the unity and infallibility of the Church as a whole.

Although the East was no more inclined than the West to see in the Emperors any kind of *guarantee* (as opposed to *focus*) of the Church's unity or infallibility, several historical facts demonstrate that the Eastern Church saw much more in the office of the Emperor than the Romans did.

⁶ "For you know, most dear son," wrote Pope Gelasius to the Emperor Anastasius, "that you are permitted rightly to rule the human race, yet in things Divine you devoutly bow your head before the principal clergy." (in Eric Jay, *The Church*, London: SPCK, 1977, vol. 1, p. 98).

First, the Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council not only responded to the invitation of Constantine to come together in a Council, but gave him very considerable authority in the Council, as is evident from their address to him: "Blessed is God, Who has chosen you as king of the earth, having by your hand destroyed the worship of idols and through you bestowed peace upon the hearts of the faithful... On this teaching of the Trinity, your Majesty, is established the greatness of your piety. Preserve it for us whole and unshaken, so that none of the heretics, having penetrated into the Church, might subject our faith to mockery... Your Majesty, command that Arius should depart from his error and rise no longer against the apostolic teaching. Or if he remains obstinate in his impiety, drive him out of the Orthodox Church." As Tuskarev observes, "this is a clear recognition of the divine election of Constantine as the external defender of the Church, who is obliged to work with her in preserving the right faith, and in correspondence with the conciliar sentence is empowered to drive heretics out of the Church."⁷ For, as Eusebius said, Constantine, "emulating the Divine example, removes every stain of godless error from his earthly kingdom."⁸

This does not mean, of course, that the Emperors were authorized to impose their own beliefs on the Church; for they, like every member of the Church from the most powerful bishop to the humblest layman, are subject to the revealed truth, "the faith once delivered to the saints" (Jude 3). Moreover, as the British historian Sir Arnold Toynbee pointed out, "in the conflicts between the East Roman emperors with the patriarchs of Constantinople, the former won many battles, but *did not win a single war*."⁹ Thus the Church won the war against the Arian emperors in the fourth century, the Monophysite emperors in the fifth century, the iconoclast emperors in the eighth and ninth centuries, and the Latinizing emperors in the fourteenth century.

Nevertheless, - this is a second important point, - there were also moments when the leadership of the Church faltered, and it was the Emperors who played the decisive role in protecting the true faith. For example, when the pious Emperors Marcian and Pulcheria came to the throne in the year 450, they were in fact more Orthodox than the leading bishops of the time, who were infected with Monophysitism; and it was on the initiative of these Emperors that the Fourth Ecumenical Council was convened and Orthodoxy restored. Thus the relationship between Church and Emperor was closer than the simple formula: the Church for spiritual matters and the Emperor for earthly matters, might suggest...

Thirdly, in the liturgical order the Emperors are given a place fully equal to that of the bishops. St. Constantine was called "equal to the apostles"; he was "anointed a priest and king with the oil of mercy", being "bishop of those outside" the Church; and his successors received the Holy Mysteries at the holy table, together with the

⁷ Tuskarev (now Bishop Dionysius (Alferov) of Novgorod), *Tserkov' o gosudarstve (The Church on the State)*, Tver, 1992, p. 75.

⁸ Eusebius, *Oration in Honour of Constantine on the Thirtieth Anniversary of his Reign*, 2.

⁹ Toynbee, in I.N. Andrushkevich, "Doktrina sv. Imperatora Iustiniana Velikago" ("The Doctrine of the holy Emperor Justinian"), *Pravoslavnaiia Rus' (Orthodox Russia)*, № 4 (1529), February 15/28, 1995, p. 10.

hierarchs, on the day of their coronation.¹⁰ In pannikhidas sovereigns are commemorated before hierarchs, and in liturgical processions they come last, signifying their pre-eminence.¹¹

Fourthly, the Emperor Justinian's classic definition of the "symphony" between the Church and the State places the responsibility for maintaining the symphony on *both* the Church *and* the State. As Andrushkevich points out, the word "symphony" in the Greek text denotes much more than simple agreement or concord. Church and State can agree in an evil way, for evil ends; true symphony is possible only where both the Church "is without reproach and adorned with faithfulness to God", in the words of the holy Emperor, and the State is ruled "rightly and decently" - that is, in accordance with the commandments of God.¹²

It follows that a rigid separation of functions between the Church and the Emperor fits neither the theory nor the practice of Church-State relations in Orthodoxy. Just as the Church can "interfere" in the domain of the Emperor by criticizing his actions from the point of view of the Gospel, and can refuse to recognize his authority if his faith is not Orthodox, so the Emperor can "interfere" in the spiritual domain if the waves of heresy or schism threaten to overwhelm the ship of the Church - and therefore of the State, too. And this is because *both* Church *and* State are seen as being subject to Christ and serving Him alone, and because *both* the Bishops *and* the Emperor are seen as members of the same mystical organism of the Church in which *all* are responsible, albeit in different ways, for upholding the right confession of faith.

In fact, from the point of view of the confession of the faith, the Emperor has a more prominent and critical position even than the leading bishops. For everyone, both inside and outside the Empire, looks to him as representing the official faith of the Empire. That is why the Right-Believing Kings are the *first* target of the enemies of the truth, why the Emperor's office is regarded as a most heavy cross, and why the killing or removal of the Lord's Anointed is a greater crime even than the killing of a bishop, leading inexorably to the collapse of the Christian State, as we see in England after the murder of St. Edward the Martyr and the rebellion against his brother King Ethelred, and in Russia after the murder of the Tsar-Martyr Nicholas. For as St. John Maximovich said: "It cannot be otherwise. He was overthrown who united everything, standing in defence of the Truth."¹³

¹⁰ St. Leo the Great wrote to Emperor Theodosius II that his imperial soul was "not only imperial, but also priestly". And for the Emperor Marcian he wished "besides the imperial crown, the priestly palm". See J. Meyendorff, *Rome, Constantinople, Moscow*, Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1996, p. 11. Again, Patriarch Theodore Balsamon of Antioch wrote in the 12th century: "The Tsar is with reason adorned with hierarchical gifts"; and Archbishop Demetrius Chomatianos of Ochrid wrote in the 13th century: "With the exception only of church serving, the king clearly has all the remaining rights of the episcopate" (quoted in Protopriest Valentine Asmus, "O Monarkhii i nashem k nej otnoshenii" ("On the Monarchy and our Relationship to it"), *Radonezh*, № 2 (46), January, 1997, p. 5).

¹¹ Archimandrite Pantaleimon, "On the Royal Martyrs", *Orthodox Life*, vol. 31, № 4, July-August, 1981.

¹² Andrushkevich, *op. cit.*

¹³ St. John, "Sermon before a pannikhida for the Tsar-Martyr", *Arkhiepiskop Ioann, Arkhipastyr, Molitvennik, Podvizhnik (Archbishop John, Archpastor, Man of Prayer and Ascetic)*, San Francisco, 1991, p. 125. Cf. Archbishop Seraphim (Sobolev): "There is no need to say how terrible a 'touching' of the Anointed of God is the overthrow of the tsar by his subjects. Here the transgression of the given

Thus if the priesthood is indispensable above all because it dispenses the Life-giving sacraments, the monarchy is indispensable because through it the Truth is proclaimed to the world. As the King of kings said to Pilate: "You say that I am a king. For this I was born, and for this I have come into the world, to bear witness to the truth" (John 18.37). Here the link between kingship and the confession of the truth is explicit.

The truth is witnessed to on a local scale by every individual believer, and by every Local Church headed by a bishop. But at the *ecumenical* level, in its full glory as the salvation of the *whole* world, the truth requires a king in the image of Christ the King. That is why the Ecumenical Councils were not accidentally associated with the Emperors who convened them, and why the feast of the Exaltation of the Cross, celebrating the establishment of the first truly ecumenical Christian autocracy, is such a great feast in the Church. Of course, we know that the Church will prevail even against the gates of hell, as the Saviour promised (Matthew 16.18), while no such promise is given to any earthly kingdom. However, as we have seen, the fall of the last Christian empire will lead to the final decline of the Church on earth, which will be halted only by the Second Coming of Christ, the King of kings. Moreover, the Church is not just the hierarchy; and it is quite possible that during the times of the Antichrist the whole of the hierarchy will fall away while only some individual laymen remain to represent the Church. Thus according to some interpretations of Daniel 12.11, "the removal of the continual burnt offering" signifies the removal of the Sacrifice of the Eucharist, which implies either the falling away of the priesthood or its inability to carry out its sacramental functions.¹⁴ For perhaps, as New Hieromartyr Joseph, Metropolitan of Petrograd, wrote, "the last 'rebels' against the betrayers of the Church and the accomplices of her ruin will be not only bishops and not archpriests, but the simplest mortals, just as at the Cross of Christ His last gasp of suffering was heard by a few simple souls who were close to Him..."¹⁵

command of God reaches the highest degree of criminality, which is why it drags after it the destruction of the state itself" (*Russkaia Ideologia (The Russian Ideology)*, St. Petersburg, 1992, pp. 50-51).

¹⁴ See St. Hippolytus, in Sergius Fomin, *Rossia pered Vtorym Prishestvoiem (Russia before the Second Coming)*, Sergiev Posad, 1994, p. 268. However, Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow, commenting on I Corinthians 11.26, writes: "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till He come", disputes this interpretation: "Here we find an important truth in the small word 'till'. In order better to understand this, I direct the speech of the Apostle to the question will Christians eat the mystical Bread and drink of the Chalice of the Lord? We find the answer in the words of the Apostle: 'till He come,' i.e., the mystery of the Body and Blood of Christ will take place without interruption in the true Church of Christ till the very second coming of Christ, or till the end of time, which has the same meaning. Since this cannot be without the grace of the priesthood, and the grace of the priesthood cannot exist without the grace of an hierarchy, then clearly the grace of the office of bishop, according to the foresight of the Apostle, will be in the Church in all times and uninterrupted channels will flow even up to the bring of the approach of the kingdom of glory." After quoting this passage, Hieromonk Ignaty (Trepatschko) writes: "The ancient Fathers of the Church express the same opinion. St. John Chrysostom says: 'Showing that the Holy Eucharist will be till the end of the world, the Apostle Paul said: "till He comes". St. John of Damascus and St. Ephraim the Syrian concur with this view' ("The Church of Christ in the Time of the Antichrist", *Orthodox Life*, vol. 41, № 2, March-April, 1991, p. 40).

¹⁵ Metropolitan Joseph, in I.M. Andreev, *Russia's Catacomb Saints*, Platina: St. Herman of Alaska Press, 1982, p. 128.

The papist position implicitly rejects this possibility. It cannot conceive of the Church existing even for a short period without a hierarchy – that is, the Pope; which is why, when one Pope dies and his successor has not yet been elected, the Roman Church enters a kind of metaphysical limbo, whose reflection can be seen in the strange psychological state of some papists during the interregnum. Strictly speaking, in fact, according to papist doctrine *the Church ceases to exist* in this period; for if the Church is founded on Peter, and Peter is visibly present neither in his own person nor in that of his successor, how can it be said to exist if the “reincarnation of Peter” in the pope has died?

It follows, according to the papist teaching, that *everything* should be subject to the hierarchy, including the affairs of State. As Pope Gregory VII wrote in a letter of August, 1076: "If the holy apostolic see, through the princely power conferred upon it, has jurisdiction over spiritual things, why not also over temporal things?" For how can it ever be right for the laity to resist the hierarchy, or the Emperor resist the Pope, if truth and salvation are in the Pope alone? Indeed, if the Pope is the first bishop and the Emperor only the first layman, and if the Pope is infallible while the Emperor is clearly fallible, *why should not the Pope also be Emperor?*

Thus there is a logical progression from the first seeds of the papist heresy, as we find them in the writings of some of the Popes of the fifth century, to the full-blown blasphemy of Pope Gregory VII (Hildebrand) proclaimed at the First Lateran council of 1076: "The Pope can be judged by no one; the Roman Church has never erred and never will err till the end of time; the Roman Church was founded by Christ alone; the Pope alone can depose and restore bishops; he alone can make new laws, set up new bishoprics, and divide old ones; he alone can translate bishops; he alone can call general councils and authorize canon law; he alone can revise his own judgements; *he alone can use the imperial insignia; he can depose emperors; he can absolve subjects from their allegiance; all princes should kiss his feet*; his legates, even those in inferior orders, have precedence over all bishops; an appeal to the papal court inhibits judgement by all inferior courts; a duly ordained pope is undoubtedly made a saint by the merits of St. Peter."¹⁶

Such papocaesarist madness was bound to elicit a reaction; which is why Pope Gregory was expelled from Rome by the German Emperor, and why the history of the Middle Ages in the West is the history of the continual struggle between Popes and Emperors for ultimate rule over the Christian people. But while some of the kings of the West rejected the papocaesarist heresy, it had already taken deep root in the Church as a whole. Thus when Gregory lay dying in exile in Salerno and said: "I have loved righteousness and hated iniquity"; therefore I die in exile," a monk who waited on him replied, continuing the quotation from the Psalms which can rightly be referred only to Christ: "In exile thou canst not be, for 'God hath given thee the heathen for thine inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession' (Psalm 2.8)."

¹⁶ Gregory VII, in R.W. Southern, *Western Society and the Church in the Middle Ages*, Penguin Books, 1970, p. 102.

The heretical Popes were the first political revolutionaries in Christian history; for by inciting the peoples of the West to rise up against their legitimate sovereigns, they transgressed the apostolic command to be subject to the powers that be.

This was clearly evident for the first time in 1066, when the Pope, egged on by Archdeacon Hildebrand, anathematized King Harold of England and all those who supported him and blessed the invasion of England by William the Conqueror. The invasion was deemed necessary because the English Church and people had refused to break their allegiance to King Harold and his predecessor, St. Edward the Confessor, when they fell out with Rome. For they were deeply imbued with the principles of the Orthodox autocracy that had served them so well since King Alfred the Great had restored Orthodoxy after the Viking invasions in the ninth century, and which had produced at least one saint in the person of King Edward the Martyr. Therefore when King Harold was killed at the battle of Hastings he died in defence, not only of his personal power, but also of the Orthodox doctrine of Church-State relations.

But one form of totalitarianism begets another and opposite kind. And the papocaesarist heresy of Hildebrand begat the first purely caesaropapist State in Christian history in the form of William the Conqueror's England. For while William's invasion of England had been blessed by Hildebrand, to whom he owed nominal allegiance, he proceeded to reject the authority of the Pope in his conquered land. For, as Eadmer of Canterbury wrote: "All things, spiritual and temporal alike, waited upon the nod of the King... He would not, for instance, allow anyone in all his dominion, except on his instructions, to recognize the established Pontiff of the City of Rome or under any circumstances to accept any letter from him, if it had not first been submitted to the King himself. Also he would not let the primate of his kingdom, by which I mean the Archbishop of Canterbury, if he were presiding over a general council of bishops, lay down any ordinance of prohibition unless these were agreeable to the King's wishes and had been first settled by him. Then again he would not allow any one of his bishops, except on his express instructions, to proceed against or excommunicate one of his barons or officers for incest or adultery or any other cardinal offence, even when notoriously guilty, or to lay upon him any punishment of ecclesiastical discipline."¹⁷

The parallel with Russia in 1917 is striking. For in England as in Russia, the overthrow of the Orthodox autocracy by anti-monarchical forces led to the imposition of a caesaropapist dictatorship of unparalleled cruelty, which led in turn to the downfall of the official Church, the removal of the true bishops, the killing of the faithful believers, and the profaning of the holy relics and churches. And, as if to emphasize this correspondence, the surviving child of the last English Orthodox king, Gytha, fled to Kiev and married Great-Prince Vladimir Monomakh, making the Russian Tsar-Martyr Nicholas a direct descendant of the English Martyr Kings. It is as if the last scion of Orthodox autocracy in the "First Rome" was saved through its union with the new Orthodox autocracy of the "Third Rome", just as, four centuries later, the

¹⁷ Edmer, *Historia Novorum in Anglia (The History of Recent Events in England)*, in Henry Bettensen, *The Documents of the Christian Church*, Oxford University Press, 1963, pp. 155-156.

last scion of the Orthodox autocracy of the "Second or New Rome", Sophia Palaeologus, was united to another Russian Great-Prince, Ivan III...

*

Let us now turn to the specific contribution made by Russia to the Orthodox understanding of Church-State relations. Holy Russia, "the Third Rome", came into being in the late tenth century at almost exactly the same time that the Christian West, "the First Rome", was entering its final descent into apostasy. This fact has led some to speculate that Russia has taken the place of the West in the Divine Plan, and that it is precisely Russia that will achieve the final victory over the Western apostasy.

Of course, this is not to deny the great merit of the Great Church of Constantinople in exposing and anathematizing the Western heresies of the Filioque (in the ninth century), of unleavened bread and the omission of the epiclesis (in 1054), and of created grace (in the fourteenth century). But, according to a Greek prophecy of the eighth or ninth century, "the sceptre of the Orthodox kingdom will fall from the weakening hands of the Byzantine emperors, *since they will not have proved able to achieve the symphony of Church and State*. Therefore the Lord in His Providence will send a third God-chosen people to take the place of the chosen, but spiritually decrepit people of the Greeks."¹⁸

For the Greeks, while clearly discerning the apostasy of the West, nevertheless followed their last two emperors, John VIII and Constantine XI, into union with the West at the council of Florence in 1439 for the sake of preserving their empire from the Turks. Unlike their great ancestors, who had often defied heretical emperors for the sake of faithfulness to the truth, they tried to preserve their earthly kingdom at the price of the Kingdom of Heaven, forgetting that the whole glory of the Christian Empire lay in its readiness to live and die for its Heavenly King. "For here we have no lasting city, but seek the City which is to come" (Hebrews 13.14).

Fr. Alexander Schmemmann traced the beginning of this fall of Byzantium to the eleventh century: "After 1081, when Alexius Comnenus ascended the throne, the patriarchs seem to withdraw into the background. We find very meager information about them in the Byzantine chronicles through which we establish their names, their chief 'acts', and the years in which they were appointed or died. A curve could be traced, showing a gradually fading image of the patriarch side by side with the ever-increasing splendor of the basileus, as the Eastern emperors were called. And this is not accidental. It gives proof that the scales of the unattainable harmony were inclined in the direction of imperial power.

"It is important to emphasize that this painful weakness cannot be explained solely in terms of the government's coercing the Church - in terms of the superiority of physical force, so to speak... This was an inner, organic weakness of the

¹⁸ Archbishop Seraphim of Chicago, "Sud'by Rossii" ("The Destinies of Russia"), *Pravoslavnij Vestnik (Orthodox Bulletin)*, № 87, January-February, 1996, pp. 6-7. This prophecy was discovered by Archbishop Seraphim in St. Savva's monastery near Jerusalem.

representatives of the Church. Their dual situation made them not just the victims but also the agents of their own destiny. The thirst for a sacred theocracy, the desire to illumine the sinful stuff of history with the light of Christ; everything that could justify the union of Church and empire - this ideal required for its attainment a very subtle but very clear distinction between the Church and the world. For the Church is thoroughly fulfilling its mission to transform the world only when it completely feels itself to be a kingdom not of this world.

"The tragedy of the Byzantine Church consisted precisely in the fact that it became merely the *Byzantine* Church, that it merged itself with the empire not so much administratively as, above all, psychologically, in its own self-awareness. The empire became for it the absolute and supreme value, unquestioned, inviolable, and self-evident."¹⁹

Allowing for a certain exaggeration, we may accept Schmemmann's analysis, which accords with the witness of the Greek prophecy quoted above. The Byzantine empire failed because, although it remained Orthodox in itself, and the emperor and patriarch remained in harmony to the end, this harmony was not true "symphony", being based on a diminished, less-than-truly-ecumenical and non-missionary vision which tended to degenerate into a narrow nationalism that has become increasingly evident in the post-Byzantine era, when Hellenism and revolutionary ideas of freedom at times have seemed to supplant Orthodoxy in the affections of the people. Therefore, being unable to present a truly catholic and ecumenical vision of Christian society to the world, the Byzantines fell into a false union with the West with its heretical, but more explicitly universal vision.

Did Russia succeed where Byzantium failed? Schmemmann sees the Russians as having corrupted the ideal of Church-State symphony no less than the Byzantines, most obviously in the reigns of Ivan the Terrible and Peter the Great. However, here we must disagree with the learned theologian, who betrays the bias of his Parisian training in his blindness to the "curves" of Russian history. Although Russia succumbed at times to caesaropapism and narrow nationalism, she always recovered from these temptations as a result of several factors which distinguished Russian history from that of Byzantium.

First, Russia had a long, nearly five-hundred year training in humility in the shadow of the Byzantine empire, during which, in spite of her vastly greater size and political independence from Byzantium, her metropolitans were always (until the council of Florence) appointed by the Constantinopolitan Patriarch, and her great-princes always (until the very fall of Byzantium) looked to the Byzantine Emperors as to their elder brothers. This meant that, when Russia came to take the place of Byzantium as the bearer of the cross of the Christian Empire, she was not tempted to think of herself as the *first* or *only* or *best* Christian people. And when that temptation appeared in the form of the Old Ritualist schism, it was rejected by the ecumenical consciousness of the Russian Church and State.

¹⁹ Schmemmann, *The Historical Road of Eastern Orthodoxy*, London: Harvill Press, 1963, pp. 222-223.

Secondly, while the Greeks had a long and sophisticated history as pagans before accepting Christianity, the Russians accepted the faith in the first flush of youth, as it were. This meant, among other things, that the pagan traces of idolatrous emperor-worship, which some scholars have claimed to find even in late Byzantium, were no part of the inheritance of the newly Christianized people of Rus'. Some have claimed that the Mongol yoke later injected certain pagan and idolatrous attitudes into Russian life; but there is little evidence to support this notion.

Thirdly, while the Byzantine Empire contracted from the large, multi-national dominion of Constantine the Great to the small, exclusively Greek dominion of Constantine XI, the Russian Empire grew in the opposite direction, expanding from its Muscovite heartland to the borders of Sweden and Germany in the West and China and America in the East. This meant that the Russian Empire was always and increasingly multi-national, with a large number of non-Russian saints and a strong commitment to missionary activity right until 1917 and (in the Russian Church Abroad) to the present day. This truly ecumenical, non-nationalistic character of the Russian Empire was emphasized by its last three wars - the Crimean war, the Russo-Turkish war of 1877-78 and the First World War, which were fought in a self-sacrificial spirit for the sake of the non-Russian Orthodox of the Balkans and Middle East.

Fourthly, the history of the Russian Empire has been punctuated by wars against the Western heretics. Thus the history of Russia is defined, to a much greater degree than Byzantium, by her relationship with the West. And whereas Byzantium chose to compromise with the West so as to receive help against the Muslims (which never came), Russia in the person of Alexander Nevsky made the opposite choice of priorities, and the Russian Empire died during a war against both the West (Germany and Austria-Hungary) and the Muslims (the Ottoman empire).

And yet Russia finally fell to a western heresy - the heresy of social democracy, or, in its extreme form, communism. And now her Church is captive to another western heresy - ecumenism. So the promise that she is in some sense destined to be the conqueror of Old Rome remains so far unfulfilled.

How, then, can Russia fulfil her destiny in relation to the West, becoming in truth "light from the East"? *Only by demonstrating in her own life the vitality of that ideal form of Christian social life, the symphony of Emperor and Church, which Byzantium failed to achieve and of which caesaropapism and papocaesarism are the heretical distortions.* For we may say that the root heresy of the West, more fundamental even than the heresies that the Byzantines fought against, is precisely a false understanding of Church-State relations, which gave birth, first to Catholic papocaesarism, then to Protestant caesaropapism and finally, in our time, to ecumenist democracy.

In trying to define this root heresy of the West, a clue is provided by a phrase in the famous speech of the Ecumenical Patriarch Jeremiah II to Tsar Theodore Ivanovich, when he enunciated and gave his blessing to the idea that Russia is the Third Rome: "Since *the First Rome fell through the Apollinarian heresy*, and the Second Rome, which is Constantinople, is held by infidel Turks, so thy great Russian kingdom, most pious

Tsar... is the Third Rome... and thou alone under heaven art Christian Emperor for all Christians in the world."²⁰

Now the Apollinarianism rarely, if ever, figures in lists of the western heresies. And yet the patriarch here indicates that it is *the* heresy as a result of which the First Rome fell. We must therefore look for some matching in form, if not in substance, between the Apollinarian and papist heresies. Smirnov's definition of the heresy gives us a clue: "accepting the tripartite composition of human nature - spirit, irrational soul, and body - [Apollinarius] affirmed that in Christ only the body and the soul were human, but His mind was Divine."²¹ In other words, Christ did not have a human mind like ours; it was replaced, according to the Apollinarians, by the Divine Logos. A parallel with Papism immediately suggests itself: just as the Divine Logos replaces the human mind in the Apollinarian Christology, so a quasi-Divine, infallible Pope replaces the fully human, and therefore at all times fallible episcopate in the heretical papist ecclesiology.

The root heresy of the West therefore consists in the unlawful exaltation of the mind of the Pope over the other minds of the Church, both clerical and lay, and its quasi-divinization to a level equal to that of Christ Himself.

From this root heresy proceed all the heresies of the West. Thus the Filioque with its implicit demotion of the Holy Spirit to a level below that of the Father and the Son becomes necessary insofar as the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of truth Who constantly leads the Church into all truth has now become unnecessary - the Divine Mind of the Pope is quite capable of fulfilling His function. Similarly, the epiclesis, the invocation of the Holy Spirit on the Holy Gifts is also unnecessary - if Christ, the Great High Priest, sanctified the Holy Gifts by His word alone, then His Divine Vicar on earth is surely able to do the same without invoking any other Divinity, especially a merely subordinate one such as the Holy Spirit.

Again, if the Pope is agreed to dispense grace directly, rather than beseeching the Holy Spirit to send it down, then grace must be agreed to be created - for even the Popes do not pretend to be uncreated, and it is paradoxical for a created being to dispense uncreated grace. Rather, the Popes are created beings who partake in the essence of the Godhead through their infallible minds. Therefore, as a recent official publication of the Vatican put it, the Pope "is the ultimate guarantor of the Teaching and Will of the Divine Founder!"²²

Not only the Papist, but also the Protestant heresies proceed from this bitter root. For Protestantism's main difference from Papism is that, in the spirit of rationalist democracy, it wants to extend the privileges of the Pope's Divine mind - his infallible access to truth and certain possession of salvation - to the minds of all Christians. As New Hieromartyr Archbishop Hilarion (Troitsky) put it: "Protestantism only objected:

²⁰ Jeremiah II (Tranas), in Runciman, Sir Steven, *The Orthodox Churches and the Secular State*, Oxford University Press, 1971, p. 51.

²¹ Smirnov, in Appendix to Protopresbyter Michael Pomazansky, *Orthodox Dogmatic Theology*, Platina, Ca.: St. Herman of Alaska Brotherhood, 1984, p. 379.

²² Mgr. Oliveri, *The Representatives*, Apostolic Legation of London, 1980.

Why is truth given to the Pope alone?... Every individual was thus promoted to the rank of infallible Pope. Protestantism placed a papal tiara on every German professor..."²³

However, if truth is given to every man in view of his naturally infallible mind, there is no need, either of the Pope, or of the Church, or even of Christ Himself. Indeed, why should any organized religion or revelation be necessary if man has only to dig into his personal divinity to find all the riches of the Heavenly Kingdom? Why not recognize all religions and all revelations, since they all manifest that "Light which enlightens every man that comes into the world" (John 1.9)?

Thus the papist heresy of Church-State relations, whose seeds are evident already in the fifth century, leads inexorably, not only to the full-blown heresies of eleventh-century Papism and sixteenth-century Protestantism, but even to the modern pan-heresies of Ecumenism and the New Age.

More than that: it could prove to be the theoretical underpinning of the "divinity" of the Antichrist. For just as the Pope is considered to have an infallible mind, so the Jew is considered to have a *Divine soul* - and none more, of course, than the coming false king of the Jews, the Antichrist. Thus we read in a contemporary Jewish journal: "When the Creator on Mount Sinai CHOSE us for a special mission, there arose a completely new form of connection between Him and the Jewish people. The distinction between the Hebrew people and the others was formed in two stages. The first stage was the epoch of our forefathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, who, thanks to their selfless devotion to the Master of the universe, were raised above the limitations of their nature and laid the foundation for a new type of reality - the Jewish people.

"The second stage was accomplished by the revelation on Sinai. Thanks to their special inspiration and complete devotion to the will of the Creator, the forefathers of the Jewish people merited, not only for themselves, but also for their descendants, a special spiritual substance - a Divine soul. Thus the Jewish people was separated into a special category distinct from the other peoples. This distinction is not quantitative, but qualitative...

"Such an approach allows us to understand the specific nature of the Jewish people. The Jew is not simply a man who has one extra quality or characteristic. The Jew is a creature into which the Most High has inserted a Divine soul - the spirit of holiness, a particle of God Himself.

"The Divine soul which belongs to the Jew is a supremely unique characteristic. All creatures, including mankind, are parts of the creation of the world with its regularities and limitations. But the Jew stands outside the creation of the world thanks to his Divine soul. This particularity of the Jewish people was formed already in the time of the forefathers, and from them was passed down by inheritance to every Jew, who bears within himself this phenomenon, the Jewish soul - a particle of God Himself.

²³ Troitsky, *Christianity or the Church?*, Holy Trinity Monastery, Jordanville, 1971, p. 28.

"From this it follows that true freedom of choice belongs only to those possess a particle of God Himself - a Divine soul. As is said in the book of the Prophet Ezekiel, chapter 34, verse 31: 'You are My people, My flock. Your name is man.' From these words it follows that the definition of 'man' in the highest sense of the word, and consequently freedom of will in the full sense refer only to the possessors of a Divine soul."²⁴

We may speculate that the "third stage" in the supposed superiority of the Jews over all other nations will come when the Antichrist comes to power, when it will be claimed, through a new revelation higher even than that of the law and the prophets, that he has a Divine soul to an even greater degree than the other Jews, being in fact, not just a particle of God Himself, but the whole Divinity; for he will "take his seat in the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God" (II Thessalonians 2.4).

Thus the warning of the Orthodox Pope St. Gregory the Great that papism is "the forerunner of the Antichrist" is shown to be true. Jewish Antichristianity may be defined as a nationalist form of Papism or Apollinarianism. In essence it is the same as the Hindu teaching that man is by nature God, which is the same primordial lie that Satan whispered into the ears of Eve in the Garden of Eden.

Against this, the first and perhaps also the last of the God-fighting heresies, the Orthodox Church teaches that man is not god by nature, but can become god by grace, through union in the fear of God, in faith and in love with the only God-Man, the Lord Jesus Christ, and through participation in the Holy Spirit.

But Orthodoxy demonstrates this truth not only in words, but also in its God-inspired social structure. For the division of powers between the Emperor and the Patriarch, which was abolished by the Papacy and will be abolished again by the Antichrist, demonstrates that no man, however holy, can have the fulness of grace, which belongs to God alone. For just as the Emperor is forbidden to offer the Bloodless Sacrifice at the altar (although, as we have seen, he is a priest in a certain sense), so the Patriarch is forbidden to assume political office. And if some patriarchs in Orthodox history have been forced to assume a more than strictly priestly role, this has been exceptional, an exercise of *oekonomia*. In essence the throne of the Emperor at such a time remains empty; no Patriarch, however distinguished, can occupy it.

Thus the role of the Emperor in the Church may be compared to that of the Archangel Michael in the angelic hierarchy. Just as the great archangel was called to take on the leadership of the good angels, although he was not from the ranks of

²⁴ *Aleph*, № 451, October, 1992; quoted in A.S. Shmakov, *Rech' Patriarkha Alekseya II k ravvinam g. Nyu Yorka (S.Sh.A.), 13 noyabrya, 1991 goda i yeres' zhidovstouyushchikh (The Speech of Patriarch Alexis II to the Rabbis of New York (U.S.A.)), second edition, U.S.A., 1993, p. 13.*

The verse from Ezekiel quoted here has the words "Your name is man" neither in the Greek Septuagint translation of the Old Testament, which is the only text accepted by the Orthodox Church, nor in the Old Latin text. The Authorized King James translation, which is from the Massoretic Hebrew text, reads: "And ye My flock, the flock of My pasture, *are men*, and I am your God, saith the Lord God" - a clear rebuttal of the Jews' claims to natural divinity.

Cherubim and Seraphim, so the right-believing Emperor is called to take on the leadership of the Church, although he is not from the ranks of the holy bishops. And just as the archangel was called to resist the Luciferian pride of the fallen first angel, so the Emperor is called to resist "the depths of Satan" (Revelation 2.24) in the fallen first-hierarchs of the West and formerly chosen people of the East. For the name "Michael" means "Who is like unto God?", which refrain is precisely that of the Orthodox Emperors in their struggle against Papism and Judaism. Fittingly, then, is the Archangel Michael seen as the special protector of Orthodox Emperors, being the "wondrous champion of them that wage war against the spirits of evil in high places".²⁵

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We can now see why the differences with regard to monarchism in general, and Tsar-Martyr Nicholas II, in particular, between the present-day Moscow Patriarchate, on the one hand, and the True Russian Church, on the other, are by no means unimportant or secondary, but in fact underlie all their other differences.

The main achievements of the Tsar-Martyr consisted in his resisting the resurgent power of the Jews and papists, and in his overcoming, in his own person, of the caesaropapist legacy of the eighteenth century. Of course, his nineteenth-century predecessors paved the way for the restoration of true symphony in Church-State relations. However, it was Tsar Nicholas II who showed the most exceptional devotion to the Church, building churches, glorifying saints and, most significantly, approving the restoration of the patriarchate.

The fact that the patriarchate was not restored during his reign, but some months later, was not his fault, but the fault of those who, having inwardly broken their ties with the Church, were trying to undermine the foundations of the State as well. Some claimed that it was the overbearing power of the monarchy which inhibited the restoration of the patriarchate, which therefore became possible only after the monarchy's fall. But this was not in fact the case: rather, it was the weakness of the Church, especially in its more educated strata, that undermined the strength of the monarchy, which in turn necessitated the restoration of the patriarchate if Christian society was to have a clear focus of unity and leadership. For, as one peasant delegate to the Local Council of 1917-18 put it: "We have a Tsar no more; no father whom we love. It is impossible to love a synod; and therefore we, the peasants, want a Patriarch."

For a time the Patriarch carried the colossal burden of representing and defending the Christian people in the absence of a tsar. This inevitably involved certain quasi-political acts, such as the anathematization of Soviet power and the condemnation of the treaty of Brest-Litovsk. However, the accusation of "politicking" that was hurled against the Patriarch was misplaced, not only because these acts were necessary in the interests of the Church, and were therefore within the Patriarch's competence, but also because, in the absence of a tsar, someone had to bear the cross of witnessing to the truth and condemning the revolution publicly and on the world stage.

²⁵ *Akathist Hymn to the Holy Archangel Michael*, ikos 4.

Nevertheless, the strain of this unnatural situation began to tell, and the witness of the Church against the revolution began to grow muted. Again, this was not so much the fault of the Patriarch as of the whole of Christian society; for just as the Tsar could not govern if nobody obeyed him, the Patriarch could not witness effectively if civil society pursued other ideals.²⁶ And so, since "the spirit was not right" among the Whites, as Elder Aristocleus of Moscow said - many of them were aiming, not at the restoration of the Romanov dynasty, but at the reconvening of the Constituent Assembly or the restoration of the landowners' lands - the patriarch felt unable to give his unequivocal blessing to their leaders.²⁷

Thus by the end of the Civil War the spirit of Orthodox Monarchism, without which the restoration of Holy Russia was inconceivable, had been driven largely underground and overseas, manifesting itself only rarely in public, as in the First All-Emigration Council of the Russian Church in Exile in 1921. And a few years later the Church herself was forced underground. For, deprived of all support in the public domain, the Patriarch had been forced to make damaging concessions to the atheists - first in the affair of the requisitioning of church valuables²⁸, then in setting himself "finally and decisively" apart "from both the foreign and the internal monarchist White-guard counter-revolutionaries", in the annulling of the anathema against the Bolsheviks, in the introduction of the new calendar, and in the admittance of the renovationist Krasnitsky to a place in the Synod.

But though the Patriarch bowed to the overwhelming pressure of the Bolsheviks, he did not break. He himself foresaw, as he revealed in a conversation with the future catacomb hieromartyr Maximus of Serpukhov, that the Church could not go on making such compromises without sacrificing her inner freedom, and therefore her inner union with Christ in the Spirit. And so he blessed the formation of the Catacomb Church, which would preserve the spirit of Orthodox Monarchism in the only conditions in which it could survive in the conditions of the militantly atheist State - as an underground opposition to the State.

²⁶ P.S. Lopukhin, "Tsar i Patriarch" ("The Tsar and the Patriarch"), *Pravoslavniy Put'* (*The Orthodox Way*), 1951, p. 104.

²⁷ Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) of Kiev wrote: "Unfortunately, the most noble and pious leader of this [the White] army listened to those unfitting counsellors who were foreign to Russia and sat in his Special council and destroyed the undertaking. The Russian people, the real people, the believing and struggling people, did not need the bare formula: 'a united and undivided Russia'. They needed neither 'Christian Russia', nor 'Faithless Russia', nor 'Tsarist Russia', nor 'the Landowners' Russia' (by which they will always understand a republic). They needed the combination of the three dear words - 'for the Faith, the Tsar and the Fatherland'. Most of all, they needed the first word, since faith rules the whole of the state's life; the second word was necessary since the tsar guards and protects the first; and the third was needed since the people is the bearer of the first words" ("Tserkovnost' ili politika?" ("Churchness or Politics?"), *Pravoslavnaiia Rus'* (*Orthodox Russia*), № 1558, May 1/14, 1996, p. 4).

²⁸ The holy Elder Nectarius of Optina once said to the wife of Fr. Adrian Rymarenko, the future Archbishop Andrew of Rockland: "You see now, the patriarch gave the order to give up all valuables from the churches, but they belonged to the Church!" (Matushka Evgenia Grigorievna Rymarenko, "Remembrances of Optina Staretz Hieroschemamonk Nektary", *Orthodox Life*, vol. 36, № 3, May-June, 1986, p. 39)

The "achievement" of Metropolitan Sergius, the founder of the Sovietized Moscow Patriarchate, was to give a dogmatic foundation to the heresy concerning Church-State relations that goes under his name - Sergianism. Sergianism is in fact a subtle and paradoxical form of Papism. Its paradoxicality consists in the fact that it is at the same time *both* papocaesarism *and* caesaropapism; for while it creates a completely papal structure for the Church, it at the same time subordinates the whole Church to the complete control of the State.

Like Papism, Sergianism begins by denying the rights of the Emperor in the Church and monarchism in general. In fact it goes further in this direction than any of the Popes: in the spirit of the revolution it denounces the meekest and most merciful of the tsars as a blood-sucking tyrant and political criminal.

Unlike Papism, however, Sergianism did not put the first-hierarchy of the Church in the position of the overturned Emperor. That was obviously out of the question in the context of the revolution. Rather, it accorded the roles both of Emperor and of Patriarch to the Leader of the Soviet State. And if Sergius himself was later given the title of patriarch, everyone understood who the real "Father" was - Joseph Stalin, that "wise, God-established", "God-given Supreme Leader", who had served as "the instrument of Divine Providence" in saving Holy Russia (by extending the rule of militant atheism from Berlin to Peking!). Thus whereas the Popes introduced heresy into the Church by proclaiming themselves the Vicars of Christ, Sergius' Papism consisted in becoming the Vicar of the Antichrist! And, like the Popes, he justified his heresy on the grounds that only in this way could he save the Church!

Thus in a real way Sergius subdued Russia to papism. Just as Old Rome fell through accepting that all truth was in the Pope, so the Third Rome, Russia, fell through accepting that all salvation was in the "Patriarch".

Hieromonk Nectarius (Yashunsky) has described how Sergius introduced papism into the Moscow Patriarchate: "Metropolitan Sergius' understanding of the Church (and therefore, of salvation) was heretical. He sincerely, it seems to us, believed that the Church was first of all an organization, an apparatus which could not function without administrative unity. Hence the striving to preserve her administrative unity at all costs, even at the cost of harming the truth contained in her.

"And this can be seen not only in the church politics he conducted, but also in the theology [he evolved] corresponding to it.

"In this context two of his works are especially indicative: 'Is There a Vicar of Christ in the Church?' (*The Spiritual Heritage of Patriarch Sergius*, Moscow, 1946) and 'The Relationship of the Church to the Communities that have Separated from Her' (*Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate*). In the first, although Metropolitan Sergius gives a negative answer to the question (first of all in relation to the Pope), this negative answer is not so much a matter of principle as of empiricism. The Pope is not the head of the Universal Church only because he is a heretic. But in principle Metropolitan Sergius considers it possible and even desirable for the whole of the Universal Church to be headed by one person. Moreover, in difficult times in the life of the Church this person

can assume such privileges even if he does not have the corresponding canonical rights. And although the metropolitan declares that this universal leader is not the vicar of Christ, this declaration does not look sincere in the context both of his other theological opinions and of his actions in accordance with this theology."

In the second cited article, Metropolitan Sergius explained the differences in the reception of heretics and schismatics, not on the basis of their objective confession of faith, but on the subjective (and therefore changeable) relationship of the Church's first-hierarchy to them. Thus "we receive the Latins into the Church through repentance, but those from the Karlovtsy schism through chrismation". And so for Sergius, concludes Fr. Nectarius, "to be saved it is not the truth of Holy Orthodoxy but belonging to a legal church-administrative organization that is necessary!"²⁹

The last few years have demonstrated that Sergianism does not depend on the existence of Soviet power, but has entered into the very flesh and blood of the patriarchate. Thus recently the patriarch said about Sergius' declaration: "I do not renounce it, for it is impossible to renounce one's history... I think that in the present year we have been able to withdraw from under the state's *trivial* [sic!] charge and, therefore, we have the moral right to affirm the fact that Metropolitan Sergius' declaration is a fact belonging to the past, and we no longer are guided by it. At the same time, however, this does not mean that we are against the government..."³⁰

For, of course, Patriarch Alexis is *never* against the government. For in the last resort, as Fr. Peter Perekrestov points out, it is all a matter of *power* for him: "It is not important to them whether a priest is involved in shady business dealings or purely church activities; whether he is a democrat or a monarchist; whether an ecumenist or a zealot; whether he wants to serve Vigil for six hours or one; whether the priest serves a panikhida for the victims who defended the White House or a moleben for those who sided with Yeltsin; whether the priest wants to baptize by immersion or by sprinkling; whether he serves in the catacombs or openly; whether he venerates the Royal Martyrs or not; whether he serves according to the New or Orthodox Calendar - *it really doesn't matter*. The main thing is to commemorate Patriarch Alexis. Let the Church Abroad have its autonomy, let it even speak out, express itself as in the past, but only under one condition: *commemorate Patriarch Alexis*. This is a form of **Papism** - let the priests be married, let them serve according to the Eastern rite - it makes no difference, what is important is that they commemorate the Pope of Rome."³¹

How can the neo-papist heresy of Sergianism be overthrown in Russia? Only by clearly recognizing the root of the heresy in the overthrow of the Orthodox autocracy and in the rejection of the Orthodox doctrine of Church-State relations. Such a recognition involves much more than a nostalgia for monarchism, more even than a veneration for the Tsar-Martyr. It means the recognition that the Orthodox autocracy is the crown of Christian society, its *dogmatic completion*. For, as Patriarch Anthony of

²⁹ Hierodeacon Jonah (now Hieromonk Nectarius) (Yashunsky), "Sergianstvo: Politika ili Dogmatika?" (Sergianism: Politics or Dogmatics?) (MS), 29 April / May 12, 1993, pp. 2-3, 5.

³⁰ Patriarch Alexis, in *Golos (The Voice)*, № 33, p. 11; quoted by Fr. Peter Perekrestov, "Why Now?" *Orthodox Life*, vol. 44, № 6, November-December, 1994, p. 40.

³¹ Perekrestov, *op. cit.*, p. 43.

Constantinople wrote to Great Prince Basil Dmitrievich in 1393: "*It is impossible for Christians to have a Church, and not have a king; for the kingdom and the Church are in close union and communion with each other, and it is impossible to separate them.*"³²

Of course, the Church can *exist* without a king, but it cannot *prosper, manifesting her true glory to the world*, without a king. It is impossible for the Church to prosper without a king because "no city or house that is divided against itself will stand" (Matthew 12.25), and only an Orthodox king ruling in the image of the Heavenly King and chosen by Him alone can restore unity to a nation torn apart by a multitude of self-appointed leaders in Church and State. It is impossible for the Church and prosper without a king because only in obedience to the king's autocratic to paternal authority can obedience to all lawful authorities, from the paterfamilias to our Father in the Heavens, be established. It is impossible for the Church to prosper without a king because only an Orthodox king ruling in obedience to Christ the God-man is able to defend the Church against the false authorities that threaten to overwhelm her, and in particular the false authority based on the Hindu-Apollinarian-Papist-Talmudist doctrine of the innate divinity of man - the dogma of the Man-god, the Antichrist.

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And if some will say: then there is no hope, for we have no king, we shall answer: although we have no king, yet the mystery of the Orthodox kingship has not been destroyed and can be restored if we fervently beseech God for it; for the Mother of God has revealed in her miraculous Reigning icon, which appeared at the very moment of the abdication of the last tsar, that the symbols of kingly authority are in her hands...

Once the backsliding Jews said: "We have no king, for we fear not the Lord, and a king, what shall he do for us?" (Hosea 10.3). And the Lord, the King of kings, said: "They have made kings for themselves, but not by Me... Therefore shall they be delivered up to the nations;... and they shall cease a little to anoint a king and princes" (Hosea 8.4,10).

But then the Lord hearkened to the repentance of the Jews in Babylon and gave them again a king of the line of David, of whom He said: "It is he that shall build the Temple of the Lord, and shall bear royal honour, and shall sit and rule upon his throne. And there shall be a priest by his throne, and peaceful understanding shall be between them both" (Zechariah 6.13). Now, as then, repentance is possible and restoration is possible. Now, as then, we can still say: "The king shall be glad in God; everyone shall be praised that sweareth by him" (Psalms 62.10).

*September 4/17, 1996 (revised February 15/28, 2020).
Holy Prophet and God-seer Moses.*

(Published in Russian as *Dogmaticeskoe Znachenie Pravoslavnogo Samoderzhavia*, Moscow, 1997)

³² Quoted in Fomin, op. cit., p. 95.

2. WHAT POWER IS OF GOD?

The question of the proper limits of obedience to political power has preoccupied Christians since the time of the early martyrs, who confessed loyalty to the pagan Roman emperor but refused to obey him in that which conflicted with the supreme sovereignty of God. This problem - the problem, namely, of where to draw the line between that which is God's and that which is Caesar's (or Pharaoh's) - has become particularly difficult and divisive in the last two centuries, since the French Revolution infected the whole world with the lust for freedom. Both the Greek and the Russian Churches have suffered major schisms because of differing answers to the question: What power is of God? Thus when the Greeks of the Peloponnese rose up against Turkish power in 1821, they were anathematized by the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Constantinople, which led to a schism between the Churches of Greece and Constantinople that lasted until 1852. Again, when the Russian Church rose up against Soviet power in 1918 and anathematized it, a reaction set in from pro-Soviet hierarchs, who drove those faithful to the decrees of 1918 into the catacombs.

In the nineteenth century, the most extensive and profound study of this question came from the pen of Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow, who refuted the anti-tsarist propaganda of the Russian liberal intelligentsia by demonstrating that the power of the Tsar in the State, being an extension, as it were, of the power of the father in the family (for the State is formed through an amalgamation of many families), is natural and established by God.³³ However, the metropolitan directly answered only one half, and the less difficult half, of the question. Granted that the power of the Tsar, and monarchical power in general, is of God: what of the power that fights against this God-established power, which usurps and overthrows it? Are we to view it as tolerantly as the Church viewed the many coups d'état that brought successive emperors to the throne of the New Rome of Constantinople? How are we to regard today's democratic regimes, which not only came to power over the dead bodies of lawful monarchs, but even deny the monarchical principle itself? Still more pertinently for today's Russian Orthodox Christians, what are we to say of Soviet power, which not only killed monarchs and denied the monarchical principle, but denied the very fount and origin of all lawful authority - God Himself?

There are some who say that Soviet power, too, was (or is) legitimate, and had to be obeyed insofar as "all power is of God" (Romans 13.1)? Others assert that Soviet power was the Antichrist, if not in the sense that it was that last antichristian ruler, "the man of lawlessness, the son of perdition," (II Thessalonians 2.3) whom the Lord will destroy at His Second Coming, but rather in the sense that it was one of the heads or horns of that beast whose "power and throne and great authority" comes, not from God, but from "the dragon", that is, Satan (Revelation 13.3)? For the consensus of the Holy Fathers is that this first beast of the book of Revelation is indeed the Antichrist, whose seven heads and ten horns represent a series of antichristian kingdoms culminating in "another horn, a little one,.. in which were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking great things" (Daniel 7.8) - the false king of the Jews. So the

³³ Metropolitan Philaret, *Sochinenia (Works)*, vols. II, pp. 133-137, 193-196, 183-186, 141-143, 168-170, 171-173, 179-183; III, pp. 290-292, 251-255, 302, 300-301.

question is: can Soviet power be construed as "the collective Antichrist" which precedes the last, "personal" Antichrist and which shares his essence to such a degree that it, too, can be said to be established, not by God, but by Satan?

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But how, it will be asked, can *any* power be of Satan when we have St. Paul's explicit statement that *all* power is of God? In order to understand the true meaning of St. Paul's words, we must first take into account the context in which these verses are written. In the previous chapter (Romans 12), St. Paul has been elaborating the Christian teaching on love, unity and non-resistance to evil. "Recompense no man evil for evil... Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good" (vv. 17, 21). Having elaborated this teaching in the *personal* sphere, the sphere of relations between individual men, St. Paul proceeds to elaborate the *same* teaching in the *political* sphere, the sphere of relations between the individual or the group and the State. Just as we have been exhorted not to resist evil with evil in the personal sphere, so now we are exhorted not to resist evil with evil in the political sphere. In other words, as Vladimir Rusak explains, these words constitute a call to *conditional obedience*, and to *the renunciation of revolutionary action*.³⁴

On what is the obedience conditional? On the ruler being, in St. Paul's words "not a terror to good works, but to the evil" (v. 3; cf. I Peter 2.14). Only such a ruler is "established by God"; only such a ruler receives his authority from God.

Pilate, according to this definition, may have been a true ruler to whom obedience was due before he condemned Christ to death. But when he condemned the Just One, Christ, and released the unjust, Barabbas, he lost all real authority. "For without justice," writes St. Augustine, "what are kingdoms but vast robberies?"³⁵

This does not mean, however, that *armed rebellion* against such a ruler is necessarily justified; for evil must be resisted by means that are good, and civil war, as Metropolitan Anthony Khrapovitsky points out, is among the worst of evils.³⁶ But it does mean that we must *spiritually* resist the injustice of such a ruler. Moreover, if the evil of obedience to an unjust or blaspheming ruler is sufficiently great, it may be right to resist that ruler even by physical means, as being the lesser of two evils. Thus St. Hermogen, patriarch of Moscow, called for armed struggle against the false tsar Dimitri in 1611. And Metropolitan Anthony and the Council of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad called for a crusade against Soviet power in 1921...

However, there is an important sense in which *all* authorities, even when they commit injustice - and all rulers are sometimes unjust - can still be considered to be established by God. In this sense, as St. John Chrysostom explains, political authority *as such and in principle* is good and necessary in our fallen world in order to check our

³⁴ Rusak, *Svidetel'stvo Obvoivenia (Witness for the Prosecution)*, Holy Trinity Monastery Press, Jordanville, 1987, vol. 1, pp. 32-33, 38-39, 40, 42, 43.

³⁵ St. Augustine, *The City of God*, II, 29.

³⁶ Khrapovitsky, *The Christian Faith and War*, Holy Trinity Monastery Press, Jordanville.

fallen nature. In the life of the world to come, there will be no need for politics, just as there will be no need for marriage. But until that time, political power will be as necessary to check the fallen tendency of man to self-will and rebelliousness as marriage is to his tendency to lust and fornication. "For anarchy," writes St. Isidore of Pelusium, "is always the worst of all evils... That is why, although the body is a single whole, not everything in it is of equal honour, but some members rule, while others are in subjection. So we are right to say that the authorities - that is, leadership and royal power - are established by God so that society should not fall into disorder."³⁷

"But if," continues St. Isidore, "some evildoer unlawfully seizes power, we do not say that he is established by God, but we say that he is allowed, either to spit out all his craftiness, or in order to chasten those for whom cruelty is necessary, as the king of Babylon chastened the Jews."³⁸ In other words, we can say that every ruler is allowed to rule by God in the same sense that sinners are allowed to sin - in the sense, namely, that God does not prevent them from exercising their free will, either so that they should fill up the measure of their sins before being brought to judgement, or in order to punish those who are subject to them for their sins. Thus Soviet power, though not established by God, could be said to have been allowed by Him in order to chasten the Russian people for their sins.³⁹

Now St. Paul exhorts Christians not only to pray for the kings, who were impious pagans and enemies of the Church at that time, but even to give thanks for them "and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceful life in all godliness and honesty" (I Timothy 2.1-2). Is it possible that St. Paul could sincerely have given thanks for the bloody persecutions of the Church? Certainly not! His words can be interpreted in two ways. Either he gave thanks for the *principle* of authority, of law and order, which the pagan emperors *generally* - when they were not persecuting the Church - embodied, and which both preserved St. Paul himself from the wrath of the Jews in Jerusalem and elsewhere, and helped spread Christianity so rapidly from the borders of Persia in the East to Hadrian's Wall in the West. This is the most obvious interpretation.

However, there is a profounder interpretation suggested by Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow: "The Spirit of God in him foresaw and more or less showed him the future light of Christian kingdoms. His God-inspired vision, piercing through future centuries, encounters Constantine, who brings peace to the Church and sanctifies the kingdom by faith; and Theodosius and Justinian, who defend the Church from the impudence of heresies. Of course, he also goes on to see Vladimir and Alexander Nevsky and many spreaders of the faith, defenders of the Church and guardians of Orthodoxy. After this it is not surprising that St. Paul should write: I beseech you not only to pray, but also to give thanks for the king and all those in authority; because there will be not only such kings and authorities for whom it is necessary to pray with

³⁷ St. Isidore, *Letter 6*, to Dionysius.

³⁸ St. Isidore, *Letter 6*, to Dionysius.

³⁹ Archbishop Theophan of Poltava, *Pis'ma (Letters)*, Holy Trinity Monastery Press, Jordanville, 1976.

sorrow..., but also those for whom we must thank God with joy for His precious gift."⁴⁰

In general, a special authority attached to the Roman empire, of which the Lord Himself was registered as a citizen, which in its Christian reincarnations as the New Rome of Constantinople and the Third Rome of Moscow played such an important role in preserving Orthodox Christianity, and whose final removal, according to the Holy Fathers, would usher in the reign of the Antichrist. That was why the British ruler Ambrosius Aurelianus called himself "the last of the Romans", although in his time, the late fifth century, the Roman legions had left Britain long ago. And that was why, as late as the tenth century, the English King Athelstan called himself "Basileus", declaring thereby that his State was in some sense still Roman.

All Christians were obliged to revere the authority of the Christian Roman emperor above every other political authority. Thus when Patriarch Jeremiah II of Constantinople established the Russian patriarchate in 1589, he confirmed that the Russian Tsardom was "the Third Rome" and declared, addressing the Tsar: "Thou alone under heaven art Christian emperor for all Christians in the world."⁴¹

Not all Christian leaders kept this testament, and there is an interesting incident from the life of Schema-Hieromonk Hilarion the Georgian, which illustrates just how dangerous such neglect could be. During the Crimean War of 1854-56, when the Russian armies were fighting the Turks and their Western allies on Russian soil, the Ecumenical Patriarch issued an order that all the monasteries on Mount Athos should pray for the triumph of the Turkish armies during the war. On hearing this, the Georgian elder, Fr. Hilarion said of the patriarch: "He is not a Christian", and when he heard that the monks of Grigoriou monastery had carried out the patriarch's command, he said: "You have been deprived of the grace of Holy Baptism, and have deprived your monastery of the grace of God." And when the abbot came to the elder to repent, he said to him: "How did you dare, wretched one, to put Mohammed higher than Christ? God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ says to His Son: 'Sit Thou at My right hand, until I make Thine enemies the footstool of Thy feet' (Psalm 109.1), but you ask Him to put His son under the feet of His enemies!" Again, in a letter to the head of chancellery of the Russian Holy Synod, Elder Hilarion wrote: "The other peoples' kings [i.e. not the Russian Tsar] often make themselves out to be something great, but not one of them is a king in reality, but they are only adorned and flatter themselves with a great name, but God is not favourably disposed towards them, and does not abide in them. They reign only in part, by the condescension of God. Therefore he who does not love his God-established tsar is not worthy of being called a Christian..."⁴²

⁴⁰ Metropolitan Philaret, *Sochinenia (Works)*, vol. II, pp. 171-173.

⁴¹ Jeremiah II (Tranas), in Sir Steven Runciman, *The Orthodox Churches and the Secular State*, Oxford University Press, 1971, p. 51.

⁴² Hieromonk Anthony of the Holy Mountain, *Ocherki zhizni i podvigov Startsa Ieroskhimonakha Ilariona Gruzina (Sketches of the Life and Exploits of the Elder Hieroschemamonk Hilarion the Georgian)*, Holy Trinity Monastery, Jordanville, 1985, pp. 68-74, 95.

This authority remained in spite of the fact that at certain times the Roman empire acquired the image rather of the beast than of "the minister of God". For while some of the fruits of the tree were infected by evil influences from without, its root and trunk remained good as being established by the only Good One. That is why it was incumbent upon all Christians to pray and give thanks for the Roman emperors, whether of the Old, New or Third Rome; for, as St. Seraphim said: "After Orthodoxy, zealous devotion to the Tsar is the Russian's first duty and the chief foundation of true Christian piety."⁴³

In other words, God-established authority, being one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit (I Corinthians 12.27), belongs in the first place only to the Christian Roman emperors and to those other Christian rulers who have received the true anointing of the Holy Church. In a secondary sense, it may also be said to belong to other, non-Christian rulers who maintain the basic principle of law and order against the forces of anarchy and revolution. However, this secondary kind of authority is only partial and relative; and the authority of truly Christian rulers must always be revered by Christians above any other kind of political authority, even if the latter is the authority they live under.

Were there any rulers for whom the early Church refused to pray and give thanks? Yes: in the fourth century, St. Basil the Great prayed for the defeat of Julian the Apostate, and it was through his prayers that the apostate was killed, as was revealed by God to the holy hermit Julian of Mesopotamia.⁴⁴ This raises the interesting question: what was different about Julian the Apostate that made him so much worse than previous persecutors and unworthy even of that honour and thanks that was given to them? Was it because he was an apostate from the Christian faith? Or because he tried to help the Jews rebuild the Temple and thereby became in a very direct sense a forerunner of the Antichrist?

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Let us explore each of these suggestions in turn. The first can be expressed as follows. A ruler is a true, God-established authority if he provides a minimal degree of law and order. Such a ruler may be a Christian or even a pagan; for even pagans can be good rulers in the purely political sense, and the early Christians found no difficulty in obeying and honouring the pagan emperors in everything except their religious policies. However, an apostate from the true faith represents a much more dangerous threat to the Christian people. For the weaker brethren may be tempted to obey him, not only in his political demands, but also in his religious policy, seeing in him a Christian by baptism. Moreover, the apostate ruler may attack the authority of previous Orthodox rulers, declaring that they were not only religious heretics, but also political traitors or usurpers. Therefore an apostate ruler has the ability to shake the foundations of both Church and State.

⁴³ St. Seraphim, in S. Nilus, "Chto zhdet Rossiia?" ("What is Awaiting Russia?"), *Moskovskie Vedomosti (The Moscow Gazette)*, № 68, 1905.

⁴⁴ V.A. Konovalov, *Otnoshenie Khristianstva k Sovetskoj Vlasti (The Relationship of Christianity to Soviet Power)*, Montreal, 1936, p. 35.

It is certainly true that some of the most critical periods in the history of the Church have coincided with the reigns of apostate rulers. Thus the Church was much fiercer in her condemnation of the iconoclast rulers of eighth- and ninth-century Byzantium than of the pagan rulers of the first three Christian centuries. At the same time, there is no evidence that the Church called on the faithful of that time to refuse to pay taxes or give military service to the iconoclast emperors, still less rise up in open rebellion against them. Indeed, the Acts of the Seventh Ecumenical Council make it clear that the confessors of the truth prayed for the success of the iconoclast emperors in military affairs while rebuking them for their impiety. Perhaps this was because the iconoclast rulers continued the political traditions of Christian Rome, if not her religious traditions, so that they could still be called authorities in the political sense. Or perhaps the Church foresaw that the last iconoclast ruler would die and be succeeded by the Orthodox rulers Michael and Theodora - in other words, that the ship of State would right itself in time without the need for any violent corrective action.

A more ambiguous example is the Norman invasion of England in 1066. The Norman ruler, William the Conqueror, was crowned as the first Catholic king of England on January 6, 1067. One year and one day earlier, on January 5, 1066, King Edward the Confessor, Harold's predecessor, had died after prophesying: "Since those who have climbed to the highest offices in the kingdom of England, the earls, bishops and abbots, and all those in holy orders, are not what they seem to be, but, on the contrary, are servants of the devil, on a year and one day after the day of your death God had delivered all this kingdom cursed by Him, into the hands of the enemy, and devils shall come through all this land with fire and sword and the havoc of war."⁴⁵ William not only imposed the heresy of Papism upon his new subjects. He also rejected the legitimacy of the last, Orthodox ruler, King Harold, who had been anointed by the Holy Church, and himself imposed a completely new culture upon England which can best be described as "totalitarian".⁴⁶

Seeing, therefore, that they stood to lose *everything* of true value, the Orthodox English resisted force with force, and, when defeated, emigrated in large numbers to foreign lands - mainly Constantinople (where English soldiers formed the core of the emperor's bodyguard until the Fourth Crusade in 1204) and Kievan Russia (where the daughter of the last Orthodox English king, Gytha, married Great-Prince Vladimir Monomakh, and a colony called "New England" was founded in the Crimea).

Are we to say, then, that from 1066 England entered the era of the Antichrist, and that all faithful Christians were bound to refuse obedience to the pseudo-authority represented by William and his successors?

Britain had been part of the Roman Empire since 43, and her Christianization began at about the same time. In the ten centuries that followed, in spite of falls and apostasies, Britain remained culturally and religiously, if not politically, within the

⁴⁵ Anonymous, *Vita Aedwardi Regis* (The Life of Edward the King).

⁴⁶ As one historian has written, "apparently as the result of one day's fighting (14 October, 1066), England received a new royal dynasty, a new aristocracy, a virtually new Church, a new art, a new architecture and a new language"(R.H.C. Davies, *The Normans and Their Myth*, London: Thames & Hudson, 1976, p. 103).

orbit of Rome, both the Old Rome and the Orthodox Christian Empire of New Rome. However, when the Roman papacy fell away from the Truth in 1054, and all the kingdoms of the West were gradually forced into submission to papist rulers, of which William the Conqueror was one, "he that restrains" the advent of the Antichrist "was removed from the midst" of the Western peoples (II Thessalonians 2.7). And so, as the English Proto-Protestant John Wiclif wrote in 1383, "the pride of the Pope is the cause why the Greeks are divided from the so-called faithful... It is we westerners, too fanatical by far, who have been divided from the faithful Greeks and the faith of the Lord Jesus Christ."⁴⁷

So perhaps rebellion against the pseudo-authority of William was indeed necessary for the first generation of Englishmen he ruled, who had been born in Orthodoxy and of whom an anonymous English poet wrote: "The teachers are lost, and many of the people too". However, as time passed and new generations which had never known Orthodoxy were born, the question of resistance to the rulers became meaningless; for in the name of what, and for the sake of what, should heretics rise up against heretics? And now, over nine hundred years later, Orthodox Christians, both native and foreign, live in the apostate nations of the West without, generally, giving a thought to the legitimacy or illegitimacy of their rulers. This is not, of course, because the West has repented of its apostasy, but because that apostasy has become less overtly aggressive towards Orthodoxy, and because the present rulers, unlike those of the late eleventh century, do - for the time being - guarantee that minimum of law and order which, as we have seen, is the essence of authority in the apostles' sense of the word.

Moving on some three hundred years, we come to the first clear example of a successful armed rebellion of an Orthodox Christian people against their rulers - that of the Russians against the Tatars. Now when the Tatars had first invaded Russia in the thirteenth century, St. Alexander Nevsky had decided to fight the Catholic Teutonic Knights but submit to the Tatars because the former threatened the faith of his subjects while the latter threatened only their political independence. So the Tatars were granted to have greater political legitimacy than the Catholics, if only because their pretensions were only political. Why, then, some 150 years later, did the Russians rise up against the rulers they had accepted as legitimate for so long - with the blessing, moreover, of one of the holiest men who ever lived, St. Sergius of Radonezh? There is no evidence that the Tatars had become significantly more intolerant towards the Orthodox Faith; nor were they apostates from that faith, having never confessed it.

It is tempting to conclude that the difference here consisted in the fact that St. Sergius foresaw, through the Spirit of God that was in him, that a rebellion now would be successful and would have good long-term consequences for the Church as a whole. But does that not mean that the judgement as to the legitimacy or illegitimacy of a ruler, and whether or not it is right to remain in obedience to him, - at any rate if he is not an Orthodox Christian, - is not a purely moral question, but contains an element of political or military calculation? Of course, prudence and foresight are not

⁴⁷ Wyclif, *De Christo et Suo Adversario* (*On Christ and His Adversary*), 8; in R. Buddensig (ed.), *John Wiclif's Polemical Works in Latin*, London: The Wiclif Society, 1883, vol. II, p. 672.

qualities having nothing to do with morality; but we might reasonably suppose that if a ruler is legitimate, that is, established by God, it would be wrong to rebel and try to overthrow him in *any* circumstances, even if we could be sure that our attempt would be successful and would not lead to any terrible reprisals for the Orthodox people.

Let us consider another example of a successful and righteous rebellion against the powers that be - that of the Russian people against the Catholic Poles in 1612. Of course, the Catholics were heretics, and it was reasonably expected that the false Dimitri, even if he formally converted to Orthodoxy, would protect the Jesuits whose aim was to catholicize Russia. On the other hand, the enterprise was fraught with great risk; the Russians themselves were divided, and other foreign powers, such as the Swedes, were waiting to pounce. Why, then, did the holy Patriarch Hermogen bless what was, in effect, civil war? Was it again because he foresaw, by the Spirit of God within him, that the Russian armies would triumph and usher in the Orthodox dynasty of the Romanovs?

If the Tatars in 1380, and the Catholics in 1612 (and again in 1812), were less than fully legitimate rulers against whom the Lord Himself, in the persons of His saints, raised successful rebellions at specific times, there can be no doubt that a rebellion against Soviet power could have been both legitimate and successful. Moreover, an implicit blessing for rebellion was contained in the decree of the Local Council of the Russian Orthodox Church of January 22, 1918, which confirmed Patriarch Tikhon's anathematization of Soviet power three days earlier and his exhortation "not to commune with such outcasts of the human race *in any matter whatsoever* - 'cast out the wicked from among you' (I Corinthians 5.13)", and went on to declare: "Orthodox! His Holiness the Patriarch has been given the right to bind and to loose according to the word of the Saviour... Do not destroy your souls, cease communion with the servants of Satan - the Bolsheviks. Parents, if your children are Bolsheviks, demand authoritatively that they renounce their errors, that they bring forth repentance for their eternal sin, and if they do not obey you, renounce them. Wives, if your husbands are Bolsheviks and stubbornly continue to serve Satan, leave your husbands, save yourselves and your children from the soul-destroying infection. An Orthodox Christian cannot have communion with the servants of the devil... Repent, and with burning prayer call for help from the Lord of Hosts and thrust away from yourselves 'the hand of strangers' - the age-old enemies of the Christian faith, who have declared themselves in self-appointed fashion 'the people's power'... If you do not obey the Church, you will not be her sons, but participants in the cruel and satanic deeds wrought by the open and secret enemies of Christian truth... Dare! Do not delay! Do not destroy your soul and hand it over to the devil and his stooges."⁴⁸

Moreover, in his Epistle to the Council of People's Commissars in October, 1918, the Patriarch wrote: "It is not our affair to judge the earthly authorities; every power allowed by God would draw upon itself our blessing if it were truly 'the minister of

⁴⁸ "Iz sobrania Tsentral'nogo gosudarstvennogo arkhiva Oktiabr'skoj revolyutsii: listovka bez vykhodnykh dannyx, pod № 1011" ("From the Collection of the Central State Archive of the October Revolution: leaflet without date, № 1011"), *Nauka i Religia (Science and Religion)*, 1989, № 4.

God' for the good of those subject to it and 'terrible not for good works but for evil' (Romans 13.3,4)" - which clearly implied that Soviet power, which was terrible for good works and not for evil, was *not* "the minister of God".

Nevertheless, in spite of all these historical, scriptural and conciliar justifications, the Patriarch did not in the end bless the White armies who fought against the Soviets; nor were those armies blessed with victory from on high. Why? Because the Patriarch foresaw, by the Spirit of God within him, that it would not be successful? Perhaps; but this begs the question why it was not successful, why God did not bless it. Because Soviet power was in fact of God, so that rebellion against it was rebellion against God, as the renovationists and sergianists would have it? We have already given sufficient reasons why this argument is invalid. In any case, if it were valid, then the sergianists would be forced to recognize that the rebellions of the Russian people in 1380 and 1612, though blessed by the greatest Russian saints, were also wicked rebellions against legitimate, God-established authorities.

The White armies failed, not because Soviet power was of God, and so should not have been resisted, but because, as Elder Aristocles of Moscow put it, "the spirit is not right". And the spirit was not right because, while there were many true Christians and monarchists on the side of the Whites, their leaders did not put as their aim the restoration of Holy - that is, Orthodox and Tsarist Russia, but rather the restoration of the property of the landowners, or the reconvening of the Constituent Assembly, or one or another similar non-spiritual goal.⁴⁹

The rebellion of the Catacomb Church, which began in 1927-28, was more spiritual and therefore more successful; and it is to the many thousands, perhaps millions, of martyrs and confessors of the Catacomb Church that we must ascribe the fall of Soviet power in 1991. Having never had much to lose, they did not aim at the restoration of material goods; having no faith in democracies, they did not agitate for "human rights". They simply repented, suffered and died; and with every death, the walls of the Antichrist's kingdom became weaker...

And it is to a document of the Catacomb Church that we owe the clearest, most theologically convincing explanation of why Soviet power was not simply a true authority gone wrong, not simply a ruler abusing his God-given authority, but precisely an *anti-authority*. Here is an extract from this document: "How should one look on the Soviet authority, following the Apostolic teaching on authorities [Rom. 13]? In accordance with the Apostolic teaching which we have set forth, one must acknowledge that the Soviet authority is not an authority. It is an anti-authority. It is not an authority because it is not established by God, but insolently created by an aggregation of the evil actions of men, and it is consolidated and supported by these actions. If the evil actions weaken, the Soviet authority, representing a condensation of evil, likewise weakens... This authority consolidates itself in order to destroy all religions, simply to eradicate faith in God. Its essence is warfare with God, because its

⁴⁹ See the quotations from Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) and Fr. Vladimir Vostokov in Hieromonk Euthymius (Trofimov), "O tropare prazdniku Vozdvizhenia" ("On the Troparion to the Feast of the Exaltation"), *Pravoslavnaia Rus'* (*Orthodox Russia*), № 17 (1566), 1/14 September, 1996, p. 3.

root is from satan. The Soviet authority is not authority, because by its nature it cannot fulfil the law, for the essence of its life is evil.

"It may be said that the Soviet authority, in condemning various crimes of men, can still be considered an authority. We do not say that a ruling authority is totally lacking. We only affirm that it is an anti-authority. One must know that the affirmation of real power is bound up with certain actions of men, to whom the instinct of preservation is natural. And they must take into consideration the laws of morality which have been inherent in mankind from ages past. But in essence this authority systematically commits murder physically and spiritually. In reality a hostile power acts, which is called Soviet authority. The enemy strives by cunning to compel humanity to acknowledge this power as an authority. But the Apostolic teaching on authority is inapplicable to it, just as evil is inapplicable to God and the good, because evil is outside God; but the enemies with hypocrisy can take refuge in the well-known saying that everything is from God. This Soviet anti-authority is precisely the collective Antichrist, warfare against God..."⁵⁰

Granted that Soviet power was an anti-authority, was it a sin to receive Soviet citizenship? Catacomb Christians did not reach unanimity on this question. Some took the very hard, very self-sacrificial path of the "besspassortnij", "one without a passport". Others were not so strict, insisting only that a Christian could not sympathize with Soviet power or help it. The latter group pointed out that one could not condemn those who accepted Soviet citizenship while themselves accepting the benefits (meagre though they were) of that same citizenship.

Thus in 1960 Archimandrite Hilarion (Andrievsky), leader of the Catacomb Church in Voronezh, wrote to a "hardline" nun as follows: "To call oneself 'a citizen of the Soviet state' by no means signifies recognizing oneself to be 'a Soviet person'. It does not signify agreement with the communists, it does not signify going together with them, it does not signify working in concert with them and sympathizing with all their undertakings... 'A citizen of the Soviet state' and 'a Soviet person' are by no means identical concepts: the first is recognition and submission to Soviet power, and the second - is an inner content, a feeling in the soul of man. There is a huge difference between these concepts. I experienced this myself in 1928, thirty-two years ago. When, after a long convoy, I was waiting for a decision on my fate together with other prisoners in Samarkand prison, I was told that I had been left to serve my term of exile in the city of Samarkand itself. Several people in the prison envied me because this, being the former capital of Central Asia, was a large, cultured, interesting city with ancient sites. But then, when I was summoned to the GPU to fill in a questionnaire, my position suddenly changed sharply - it appeared that my replies did not please them. To the question: 'What is your relationship to the authorities?', I replied: 'I recognize it and submit to it in civil matters'. Then they said that 'this is not much'. But when I asked: 'What more do you need?' they replied with another question: 'But do you sympathize with it?' I replied directly: 'No, I do not sympathize with it, and as a believer I cannot sympathize with it in general. Moreover, how can I sympathize with it personally, when they brought me here completely against my will, tearing me

⁵⁰ I.M. Andreev, *Russia's Catacomb Saints*, Platina: St. Herman of Alaska Press, 1982, pp. 541-42.

away from my relatives and friends!...' To this they said: 'You probably need the Tsar's authority?' I replied: 'No, you are mistaken. Read history, and you will see that there were times when the Tsars also fiercely persecuted the Christians.' All these replies of mine were written down and signed. A little later I was told that there would be a sharp change in my place of exile: from the big beautiful city that I had been assigned to before I was sent to the remote steppe, whence after a five-year stay I was despatched to another exile - in distant Siberia. Thus it became clearly evident from this questionnaire that Soviet power makes a profound distinction between 'citizenship' and 'sympathy' and does not necessarily merge and confuse these two concepts into one. Otherwise, after my reply about recognizing and submitting to Soviet power, they would not have gone on to ask me about my 'sympathy', if this 'sympathy' was truly linked with 'citizenship'. After all, they not only asked me about 'sympathy', but punished me for my negative reply, and changed the place of my exile from Samarkand to the remote steppe four hundred kilometres away from it.

"So a 'citizen' is not always and necessarily a 'sympathizer' with all the communist undertakings, for the concept of 'citizen' in itself does not contain this 'sympathy'; and for that reason there was absolutely no sin in taking part in the census and giving a positive reply to the question about 'citizenship' in the Soviet state, in which, as you well know, there are citizen-communists who are completely devoted and sympathetic to it, and there are simply citizens in the sense only of subjects - and the latter are the absolute majority, in whose number are you and I, which is clearly witnessed by your passport, which you yourself took, and you live through it with the rights of 'citizenship' in necessary cases (reception of pension, etc.). It is more than strange to say that to take advantage of the rights of a citizen here is not a sin, but to call oneself a 'citizen' is, in your opinion, such a terrible sin that you have even excluded all those who took part in the census from Orthodoxy! What amazing light-mindedness! It is this that has engendered such a profound error, which even contradicts simple common logic, not to speak of the greater error that I wrote to you about earlier and which I will not repeat. I will only add that such a spiritual double-mindedness is not pleasing to God. If, in your opinion, it is sinful merely to call yourself a 'citizen' of the Soviet state in a census, then to take advantage, as you do, of this citizenship is a still more bitter and responsible act, although you don't recognize it. (Your passport, your pension, etc. They reproach you!) What use is this?! And how much is said in the Divine services of the December Menaion concerning the participation of our Lord Jesus Christ Himself in the census of Herod, which proves the sinlessness of our participation in the census that has taken place. And in the Menaion for January 5 it is said of Christ: 'He was registered, but did not work, obeying the commands of Caesar.' As you can see, here 'registration' was in no way bound up with 'work' for Caesar. Thus our participation in the census does not necessarily oblige us to work for Soviet power, the more so in that we do not sympathize with communism, as you mistakenly think. In conclusion I want to cite one more argument in favour of our positive reply to the question on 'citizenship'. We Russians received our holy Orthodox faith from the Greeks, from Constantinople, while the Greeks were in a condition of civil subjection to the Turks - Muslims. However, this Turkish citizenship did not hinder the Greeks from preserving the Orthodox Faith in the course of many centuries. Constantinople is considered to this day to be a cradle of Holy Orthodoxy, a Centre of the Universal Church of Christ. And

this historical example clearly shows that Turkish citizenship did not necessarily contain within itself sympathy with the Muslims, just as Soviet citizenship does not necessarily contain within itself sympathy with Communism – which is sinful....”⁵¹

Fr. Hilarion’s point is well taken. Nevertheless, as this article has sought to show, he erred in seeing no essential difference between the regimes of Pagan Imperial Rome and the Turkish sultanate, on the one hand, and Soviet power, on the other. Perhaps one could indeed be a Soviet citizen without sympathizing with, or helping, Soviet power in any way. But it was extremely difficult; and if “recognition” involved accepting the *legitimacy* of the Soviet regime, then this in itself helped Soviet power to a certain degree. Moreover, any kind of recognition or submission was in direct contradiction with the Patriarch Tikhon’s anathema of 1918, which called on the Orthodox to obey the Soviets *in no way whatsoever*.

This argument remained unresolved right until the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991. We see it re-emerge in the early 1990s argument between Metropolitan Vitaly, first-hierarch of the Russian Church Abroad and the correspondence between Metropolitan Vitaly and representatives of the passportless in the early 1990s. The metropolitan compared the Soviet Union to the Roman empire. St Paul had been proud of his Roman citizenship, he wrote, so what was wrong with having a Soviet passport and being called a Soviet citizen? ⁵² The Passportless Christians were appalled by the comparison – as if Rome, the state in which Christ Himself was born and was registered in a census, and which later grew into the great Orthodox Christian empires of Byzantium, the New Rome, and Russia, the Third Rome, could be compared to the anti-state, the collective Antichrist established, not by God, but by satan (Revelation 13.2), which had destroyed the Russian empire! Rome, even in its pagan phase, had protected the Christians from the fury of the Jews: the Soviet Union was, in its early phase, the instrument of the Jews *against* the Christians. Rome, even in its pagan phase, guaranteed a framework of law and order within which the apostles could rapidly spread the faith from one end of the world to the other: the Soviet Union forced a population that was already Orthodox in its great majority to renounce their faith or hide it “in deserts and mountains, in dens and caves of the earth” (Hebrews 11.38).

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Let us now turn to the second possible criterion indicated above for the legitimacy or otherwise of political power: its relationship to “the mystery of lawlessness” (II Thessalonians 2.7), *the Jewish revolution*.

Julian the Apostate was uniquely repugnant to the Church not only because he was an apostate from Christianity, but, still more important, because he helped the Jews in their attempt to rebuild the Temple of Solomon. If God had not thwarted the Jews'

⁵¹ Priest Alexis, “Sv. Otsy-Ispovedniki ob otnoshenii k vlastiam”, <http://priestalexei.livejournal.com/2197.html>.

⁵² Metropolitan Vitaly, “Otvét bespasportnomu” (Reply to a Passportless), *Pravoslavnij Vestnik (Orthodox Herald)*, February-March, 1990; Petrova, op. cit.

plan by causing fire to emerge from the foundations of the Temple, it is very possible that they would have proclaimed Julian himself as the Messiah, just as the Great Sanhedrin offered to proclaim Napoleon as the Messiah when he proposed to complete Julian's project some fifteen hundred years later. Thus when St. Basil, whose name means "king", prayed for the destruction of Julian, he was in fact carrying out, in the absence of a true king, the kingly role of "him who restrains" the appearance of the Antichrist (II Thessalonians 2.7).

Roman pagan power, for all its excesses, did not support the Jewish revolution, but rather restrained it, through the destruction of Jerusalem and the suppression of successive Jewish rebellions.⁵³ The same could be said of the Catholic and Islamic powers, which, although apostate and antichristian in the sense that they converted nations that had formerly been Orthodox Christian into enemies of God, remained hostile to the ambitions of the still more apostate and antichristian Jews. Thus it was Arabic Islamic power that cast the Jews out of Babylon in 1040, and Tatar Islamic power that threw the Jews out of Khazaria in the thirteenth century (whence they migrated to Catholic Poland). And it was English Catholic power that threw the Jews out of England in the Middle Ages, and Spanish and Portuguese Catholic power that threw the Jews out of the Iberian peninsula in the fifteenth century.⁵⁴ For all these powers, antichristian or heretical though they were, understood from bitter experience (and their reading of the Talmud) that the Jews recognized no other authority than their own, and were essentially revolutionaries bent on establishing Jewish dominion over all other nations.⁵⁵

The first political power in history that recognized and supported the Jewish revolution was the European socialist revolution in its major successive stages: the English revolution of 1642, the French revolution of 1789 and the Russian revolution of 1917. Thus Cromwell, after killing King Charles I and introducing the Puritan revolution with its heavily socialist and communist overtones, invited the Jews back into England. Again, the French Jacobins gave full rights to the Jews, and these were confirmed and extended by Napoleon. This was followed, in the course of the nineteenth century, by the emancipation of the Jews in all the countries of Europe except Spain and Portugal in the West and Russia and Romania in the East. Thus immediately after the Orthodox Balkan nations were liberated from the Turks, they gave the Jews the privileges that the Ottoman Turks had denied them.

It was in 1917 that the Jewish revolution first emerged fully out of the underground, and seized significant political power - and not only in Russia. For by one of those extraordinary "coincidence" of Divine Providence, the October revolution in Petrograd and the promise of a homeland to the Jews in Palestine by the British Foreign Secretary Lord Balfour took place *at exactly the same time*, being reported on *the very same column of newsprint* in the *London Times* of November 9, 1917. It was as if the beast suddenly emerged out of the sea of the Gentile peoples, being visible

⁵³ I. Antonopoulos, *Synomosia kai Agape (Conspiracy and Love)*, Athens, 1979, pp. 36-37 (in Greek).

⁵⁴ Douglas Reed, *The Controversy of Zion*, Durban, S.A.: Dolphin Press, 1978.

⁵⁵ See Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky), "Christ the Saviour and the Jewish Revolution", *Orthodox Life*, vol. 35, № 4, July-August, 1988, pp. 11-31.

simultaneously in two of its horns - one situated in Bolshevik Moscow, on the ruins of the last Orthodox Christian empire, and the other in Zionist Jerusalem. Indeed, as Chaim Weitzmann, the first president of Israel, witnessed in his autobiography, the leaders of the Bolshevik and Zionist movements came, not only from the same race and territory - the formerly Khazarite Jews of the Russian Pale of Settlement, but even, sometimes, from the same families.⁵⁶ It is now accepted even by "pro-Semite" historians, such as the Harvard professor Richard Pipes, that the great majority of the leaders of the Bolshevik party were Jews.⁵⁷

"Pro-Semites" point out that the Bolshevik Jews were very different from the Zionist-Talmudic Jews, being atheist as opposed to theist, internationalist as opposed to nationalist; and that they persecuted the Jewish religion only a little less severely than Orthodox Christianity. This is true; but the similarities remain more striking and profound than the differences. First, Bolshevism should be described as antitheist rather than atheist, having a quasi-religiously intense hatred of God that is not typical of simple unbelievers. It is as if the Bolsheviks, like the demons who inhabited them, both believed and trembled - but drowned their fear in the intense zeal of their hatred of everything that reminded them of God. Similarly, Talmudist Zionism should be described as antitheist rather than theist, being based on an intense hatred of the One True God, Jesus Christ (Who is described in the Talmud as a sorcerer born of a whore and a Roman soldier), and of the race of the Christians, such as is rarely if ever found in any other religion or world-view.

Secondly, as Bertrand Russell pointed out, many elements of the Marxist system are reminiscent of Judaism: the same striving for the promised land on earth and in time (communism and the withering away of the state); the same division of the peoples of the world into the chosen people (the proletariat) and the goyim (the exploiting classes), and the hatred incited against the latter; and the same cult of the false Messiah (the infallible leader or party).⁵⁸

Thirdly, there is considerable evidence that the Bolshevik revolution was conceived in the bowels of Zionism. Thus it is well known that Western Jewish financiers financed the Bolshevik revolution (as they financed the early rise of Hitler, according to Hitler himself⁵⁹). And the murder of the Tsar and his family was carried out not only by Jews but also in a specifically Jewish religious, ritualistic manner.⁶⁰

The high point of Bolshevik-Zionist cooperation came in 1948, when the Soviet Union became (with Britain) one of the guarantors of the newborn State of Israel, thereby repaying the debt which the Bolsheviks owed to the Jewish American financiers in 1917. Thereafter, however, Stalin and his successors became increasingly "anti-semitic", until, in the Brezhnev era, the Soviet Union came to be seen, with the

⁵⁶ *Trial and Error: The Autobiography of Chaim Weitzmann*, New York: Harper, 1949

⁵⁷ Pipes, *Russia under the Bolshevik Regime, 1919-1924*, London: Fontana, 1994, pp. 112-113.

⁵⁸ Russell, *A History of Western Philosophy*, London: Allen Unwin, 1947.

⁵⁹ Pipes, *op. cit.*, p. 113.

⁶⁰ See Nikolai Kozlov, *Krestnij Put' (The Way of the Cross)*, Moscow, 1993; Enel, "Zhertva" ("Sacrifice"), *Kolokol' (The Bell)*, Moscow, 1990, № 5, pp. 17-37, and Michael Orlov, "Ekaterinburgskaia Golgotha" (The Ekaterinburg Golgotha"), *Kolokol' (The Bell)*, 1990, № 5, pp. 37-55.

Arabs, as the main threat to Israel's existence. It is significant that this change of direction coincided with a limited, but definite relaxation of pressure on Orthodox Christianity (of the official kind) in the Soviet Union, and a gradual regeneration of Russian national consciousness. This could not fail to be reflected in a reaction against that other national principle which had destroyed Holy Russia.

At this point Satan's kingdom on earth looked dangerously divided against itself; the two horns of the beast began to turn in towards each other, threatening "mutually assured destruction". Now nuclear war between Israel and its allies, on the one hand, and the Soviet Union and its allies, on the other, was not in the plans of the Elders of Zion. So it was decided that the leaders of the southern and western half of the conspiracy should take control of the northern and eastern half - "perestroika" was born. Under Gorbachev the Bolshevik bear, having served its purpose nicely, was muzzled; and under Yeltsin, "the empire of evil" is being turned into just another shopping mall - or gangster wasteland.

Yeltsin, as was openly announced in *Pravda*, is a Mason, and Masonry has been re-established in Russia under his protection. Moreover, his policies have promoted the westernization of Russia which has been the aim of the Masons since before the revolution. Thus the prophecy of Hieroconfessor Theodore (Rafanovich) of the Russian Catacomb Church (+1975) has been fulfilled: "The communists have been hurled at the Church like a crazy dog. Their Soviet emblem - the hammer and sickle - corresponds to their mission. With the hammer they beat people over the head, and with the sickle they mow down the churches. But then the Masons will remove the communists and take control of Russia..."

Meanwhile, the Judaization of the West nears its zenith: Ecumenism has destroyed any remaining "prejudices" against the Jewish religion, and the Vatican has recognized Israel; some Protestant sects have begun to argue that anti-Christian Israel is "the Bride of Christ"; the U.S.A. is preparing to recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel in spite of Palestinian protests; the murder of Orthodox priests and monastics has begun again in Israel; and Jewish extremists with the full cooperation of the government build a tunnel under the Dome of the Rock with the aim of destroying it and rebuilding the Temple of Solomon in its place - the essential prerequisite to the enthronement of the Antichrist.

Thus the religio-political situation towards the end of the twentieth century may be summarized as follows. The Orthodox Christian Empire, "that which restraineth" the advent of the Antichrist, is dead and buried - and only a tiny remnant still awaits its resurrection. The first major power that began the dismemberment of its eastern and southern territories, Islam, is more powerful than ever - but remains bitterly opposed to the Jewish Antichrist. The power that carved up the western part of the empire, Catholicism, together with its bastard child, Protestantism, is also very powerful; and spiritually and politically it has already handed over its birthright to the Antichrist. And the power that destroyed its northern territories, Bolshevism, has been put to sleep like a dog because it threatened to bite the hand that fed it...

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What can we conclude from this about the legitimacy of the present-day Russian democracy? Has Russia again acquired a power that is from God? Or is the successor to the Soviet beast no better than the beast itself?

In order to answer this question let us return to the fateful year 1917. It is usually assumed that while the democratic revolution of February, 1917 paved the way for the communist revolution of October, it was more legitimate than the latter because less fierce, more expressive of the will of the people. But it should be clear by now that neither gentleness nor popularity are criteria of legitimacy in a theological sense. After all, it is not the mandate of earth, but of heaven, that we are seeking. The Antichrist himself, according to the Tradition of the Church, will both bring both peace and prosperity, and will be highly popular in the first part of his reign.

Some very distinguished men refused to recognize the legitimacy of the Provisional Government, among them Metropolitan Macarius (Parvitsky), the Apostle of the Altai, General Theodore Keller and Count Paul Grabbe. Again, Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) wrote in 1922: "Who can deny that the February revolution was as God-fighting and anti-monarchist [as the October revolution]? Who can condemn the Bolshevik movement and at the same time approve of the Provisional government? It raised its hand against the Anointed of God. It annihilated the ecclesiastical principle in the army. It introduced the civil oath. In a word, all this was the triumph of that nihilism which has been known to Russian society already for three quarters of a century."⁶¹

Thus if the transition from democracy to communism in 1917 was by no means a transition from light to darkness, but rather from one phase of the revolution to another, we cannot assume that the transition from communism to democracy in 1991 was any different in principle. Certainly, this Russian democracy has not brought peace or prosperity, but division and crushing poverty. It has not restored true religion, but confirmed the authority of the KGB agents in cassocks. It has not raised the morals of the people, but sunk them to hitherto unheard-of depths. It has not restored law and order, but rather created the criminal state par excellence, a state run by ex-communists who use their power in the pursuit of the worst kinds of capitalist excess.

In this connection, it is highly significant that the same communist who destroyed the Ipatiev house, in which the last Tsar was murdered, is now the democratic president of Russia. For in the last analysis it is by its attitude to the events that took place in that house that every Russian government since 1917 must be judged. Regret at the barbarity of the deed is not enough; attendance at the burial of the Tsar's remains, or his official canonization, is not enough. What is required is repentance and *the reversal of the revolution by the restoration of the Orthodox monarchy*. Thus at present only a Provisional Russian government can be a legitimate one - Provisional, that is, in the sense that it is merely preparatory to the rule of the future Tsar...

⁶¹ Khrapovitsky, "Tserkovnost' ili politika?" ("Churchness or Politics?"), *Pravoslavnaia Rus' (Orthodox Russia)*, № 9 (1558), May 1/14, 1996, p. 4.

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3. ORTHODOXY, THE STATE AND RUSSIAN STATEHOOD

My Kingdom is not of this world.
John 18.36

The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign for ever and ever.
Revelation 11.15

What is the State? What is its origin and purpose? What are the obligations of the Christian to the State? In what circumstances should the Christian disobey the State? Are there any circumstances in which the Christian should rise up in rebellion against the State?

These questions – and especially the last two – have become particularly important for Orthodox Christians in the last two centuries, often dividing them into bitterly opposed camps. Thus in 1821 the Greeks of Europe rebelled against the Ottoman Turkish empire, for which they were anathematised by the Ecumenical Patriarchate, leading to a schism between the patriarchate and the newly-formed Church of Greece. Again, in 1918 the Russian Orthodox Church anathematised the Bolsheviki and all those who co-operated with them. But in 1927 Metropolitan Sergius initiated a policy of active co-operation with Soviet power, which led to a schism between the Moscow Patriarchate and the Catacomb Church that has lasted to the present day.

Let us try to establish certain principles to help us to orient ourselves in such conflicts, which are likely to intensify as we approach the time of the Antichrist.

1. The Origin and Purpose of the State

In the beginning of human history – that is, in Paradise, – there was no such thing as political life. Some heterodox thinkers, such as Thomas Aquinas, in their concern to demonstrate the essential goodness of the state have argued that the rudiments of the State already existed in the Garden, with Adam ruling like a king over Eve.⁶² But this is an artificial schema. The *Church* may indeed be said to have existed in Paradise – as we read in *The Order of Orthodoxy for the Week of Orthodoxy*: “This is our God, providing for and sustaining His beloved inheritance, the Holy Church, comforting the forefathers who had fallen away through sin with His unlying Word, laying the foundation for Her already in Paradise...”⁶³ But the *State*, while also from God and therefore good as such, is a product of the Fall and would never have been necessary if Adam had not sinned. As Metropolitan Anastasy (Gribanovsky) of New York

⁶² J.S. McClelland writes: “Thomas argues that there must have been political life before the Fall. Some form of rulership must have existed in the Garden of Eden. Thomas accepts Aristotle’s opinion that men are naturally superior to women, so he infers that God must have wanted Eve to be guided by Adam; only then would life in the garden have been complete” (*A History of Western Political Thought*, Routledge: London and New York, 1996, p. 116).

⁶³ Cf. the second epistle attributed to St. Clement of Rome: “The Church does not now exist for the first time, but comes from on high; for she was spiritual, and was manifested in the last days that He might save us” (XIV, 1).

writes: "Political power appeared on earth only after the fall of the first people. In Paradise the overseer's shout was not heard. Man can never forget that he was once royally free, and that political power appeared as the quit-rent of sin."⁶⁴

The State is necessary to fallen, sinful man because "the wages of sin is death" (Romans 6.23), and the purpose of the State is, not to conquer death in man - only Christ in the Church can do that - but to slow down its spread, to enable man to *survive*, both as an individual and as a species. To survive he needs to unite in communities with other men, forming families, tribes and, eventually, states. This process is aided, of course, by the fact that man is social by nature, and comes into the world already as a member of a family. So, contrary to the teaching of some heterodox thinkers, such as Thomas Hobbes, it is not only out of fear that men unite into large groups, but out of the natural bonds of family life. In this sense the state is simply the family writ large.

And since the family naturally has a single head, the father, so the state naturally has a single head, the king. Hieromonk Dionysius writes: "Both the familial and the monarchical systems are established by God for the earthly existence of sinful, fallen man. The first-formed man, abiding in living communion with God, was not subject to anyone except God, and was lord over the irrational creatures. But when man sinned and destroyed the Divine hierarchy of submission, having fallen away from God - he became the slave of sin and the devil, and as a result of this became subject to a man like himself. The sinful will of man demands submission for the limitation of his own destructive activity. This Divine establishment has in mind only the good of man - the limitation of the spread of sin. And history itself confirms that whatever may be the defects of monarchy, they cannot compare with the evil brought upon men by revolution and anarchy."⁶⁵

Now states issue *laws*, which determine what is a *crime* and what is to be the *punishment* for crime. To the extent that the laws are good, and well executed, the people can live in peace and pursue the aim for which God placed them on the earth - the salvation of their souls for eternity. To the extent that they are bad, and/or badly executed, not only is it much more difficult for men to pursue the supreme aim of their existence: the very existence of future generations is put in jeopardy.

The difference between sin and crime is that whereas sin is transgression of the law of God only, crime is transgression both of the law of God and of the law of man as defined by the State. The first sin, that of Adam and Eve in the garden, was punished by their expulsion from Paradise, or the Church - that is, from communion with God. The second sin, that of Abel's murder of his brother Cain, was, according to every legal code in every civilised state, a crime as well as a sin. But since there was as yet no state, it was God Himself Who imposed the punishment - expulsion from the society of men ("a fugitive and a vagabond you shall be on the earth" (Genesis 4.12)).

⁶⁴ Metropolitan Anastasy, *Besedy s sobstvennym serdtsem*, 1935, p. 159; reprinted in *Holy Trinity Russian Orthodox Calendar for 1998*, Jordanville, 1998.

⁶⁵ Hieromonk Dionysius, Priest Timothy Alferov, *O Tserkvi, Pravoslavnom Tsarstve i Poslednem Vremeni*, Moscow: "Russkaia Idea", 1998, p. 15.

The paradox is that Cain was the builder of the first state in recorded history, a city, as he fled from the presence of the Lord (Genesis 4.16,17) ...

The fact that the first state was founded by the first murderer has cast a shadow over statehood ever since. On the one hand, the State exists in order to curb sin in its crudest and most destructive aspects, and to that extent it is of Christ, "Who rules in the kingdom of men, [and] gives it to whomever He will" (Daniel 4.17). On the other hand, the greatest and most destructive crimes known to man have been committed precisely by the State, and to that extent it is an evil phenomenon, permitted but not blessed by God – for God sometimes "sets over it the lowest of men" (Daniel 4.17). Moreover, since Cain and at least until Saul and the kings of Israel, all states known to man were not only the main agents both of mass murder and of slavery, but were also worshippers of demons who compelled their citizens to worship demons, too. And if Blessed Augustine, in his famous book, *The City of God*, could see the Providence and Justice of God working even in the most antichristian states and institutions, this could not prevent him from taking a most pessimistic view of the origin and nature of most states (even the Roman).⁶⁶

St. Augustine traced the history of two lines of men descending from Seth and Cain respectively - the City of God, or the community of those who are saved, and the City of Man, or the community of those who are damned. The City of God is not to be identified with the Church (because the Church contains both good and bad), nor is the City of Man to be identified with the State (because the State contains both good and bad). Nevertheless, the Church is clearly closer to the first pole as the State is to the second....

This is the reason why the history of Church-State relations until Constantine the Great is a history of almost perpetual conflict. Thus until David and the foundation of the state of Israel, the people of God – that is, the Church – was not associated with any state, but was constantly being persecuted by contemporary rulers, as Moses and the Israelites were by Pharaoh.

And this symbolises a deeper truth: that the people of God, spiritually speaking, have *never* lived in states, but have always been stateless wanderers, desert people, as it were; "for here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come" (Hebrews 13.14). We seek, that is, the City of God, the new Jerusalem, which is to be fully revealed only in the age to come (Revelation 21-22).

On the other hand, the people who reject God are spiritually speaking citizens of the kingdoms of this earth, rooted in the earth of worldly cares and desires. That is why they like to build huge urban states and civilisations that enable them to satisfy these desires to the maximum extent. It is not by accident, therefore, that Cain and his immediate descendants were the creators not only of cities, but also of all the cultural and technological inventions that make city life so alluring to fallen man.

⁶⁶ St. Augustine, *The City of God*, XIX, 15.

For, as New Hieroconfessor Barnabas, Bishop of Pechersk, writes: "In its original source culture is the fruit, not of the fallen human spirit in general, but a consequence of its exceptional darkening in one of the primordial branches of the race of Adam... The Cainites have only one aim - the construction of a secure, carnal, material life, whatever the cost. They understood, of course, that the Seed of the Woman, the Promised Deliverer from evil that is coming at the end of the ages, will never appear in their descendants, so, instead of humbling themselves and repenting, the Cainites did the opposite: in blasphemous despair and hatred towards God, they gave themselves over irrevocably to bestial passions and the construction on earth of their kingdom, which is continually fighting against the Kingdom of God."⁶⁷

The Cainites eventually became the overwhelming majority of mankind, corrupting even most of the Sethites. Thus Josephus writes: "This posterity of Seth continued to esteem God as the Lord of the universe, and to have an entire regard to virtue, for seven generations; but in process of time they were perverted..."

"But Noah was very uneasy at what they did; and being displeased at their conduct, persuaded them to change their disposition, and their actions for the better: but seeing they did not yield to him, but were slaves to wicked pleasures, he was afraid they would kill him, together with his wife and children, and those they had married; so he departed out of the land."⁶⁸

He departed, and entered, the Ark. And then God destroyed the whole Cainite civilisation in the Great Flood. So statehood in its first historical examples was demonic and antichristian and was destroyed by the just judgement of God.

Immediately after the Flood God commands Noah to establish a system of justice that is the embryo of statehood as it should be: "The blood of your lives will I require: at the hand of every beast will I require it, and at the hand of man; at the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man. Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made He man" (Genesis 9.5-6). Commenting on these words, Protopriest Basil Boshchansky writes, that they "give the blessing of God to that institution which appeared in defence of human life" - that is, the State.⁶⁹

As Henry Morris explains: "The word 'require' is a judicial term, God appearing as a judge who exacts a strict and severe penalty for infraction of a sacred law. If a beast kills a man, the beast must be put to death (note also Exodus 21.28). If a man kills another man (wilfully and culpably, it is assumed), then he also must be put to death by 'every man's brother'. This latter phrase is not intended to initiate family revenge slayings, of course, but rather to stress that all men are responsible to see that this justice is executed. At the time these words were first spoken, all men indeed were blood brothers; for only the three sons of Noah were living at the time, other than Noah himself. Since all future people would be descended from these three men and

⁶⁷ Bishop Barnabas, *Pravoslavie*, Kolomna: New Golutvin monastery, 1995, pp. 128, 129.

⁶⁸ Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, I, 3.

⁶⁹ Boshchansky, *Zhizn' vo Khriste*, in *Tserkovnaia Zhizn'*, NN 3-4, May-August, 1998, p. 41.

their wives, in a very real sense all men *are* brothers, because all were once in the loins of these three brothers. This is in essence a command to establish a formal system of human government, in order to assure that justice is carried out, especially in the case of murder. The authority to execute this judgement of God on a murderer was thus delegated to man."⁷⁰

But not to every man. The authority to pronounce the judgement of God on a man can only be given to men whom God has appointed to judge – that is, to political rulers. For, as E. Kholmogorov writes, “everywhere in Scripture an opposition is presupposed between the power of the leader and the position of the citizen, of him who is subject to the leader. The work that is done by the leader for the sake of the common good, to preserve order, does not belong to the jurisdiction of the private person, and if it did belong to the private person, there would be no need of leadership...

“What precisely are the obligations laid upon leaders, what constitutes the essence of the power of the leader?

“The first is the power of discernment – the power of the judge. The essence and meaning of the power of leadership consists in distinguishing between what is good and what is bad, and in rewarding each man in accordance with justice. Leadership is first of all the moral, ethical practice of unceasingly distinguishing that which is in agreement with natural virtue and the commandments of God from that which is contrary to them and dangerous for them. Therefore, as the Apostle Paul says: ‘The leaders are terrible not for good works, but for the evil. Do you not want to fear the authorities? Do good and you will receive praise from them...’ (Romans 13.3). The power of the leader is first of all the power of the judge, the right to say: ‘yes’ and ‘no’, so it presupposes a special responsibility and a special weighing of each decision. For this reason alone it cannot belong to everyone. A remarkable witness to this is given in Scripture in the story about Moses: ‘And he went out the second day and behold, two Hebrews were quarrelling; and he said to the one who did the wrong, “Why are you striking your companion?” Then he said, **Who made you a prince and a judge over us? Do you intend to kill me as you killed the Egyptian?”**’ (Exodus 2.13-14). And truly – there was nowhere Moses could at that time receive power over the people of Israel, he had no right either to judge or to say with authority: “Why are you doing wrong?” And so the one who was doing wrong rejected his authority, he saw in Moses’ claim to judge only one foundation – the threat of using arms, the notorious “right of the mighty”, but with the aid of this right Moses could neither establish justice nor assume leadership over the people. For that reason he fled into the wilderness, and returned already as one having power, having been established as Leader by the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob... Only with this establishment did he receive both the power to judge and the power to restrain that proceeds from it...

“The second power belonging to the leader is the power of restraining, the power of the sword, which proceeds from the power to discern, the power of judgement. After good and evil have been distinguished and a verdict has been reached – the

⁷⁰ Morris, *The Genesis Record*, Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Book House, 1976, p. 224.

punishing sword of the leader must fall on the head of the lawless one and crush it. States without the power of punishment that is in accordance with the Christian principles of power, without a death penalty and without the right to wage war, simply do not exist. A power built without the death penalty and war as weapons against evil would be an unchristian and unevangelical power, it would directly contradict the teaching on the essence of power given by the holy Apostle Paul: 'If you do evil, fear, for he does not wield the sword in vain: he is a servant of God, an avenger to punish him who does evil' (Romans 13.4). If the authorities refused to apply the sword given them, if their refusal were not motivated by compassion for a particular penitent evildoer, but were principled, it would be a direct refusal of the service for which they had been established by God. That is why the Old and New Testaments are full of witnesses to the necessity of the power of the sword to restrain moral evil from bursting its limits. Only violence is condemned, that is, the power of the sword without the power of judgement, the sword applied not in accordance with righteousness, not to avenge evil, but to restrict the righteous man.

"We can understand that the power of sword, being bound to the power of judgement, cannot belong to everyone, but only to him who is vested with the power to judge. The power of the sword is placed in the service of judgement and constitutes a special service in society, the service of *restraining*... The very concept of restraining, of him who restrains [II Thessalonians 2.7], is imbued with deep meaning. It leads to the idea of the fence, of the special obstacle which stands in the way of the invasion of evil into everyday life, and of the guard who prevents such an invasion... It is precisely this idea that the Orthodox Church puts into her teaching on the Christian Kingdom and on the Tsar who stands at its head – the one who restrains, ο κατεχων, the one person entitled to bear the power of judging and punishing... The Christian Kingdom constitutes the fence of the Church, the fence of the whole Christian community, the fence whose existence is part of God's fulfilment of our petition in prayer: "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one". Of course, this petition mainly refers to our personal inner spiritual life, to its fencing off from the actions of demons... But it also applies to external life. All states that are well constructed, which are erected in agreement with the given apostolic model, protect each of us from a mass of temptations. The existence of the city watch and our hoping on it guard us from unexpected murders, in which it is sometimes very difficult to draw the line between "necessary defence" and unreasonable "caution" which can cost an innocent his life. Appealing to the authorities makes it possible for us, in hundreds of cases, to avoid defiling our hands with reprisal against one who has done wrong, and not only with reprisal itself, but also with the bad feelings bound up with it – anger, hatred, the temptation to cross the boundary where retribution ends and revenge begins... We who are accustomed to stable state institutions, and who have never really encountered absence of authority and chaos, cannot even imagine the full degree of sinfulness involved in *lawlessness and anarchy* – an existence defined neither by the law nor by the sword of the leader. Every day the Christian would be forced to encounter a situation in which he would be presented with a choice, not between sin and virtue, but between a greater sin and a lesser sin; he would sin, not through passion, not through arbitrariness, but simply through the necessity of living...

“The reason why the army and police exist, and are separate from us, having a special line and form of being, - and are separate from us, moreover, from ancient times, - is in order to deliver us from the many temptations linked with the application of force, to free us from the very heavy occupation of the soldier and the executioner...

“The very idea of leadership and the judging and punishing functions of this leadership are undoubtedly established by God. And the just fulfilment of these functions is a service rendered to God.”⁷¹

In the Old Testament the Lord established the sacrament of anointing to the kingdom: “I have found David My servant, with My holy oil have I anointed him” (Psalm 88.19). Even certain pagan kings were given an invisible anointing to rule justly and help the people of God, such as Cyrus of Persia (Isaiah 45.1). This was a foreshadowing of the role to be played by the greatest of the pagan kingdoms, Rome...

2. Orthodoxy and the Roman Empire

When the Lord Jesus Christ, the King of heaven, was born as a man on earth, He was immediately enrolled as a citizen of an earthly kingdom, the Roman Empire. In fact, His birth, which marked the beginning of the Eternal Kingdom of God on earth, coincided almost exactly with the birth of the Roman Empire under its first emperor, Augustus. For several of the Holy Fathers and ecclesiastical writers, this coincidence pointed to a certain special mission of the Roman empire, as if the Empire, being born at the same time as Christ, was Divinely established to be a vehicle for the spreading of the Gospel to all nations. Thus St. Leo the Great, Pope of Rome, wrote: "Divine Providence fashioned the Roman Empire, the growth of which was extended to boundaries so wide that all races everywhere became next-door neighbours. For it was particularly germane to the Divine scheme that many kingdoms should be bound together under a single government, and that the world-wide preaching should have a swift means of access to all people, over whom the rule of a single state held sway."⁷²

The empire was to create a political unity that would help and protect the spiritual unity created by the Church; it was to be *the Guardian of the Ark*. As an epistle accepted by the Seventh Ecumenical Council put it some centuries later, when the empire was already Christian: “The priest is the sanctification and strengthening of the Emperor’s power, and the Emperor’s power is the power and steadfastness of the priesthood.”⁷³

On the face of it, this was a very bold and paradoxical teaching. After all, the people of God at the beginning of the Christian era were the Jews, not the Romans. The Romans were pagans; they worshipped demons, not the True God Who had revealed Himself to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. In 63 B.C. they had actually conquered the people of God, and their rule was bitterly resented. In 70 A.D. they destroyed Jerusalem and the Temple in a campaign of appalling cruelty and scattered the Jews

⁷¹ E. Kholmogorov, “O Khristianskom tsarstve i ‘voorushennom narode’”, *Tserkovnost’*, № 1, 2000.

⁷² St. Leo, *Sermon* 32, *P.L.* 54, col. 423.

⁷³ *Deyania Vselenskikh Soborov*, volume 7, Kazan, 1891, p. 98.

over the face of the earth. How could Old Rome, the Rome of Nero and Titus and Domitian and Diocletian, possibly be construed as working with God rather than against Him?

The solution to this paradox is to be found in an examination of two encounters recounted in the Gospel between Christ and two “rulers of this world” – Satan and Pontius Pilate.

In the first, Satan takes Christ onto a high mountain and shows him all the kingdoms of this world in a moment of time. “And the devil said to Him, ‘All this authority I will give You, and their glory; for this has been delivered to me, and I give it to whomever I wish. Therefore, if You will make obeisance before Me, all will be Yours.’ And Jesus answered and said to him: ‘Get behind Me, Satan! For it is written, You shall make obeisance to the Lord your God, and Him only will you worship.’” (Luke 4.6-8).

Thus up to that time Satan had control over all the kingdoms of the world – but by might, the might given him by the sins of men, not by right. As St. Cyril of Alexandria exclaims: “How can you promise that which is not yours? Who made you heir of God’s kingdom? Who made you lord of all under heaven? You have seized these things by fraud. Restore them, therefore, to the incarnate Son, the Lord of all...”⁷⁴

And indeed, the Lord accepted neither Satan’s lordship over the world, nor the satanism that was so closely associated with the pagan statehood of the ancient world (insofar as the pagan god-kings often demanded worship of themselves as gods). He came to restore true statehood, which recognises the ultimate supremacy only of the one true God, and which demands veneration of the earthly ruler, but worship only of the Heavenly King. And since, by the time of the Nativity of Christ, all the major pagan kingdoms had been swallowed up in Rome, it was to the transformation of Roman statehood that the Lord came in the first place.

For, as K.V. Glazkov writes: “The good news announced by the Lord Jesus Christ could not leave untransfigured a single one of the spheres of man’s life. One of the acts of our Lord Jesus Christ consisted in bringing the heavenly truths to the earth, in instilling them into the consciousness of mankind with the aim of its spiritual regeneration, in restructuring the laws of communal life on new principles announced by Christ the Saviour, in the creation of a Christian order of this communal life, and, consequently, in a radical change of pagan statehood. Proceeding from here it becomes clear what place the Church must occupy in relation to the state. It is not the place of an opponent from a hostile camp, not the place of a warring party, but the place of a pastor in relation to his flock, the place of a loving father in relation to his lost children. Even in those moments when there was not and could not be any unanimity or union between the Church and the State, Christ the Saviour forbade the

⁷⁴ St. Cyril of Alexandria, *Commentary on the Gospel of Saint Luke*, Homily 12, New York: Studion Publishers, 1983, p. 89.

Church to stand on one side from the state, still less to break all links with it, saying: 'Give to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's' (Luke 20.25)."⁷⁵

Let us now turn to the second time Christ confronted a ruler of this world – His trial before Pilate. While acknowledging that the power of this representative of Caesar was lawful, the Lord at the same time insists that Pilate's and Caesar's power derived from God, the true King and Lawgiver For "you could have no power at all against Me," He says to Pilate, "unless it had been given to you from above" (John 19.11). These words, paradoxically, both limit Caesar's power, insofar as it is subject to God's, and strengthen it, by indicating that it has God's seal and blessing in principle (if not in all its particular manifestations).

And He continues: "Therefore the one who delivered Me to you has the greater sin." The one who delivered Christ to Pilate was Caiaphas, chief priest of the Jews. For, as is well known (to all except contemporary ecumenist Christians), it was the Jews, His own people, who condemned Christ for blasphemy and demanded His execution at the hands of the Roman authorities in the person of Pontius Pilate. Since Pilate was not interested in the charge of blasphemy, the only way in which the Jews could get their way was to accuse Christ of fomenting rebellion against Rome – a hypocritical charge, since it was precisely the Jews, not Christ, who were planning revolution.⁷⁶ Not only did Pilate not believe this accusation: he did everything he could to have Christ released, giving in only when he feared that the Jews were about to start a riot and denounce him to the emperor in Rome. Thus it was the Jews, not the Romans, who were primarily responsible for the death of Christ.

This has the consequence that, insofar Pilate could have used his God-given power to save the Lord from an unjust death, Roman state power appears in this situation as the potential, if not yet the actual, protector of Christ from His fiercest enemies. In other words, already during the life of Christ, we see the future role of Rome as "he who restrains" the Antichrist (II Thessalonians 2.7) and the guardian of the Body of Christ...

In the trial of Christ before Pilate, Roman power, still spiritually weak, did not use its power for the good; but its sympathies were clearly already with Christ, and this sympathy would later, under Constantine the Great, be turned into full and whole-hearted support.

In fact, we do not have to wait that long to see Roman power fulfilling the role of protector of the Christians. Thus already in 35, on the basis of a report sent to him by Pilate, the Emperor Tiberius proposed to the senate that Christ should be recognised as a god. The senate refused this request, and declared that Christianity was an "illicit superstition"; but Tiberius ignored this and imposed a veto on any accusations being brought against the Christians in the future. In 36 or 37 the Roman legate to Syria, Vitellius, deposed Caiaphas for his unlawful execution of the Archdeacon and

⁷⁵ Glazkov, "Zashchita ot liberalizma", *Pravoslavnaia Rus'*, № 15 (1636), August 1/14, 1999, p. 10.

⁷⁶ Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky), "Christ the Savior and the Jewish Revolution", *Orthodox Life*, vol. 35, no. 4, July-August, 1988, pp. 11-31.

Protomartyr Stephen (in 34), and in 62 the High Priest Ananias was similarly deposed for executing St. James the Just, the first Bishop of Jerusalem. In between these dates the Apostle Paul was saved from a lynching at the hands of the Jews by the Roman authorities (Acts 21, 23.28-29, 25.19).⁷⁷

So for at least a generation after the Death and Resurrection of Christ the Romans, far from being persecutors of the Christians, were their chief protectors against the Jews – the former people of God who had now become the chief enemies of God. It is therefore not surprising that the Apostles, following in the tradition of Christ's own recognition of the Romans as a lawful power, exhorted the Christians to obey Caesar in everything that did not involve transgressing the law of God. Thus St. Paul commands Christians to give thanks for the emperor "and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceful life in all godliness and honesty" (I Timothy 2.1-2).

And if it be asked how it was possible for Paul to give thanks for a pagan emperor who sometimes persecuted Christians for their refusal to worship idols, including the idol of the emperor himself, then Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow provides the answer: "The Spirit of God in him foresaw and more or less showed him the future light of Christian kingdoms. His God-inspired vision, piercing through future centuries, encounters Constantine, who brings peace to the Church and sanctifies the kingdom by faith; and Theodosius and Justinian, who defend the Church from the impudence of heresies. Of course, he also goes on to see Vladimir and Alexander Nevsky and many spreaders of the faith, defenders of the Church and guardians of Orthodoxy. After this it is not surprising that St. Paul should write: I beseech you not only to pray, but also to give thanks for the king and all those in authority; because there will be not only such kings and authorities for whom it is necessary to pray with sorrow...., but also those for whom we must thank God with joy for His precious gift."⁷⁸

It is precisely the emperor's ability to maintain law and order, "a quiet and peaceful life", which makes him so important for the Church; for while Christianity can *survive* under any regime, and, in the persons of the martyrs, triumph over it, it can spread and become consolidated among the masses of the people only if supported by the State. Therefore "Be subject for the Lord's sake," says St. Peter, "to every human institution, whether it be to the emperor as supreme, or to governors as sent by him to punish those who do wrong and praise those who do right... Fear God. Honour the emperor" (I Peter 2.13, 17). The emperor is to be obeyed, says St. Paul, "not only because of wrath, but for conscience's sake" (Romans 13.5). For he is "the servant of God for good" and "wields not the sword in vain" (Romans 13.4).

St. Isidore of Pelusium explained the importance of submission to the State as follows. "Anarchy is always the worst of all evils... That is why, although the body is a single whole, not everything in it is of equal honour, but some members rule, while others are in subjection. So we are right to say that the authorities - that is, leadership

⁷⁷ Professor Marta Sordi, *The Christians and the Roman Empire*, London: Routledge, 1994, chapter 1.

⁷⁸ Metropolitan Philaret, *Sochinenia*, vol. II, pp. 171-173.

and royal power - are established by God so that society should not fall into disorder."⁷⁹

At the same time, submission to the emperor was never considered to be *unconditional*. The Christians, unlike the Jews, were loyal subjects of the Roman emperors, paying their taxes, obeying their laws and serving in their armies; but when asked to worship idols they refused, even at the cost of their lives.

One of those who gave his life rather than obey an emperor's decree was Hieromartyr Hippolytus, Pope of Rome in the third century, who wrote: "Believers in God must not be hypocritical, nor fear people invested in authority, with the exception of those cases when some evil deed is committed [Romans 13.1-4]. On the contrary, if the leaders, having in mind their faith in God, force them to do something contrary to this faith, then it is better for them to die than to carry out the command of the leaders. After all, when the apostle teaches submission to 'all the powers that be' (Romans 13.1), he was not saying that we should renounce our faith and the Divine commandments, and indifferently carry out everything that people tell us to do; but that we, while fearing the authorities, should do nothing evil and that we should not deserve punishment from them as some evildoers (Romans 13.4)."⁸⁰

The fruit of the Christians' patience, their refusal, on the one hand, to place the emperor above God, and, on the other, to succumb to the propaganda of revolution, produced its inestimable fruit in the conversion of the empire to Christianity, as a result of which the empire not only tolerated Christianity, but became its active co-worker in that "symphony of powers" which is the hallmark of Orthodox statehood.

3. Orthodoxy and Heretical Rulers

If the early Christians honoured and (in most cases) obeyed the pagan Roman emperors, we might expect them to have adopted a similarly benevolent attitude towards the heretical Roman emperors. However, the Fathers' language in relation to the Arian emperor Constantius was violent in the extreme: "patron of impiety and Emperor of heresy,... godless, unholy,.. this modern Ahab, this second Belshazzar", "the abomination of desolation", like Pharaoh, worse than Pilate and a forerunner of the Antichrist, are just some of the epithets employed by St. Athanasius the Great. In the West, St. Hilary of Poitiers was hardly less violent in his language about the Arian emperor, calling him a forerunner of the Antichrist.

Again, when the Emperor Justinian, a zealot of Orthodoxy, momentarily wavered and tried to force Pope Agapetus to accept a Monophysite Patriarch of Constantinople, the Orthodox pope replied: "I wished to come to the most Christian of all emperors, Justinian, and I have found now a Diocletian. However, I do not fear your threats."⁸¹ Evidently a new, higher standard was now required of rulers - or, at any rate, Roman

⁷⁹ St. Isidore, *Letter 6 to Dionysius*.

⁸⁰ St. Hippolytus in Fomin, S. & Fomina, T., *Rossia pered otorym prishestviem* (Russia before the Second Coming), Sergiev Posad, 1998, p. 56.

⁸¹ Quoted in A.A. Vasiliev, *A History of the Byzantine Empire*, Milwaukee: University of Wisconsin Press, 1958, p. 151.

rulers. Since the conversion of Constantine and the Christianisation of the empire, the appearance of a heterodox emperor constituted a retrograde step and extreme danger for the flock of Christ and possibly heralded the coming of the Antichrist. It therefore had to be resisted with the greatest force and boldness.

In general, however, while severely criticising the heretical emperors, the holy Fathers did not call on the faithful to rebel against them. For this would have threatened the institution of the Roman empire itself, which everyone accepted was established by God.

However, there are two partial exceptions to this rule. The first was Julian the Apostate (361-363). Although the Church did not initiate or bless any armed rebellion against him, St. Basil the Great did actively pray for his defeat in his wars against the Persians - and it was through his prayers that the apostate was in fact killed, as was revealed by God to the holy hermit Julian of Mesopotamia.⁸² Not only St. Basil prayed in this way: his friend, St. Gregory the Theologian, who had called Julian not only an "apostate", but also "universal enemy" and "general murderer", now, on his death, called the Christians to "spiritual rejoicing".

This raises the interesting and important question: what was different about Julian the Apostate that made him so much worse than previous persecutors and unworthy even of that honour and obedience that had been given to them? Two possible answers suggest themselves. The first is that Julian was the first - and last - of the Byzantine emperors who openly trampled on the memory and legitimacy of St. Constantine, declaring that he "insolently usurped the throne".⁸³ In this way he questioned the legitimacy of the Christian Empire as such - a revolutionary position that we do not come across again in Eastern Orthodox history (if we except the short interlude of the political zealots in Thessalonica in the 1340s) until the fall of the Russian Empire.

A second reason for ascribing to Julian an exceptional place amongst the forerunners of the Antichrist was his reversal of the Emperor Hadrian's decree of the year 135 forbidding the Jews from returning to Jerusalem and, still worse, his helping the Jews to rebuild the Temple, in defiance of the Lord's prophecy that "there shall be left not one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down" (Mark 13.2). By a miracle from God the rebuilding of the Temple was forcibly stopped. But if Julian had succeeded, then, wondered the Christians, what would have prevented him from sitting in the Temple as God - in other words, taking the place of the Antichrist himself?

Another exception to the rule of submission to heretical rulers was the rebellion of St. Hermenegild, prince of Spain, against his Arian father, King Leogivild. Most of Spain was ruled at that time by the Visigoths, a Germanic tribe which had adopted the Arian faith. However, the majority of the Spanish population were Romans by

⁸² V.A. Konovalov, *Otnoshenie khristianstva k sovetskoj vlasti (The Relationship of Christianity to Soviet Power)*, Montreal, 1936, p. 35.

⁸³ See his dialogue with St. Artemius in the *Life* of the great martyr, in St. Dmitri of Rostov, *The Great Collection of the Lives of the Saints*, October 20.

race and Orthodox by religion. Hermenegild was converted by his Frankish Orthodox wife, and by St. Leander, bishop of Seville, who lived in the Byzantine part of Spain. He then rebelled against his father, but in spite of support from the Byzantines his rebellion was crushed, and he himself was imprisoned and then killed at Pascha, 585 for refusing to accept communion from an Arian bishop.

The Spanish Church did not hail Hermenegild as a martyr, because the Orthodox had not been persecuted by their Arian overlords and there was not much support, even in the Orthodox population, for the rebellion of a son against his father. However, he was immediately hailed as a martyr by the holy Pope Gregory the Dialogist, the writer of his *Life*; and by the Orthodox Church in the East.

Moreover, within a very few years, at the great Council of Toledo in 589, the new king, Reccared and the whole of the Gothic nobility accepted Orthodoxy. Arianism never again lifted its head in Spain. Thus, in the words of St. Dmitri of Rostov, “the fruit of the death of this one man was life and Orthodoxy for all the people of Spain”.⁸⁴

The abortive, but nevertheless ultimately successful, rebellion of St. Hermenegild appeared to establish the principle that *legitimate political power was either Roman power, or that power which, while independent of the Roman, shared in the faith of the Romans, Orthodoxy*. A power that was not Orthodox could legitimately be overthrown from without or rebelled against from within as long as the motive was truly religious – the establishment or re-establishment of Orthodoxy. This did not mean, however, that Christians were *obliged in all cases* to rebel against pagan or heterodox régimes; for, as Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) points out, civil war is one of the worst of all evils and is to be undertaken only if the alternative is likely to be even worse in terms of the salvation of souls.⁸⁵

When the people of God fall under the power of a pagan or heterodox ruler, the reason is their sinfulness, which makes them unworthy of an Orthodox king and in need rather of the chastisement that the harsher rule of the heterodox brings upon them. For “If My People had heard Me, if Israel had walked in My ways, quickly would I have humbled their enemies, and upon their oppressors would I have laid My hand.” (Psalm 80. 12-13). A believing people will not rebel against this situation, knowing that, in submitting to a pagan or heterodox ruler, they are in fact submitting to the Lord and that He, in Whose hand are the hearts of all kings, and Who rules “over all the kingdoms of the heathen” (II Chronicles 20.6), will protect them from evil.

In such cases, as St. Isidore of Pelusium writes, the ruler “has been allowed to spew out this evil, like Pharaoh, and, in such an instance, to carry out extreme punishment or to chastise those for whom great cruelty is required, as when the king of Babylon chastised the Jews.”⁸⁶ Or, as St. Irenaeus of Lyons puts it: “Some rulers are given by

⁸⁴ St. Dmitri of Rostov, *The Great Collection of the Lives of the Saints*, November 1.

⁸⁵ Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky), *The Christian Faith and War*, Jordanville, 1973, p. 12.

⁸⁶ St. Isidore, Letter 6, quoted in *Selected Letters of Archbishop Theophan of Poltava*, Liberty, TN: St. John of Kronstadt Press, 1989, p. 36.

God with a view to the improvement and benefit of their subjects and the preservation of justice; others are given with a view to producing fear, punishment and reproof; yet others are given with a view to displaying mockery, insult and pride – in each case in accordance with the deserts of the subjects. Thus... God's just judgement falls equally on all men."⁸⁷

However, such submission must never turn into sympathy with the aims or faith of the heterodox ruler, otherwise they will receive the same rebuke that King Jehoshaphat of Judah received from the Prophet Jehu: "Shouldst thou help the ungodly, and love them that hate the Lord? Therefore is wrath upon thee from the Lord" (II Chronicles 19.2).

Moreover, in certain situations the danger presented by submission to a heterodox ruler may be so great that a certain point God commands His people to rebel.

In practice, rebellion against pagan or heterodox rulers for the sake of Orthodoxy has been very rare in Orthodox history since the time of St. Hermenegild. One example sometimes cited is the rebellion of Moscow under Great Prince Demetrius Donskoj against the Tatar prince Mamai in 1380, which was undertaken with the blessing of St. Sergius of Radonezh. This example is the more striking in that the Tatars had been recognised as the lawful rulers of Russia by the Russian Church for nearly 150 years.

However, it needs to be borne in mind, first, that Mamai was himself a rebel against the Horde, so that in resisting him the Russians were not rebelling against their lawful sovereigns, but rather supporting them. In any case, two years later the lawful khan came and sacked Moscow; so there was not, and could not be, any radical change from the policy of submission to the Tatars (it was not until a century later, in 1480, that the Muscovites refused to pay any further tribute to the khans).

Secondly, St. Sergius in fact blessed the Grand-Prince to fight only when all other measures had failed. Thus, as I.M. Kontzevich writes, "the *Chronicle of St. Nikon* has preserved for posterity the description of Prince Demetrius Donskoy's visit to St. Sergius before his campaign against the Tatars. In the ensuing conversation with the Grand Prince, the holy Elder first advised him to respect the evil Tatar Mamai with gifts and honor, following the example of St. Basil the Great, whose gifts appeased Julian the Apostate: 'You, too, my Lord, pay your respects to them, give them gold and silver, and God will not allow them to destroy us: He will elevate you, seeing your humility, and will bring down the pride of the enemy.' 'All this I have done already,' answered Demetrius, 'but my enemy becomes even more conceited.' Having heard these words, the Saint of God made the sign of the Cross over him and was inspired to pronounce: 'Go, my Prince, without fear! The Lord will help you against the godless enemies.' Then, lowering his voice, he said to the Prince alone to hear: 'You will conquer your enemy.'"⁸⁸

⁸⁷ St. Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, V, 24, 3; translated in Maurice Wiles & Mark Santer, *Documents in Early Christian Thought*, Cambridge University Press, 1977, p. 226.

⁸⁸ Kontzevich, *The Acquisition of the Holy Spirit in Ancient Russia*, Platina, Ca.: St. Herman of Alaska Brotherhood, 1988, pp. 178-179.

A clearer example is provided by the refusal of the best of the Russian people to accept a Catholic tsar in the Time of Troubles... Most of the Russian clergy accepted the first false Demetrius, who was anointed and crowned by Patriarch Ignatius. However, writes Fr. Lev Lebedev, "in relation to the second false Demetrius [they] conducted themselves more courageously. Bishops Galacteon of Suzdal and Joseph of Kolomna suffered for their non-acceptance of the usurper. Archbishop Theoctistus of Tver received a martyric death in Tushino. Dressed only in a shirt, the bare-footed Metropolitan Philaret of Rostov, the future patriarch, was brought by the Poles into the camp of the usurper, where he remained in captivity. Seeing such terrible events, Bishop Gennadius of Pskov 'died of sorrow...'"⁸⁹

In February, 1610 the protagonists of the second false Demetrius switched their support to the Polish crown. They presented King Sigismund with a set of conditions on which they were prepared to accept his son Vladislav as Tsar. The first was that the Orthodox faith should remain inviolate. The second was that supreme authority in the state should be shared between the tsar and a combined boyar assembly and zemskii sobor. In other words, they were seeking the establishment of a kind of constitutional monarchy in Russia.

However, their plans fell through, for Vladislav did not come to Moscow to claim his throne, and when his father Sigismund declared his intention of taking his place, Patriarch Hermogen issued a stern command that the Russian people were not to "kiss the cross before a Catholic king". Hermogen was killed by the Poles in the dungeon of the Kremlin. However, his refusal to recognise the legitimacy of a Catholic tsar was decisive in arousing the Russians to expel the Poles and restore Orthodoxy. And his canonisation just before another, still more terrible time of troubles in 1914 would be a sign: now, too, you must reject the State that wars against Christ...

4. Orthodoxy and Nationalism

The lives of the holy martyrs Hermenegild of Spain and Hermogen of Russia show that in extreme cases, when Orthodoxy is at stake, even civil war for the sake of the reestablishment of Orthodoxy is permitted and blessed by God. However, it is essential that the aim should be precisely *Orthodoxy* and not some secondary value which, while good in itself, cannot justify the destruction of civil peace and the suffering and death, often on a vast scale, that inevitably ensues. Such secondary values include *national independence* and *freedom from tyranny*.

National independence was the primary value that motivated the rebellion of the Jews against Roman power in 66-70 A.D. – and they were terribly punished for it. A similar danger threatened the Greek Church and nation at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Influenced by nationalist ideas emanating from the French Revolution, which spread in Greece through the quasi-masonic organisation called the philiki hetairia, the Greeks of Europe rose up against their Turkish overlords. But the Greeks of Constantinople and Asia Minor remained loyal to the Sultan, whose

⁸⁹ Lebedev, *Moskva Patriarshaia*, Moscow: "Veche", 1995, p. 14.

legitimacy they had recognised since the fall of Constantinople in 1453. At this point the frightened Turks pressurised Patriarch Gregory V and his Synod to anathematize the insurgents.

Some have argued that the patriarch secretly repudiated this anathema and sympathised with the insurgents; which is why the Turks, suspecting him of treachery, hanged him on April 10, 1821. However, the evidence does not support this view. The patriarch had always refused to join the philiki hetairia, to which the leader of the insurgents, Metropolitan Germanos of Old Patras, belonged. Moreover, the righteousness of his character precludes the possibility that he could have been plotting against the Sultan to whom he had sworn allegiance.

The true attitude of the Church to the revolution had been expressed in a work called "Paternal Teaching" published in Constantinople in 1789, and which, according to Charles Frazee, "was signed by Anthimus of Jerusalem but was probably the work of the later Patriarch Gregory V. The document is a polemic against revolutionary ideas, calling on the Christians 'to note how brilliantly our Lord, infinite in mercy and all-wise, protects intact the holy and Orthodox Faith of the devout, and preserves all things'. It warns that the devil is constantly at work raising up evil plans; among them is the idea of liberty, which appears to be so good, but is only there to deceive the people. The document points out that [the struggle for] political freedom is contrary to the Scriptural command to obey authority, that it results in the impoverishment of the people, in murder and robbery. The sultan is the protector of Christian life in the Ottoman Empire; to oppose him is to oppose God."⁹⁰

Certainly, the Greeks had to pay a heavy price for the political freedom they gained. After the martyrdom of Patriarch Gregory (whose body was washed ashore in Odessa, and given a splendid State funeral by the Russian Church), the Turks ran amok in Constantinople, killing many Greeks and causing heavy damage to the churches; and there were further pogroms in Smyrna, Adrianople, Crete and especially Chios, which had been occupied by the revolutionaries and where in reprisal tens of thousands were killed or sold into slavery. When the new patriarch, Eugenios, again anathematized the insurgents, twenty-eight bishops and almost a thousand priests in free Greece in turn anathematized the patriarch, calling him a Judas and a wolf in sheep's clothing, and ceasing to commemorate him in the Liturgy.

As for the new State of Greece, it "looked to the west," writes Charles Frazee, "the west of the American and French Revolutions, rather than to the old idea of an Orthodox community as it had functioned under the Ottomans. The emotions of the times did not let men see it; Orthodoxy and Greek nationality were still identified, but the winds were blowing against the dominant position of the Church in the life of the individual and the nation..."⁹¹

⁹⁰ Frazee, *The Orthodox Church and Independent Greece 1821-1853*, Cambridge University Press, 1969, p. 8.

⁹¹ Frazee, *op. cit.*, p. 48.

Thus, forgetting the lessons of the council of Florence four hundred years earlier, the new State and Church entered into negotiations with the Pope for help against the Turks. Metropolitan Germanus was even empowered to speak concerning the possibility of a reunion of the Churches. However, it was the Pope who drew back at this point, pressurised by the other western States, which considered the sultan to be a legitimate monarch. The western powers helped Greece again when, in 1827, an Allied fleet under a British admiral destroyed the Turkish-Egyptian fleet at Navarino. But after the assassination of the president of Greece, Count Kapodistrias, in 1832, the country descended further into poverty and near civil war.

Then, in 1833, the western powers appointed a Catholic prince, Otto of Bavaria, as king of Greece, with three regents until he came of age, the most important being the Protestant George von Maurer. Maurer proceeded to work out a constitution for the country, which proposed autocephaly for the Church under a Synod of bishops, and the subordination of the Synod to the State on the model of the Bavarian and Russian constitutions, to the extent that "no decision of the Synod could be published or carried into execution without the permission of the government having been obtained". In spite of the protests of the patriarch of Constantinople and the tsar of Russia, and the walk-out of the archbishops of Rethymnon and Adrianople, this constitution was ratified by the signatures of thirty-six bishops on July 26, 1833.

The Greek Church therefore exchanged the admittedly uncanonical position of the patriarchate of Constantinople under Turkish rule for the even less canonical position of a Synod anathematized by the patriarch and under the control of a Catholic king and a Protestant constitution! In addition to this, all monasteries with fewer than six monks were dissolved, and heavy taxes imposed on the remaining monasteries. And very little money was given to a Church which had lost six to seven thousand clergy in the war, and whose remaining clergy had an abysmally low standard of education.

The dangers posed for Orthodoxy by nationalist passions can most clearly be seen in the controversial question of the Bulgarian schism. Already in 1860, before the liberation of their country by the Russian armies in 1877-78, the Bulgars had succeeded in obtaining the status of a millet, or autonomous national-religious community, and therefore the right to have an autocephalous Church independent of the patriarch of Constantinople. However, not content with having an autocephalous Church for the territory of Bulgaria, in 1870 the Bulgars, with the active cooperation of the Turkish government, set up a bishop in Constantinople with the title of Exarch, who was to have jurisdiction over all the Bulgars in Turkey itself. This undoubtedly uncanonical act was resisted with fury by Patriarch Anthimus VI and his Synod, who in 1872 excommunicated the Bulgarian exarch and all those with him, branding them as schismatics and heretics, their heresy being the newly-defined one of "phyletism", that is, nationalism, the invasion of the national principle into the affairs of the Ecumenical Church.⁹²

⁹² See K. Dinkov, *Istoria na B'lgarskata Ts'rkva*, Vratsa, 1953, pp. 80-96; D. Kosev, "Bor'ba za samostoyatel'na natsionalna tserkva", in *Istoria na B'lgaria*, Sofia: Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, 1987, vol. 6, pp. 124-188; Fr. Basil Lourié, "Ekklesiologika otstupayushchej armii", *Vertograd-Inform*, №

Now such a condemnation of nationalism was certainly timely. For the Bulgarians' attempts to achieve ecclesiastical independence had given rise to another danger - the Vatican's attempt to introduce a uniate movement into Bulgaria. However, for many Orthodox the conciliar condemnation of nationalism carried little weight because it came from the patriarchate which they considered the first sinner in this respect. For, as D.A. Khomyakov wrote: "Is not 'pride in Orthodoxy' nothing other than the cultural pride of the ancient Greek? And, of course, the true 'phyletism', formulated for the struggle against the Bulgarians, is precisely the characteristic of the Greeks themselves to a much greater extent than the Bulgarians, Serbs, Syrians and others. With them it is only a protest against the basic phyletism of the Greeks. The contemporary Greek considers himself the exclusive bearer of pure Orthodoxy..."⁹³

For a brief moment, in 1912, the Greeks joined with the Bulgarians and the Serbs against the Turks in the First Balkan War. But this brief unity among the Orthodox nations was shattered when war broke out between them in 1913 for the control of Macedonia. An attack on Greece and Serbia by Bulgaria was met with firm resistance by the other nations, including Turkey. And the war ended in defeat for Bulgaria - and, still more tragically, for the ideal of Orthodox Catholicism....

Every attempt by an Orthodox or formerly Orthodox nation in modern times to achieve regeneration, not through a return to purity of faith and good works, but through national self-aggrandisement, has been severely punished by the Lord. Thus when Georgia tried to break away from Russia in 1917, she soon found herself, first under a Menshevik, and then under a Bolshevik government. When the Greeks tried to capitalise on the defeat of Turkey in the First World War in 1922, they were defeated and the whole of the Greek population of Asia Minor (and, in 1974, northern Cyprus also) was expelled. When the Serbs tried to achieve a "Greater Serbia" by war against all the other republics of the former Yugoslavia in the 1990s, the result was a lesser Serbia - lesser in size, in economy and, above all, in spiritual stature.

The Jews in the time of Nebuchadnezzar had similar strivings for national independence and greatness, but were met with the words: "Bring your necks under the yoke of the king of Babylon, and serve him and his people, and live. Why will ye die, thou and thy people, by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence, as the Lord hath spoken against the nation that will not serve the king of Babylon?... I will acknowledge them that are carried away captive of Judah, whom I have sent out of this place into the land of the Chaldeans for their good. For I will set My eyes on them for good, and I will bring them again to this land..." (Jeremiah 27.12-13, 24.5-6).

Thus captivity, national humiliation at the hands even of pagans, is sometimes *for the good* of the people of God, and should not be resisted. For God's will is worked even in the pagan kingdoms.

10 (43), October, 1998, 1999, pp. 25-27, 28-29; E. Pavlenko, "Eres' i filetizma: istoria i sovremennost'", *Vertograd-Inform*, № 9 (54), September, 1999, pp. 17-24.

⁹³ Khomyakov, *Pravoslavie, Samoderzhavie, Narodnost'*, Minsk: Belaruskaya Gramata, 1997, p. 19. Cf. Glubokovsky, N.N. "Pravoslavie po ego sushchestvu", in *Tserkov' i Vremia*, 1991, pp. 5-6.

But why, then, did the Jews resist Antiochus Epiphanes some centuries later, and this time succeed in winning their national independence? Was Nebuchadnezzar any less of a pagan than Antiochus? No, he was not. But God knew that Nebuchadnezzar's captivity would be for the good of the Jews, whereas Antiochus struck at the very heart of the Jewish faith. Moreover, the motivation of the Jews in the latter case was better and purer in the former: whereas in the time of Nebuchadnezzar they were fighting for national independence and not for the faith, in the time of Antiochus they were fighting for the faith first of all...

5. A Hierarchy of Political Loyalties

The nineteenth century threw up other difficult problems of political loyalty. One of these arose during the Crimean War of 1854-56, when the Russian armies were fighting the Turks and their western allies on Russian soil. The question was: which side were the Orthodox of Greece and the Balkans to support?

The Ecumenical Patriarch ordered all the monasteries on Mount Athos to pray for the triumph of the Turkish armies during the war. On hearing this, the Georgian elder, Hieroschemamonk Hilarion said of the patriarch: "He is not a Christian", and when he heard that the monks of Grigoriou monastery had carried out the patriarch's command, he said: "You have been deprived of the grace of Holy Baptism, and have deprived your monastery of the grace of God." And when the abbot came to the elder to repent, he said to him: "How did you dare, wretched one, to put Mohammed higher than Christ? God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ says to His Son: 'Sit Thou at My right hand, until I make Thine enemies the footstool of Thy feet' (Psalm 109.1), but you ask Him to put His son under the feet of His enemies!"

Again, in a letter to the head of chancellery of the Russian Holy Synod, Elder Hilarion wrote: "The other peoples' kings [i.e. not the Russian Tsar] often make themselves out to be something great, but not one of them is a king in reality, but they are only adorned and flatter themselves with a great name, but God is not favourably disposed towards them, and does not abide in them. They reign only in part, by the condescension of God. Therefore he who does not love his God-established tsar is not worthy of being called a Christian..."⁹⁴

A hierarchy of political loyalties appeared to be established here. At the top of the hierarchy was loyalty to the Orthodox Christian Emperor, who, since at least the late sixteenth century, had been the Russian Tsar. The greater authority of the Russian Tsar over all other political authorities did not reside in his purely political power, but in the mystical anointing that he received from the Church. Other authorities might be powers in the Apostles' understanding of the word, in that they in general punished evildoers and rewarded the good (I Peter 2.14; Romans 13.3), but the grace to protect the Church of God was given to the Russian Empire alone. That is why it was incumbent upon all Orthodox Christians to pray and give thanks for the Russian Tsar,

⁹⁴ Hieromonk Anthony of the Holy Mountain, *Ocherki zhizni i podvigov startsa ieroskhimonakha Ilariona gruzina*, Holy Trinity Monastery, Jordanville, 1985, pp. 68-74, 95.

even if they lived in other States. For, as St. Seraphim said: "After Orthodoxy, zealous devotion to the Tsar is the Russian's first duty and the chief foundation of true Christian piety."⁹⁵

Nor was this only a *Russian's* duty. Already in 1562 the Ecumenical Patriarch Joasaph called the Tsar "our Tsar", applying to him the same epithets, "pious, God-crowned and Christ-loving" as were applied to the Byzantine Emperors.⁹⁶ and ascribing to him authority over "Orthodox Christians in *the entire universe*". Again, in 1589 the Ecumenical Patriarch Jeremiah II confirmed that the Russian Tsardom was "the Third Rome" and declared, addressing the Tsar: "Thou alone under heaven art Christian emperor for *all* Christians in the world."⁹⁷

Strictly speaking, according to Elder Hilarion, only the Orthodox emperor had full political authority and legitimacy. Other states could be said to share in that gift of the Holy Spirit which is political government (I Corinthians 12.27) only relatively, depending on the closeness of their relationship to the Orthodox empire. According to the Byzantine theory of statehood, which the elder inherited, this would include, first of all, other Orthodox Christian rulers who had received the true anointing of the Holy Church, and then allies or friends of the empire.⁹⁸ Further down the hierarchy, a certain, though lesser, degree of political legitimacy could also be said to belong to

⁹⁵ St. Seraphim, in Sergius Nilus, "Chto zhdet Rossiu?", *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, № 68, 1905.

⁹⁶ Fomin, S. & Fomina, T., *Rossia pered otorym prishestviem*, Sergiev Posad, volume I, p. 230.

⁹⁷ Sir Steven Runciman, *The Orthodox Churches and the Secular State*, Oxford University Press, 1971, p. 51.

⁹⁸ "This doctrine," writes I.P. Medvedev, "found practical expression in.. a hierarchical system of States... The place of each sovereign in this official, hierarchical gradation of all the princes of the world in relation to the Byzantine Emperor was defined by kinship terms borrowed from the terminology of family law: father-son-brother, but also friend... The use of kinship terms by the Byzantine Emperor in addressing a foreign Sovereign was not a simple metaphor or rhetoric, but a definite title which was given on the basis of a mutual agreement, that is, bestowed by the Emperor... And so at the head of the oikoumene was the Basileus Romanon, the Byzantine Emperor, the father of 'the family of sovereigns and peoples'. Closest of all 'by kinship' among the politically independent sovereigns were certain Christian rulers of countries bordering on the Empire, for example Armenia, Alania and Bulgaria; they were spiritual sons of the Byzantine Emperor. Less close were the Christian masters of the Germans and French, who were included in this 'family of sovereigns and peoples' with the rights of spiritual brothers of the Emperor. After them came the friends, that is, independent sovereigns and peoples who received this title by dint of a special agreement – the emir of Egypt and the ruler of India, and later the Venetians, the king of England, etc. Finally, we must name a large group of princes who were ranked, not according to degree of 'kinship', but by dint of particularities of address and protocol – the small appanage principalities of Armenia, Iberia, Abkhazia, the Italian cities, Moravia and Serbia (group 1), and the appanage princes of Hungary and Rus', the Khazar and Pecheneg khans, etc. (group II)... As a whole the idea of a centralised hierarchical structure of the world was preserved throughout the existence of the Byzantine Empire. (Proof that this system existed not only in the minds of the Byzantines is provided by, among other things, decrees of Turkish sultans which still, in the 14th century, called the Byzantine Emperors Emperors of Bulgaria, Alania, Russia, Iberia, Turkey, etc.) The Byzantine Emperors were unwilling to make any changes in the accepted titles. The most curious deviations from the rules were represented by the attempts to include in this system, in the 14th century – the Russian Great Prince with the rights of... 'a related brother' of the Byzantine Emperor, and in the 15th century – the Turkish sultan with the rights of a son, and then also of a brother... In the opinion of Ostrogorsky, one can speak only of an 'idealized submission' to the Empire, which by no means excluded the complete independence of the State in a political sense." (S. Fomin & T. Fomina, op. cit., pp. 138-139).

other, non-Christian rulers who maintained the basic principles of law and order against the forces of anarchy and revolution. However, such rulers, being heterodox, could support Orthodoxy only indirectly, while by their confession of heterodoxy they inevitably harmed it to some degree.

The Ottoman empire was a clear example of this kind of power. It aided Orthodoxy indirectly by preserving the Balkan Orthodox peoples in existence and defending them from the incursions of western missionaries and heresies (including nationalism). But by its killing of the new martyrs and restrictions on Orthodox education and church-building it showed itself an enemy of Orthodoxy. Such rulers were to be honoured for the sake of their positive contributions, and even their oppressions could be seen as chastisement for sin; which was why Divine Providence allowed them to rule over the Orthodox. But this fact was not to be allowed to obscure the higher honour in which the Orthodox emperor was to be held by Orthodox Christians – *all* Orthodox Christians.

How was this higher honour to be expressed by those Orthodox living outside the Orthodox empire, or in states like Turkey that were at times hostile to it? Again, active rebellion in favour of the empire, even if it were a practical possibility, could not be an *obligation* for citizens of other states. In this sense political allegiance has a much more pragmatic connotation, in the Orthodox understanding, than ecclesiastical allegiance. If one's *ecclesiastical* lord is a heretic, one *must* leave him, according to the Law of God, and find an Orthodox one, whatever the cost. But if one's *political* lord is a heretic or a pagan, there is no such obligation – only the obligation to pray and long for “the peace of Jerusalem”, the prosperity and final victory of the Orthodox Christian empire.

Thus the holy martyrs Manuel, Sabel and Ismael, on reaching maturity, enrolled in the armies of the Persian King Alamundar, although he was a pagan and Persia was often at war with the Byzantine empire.⁹⁹ Again, during the Russo-Japanese war of 1904-05, St. Nicholas, archbishop and apostle of Japan, allowed his Japanese Orthodox spiritual children to pray for the victory of the pagan Japanese armies in the war against the Russian empire in 1904-05. But he himself, as an Orthodox Christian and a Russian subject, felt unable to join in those prayers...

The problem is: if we compare these cases with the above-cited judgement of Elder Hilarion, we appear to have two contradictory principles: the principle that loyalty must be demonstrated above all to that State which stands for Christ in the Orthodox Faith, the Orthodox Empire, and the principle that loyalty must be shown to one's native land, whether or not it is Orthodox, because Christ came, not to destroy the existing worldly structures, but to transfigure them.

Abstract principles cannot always be reconciled, or placed neatly in a hierarchical order. Dilemmas arise in which there is only one solution: to seek the will of God for the individual person in the concrete situation. Let us consider the case of the Russo-Japanese war. Here it was not the will of God that the Orthodox Empire should

⁹⁹ *Orthodox Life*, vol. 29, № 3, May-June, 1979, p. 3.

triumph, in spite of the fact that paganism was seen to triumph over Orthodoxy, and the foundations of the Orthodox Empire were shaken. We can only speculate why – God’s judgements are a great abyss. However, knowing what God’s judgement turned out to be in this particular case, we can see the wisdom of the Russian Orthodox pastor in his care for his Japanese Orthodox flock. He himself could not possibly pray for what was a victory both of paganism over Orthodoxy and of foreigners over his native land. But, perhaps knowing of the eventual outcome, and also perhaps that his flock was not strong enough to defy their own government over what was a matter of politics rather than faith, he allowed them to express their natural patriotic feelings...

6. Orthodoxy and the Soviet Antichrist

So far we have considered only political authorities which, whether Orthodox, heretical or pagan, can all be called “authorities” in St. Paul’s definition of the word – that is, which *in general* “are not a terror to good works, but to the evil” (Romans 13.3). As such, and insofar as they are willing and able to maintain a minimum level of law and order, these authorities can be said to be “of God” (Romans 13.1), even if many of their individual actions are carried out in defiance of God. However, the Holy Scriptures speak of another “authority” that receives its power, not from God, but from “the dragon” – that is, from Satan (Revelation 13.2). This is that lowest level of political authority - if it should not rather be called “anti-authority” - which does not even have the minimal quality of preserving law and order, but actively wars against all that is good and pure and simply *normal* in human society. This power is the power of the Antichrist.

It fell to the lot of the Russian people in 1917 to be the first nation in history to fall under the yoke of the Antichrist, in that collectivist form called Soviet power. For a long time – at least ten years – the Russian Church wavered in her estimation of this power. At the beginning, in the Church Council of 1917-18, she anathematised it, forbade her children to have any relations whatsoever with it, and in general ignored all its decrees. This first, completely uncompromising, instinct of the Russian Church in the face of Soviet power was never permanently extinguished. It continued to manifest itself both at home and abroad, in both the early and the later decades of Soviet power.

Thus the All-Emigration Council of the Russian Church in Exile, which opened its first session on November 8/21, 1921, called on the Genoa conference to refuse recognition to the Bolshevik regime, to arm its opponents, and restore the Romanov dynasty. In defence of this call, which provoked the frenzy of the Bolsheviks and which many regarded as dangerous dabbling in politics, the First-Hierarch of the Church in Exile, Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) of Kiev, said: “If by politics one understands all that touches upon the life of the people, beginning with the rightful position of the Church within the realm, then the ecclesiastical authorities and Church councils must participate in political life, and from this point of view definite demands are made upon it. Thus, the holy hierarch Hermogenes laid his life on the line by first demanding that the people be loyal to Tsar Basil Shuisky, and when the Poles imprisoned him he demanded the election of Tsar Michael Romanov. At the present time, the paths of the political life of the people are diverging in various

directions in a far more definite way: some, in a positive sense, for the Faith and the Church, others in an inimical sense; some in support of the army and against socialism and communism, others exactly the opposite. Thus the Karlovtsy Council not only had the right, but *was obliged to bless the army* for the struggle against the Bolsheviks, and also, following the Great Council of Moscow of 1917-1918, to condemn socialism and communism."¹⁰⁰.

However, the sheer weight of the terrorist machine in Russia, and, still more, the lack of unanimity of the Church herself, compelled the Church in the person of the Patriarch to adopt a more neutral, apolitical stance. Therefore from the early 1920s a new attitude towards Soviet power began to evolve among the Tikhonite Christians: loyalty towards it as a political institution ("for all power is from God"), and acceptance of such of its laws as could be interpreted in favour of the Church (for example, the law on the separation of Church and State), combined with rejection of its atheistic world-view (large parts of which the renovationists, by contrast, accepted). In essence, this new attitude involved accepting that the Soviet State was, contrary to what the Local Council of 1917-18 and the Russian Church Abroad had in effect declared, not Antichrist, but Caesar, no worse in principle than the Caesars of Ancient Rome, to whom the things belonging to Caesar were due. This attitude involved the assertion that it was possible, in the Soviet Union as in Ancient Rome, to draw a clear line between politics and religion.

But in practice, even more than in theory, this line proved very hard to draw. For for the early Bolsheviks, at any rate, there was no such dividing line; for them, *everything* was ideological, everything had to be in accordance with their ideology, there could be no room for disagreement, no private spheres into which the state and its ideology did not pry. Unlike most of the Roman emperors, who allowed the Christians to order their own lives in their own way so long as they showed loyalty to the state (which, as we have seen, the Christians were very eager to do), the Bolsheviks insisted in imposing their own ways upon the Christians in every sphere: in family life (civil marriage only, divorce on demand, children spying on parents), in education (compulsory Marxism), in economics (dekulakization, collectivization), in military service (the oath of allegiance to Lenin), in science (Lysenkoism), in art (socialist realism), and in religion (the requisitioning of valuables, registration, commemoration of the authorities at the Liturgy, reporting of confessions by the priests). Resistance to any one of these demands was counted as "anti-Soviet behaviour", i.e. *political* disloyalty. Therefore it was no use protesting one's political loyalty to the regime if one refused to accept just one of these demands. According to the Soviet interpretation of the word: "Whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one has become guilty of all of it" (James 2.10), such a person was an *enemy of the people*.

The point is that a neat division between politics and religion, which is hard enough to make in a normal state, is out of the question in the state of the Antichrist. For the

¹⁰⁰ Holy Transfiguration Monastery, Boston, *A History of the Russian Church Abroad*, Seattle: St. Nectarios Press, 1961, p. 24; Archbishop Nikon, *Zhizneopisanie Blazhennejshago Antonia, Mitropolita Kievskago i Galitskago* (A Biography of his Beatitude Anthony, Metropolitan of Kiev and Galich), New York, 1960, vol. VI, p. 36.

Antichrist, *everything* is politics - or religion, whichever way you like to look at it. *Everything* is assessed in relation to whether it aids or hinders the fundamental aims of the antichristian state. But how can Christianity be neutral with regard to the aims of antichristianity? How can the Church of Christ deny that her fundamental aims, and the whole purpose of her existence and of everything she does, are totally, diametrically opposed to those of "the Church of the evildoers"?

In view of this, it is not surprising that many Christians came to the conclusion that it was less morally debilitating to reject the whole regime that made such impossible demands, since the penalty would be the same whether one asserted one's loyalty to it or not. And if this meant living as an outlaw, so be it.

Nevertheless, the path of total rejection of the Soviet state required enormous courage, strength and self-sacrifice, not only for oneself but also (which was more difficult) for one's family or flock. For the Patriarch, in particular, the dilemma was unbearable. While willing to become a martyr personally, he was not prepared to place this burden on the whole Church, and so began to negotiate with the authorities - with, it must be admitted, only mixed results. Thus his decision to allow some, but not all of the Church's valuables to be requisitioned by the Bolsheviks in 1922 not only did not bring help to the starving of the Volga, as was the intention, but led to many clashes between believers and the authorities and many deaths of believers. For, as the holy Elder Nectarius of Optina said: "You see now, the patriarch gave the order to give up all valuables from the churches, but they belonged to the Church!"¹⁰¹

The decision to negotiate and compromise with the Bolsheviks - in transgression of the decrees of the 1917-18 Council - only brought confusion and division to the Church. Thus on the right wing of the Church there were those, like Archbishop Theodore of Volokolamsk, who thought that the patriarch had already gone too far; while on the left wing there were those, like Archbishop Hilarion of Verey, who wanted to go further. The basic problem was that the compromises were always one-sided; the Bolsheviks always took and never gave; their aim was not peaceful co-existence, but the complete conquest of the Church.

And so, as a "Letter from Russia" put it many years later: "It's no use our manoeuvring: there's nothing for us to preserve except the things that are God's. For the things that are Caesar's (if one should really consider it to be Caesar and not Pharaoh) are always associated with the quenching of the Spirit..."¹⁰²

However, the Patriarchal Church remained Orthodox under Patriarch Tikhon and his successor, Metropolitan Peter, for two major reasons: first, because the leaders of the Church kept their flock, if not themselves, out of the morally debilitating swamp of compromises with the Antichrist; and secondly, because, while the Soviet regime was recognised to be, in effect, Caesar rather than Pharaoh, no further concessions were made with regard to the communist *ideology*.

¹⁰¹ Matushka Evgenia Grigorievna Rymarenko, "Remembrances of Optina Staretz Hieroschemonk Nektary", *Orthodox Life*, vol. 36, N 3, May-June, 1986, p. 39.

¹⁰² *Ruskaia Mysl' (Russian Thought)*, N 3143, March 17, 1977.

Everything changed, however, with Metropolitan Sergius' notorious declaration of 1927. By declaring that the Soviet regime's joys were the Church's joys, and its sorrows the Church's sorrows, Sergius in effect declared an *identity of aims* between the Church and the State. And this was not just a lie, but *a lie against the faith*, a concession to the communist *ideology*. In fact, it implied that communism as such was good, and its victory to be welcomed.

Moreover, Sergius followed this up by committing *the sin of Judas*; he placed all those who disagreed with him under ban and in effect handed them over to the GPU as "counter-revolutionaries". Far from "saving the Church", as he claimed, he condemned its finest members to torture and death. And then his successors in the present-day Moscow Patriarchate followed this up with *the sin of Pilate* - the criminal indifference to the truth manifest in their participation in the "heresy of heresies", ecumenism.

In order to protect the flock of Christ from Sergius' apostasy, the leaders of the True Church had to draw once more the line between politics and religion in such a way as to recognise that Soviet "politics" could not but be antireligious in essence. One approach was to distinguish between *physical* opposition to the regime and *spiritual* opposition to it. Thus Archbishop Barlaam of Perm wrote that physical opposition was not permitted, but spiritual opposition was obligatory.¹⁰³

Again, Hieromartyr Bishop Mark (Novoselov) wrote: "I am an enemy of Soviet power - and what is more, by dint of my religious convictions, insofar as Soviet power is an atheist power and even anti-theist. I believe that as a true Christian I cannot strengthen this power by any means... [There is] a petition which the Church has commanded to be used everyday in certain well-known conditions... The purpose of this formula is to request the overthrow of the infidel power by God... But this formula does not amount to a summons to believers to take active measures, but only calls them to pray for the overthrow of the power that has fallen away from God."¹⁰⁴ This criterion allowed Christians quite sincerely to reject the charge of "counter-revolution" - if "counter-revolution" were understood to mean *physical* rebellion. The problem was, as we have seen, that the Bolsheviks understood "counter-revolution" in a much wider sense...

Another, still more basic problem was that it still left the question whether Soviet power was from God or not unresolved. If Soviet power was from God, it should be counted as Caesar and should be given what was Caesar's. But bitter experience had shown that this "Caesar" wanted to seat himself in the temple as if he were God (II Thessalonians 2.4). So was he not in fact Antichrist, whose power is not from God, but from Satan (Revelation 13.2), being *allowed*, but by no means *established* by God for the

¹⁰³ Cited in William Fletcher, *The Russian Orthodox Church Underground, 1917-1970*, Oxford University Press, 1971, p. 64.

¹⁰⁴ Novoselov, quoted in I.I. Osipova. "Istoria Istinno Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi po Materialam Sledstvennago Dela", *Pravoslavnaiia Rus'*, N 14 (1587), July 15/28, 1997, p. 5.

punishment of sinners? If so, then there was no alternative but to flee into the catacombs, rejecting totally the government of Satan on earth.

In the early years after Metropolitan Sergius' declaration, many Catacomb Christians, while *in practice* not surrendering what was God's to the Soviets, *in theory* could not make up their minds whether the Soviet regime was Caesar or Antichrist. Thus Hieromartyr Joseph (Gavrilov), superior of Raithu Desert (+1930), confessed at his interrogation: "I have never, and do not now, belong to any political parties. I consider Soviet power to be given from God, but a power that is from God must fulfil the will of God, and Soviet power does not fulfil the will of God. Therefore it is not from God, but from Satan. It closes churches, mocks the holy icons, teaches children atheism, etc. That is, it fulfils the will of Satan... It is better to die with faith than without faith. I am a real believer, faith has saved me in battles, and I hope that in the future faith will save me from death. I firmly believe in the Resurrection of Christ and His Second Coming. I have not gone against the taxes, since it says in Scripture: 'To Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's.'"¹⁰⁵

From this confession, impressive though it is, it is not clear whether Hieromartyr Joseph recognised the Soviet regime as Caesar, and therefore from God, or as Antichrist, and therefore from Satan. In the end the Bolsheviks resolved his dilemma for him. They shot him, and therefore showed that they were precisely- Antichrist.

In the Russian Church in Exile, meanwhile, a consensus had emerged that the Soviet regime was not Caesar, but Antichrist. This was the position of, for example, Archbishop Theophanes of Poltava, Metropolitan Innocent of Peking and Archbishop Averky of Jordanville. As Archbishop Theophanes put it in the same critical year of 1927: "The Bolshevik authorities are in essence antichristian, and there is no way in which they can be recognised as being established by God."¹⁰⁶

The canonist of the Russian Church Abroad, Bishop Gregory Grabbe, pointed out the similarity between Soviet power and that of Julian the Apostate: "With regard to the question of the commemoration of authorities, we must bear in mind that now we

¹⁰⁵ *Novie Prepodobnomuchenki Raifskie*, publication of the Kazan diocese, Moscow, 1997, p. 17.

¹⁰⁶ *Pis'ma Arkhiepiskopa Feofana Poltavskago i Pereyaslavskago*, Jordanville, 1976. However, in recent years the ROCOR leadership has appeared to adopt a "softer" attitude towards Soviet power. This appeared particularly in 1990, in a dialogue between Metropolitan Vitaly, first-hierarch of ROCOR, and representatives of the "passportless" branch of the Catacomb Church (E.A. Petrova, "Perestroika Vavilonski Bashni", Moscow samizdat, 1991 (in Russian)). The metropolitan compared citizenship of the Soviet Union to citizenship of the Roman Empire in the time of the Apostle Paul, who was actually proud of his Roman citizenship and used it to protect himself against the Jews. However, the passportless categorically rejected this comparison, insisting that the Soviet Union must be considered to be, in effect, the Antichrist, being that power which is established, not by God, but by the devil (Rev. 13.2), and that citizenship of the Antichrist is nothing to be proud of, but rather entails promises to uphold anti-theist legislation that no Christian can agree to.

Paradoxically, the passportless position is here closer not only to Patriarch Tikhon's anathema against the Bolsheviks in 1918, which called on Christians to have *nothing whatsoever* to do with the Bolsheviks, and even urged Christian wives to leave their Bolshevik husbands, but also to the position of the first president of ROCOR, Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky), who in 1921, as we have seen, called for an armed invasion of Soviet Russia and a general insurrection against Soviet power.

are having dealings not simply with a pagan government like Nero's, but with the apostasy of the last times. Not with a so far unenlightened authority, but with apostasy. The Holy Fathers did not relate to Julian the Apostate in the same way as they did to the other pagan Emperors. And we cannot relate to the antichristian authorities in the same way as to any other, for its nature is purely satanic."¹⁰⁷

Protopriest Michael Polsky, who was on Solovki for the faith, but then fled abroad, explains how Metropolitan Sergius' declaration opened his eyes to the impossibility of the "apolitical" approach in the conditions of the Soviet Union.

"How can I, a believing person," he asked, "recognise a godless power? What does it mean – not to be its political enemy? In a joint life with pagans I could recognise Caesar, while rejecting Caesar's gods. But now, being a believer, I inescapably, necessarily fight against the authorities, whether I like it or not – I undermine its foundations, I destroy the spirit of the revolution, I hinder the socialist construction of the state. If religion in its essence is counter-revolutionary, then I am a counter-revolutionary. My counter-revolution is my struggle for the faith. If I am for religion, I am organically already against the Bolshevik power. And how shall I separate godlessness from the Bolshevik power?"

"If humanity has in the Bolsheviks a completely godless power for the first time, then is this not the first and only case in history when religion is inseparable from politics for the believer?"¹⁰⁸

The Catacomb Church was not able, of course, to define her position in an official manner because of the near impossibility of convening a Council representing the whole Church in the catacombs. However, her relationship to the Soviet State was defined in a catacomb document dating from the Brezhnev years as follows:

"Authority is given by God in order to preserve and fulfil the law... But how should one look on the Soviet authority, following the Apostolic teaching on authorities [Romans 13]? In accordance with the Apostolic teaching which we have set forth, one must acknowledge that the Soviet authority is not an authority. It is an anti-authority. It is not an authority because it is not established by God, but insolently created by an aggregation of the evil actions of men, and it is consolidated and supported by these actions. If the evil actions weaken, the Soviet authority, representing a condensation of evil, likewise weakens... This authority consolidates itself in order to destroy all religions, simply to eradicate faith in God. Its essence is warfare with God, because its root is from satan. The Soviet authority is not authority, because by its nature it cannot fulfil the law, for the essence of its life is evil.

"It may be said that the Soviet authority, in condemning various crimes of men, can still be considered an authority. We do not say that a ruling authority is totally lacking. We only affirm that it is an anti-authority. One must know that the affirmation of real

¹⁰⁷ Bishop Gregory, *Pis'ma*, Moscow, 1998, p. 85.

¹⁰⁸ Polsky, "Polozhenie Tserkvi v Sovetskoj Rossii", in *Putevoditel' po pravoslavnoj asketike*, St. Petersburg, 1999, p. 203.

power is bound up with certain actions of men, to whom the instinct of preservation is natural. And they must take into consideration the laws of morality which have been inherent in mankind from ages past. But in essence this authority systematically commits murder physically and spiritually. In reality a hostile power acts, which is called Soviet authority. The enemy strives by cunning to compel humanity to acknowledge this power as an authority. But the Apostolic teaching on authority is inapplicable to it, just as evil is inapplicable to God and the good, because evil is outside God; but the enemies with hypocrisy can take refuge in the well-known saying that everything is from God.

"This Soviet anti-authority is precisely the collective Antichrist, warfare against God..."¹⁰⁹

Thus we come to the conclusion that the confessing Christians of the Soviet Union suffered and died precisely for Christ and against the Antichrist. This was not a political struggle because the Soviet Antichrist was not a purely political power. It was a power whose *raison d'être* was war against God, the works of God and the God-established order in every sphere of life. And since, for Soviet power, "he who is not with me is against me", anyone who was not with Soviet power in its God-fighting ends was also necessarily against it in general. For in the kingdom of the Antichrist there is no sustainable boundary between religion and politics; everything is *both* religion *and* politics; for he claims to be both *lord* (of the bodies) and *god* (of the souls) of his subjects. This being so, it is impossible to resist the Antichrist in one sphere while co-operating with him in another - the totalitarian man-god must be rejected *totally*. It is the glory of the holy new Martyrs and Confessors of Russia that, having exhausted all attempts to achieve some kind of honourable *modus vivendi* with the Antichrist (more often than not, for the sake of others rather than themselves), when they were finally presented with the stark choice between the man-god and the God-Man, they boldly and unswervingly chose the latter, proclaiming: "*Thou art my Lord and my God*" (John 20.28).

7. Orthodoxy in the Post-Soviet Period

Just as the world was never the same again after the appearance of the Lord Jesus Christ in the world, so it can never be the same since the appearance of the Antichrist in the form of Soviet power. Although Soviet power collapsed in 1989-91, this can in no way be considered its final defeat, but rather its temporary *wounding*, as one horn of the first beast of the Apocalypse was "wounded", but then recovered and was healed (Revelation 13.3,12). For if one politico-religious institution of the Antichrist has fallen, his spirit continues to live and continues to seek to incarnate itself in political and religious institutions. The Church has been given a temporary "breathing space" in which to gather her forces in preparation for a still more subtle and powerful assault, just as the Christians of the Roman empire were given a breathing space of relative peace before the final persecution of Diocletian.

¹⁰⁹ Andreyev, *Russia's Catacomb Saints*, Platina: St. Herman of Alaska Brotherhood, 1982, pp. 541-42.

However, no effective defence of Orthodoxy can be undertaken unless the lessons of the previous era are learned. Unfortunately, these lessons appear to have been learned by very few. Some see in the increased veneration for the Tsar-Martyr, and in the rise of monarchist parties, a sign that the main lesson implicit in the fall of the Orthodox empire is beginning to be learned – the lesson, namely, that the Orthodox empire was a gift from God second in value only to Orthodoxy itself, and therefore needed to be cherished and supported rather than undermined and destroyed.

This is true. And yet the Empire existed for Orthodoxy, and not Orthodoxy for the Empire – but the great majority of contemporary Russian monarchists support the Moscow Patriarchate, which bowed down to the Soviet Antichrist, is still reluctant to recognise the sanctity of the Tsar-Martyr, and has now become in many ways the chief corrupter of the Russian people, both in faith and in morals.

Even some monarchist writers of the Russian Church Abroad appear to have fallen into this trap. A recent unsigned article in a ROCOR publication¹¹⁰ argues that Russia already has a true Empress – Maria Vladimirovna Romanova, the widow of Great-Prince Vladimir Kirillovich, who in 1991 apostasised from ROCOR to the Moscow Patriarchate, dying shortly thereafter.¹¹¹ The writer of this article forgets that the very first condition for any candidate to the throne of the Orthodox Empire is *true Orthodoxy*. Even supposing that Great-Princess Maria Vladimirovna fulfilled every other condition (which is disputable), the single fact that she is a member of the Moscow Patriarchate and is therefore in heresy, disqualifies her.

Let us remember that after, during the Time of Troubles, when the Poles and renegade Russians forced Tsar Basil Shuisky to abdicate and installed a Catholic tsar in the Kremlin, Patriarch Hermogen not only anathematised the new “tsar” and all who followed him, but called on the Orthodox to rise up in armed rebellion against the usurper. *Such a step was completely unprecedented in Church history*. It signified that, *for an Orthodox nation, a ruler who takes the place of a truly anointed ruler – and, moreover, does not confess the Orthodox faith, as all truly anointed rulers must – is not simply a bad ruler, but an “anti-ruler” – an “anti-christ”, since he was “in the place of” the truly anointed one (the Greek word “christ” means “anointed one”)*.

While the Moscow Patriarchate that was created by Sovietism still lives, Soviet power still lives, and the position of the True Church in the State is likely to be precarious. Therefore those who long for the re-establishment of a true State, a State with which the Church can not only do business but with which it can enter into a true symphony for the sake of the salvation of all, must work in the first place for the triumph of truth over heresy. For only when the Kingdom that is not of this world has taken its residence in our hearts through the sanctification that comes through the truth can we realistically hope for that blessed moment when that other-worldly Kingdom will also conquer the kingdom of this world.

¹¹⁰ “Nasledstvennost’ ili Vybory?”, *Svecha Pokaiania* (Tsaritsyn), N 4, February, 2000, pp. 11-13.

¹¹¹ See the article by Grand-Duke Vladimir's former spiritual father, Archbishop Anthony of Los Angeles, “Velikij Knyaz’ Vladimir Kirillovich i ego poseshchenie SSSR”, *Pravoslavnij Vestnik*, (Montreal), NN 60-61, January-February, 1993.

*March 11/24, 2001.
Martyrdom of Emperor Paul I of Russia.*

4. THE SACRAMENT OF ROYAL ANOINTING

The unparalleled power and glory of the Roman Empire, and the acceptance of its authority by almost all the civilised nations of the ancient world, gave a new legal and moral basis to political power. Briefly, *legitimate political power was Roman power*, or that power which could claim some kinship with, or descent from it. This was accepted (albeit with different degrees of conviction and satisfaction) by Germanic warriors as well as Roman senators, by Monophysite Copts as well as Orthodox Greeks.

Thus the British apostle of Ireland, St. Patrick, called the Scottish chieftain Coroticus a “tyrant” because his power was not from Rome. St. Patrick considered himself and all other Britons to be citizens of Rome although the last Roman legions had left the island in the year 410.¹¹² British and English kings continued to use Roman and Byzantine titles and symbols until late in the tenth century.

The basic principle was that all power that was Roman or on the Roman model was of God (Romans 13.1), and all power that was anti-Roman was of the devil (Revelation 13.2). For Rome, it was agreed, was that power which held back the coming of the Antichrist (II Thessalonians 2.7), and would be destroyed only by the Antichrist. As Patriarch Nikon of Moscow said: “The Roman Empire [of which he understood Russia, the Third Rome, to be the continuation] must be destroyed by the Antichrist, and the Antichrist – by Christ.”¹¹³

After Rome became Christian under St. Constantine, an additional criterion of legitimate political power was that it should be Orthodox. Thus in the late sixth century the son of the Visigothic King of Spain, St. Hermenegild, rose up against his Arian father Leogivild in the name of Orthodoxy, and was supported by the armies of the Byzantine province of Spania (south-west Spain). Hermenegild’s rebellion was unsuccessful, and he himself was martyred for refusing to receive communion from an Arian bishop at Pascha, 585. However, at the Council of Toledo in 589, the new king, Reccared and the whole of the Gothic nobility accepted Orthodoxy. Thus, as St. Dmitri of Rostov writes, “the fruit of the death of this one man was life and Orthodoxy for all the people of Spain”.¹¹⁴

This helped to establish the principle that *legitimate political power is either Roman power, or that power which shares in the faith of the Romans, Orthodoxy*. A power that is not Orthodox can legitimately be overthrown from without or rebelled against from within as long as the motive is truly religious – the establishment or re-establishment of Orthodoxy.

¹¹² Eoin MacNeill, *Saint Patrick*, Dublin, 1964; reprinted in *The True Vine*, 26, vol. 7, no. 2, p. 37.

¹¹³ Quoted in Archbishop Seraphim (Sobolev), *Russkaia Ideologia*, St. Petersburg, 1992, p. 84.

¹¹⁴ St. Dmitri of Rostov, *The Great Collection of the Lives of the Saints*, November 1.

This does not mean, however, that Christians are obliged to rebel against all pagan or heterodox régimes. On the contrary, since civil war is one of the worst of all evils, the decision to rebel cannot be taken lightly.¹¹⁵

And in fact, such rebellions have been rare in Orthodox history, and have been successfully undertaken only with the blessing of the Church – as when St. Sergius of Radonezh blessed the rebellion of the Russians against the Tatar horde. But even St. Sergius did not bless Dmitri Donskoj to fight the Tatars until they had rejected all his attempts to appease them...

Could a Roman emperor after Constantine who was not Orthodox be counted as legitimate? In general, the Christians tended to give a positive answer to this question on the grounds that the root of the Roman tree was good even if its fruits were occasionally bad, which is why they obeyed the Monophysite and Iconoclast emperors in all but their religious policies. However, as we shall see, there were precedents for a more rigorous position which accepted a power as Roman and legitimate only if it was also Orthodox.

What about the numerous emperors who won power by means of a military coup? The possibility that an emperor might rule by might but not by right gave rise to the need for a further, more ecclesiastical form of legitimization – the sacrament of royal anointing. This sacrament went back to the age of the Old Testament Kings Saul and David, who were anointed by the Prophet and Priest Samuel. The grace of anointing both separates and strengthens the king for his holy task, and gives his person a sacred inviolability. The truly anointed king partakes in Christ's Kingship in the same way that a duly ordained priest partakes in His Priesthood.

1. Pre-Christian Anointing

The early Roman Emperors did not receive the sacrament of royal anointing because, of course, they were pagans. However, the fact that the Lord Jesus Christ was born in the Roman Empire, was enrolled in a census by it and paid taxes to it, and that the Apostle Paul was even a Roman citizen, pointed to the fact that Rome had been chosen, separated out from earlier pagan empires, made pregnant, as it were, with potential for good, which potential was conveyed to them through an invisible, spiritual anointing. Just as the Lord in the Old Testament had "anointed" the Persian Emperor Cyrus "to subdue nations before him" (Isaiah 45.1) and "make the crooked places straight" (45.2), in order that God's people could return to their homeland in the earthly Jerusalem, so in New Testament times the Lord "anointed" the pagan Roman rulers up to and including Augustus to subdue the nations before them and make the crooked places straight, in order that the Christian Gospel could bring all the nations of the Empire to their homeland in the Heavenly Jerusalem.

Thus the sacrament of royal anointing could be construed as having existed before Christ, just as the sacrament of marriage existed before Christ. Both are "natural" sacraments existing to reinforce the natural bonds of family and state life. Indeed, the

¹¹⁵ Cf. Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky), *The Christian Faith and War*, Jordanville.

state, as Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow pointed out, is simply an extension of the family, with the Tsar-Batyushka in the place of the paterfamilias.

But with the Coming of Christ – which providentially coincided, as several of the Holy Fathers pointed out, with the birth of the Roman Empire – State power was given a more lofty task – that of holding “the mystery of iniquity” at bay and protecting the Church – which required a greater outpouring of Divine Grace. Of course, the Emperors were not conscious of this task, and the grace they received they received, not directly through the Church, but through the invisible anointing of God Himself. But the results – in the stability and order of the Roman Empire – were evident for all to see and admire. For with a few exceptions, such as Nero and Domitian, the Roman Emperors did carry out the task that was entrusted to them. For, as Professor Marta Sordi has convincingly demonstrated, the opposition to the Christians in the first three centuries of Christian history generally came *not* from the Emperors, but from the Senate and the mob (both pagan and Jewish), and it was the Emperors who protected the Christians from their enemies.¹¹⁶ That is why the Christians considered the emperor, in Tertullian’s words, to be “more truly ours (than yours) because he was put into power by our God”.¹¹⁷

Sordi comments on these words: “Paradoxically, we could say that the Christian empire, made into reality by Constantine and his successors, was already potentially present in this claim of Tertullian’s, a claim which comes at the end of such a deeply committed declaration of loyalty to Rome and its empire that it should surely suffice to disprove the theory that a so-called ‘political theology’ was the fruit of Constantine’s peace. Tertullian says that the Christians pray for the emperors and ask for them ‘a long life, a safe empire, a quiet home, strong armies, a faithful senate, honest subjects, a world at peace’.”¹¹⁸

“Again,” continues Sordi, “they pray ‘for the general strength and stability of the empire and for Roman power’ because they know that ‘it is the Roman empire which keeps at bay the great violence which hangs over the universe and even the end of the world itself, harbinger of terrible calamities’. The subject here, as we know, was the interpretation given to the famous passage from the second Epistle to the Thessalonians (2.6-7) on the obstacle, whether a person or an object, which impedes the coming of the Anti-Christ. Without attempting to interpret this mysterious passage, the fact remains that all Christian writers, up to and including Lactantius, Ambrose and Augustine, identified this restraining presence with the Roman empire, either as an institution or as an ideology. Through their conviction that the Roman empire would last as long as the world (Tertullian Ad Scapulam 2) the early Christians actually renewed and appropriated as their own the concept of Roma aeterna. ‘While we pray to delay the end’ – it is Tertullian speaking (Apologeticum 32.1) – ‘we are helping Rome to last forever’.”¹¹⁹

¹¹⁶ Sordi, *The Christians and the Roman Empire*, London & New York: Routledge, 1994.

¹¹⁷ Tertullian, *Apologeticum* 33.1.

¹¹⁸ Sordi, op. cit., pp. 172-73.

¹¹⁹ Sordi, op. cit., p. 173.

2. Anointing in Byzantium

When the Empire became Christian under St. Constantine and his successors, the task for which the Empire had been called into being was made clearly explicit, as we see, for example, in Eusebius of Caesarea's words: "From Him and through Him [the Word of God] the king who is dear to God receives an image of the Kingdom that is above and so in imitation of that greater King himself guides and directs the course of everything on earth...He looks up to see the archetypal pattern and guides those whom he rules in accordance with that pattern... The basic principle of kingly authority is the establishment of a single source of authority to which everything is subject. Monarchy is superior to every other constitution and form of government. For polyarchy, where everyone competes on equal terms, is really anarchy and discord."¹²⁰

But while the task was now acknowledged, the visible sacrament that gave the grace to accomplish the task was not immediately instituted. For the striking fact about the sacrament of anointing in Byzantium is the *lateness* of its introduction by comparison with the West. Whereas the anointing of kings in the West can be traced back to the sixth or seventh centuries, in Byzantium "the purely ecclesiastical rite of anointing was only introduced into the inauguration ritual in the twelfth century".¹²¹ True, the first ecclesiastical coronation of the Emperor took place as early as 457. But this act was not felt to be *constitutive* of legitimacy.

However, this did not mean that the Empire was considered to be a merely human institution. As the Emperor Justinian's famous *sixth novella* makes clear, the monarchy was believed to have been instituted - like the Church, but independently of her - *by God alone*. It did not therefore need to be *re-instituted* by the Church - although, of course, its union with the Church was the whole purpose of its existence and exalted it to an altogether higher plane.

The independent origin of the Empire was obvious whether one dated its beginning to Augustus or to Constantine. If the Empire began with Augustus, then the Church could not be said to have instituted it for the simple reason that she came into existence simultaneously with it. For, as St. Gregory the Theologian said: "The state of the Christians and that of the Romans grew up simultaneously and Roman supremacy arose with Christ's sojourn upon earth, previous to which it had not reached monarchical perfection."¹²² But if it began with Constantine, then everyone knew that Constantine had been made emperor, from a human point of view, by the people and the senate of Rome (more specifically, the soldiers in York in 306 and the senate in Rome in 312), but in actual fact by God's direct call through the vision of the sign of the Cross and the words: "By this sign conquer". For, as the Church herself chants in the liturgical service to St. Constantine, "Thou didst not receive thy name from men, but, like the divine Paul, didst have it from Christ God on high, O all-glorious

¹²⁰ Eusebius, *Oration in Honour of Constantine*, I, 3.

¹²¹ Joseph Canning, *A History of Medieval Political Thought 300-1450*, London & New York: Routledge, 1996, p. 15.

¹²² St. Gregory, *Oratio IV*, P.G. 47, col. 564B.

Constantine".¹²³ This was another reason – apart from his truly apostolic activity on behalf of the Universal Church – why Constantine was accorded the title “equal-to-the-apostles”. For just as the Apostles were appointed and ordained for their task, not by men, but directly by God, so Constantine was made emperor, not by men, but by God alone.

The fact of the Divine origin of the Orthodox autocracy was important for several reasons. First, in the Old Testament the Lord had made clear that a true king, a king acceptable to Him as the King of kings, could only be one whom *He*, and not the people had chosen. For as He said to the people through Moses: “When thou shalt come unto the land which the Lord thy God shall choose, and shalt possess it, and shalt dwell therein, and shalt say, I will set a king over me, like as all the nations that are about me: thou shalt in any wise set him king over thee, whom the Lord thy God shall choose: one from among thy brethren shalt thou set king over thee: thou mayest not set a stranger over thee, which is not thy brother...” (Deuteronomy 17.14-15).

When the people of Israel came into possession of the promised land, the land that God had chosen for them, He Himself chose Saul, and then David to rule over them – “I have raised up one chosen out of My people; I have found David My servant” (Ps. 88.18-19). Then, since it is His will that man should work together with Him in the work of salvation, He commanded the Prophet Samuel to anoint him. But the anointing, no less than the calling, was God’s – “With My holy oil have I anointed him” (Ps. 88.19). In the same way, the calling and the anointing of Constantine – for “thou wast the image of a new David, receiving the horn of royal anointing over thy head”¹²⁴ – was God’s. And as if to make the point with special emphasis, after His direct calling of the first Christian Emperor the Lord waits *eight centuries* before commanding the Church, in the image of the Prophet Samuel, to anoint his successors.

Secondly, the independence of the two institutions - the Autocracy and the Church - lies at the base of the canonical prohibitions against a priest entering secular service and a king entering the priesthood. If Orthodox kings are sometimes called priests, this is only in the sense that they are also pastors, overseers of the flock of Christ, but not in the sense that they can minister the sacraments. The only man to combine the kingship and the priesthood with God’s blessing was Melchizedek. But Melchizedek’s importance lies, not in his being a precedent for ordinary mortals to follow, but in his being a type of *Christ*, Who uniquely combined all the charisms within Himself.¹²⁵ The combination of the roles of king and priest was characteristic of the pagan god-kings of antiquity, and was to be characteristic also of the post-schism Papacy. In Orthodoxy it is possible only in Melchizedek and Christ.

Thirdly, if the Church had to admit that the Autocracy had a Divine origin independent of her, then the Autocracy had to admit, conversely, that the Church had a Divine origin independent of it. And this concession was vitally important,

¹²³ *Menaion* for May 21, Vespers, Litia, sticheron.

¹²⁴ *Menaion* for May 21, Mattins, sedalion after the first chanting of the Psalter.

¹²⁵ Melchizedek’s combining the roles of king and priest may signify, as Protopriest Valentine Asmus has pointed out, the Divine origin of both offices (“O Monarkhii i nashem k nej otnoshenii”, *Radonezh*, N 2 (46), January, 1997, p. 4 (in Russian)).

especially in the early centuries of the Byzantine Empire. For the pagan inheritance of Rome was still strong – one of the Emperors, Julian the Apostate (361-363), even reverted to paganism, and it was not until late in the fourth century that the Emperors felt able to drop the pagan high priest's title pontifex maximus, which had given the pagan emperors religious as well as political supremacy in the Empire.

Indeed, as late as the eighth century the iconoclast Emperor Leo III tried to crush Pope Gregory II's opposition to him in just that way, claiming: "I am emperor and priest".¹²⁶

Even later, in the early tenth century, another, this time Orthodox Emperor Leo (the Sixth) "claimed to be head of Church and State in the sense that, if the Church as led by the Patriarch was irreconcilably opposed to the Emperor, the Emperor could resolve the conflict"¹²⁷. Thus when Patriarch Nicholas the Mystic opposed his fourth marriage to Zoe, the Emperor simply removed him from office, forced a priest to perform the marriage and then, in the absence of a patriarch, himself placed the imperial crown on his "wife's" head, eliciting the former patriarch's comment that the Emperor was to Zoe "both groom and bishop".¹²⁸ Then he put his friend Euthymius on the patriarchal throne. Euthymius responded by permitting the fourth marriage, saying: "It is right, sire, to obey your orders and receive your decisions as emanating from the will and providence of God!"¹²⁹

However, shortly before his death in 912 Leo was forced to depose Euthymius and restore St. Nicholas, after which caesaropapism was no longer a serious threat in Byzantium for some centuries. The new, still more serious threat was Western *papocaesarism*. For by 1100 the Pope, claiming to wield the "two swords" of kingship and the Church, had already crushed the Orthodox autocracies of the West and reduced the monarch to a desacralized lay state.

It is perhaps for this reason that the sacrament of anointing was added to the coronation service in the twelfth century, at just the moment when the papist threat, not only to the Church, but also to the Eastern Roman Empire of Constantinople, became clear. For now especially it was necessary to show that the Empire, too, was holy, having been anointed by the Church under Christ the Heavenly King and Anointed One. And although the Empire was inferior to the Church, it could not be swallowed up by the Church, as the western kingdoms were being swallowed up by the Western Church, in the same way that Christ's human nature was not swallowed up by His Divinity.

3. The Question of Legitimacy

¹²⁶ P.L. 89, 521. Quoted in A.A.Vasiliev, *History of the Byzantine Empire*, University of Wisconsin Press, 1952, p. 257.

¹²⁷ Dorothy Wood, *Leo VI's Concept of Divine Monarchy*, London: The Monarchist Press Association, 1964, p. 15.

¹²⁸ P.G. 91. 197. Quoted in Vasiliev, op. cit., p. 33.

¹²⁹ *Life of Euthymius*, quoted in Wood, op. cit., p. 11.

However, before turning to an examination of the western conflict, we may ask: what was the Byzantines' concept of political legitimacy? In what circumstances did they reject an Emperor as illegitimate?

At first sight, it might seem that the Byzantines, following the traditions of pagan Rome, had no real concept of legitimacy. There were innumerable coups and palace revolutions in Byzantine history, and at no time did the Church refuse to sanction the authority of the man who emerged on top. Even heretical emperors, such as the Iconoclast Leo, or the Latin-minded Michael VIII or John VIII, were accepted *as emperors*, even while their religious policies were fiercely resisted.

However, there are hints of a stricter approach in some of the Holy Fathers. Thus when the Emperor Constantius became an Arian, St. Athanasius, who had previously addressed him as "very pious", a "worshipper of God", "beloved of God" and a successor of David and Solomon, now denounced him as "godless", "unholy" and like Ahab and Pharaoh, worse than Pilate and a forerunner of the Antichrist.¹³⁰ Again, St. Isidore of Pelusium wrote: "If some evildoer unlawfully seizes power, we do not say that he is established by God, but we say that he is allowed, either to spit out all his craftiness, or in order to chasten those for whom cruelty is necessary, as the king of Babylon chastened the Jews."¹³¹ Moreover, St. Nicholas the Mystic said to the ambitious Bulgarian Tsar Samuel: "He who tries by force to acquire for himself the Imperial dignity is no longer a Christian".

However, with one exception, none of the Fathers practised or counselled rebellion against – as opposed to passive disobedience to – the evildoer Emperors. The exception was St. Basil the Great (whose name means "king"), who prayed for the defeat of Julian the Apostate. It was through his prayers, supported by those of St. Gregory the Theologian, that the apostate was killed, as was revealed by God to the holy hermit Julian of Mesopotamia.¹³²

This raises the interesting question: what was different about Julian the Apostate that made him so much worse than previous persecutors and unworthy even of that honour and obedience that was given to them? Two possible answers suggest themselves. The first is that Julian was the first – and last – of the Byzantine emperors who openly trampled on the memory and legitimacy of St. Constantine, declaring that he "insolently usurped the throne".¹³³ In this way he questioned the legitimacy of the Christian Empire as such – a revolutionary position that we do not come across again in Eastern Orthodox history (if we except the short interlude of the political zealots in Thessalonica in the 1340s) until the fall of the Russian Empire. And the second is that he allowed the Jews to return to Palestine and start building the Temple. This meant that he could no longer be identified with "him that restraineth" the coming of the

¹³⁰ St. Athanasius, in J. Meyendorff, *Imperial Unity and Christian Divisions*, Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1989, p. 36.

¹³¹ St. Isidore, *Letter 6 to Dionysius*.

¹³² V.A. Konovalov, *Otnoshenie Khristianstva k Sovetskoi Vlasti*, Montreal, 1936, p. 35. "Basil" means "king", and St. Basil was acting like the king who resists antichristian political power.

¹³³ See his dialogue with St. Artemius in the *life* of the great martyr, in St. Dmitri of Rostov, *The Great Collection of the Lives of the Saints*, October 20.

Antichrist, the traditional role of the Roman Emperor (II Thessalonians 2.7), but rather was to be identified with the Antichrist himself, or at any rate, his forerunner...

4. Anointing in the Orthodox West

Now in the West papocaesarism was always a greater danger than its opposite, because while the Western Empire had collapsed after 476 and split up into a number of independent kingdoms, the Western Church had remained united, making her by far the most prominent survival of Romanity. Even the most powerful of the western kings did not command a territory greater than that of a Roman provincial governor (which is what they had been in some cases), whereas the Pope was not only the undisputed leader of the whole of Western Christendom but also the senior hierarch in the whole of the Church, Eastern and Western. However, as long as the Popes remained *both* Orthodox in faith *and* loyal subjects of the Eastern Emperor in politics – that is, until approximately the death of the last Greek Pope, Zachariah, in 752, – the lack of a political power in the West commensurate with the ecclesiastical power of the Popes was not a pressing necessity. For everyone accepted that in the political sphere the Eastern Emperor was the sole leader, the basileus of the whole of Christendom, and the western kings were his sons or satraps, as it were. But problems arose when Rome broke its last political links with the Eastern Empire and sought a new protector in the Frankish empire of Pippin and Charlemagne. This caused changes in the political ideology of the Franks, on the one hand, who came to see themselves as the *real* Roman Empire, more Roman and more Orthodox than the Empire of the East; and on the other hand, in the ecclesiology of the Popes, who came to see themselves as *the only* Church of this renewed Roman Empire, having ultimate jurisdiction over *all* the Churches in the world. Frankish caesaropapism soon collapsed; but Papist pride developed until it claimed supreme authority in *both* Church *and* State...

Orthodox consciousness rose up against Papism from two directions. From the East, St. Photius the Great and the Eastern bishops, together with the Western archbishops of Trèves and Cologne, condemned the Pope's claims to universal supremacy *in the Church* (as well as the Frankish heresy of the Filioque, which Rome, too, opposed at first). From the West, meanwhile, there arose powerful native autocracies which disputed the Pope's claims to supremacy *in the State*.

The most important of these were England and Germany – although Germany, being a successor state of the Carolingian Empire, was still tainted somewhat by the caesaropapist ideology of the Franks. English opposition was crushed by a papally blessed armed invasion and the first genocide in European history (the Norman Conquest of 1066 to 1070); while German opposition was gradually neutralized in a spider's web of cunning dialectic – although conflict between Roman Popes and German emperors continued well into the later Middle Ages.

It can hardly be a coincidence that the mystery of royal anointing became widespread in the West in the late eighth century, at precisely the time that the first political rift between East and West materialized. Now that the links with the Eastern Roman emperor were no more than formal, Western churchmen felt it necessary to

prove that the Western kings were still in some important sense *Roman*. Otherwise, according to Church Tradition, the Antichrist was near!

Romanity, it was felt, could be bestowed on the western barbarian kingdoms that arose out of the rubble that was the Western Empire by the Eastern Emperor's gift of regalia or high Roman rank (usually not the imperial rank, however) on their kings. Thus St. Gregory of Tours writes of Clovis, the first Christian king of the Franks, that he received letters "from the Emperor Anastasius to confer the consulate on him. In Saint Martin's church he stood clad in a purple tunic and the military mantle, and he crowned himself with a diadem. He then rode out on his horse and with his own hand showered gold and silver coins among the people present all the way from the doorway of Saint Martin's church to Tours cathedral. From that day on he was called Consul or Augustus."¹³⁴

There is an opinion that Clovis also received the sacrament of royal anointing from St. Remigius, Archbishop of Rheims.¹³⁵ But it is more generally believed by western scholars that the sacrament of anointing did not appear in the West until the seventh century. However, we know one example of a Western bishop administering this sacrament even earlier.

In the middle of the sixth century the Italian archbishop Gregory anointed the first Christian King of the South Arabian kingdom of Homer, Abraham, in the presence of St. Elesbaan, king of Ethiopia: "Raising his eyes and mind and hands to heaven, [St. Gregory] prayed fervently and for a long time that God, Who knows the life and thoughts of every man, should indicate to him the man who was worthy of the kingdom. During the prayer of the archbishop, the invisible power of the Lord suddenly raised a certain man by the name of Abraham into the air and placed him in front of King Elesbaan. Everyone cried out in awe for a long time: 'Lord, have mercy!' The archbishop said: 'Here is the man whom you demanded should be anointed to the kingdom. Leave him here as king, we shall be of one mind with him, and God will help us in everything.' Great joy filled everyone on beholding the providence of God. Then King Elesbaan took the man Abraham, who had been revealed by God, led him to the temple of the All-Holy Trinity which was in the royal city of Afar, put the royal purple on him and laid the diadem on his head. Then St. Gregory anointed him and the bloodless Sacrifice was offered for the kings and all the people, and both kings communicated in the Divine Mysteries from the hands of the archbishop..."¹³⁶

Not long after this, in 574, the Irish apostle of Scotland, St. Columba, consecrated (by laying on of hands rather than anointing) the first Orthodox King of Scotland,

¹³⁴ St. Gregory, *The History of the Franks*, II, 38, Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1974, p. 154.

¹³⁵ Cf. Harold Nicolson, *Monarchy*, London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1962.

¹³⁶ "The Life of the Holy Hierarch Gregory, Bishop of Homer", *Living Orthodoxy*, vol. XVII, no. 6, November-December, 1996, pp. 5-6.

Aidan Mor.¹³⁷ And a third example comes from India, where King Barachias was ordained by St. Ioasaph.¹³⁸

It is perhaps significant that these three early examples of sacramental Christian kingmaking come from parts of the world that were remote from the centres of Imperial power. Neither Ethiopia nor Scotland nor India had ever been part of the Roman Empire. We may speculate that it was precisely here, where Roman power and tradition was weakest or non-existent, that the Church had to step in to supply political legitimacy through the sacrament of royal anointing. After all, *a new dynasty in a new Christian land* was being created, which required a special act of the Church – something not dissimilar to the creation of a new autocephalous Church.

In the formerly Roman West the sacrament of royal anointing first appeared in Spain, which fell away from both Orthodoxy and Romanity when its Visigothic rulers, like the Ostrogoths of Italy, accepted the Arian heresy. The country was then partially conquered by the armies of the Emperor Justinian, after which, as Canning writes, - that is, from the mid-sixth century - “it seems that no western kings sought imperial confirmation of their rule.”¹³⁹ However, as we have seen, after the martyrdom of St. Hermenegild a spirit of repentance stirred in the people, the nation was converted to Orthodoxy, and Spain entered the family of Roman Orthodox kingdoms.

But at this point, as so often in the history of newly converted peoples, the devil stirred up political chaos. Thus Collins writes that in the first half of the seventh century, “principles by which the legitimacy of any king could be judged, other than sheer success in holding onto his throne against all comers, seem to be conspicuously lacking. Thus Witteric had deposed and killed Liuva II in 603, Witteric had been murdered in 610, Sisebut’s son Reccared II was probably deposed by Swinthila in 621, Swinthila was certainly deposed by Sisenand in 631, Tulga by Chindaswinth in 642. Ephemeral kings, such Iudila, who managed to strike a few coins in Baetica and Lusitania in the early 630s, also made their bids for power.”¹⁴⁰

The only generally recognized authority that could introduce order into this chaos was the Church. And so, probably toward the middle of the seventh century, the Orthodox Church in Spain introduced the rite of royal anointing. From now on, kings would not only be *called* “kings by the grace of God”, they would be *seen* to be such by the visible bestowal of sacramental grace at the hands of the archbishop.

Thus in 672 King Wamba was anointed by the archbishop of Toledo in a ceremony that was described by his contemporary, St. Julian of Toledo, as follows: “When he had arrived there, where he was to receive the vexilla of the holy unction, in the

¹³⁷ St. Adomnan of Iona, *Life of Columba*. It may be wondered how Columba, a priest-abbot, could have carried out a rite normally accomplished only by bishops. However, in the Celtic Church many, perhaps even most abbots, were also bishops...

¹³⁸ St. John of Damascus, *Barlaam and Ioasaph*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1967, pp. 552-553.

¹³⁹ Canning, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

¹⁴⁰ Roger Collins, “Julian of Toledo and the Royal Succession in Late Seventh-Century Spain”, in P.H. Sawyer & I.N. Wood, *Early Medieval Kingship*, University of Leeds, 1979, p. 47.

praetorian church, that is to say the church of Saints Peter and Paul, he stood resplendent in his regalia in front of the holy altar and, as the custom is, recited the creed to the people. Next, on his bended knees the oil of blessing was poured onto his head by the hand of the blessed bishop Quiricus, and the strength of the benediction was made clear, for at once this sign of salvation appeared. For suddenly from his head, where the oil had first been poured on, a kind of vapour, similar to smoke, rose upon the form of a column, and from the very top of this a bee was seen to spring forth, which sign was undoubtedly a portent of his future good fortune."¹⁴¹

In 751, when the last weak Merovingian ruler of Francia was deposed and sent to a monastery (with Pope Zachariah's blessing), the first king of the new, Carolingian dynasty was specially crowned and anointed by St. Boniface, archbishop of Mainz. For the change of dynasty had to be legitimised, as did the claims of the new dynasty to power over the vast new territories that had just been Christianized by St. Boniface and his army of English missionaries to the east of the Rhine. This anointing of the first Carolingian king led gradually, as we have seen, to the rite becoming standard practice in kingmaking throughout the West.

It was some time, however, before anointing came to be seen as *constitutive* of true kingship. As in Rome and Byzantium, western kings who had been raised to the throne by election or acclamation only were not considered illegitimate; it was simply that anointing added an extra authority and sacred character to the monarchy.

The extra authority and grace provided by the sacrament of anointing produced tangible results; for in Spain, in Francia and in England the introduction of the anointing of kings, accompanied by stern conciliar warnings "not to touch the Lord's Anointed", led to a reduction in regicides and rebellions and a considerable strengthening and consolidation of monarchical power.

In Spain, this process came to an abrupt end in 711, when most of the peninsula was conquered by the Arab Muslims. In Western Francia (modern France), it was also brought to an end towards the end of the ninth century by the Viking invasions, in spite of the efforts of such champions of royal power (and opponents of papal despotism) as Archbishop Hincmar of Rheims; and France did not develop a powerful monarchy until the twelfth century. But in Eastern Francia (modern Germany) and, especially, in England, the monarchy survived and put down deep roots. Thus from the time that Prince Egfrith of the kingdom of Wessex was anointed in 786 even before he had ascended the throne of his father, one dynasty, that of Wessex, came to dominate political life in England, led the recovery against the Viking invaders, and succeeded in uniting most of Britain in a single Orthodox kingdom until the Norman-papist invasion of 1066-70.

¹⁴¹ Collins, *op cit.*, pp. 41-42. Some argue that the practice of royal anointing began in Spain with King Wamba's anointing. However, Dr. Michael Enright (*Iona, Tara and Soissons: the origins of the royal anointing ritual*, Berlin, 1985, pp. 5-78) defends the Irish hypothesis for the origin of royal anointing. But St. Gildas the Wise, writing in the sixth century, says that "kings were anointed" (*reges unguebantur*) even in 5th-century Britain (*De Excidio Britanniae*).

Now Janet Nelson writes: "If relatively many reigning Merovingians and no Carolingians were assassinated, this can hardly be explained simply in terms of the protective effect of anointing for the latter dynasty, at least in its earlier period. More relevant here are such factors as the maintenance of a fairly restrictive form of royal succession (and the Carolingians' abandonment of polygamy must soon have narrowed the circle of royals) and the growth of a clerically-fostered ideology of Christian kingship."¹⁴²

However, all these factors were related. Once it became accepted that the Church had an important part to play in kingmaking through the sacrament of anointing, then it also became natural for the Church to have a say in deciding who was the best candidate for the throne, and then in administering a coronation-oath in which the king swore to protect the Church and uphold justice, peace and mercy. *Theoretically*, too, the Church could refuse to sanction a king, and even lead the people in rebellion against him if he did not rule rightly¹⁴³, breaking his coronation oath. In practice, however, this ultimate sanction was very rarely applied, and was not applied with decisive effect until the time of troubles in seventeenth-century Russia.

A clear example of how the Church intervened decisively in the kingmaking process for the benefit of the nation is the crowning of the English King Edward the Martyr in 975. Now Edward's father, King Edgar the Peaceable, had been anointed *twice* on the model of King David: first in 960 or 961, when he became King of England, and again in 973, when he became "Emperor of Britain" and received the tribute of eight sub-kings of the Celts and Vikings. But between these two anointings he had married again and fathered a second son, Ethelred ("the Unready"). When King Edgar died in 975, Ethelred's partisans, especially his mother, argued that Ethelred should be made king in preference to his elder half-brother Edward, on the grounds that Edgar had not been anointed when he begat Edward in 959 or 960, and his first wife, Edward's mother, had *never* been anointed, so that the throne should pass to the younger son, Ethelred, who had been born "in the purple" when both his parents were anointed sovereigns.¹⁴⁴ The conflict was settled when the archbishop of Canterbury, St. Dunstan, seized the holy Cross that was customarily carried in front of him and anointed St. Edward.¹⁴⁵

The union between Church and State in England and other Western Orthodox countries was so close that crimes against the Church's laws were seen as crimes against the king, and were duly punished by him. For, as St. Isidore of Seville wrote, it was the duty of the king "through the terror of discipline" to accomplish what the priest was unable to do "through the preaching of doctrine".¹⁴⁶ "For a Christian king

¹⁴² "Inauguration Rituals", in Sawyer & Wood, *op. cit.*, p. 59.

¹⁴³ St. Isidore of Seville said: "You will be king if you act rightly; if you do not, you will not be", which contains a play on the words *rex*, "king", and *recte*, "rightly" (*Etymologiae*, 9.3.4, col. 342). In the Latin version of Justinian's famous sixth novella, there is also a clear indication that, for the symphony of powers to be effective, the king must rule rightly (*recte*).

¹⁴⁴ See Nelson, *op. cit.*, pp. 66-70.

¹⁴⁵ 'Passio et Miracula Sancti Edwardi Regis et Martyris', in Christine Fell, *Edward King and Martyr*, University of Leeds, 1971.

¹⁴⁶ St. Isidore, *Sententiae* 3.51.4, col. 723. Quoted by Canning, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

is Christ's deputy among Christian people", as King Ethelred's laws put it. Both the king and the archbishop were "the Lord's Anointed" – the archbishop so that he might minister the sacraments, and the king so that, as St. Bede wrote, "he might by conquering all our enemies bring us to the immortal Kingdom".¹⁴⁷ Regicide was the greatest of crimes; for, as Abbot Aelfric wrote, "no man may make himself a king, for the people have the option to choose him for king who is agreeable to them; but after that he has been hallowed as king, he has power over the people, and they may not shake his yoke from their necks."¹⁴⁸ And so, wrote Archbishop Wulfstan of York, "through what shall peace and support come to God's servants and to God's poor, save through Christ, and through a Christian king?"¹⁴⁹

In fact, the Byzantine ideal of a true symphony between Church and State was perhaps more passionately believed in – and, at times, more closely attained – among the former barbarians of the Orthodox West than among the more worldly-wise Byzantines themselves. Thus in Northumbria in the eighth century we see the almost ideal harmony between the brothers King Edbert and Archbishop Egbert, of whom Alcuin writes:

*So then Northumbria was prosperous,
When king and pontiff ruled in harmony,
One in the church and one in government;
One wore the pall the Pope conferred on him,
And one the crown his fathers wore of old.
One brave and forceful, one devout and kind,
They kept their power in brotherly accord,
Each happy in the other's sure support.*¹⁵⁰

Again, on the very eve of the schism, and in Rome itself, Peter Damian wrote: "The heads of the world shall live in union of perfect charity, and shall prevent all discord among their lower members. These institutions, which are two for men, but one for God, shall be enflamed by the divine mysteries; the two persons who represent them shall be so closely united by the grace of mutual charity, that it will be possible to find the king in the Roman pontiff, and the Roman pontiff in the king..."¹⁵¹

Only a few years later, however, the ideal was not simply distorted, but completely destroyed by the Roman pontiff Gregory VII as he anathematized the kings of England and Germany and ordered their populations to rise up against their sovereigns, absolving them of their oaths of allegiance. Rome rose up against her own inheritance and her own defenders, her own inestimable legacy of law and order; the essentially Roman teaching on obedience to secular authority, which was expounded in the epistles of the Roman Apostles Peter and Paul, was destroyed by the Pope of Rome himself, who thereby became the first ideologically motivated revolutionary in

¹⁴⁷ St. Bede, *Commentary on Acts*.

¹⁴⁸ Aelfric, *Catholic Homily on Palm Sunday*.

¹⁴⁹ Wulfstan, *Institutes of Christian Polity*. See William A. Chaney, *The Cult of Kingship in Anglo-Saxon England*, Manchester University Press, 1970, epilogue.

¹⁵⁰ Alcuin, "On the Saints of the Church of York", in Stephen Allott, *Alcuin of York*, York, 1974, p. 160.

¹⁵¹ Peter Damian, in Davis, *A History of Medieval Europe*, London & New York: Longman, 1988, p. 228.

European history and the direct ancestor, as Tyutchev, Kireyevsky and Dostoyevsky were to point out, of the Russian socialist revolutionaries. Using forgeries such as *The Donation of Constantine*, Gregory argued that both secular and ecclesiastical power, the so-called “two swords of Peter”, had been given to him, so that the power of the kings was merely delegated to them by the Pope, and could be taken back by the Pope at will, which meant that a king was no higher essentially than the most ordinary layman in spite of his anointing to the kingdom. Thus Gregory wrote: “Greater power is conceded to an exorcist when he is made a spiritual emperor than could be given to any layman for secular domination.” “Who would not know that kings and dukes took their origin from those who, ignorant of God, through pride, rapine, perfidy, murders and, finally, almost any kind of crime, at the instigation of the Devil, the prince of this world, sought with blind desire and unbearable presumption to dominate their equals, namely other men?” “Who would doubt that the priest of Christ are considered the fathers and masters of kings, princes and of all the faithful?”¹⁵² The only truly anointed ones, therefore, were the priests – or rather, the Popes, who supposedly had the charismas of both ecclesiastical and political government (I Corinthians 12.28).

5. Anointing in Holy Russia

Many westerners have argued that if papocaesarism ruled in the West, the East was no less in captivity to *caesaropapism*. In support of this thesis, they point to the attempts of many Byzantine Emperors to impose heresy on the Church. Indeed, according to this view, the fall of Byzantium may be ascribed to the successful attempts of the last Byzantine Emperors to force the Church to accept union with the heretical West, which led to the withdrawal of God’s protection from the Empire. As for Russia, they say, it is sufficient to point to the tyrannical reigns of Ivan the Terrible and Peter the Great...

However, although Russia succumbed at times to caesaropapism and nationalism, she always recovered from these temptations as a result of several factors which distinguished Russian history from that of Byzantium. First, Russia had a long, nearly five-hundred year training in humility in the shadow of the Byzantine Empire, during which, in spite of her vastly greater size and political independence from Byzantium for most of this period, her metropolitans were always appointed by the Constantinopolitan Patriarch, and her great-princes always looked to the Byzantine Emperors as to their elder brothers. This meant that, when Russia came to take the place of Byzantium as the bearer of the cross of the Christian Empire, she was not tempted to think of herself as the *first* or *only* or *best* Christian people. And when that temptation appeared in the form of the Old Ritualist schism, it was rejected by the ecumenical consciousness of the Russian Church and State.

Secondly, while the Byzantine Empire contracted from the large, multi-national dominion of Constantine the Great to the small, exclusively Greek dominion of Constantine XI, the Russian Empire grew in the opposite direction, expanding from its Muscovite heartland to the borders of Germany in the West and China and America

¹⁵² Gregory VII, in Canning, op. cit., pp. 91, 93.

in the East. This meant that the Russian Empire was increasingly multi-national, with a large number of non-Russian saints and a strong commitment to missionary activity right until 1917. This truly ecumenical, non-nationalistic character of the Russian Empire was emphasized by its last three wars - the Crimean war of 1853-56, the Russo-Turkish war of 1877-78 and the First World War, which were fought in a self-sacrificial spirit for the sake of the non-Russian Orthodox of the Balkans and Middle East.

Thirdly, and perhaps most importantly, at the greatest crises of national history, and with the exception of a long period in the eighteenth century, the Russian episcopate refused to anoint non-Orthodox Tsars or princes, still less follow them into union with heretics.

Thus in the time of troubles in the early seventeenth century, when the Poles and renegade Russians forced Tsar Basil Shuisky to abdicate and installed a Catholic tsar in the Kremlin, Patriarch Hermogen not only anathematized the new "tsar" and all who followed him, but called on the Orthodox to rise up in armed rebellion against the usurper. *Such a step was completely unprecedented in Church history.* It signified that, *for an Orthodox nation, a ruler who takes the place of a truly anointed ruler - and, moreover, does not confess the Orthodox faith, as all truly anointed rulers must - is not simply a bad ruler, but an "anti-ruler" - an "anti-christ", since he was "in the place of" the truly anointed one (the Greek word "christ" means "anointed one").*

The basic difference between Byzantine and Russian practice was that whereas in Byzantium, as we have seen, the Emperor did not receive his legitimacy from the Church's anointing, but from the acclamation of "the Senate and People of Rome", in Russia it was the Church that anointed the Tsar "into the kingdom". It followed that without the Church's anointing he was not considered to be a true Tsar. Thus Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow said: "The Sovereign receives his entire legitimacy from the Church's anointment".¹⁵³ This strengthened both the Church's position and that of the Tsar while binding the two institutions closer to each other. For on the one hand the Church could refrain from anointing a heterodox tsar, or, having anointed him, declare him deposed from his rank because of his apostasy from Orthodoxy, as we have seen in the case of the false Demetrius. And on the other hand, the Tsar, once anointed, could not legitimately be removed by any person or power except the Church. Even then, the tsar could not be deposed for any personal sins, but only for apostasy from Orthodoxy.

The unique authority of the Russian Tsar is illustrated by the following interesting incident from the life of Schema-Hieromonk Hilarion the Georgian. During the Crimean War of 1854-56, when the Russian armies were fighting the Turks and their Western allies on Russian soil, the Ecumenical Patriarch issued an order that all the monasteries on Mount Athos should pray for the triumph of the Turkish armies during the war. On hearing this, the Georgian elder, Fr. Hilarion said of the patriarch: "He is not a Christian", and when he heard that the monks of Grigoriou monastery had carried out the patriarch's command, he said: "You have been deprived of the

¹⁵³ Metropolitan Philaret, in Fr. Georges Florovsky, *Ways of Russian Theology*, Belmont, Mass.: Nordland, 1979, part 1, p. 239.

grace of Holy Baptism, and have deprived your monastery of the grace of God." And when the abbot came to the elder to repent, he said to him: "How did you dare, wretched one, to put Mohammed higher than Christ? God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ says to His Son: 'Sit Thou at My right hand, until I make Thine enemies the footstool of Thy feet' (Psalm 109.1), but you ask Him to put His son under the feet of His enemies!"

Again, in a letter to the head of chancellery of the Russian Holy Synod, Elder Hilarion wrote: "The other peoples' kings [i.e. not the Russian Tsar] often make themselves out to be something great, but not one of them is a king in reality, but they are only adorned and flatter themselves with a great name, but God is not favourably disposed towards them, and does not abide in them. They reign only in part, by the condescension of God. Therefore he who does not love his God-established tsar is not worthy of being called a Christian..."¹⁵⁴

The greater authority of the Russian Tsar over all other political authorities did not reside in his purely political power, but in the mystical anointing that he received from the Church. Other authorities might be powers in St. Peter's and St. Paul's understanding of the word, in that they in general punished evildoers and rewarded the good (I Peter 2.14; Romans 13.3), but the grace to protect the Church of God was given to the Russian Empire alone. That is why it was incumbent upon all Orthodox Christians to pray and give thanks for the Russian Tsar, even if they lived in other States. For, as St. Seraphim said: "After Orthodoxy, zealous devotion to the Tsar is the Russian's first duty and the chief foundation of true Christian piety."¹⁵⁵

In other words, God-established authority, being one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit (I Corinthians 12.27), belongs in the first place only to the Christian Roman emperors and to those other Christian rulers who have received the true anointing of the Holy Church. In a secondary sense, it may also be said to belong to other, non-Christian rulers who maintain the basic principle of law and order against the forces of anarchy and revolution. However, this secondary kind of authority is only partial and relative; and the authority of truly Christian rulers must always be revered by Christians above any other kind of political authority.

6. The Russian Revolution

On the eve of the Russian revolution, the Church canonized St. Hermogenes, as if to emphasize that, just as St. Hermogenes had refused to recognize the false Demetrius as a legitimate political authority, so the time was coming when it would again be necessary make a similar distinction between true and false political authorities.

That time came on March 2/15, 1917, when Tsar Nicholas abdicated from the throne in favour of his brother, Grand Prince Michael Alexandrovich. Since the Grand

¹⁵⁴ Hieromonk Anthony of the Holy Mountain, *Ocherki zhizni i podvigov Startsa Ieroskhimonakha Ilariona Gruzina*, Holy Trinity Monastery, Jordanville, 1985, pp. 68-74, 95.

¹⁵⁵ St. Seraphim, in S. Nilus, "Chto zhdet Rossiu?", *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, N 68, 1905.

Prince refused to accept the throne, power now passed to the Provisional Government. The question was: was it legitimate?

Now the constitution of the Russian Empire did not allow for any transition to a non-autocratic form of government. For who was the Church to anoint? So there was no legitimate alternative to seeking a Tsar, perhaps, as in 1613, through a "Council of the Land".

Sadly, however, the Holy Synod refused the request of the Tsarist Procurator, Rayev, that it publicly support the monarchy. Instead, it welcomed Great Prince Michael's refusal to accept the throne from his brother, and offered no resistance when the Royal Throne was removed by the new Procurator, Prince V. Lvov, from the hall in which its sessions took place. Then, on March 9/22, it published an Address to the faithful children of the Orthodox Church in which it declared that "the will of God has been accomplished" (in the abdication of the Tsar and the fall of the Orthodox Autocracy!) and called on the church people to support the new government.

This Address said nothing about Nicholas II or the future of the Romanov dynasty. In effect, the Holy Synod renounced Tsarism at this moment...

"This document, which appeared during the days when the whole of Orthodox Russia was anxiously waiting for what the Church would say with regard to the events that had taken place in the country, introduced no clarity into the ecclesiastical consciousness of the people. The Synod did not utter a word about the arrest of the Emperor and even of his completely innocent children, about the bloody lynch-mob trials established by the soldiers over their officers or about the disorders that had led to the death of people; it did not give a religio-moral evaluation of the revolutionary excesses, it did not condemn the guilty ones. Finally, the Address completely ignored the question how one should relate to the deposition and arrest of the Anointed of God, how to conduct Divine services in church without the important prayer for the prosperity of the Emperor's House..."¹⁵⁶

For the liberals in the Church, however, the Synod's Address did not go far enough. They wanted the removal, not of the Tsar only, but of the very concept of the Monarchy. Thus the Council of the Petrograd Religious-Philosophical Society resolved that the Synod's acceptance of the Tsar's abdication "does not correspond to the enormous religious importance of the act, by which the Church recognized the Tsar in the rite of the coronation of the anointed of God. It is necessary, for the liberation of the people's conscience and to avoid the possibility of a restoration, that a corresponding act be issued in the name of the Church hierarchy *abolishing the power of the Sacrament of Royal Anointing, by analogy with the church acts abolishing the power of the Sacraments of Marriage and the Priesthood.*"¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁶ M. B. Danilushkin, *Istoria Russkoj Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi (A History of the Russian Orthodox Church)*, vol. I, St. Petersburg, 1997, p. 88.

¹⁵⁷ Quoted in Tamara Groyan's work on Metropolitan Macarius of Moscow, *Tsaryu Nebesnomu i Zemnomu Vernij*, Moscow: Palomnik, 1996, p. 142. Italics mine (V.M.).

But not only can the Sacrament of Anointing not be abolished, since it is of God: even the last Tsar still remained the anointed Tsar after his abdication.

For as Shakespeare put it in Richard II:

*Not all the water in the rough rude sea
Can wash the balm off from an anointed king;
The breath of worldly men cannot depose
The deputy elected by the Lord.*

Again, as an Orthodox Jewish rabbi has written: "Tsar Nicholas II, anointed, crowned and consecrated in May, 1896, bore within himself, and shared with his Tsarina and wife, an inner calm and tranquillity of faith beyond all changes in politics and political forces. Spiritually speaking, his abdication on March 2, 1917, was of no effect. Those who are anointed cannot resign their spiritual elevation, though they may lay down the earthly trappings of power or have them torn away. Those who are true and devoted adherents of the Russian Orthodox Church have no right to speak of His Late Majesty as the 'ex-Tsar' or as the 'Tsar-abdicate'. Clearly, those of the Russian Orthodox faith should recognize the direct link that has come down from the days of Moses, through the High Priests and Kings of Israel, to Tsar Nicholas II, in the God-commanded ceremony of anointing."¹⁵⁸

The Russian people as a whole followed the lead of the Holy Synod in March, 1917 in rejecting the Tsar. In the end very few remained faithful to the terrible oath the people had first sworn in 1613 to remain loyal not only to Tsar Michael Romanov, but to all his successors to the end of time. It was only in January, 1918 that the Russian Church returned to a confessing stance in relation to the antichristian power. For it was then that Patriarch Tikhon anathematized the Bolsheviki and abjured the people to have no dealings whatsoever with "the outcasts of the human race". Then, in July, 1918, he unequivocally condemned the murder of the Tsar.

It was in the Russian Church Abroad and in the All-Russian Catacomb Church that the theology of Soviet power as the "collective Antichrist" was developed. And it is to a document of the Catacomb Church dating from the 1960s that we owe the clearest, most theologically convincing explanation of why Soviet power was not simply a true authority gone wrong, not simply a ruler abusing his God-given authority, but precisely an *anti-authority*. Here is an extract from this document: "How should one look on the Soviet authority, following the Apostolic teaching on authorities [Romans 13]? In accordance with the Apostolic teaching which we have set forth, one must acknowledge that the Soviet authority is not an authority. It is an anti-authority. It is not an authority because it is not established by God, but insolently created by an aggregation of the evil actions of men, and it is consolidated and supported by these actions. If the evil actions weaken, the Soviet authority, representing a condensation of evil, likewise weakens... This authority consolidates itself in order to destroy all religions, simply to eradicate faith in God. Its essence is warfare with God, because its

¹⁵⁸ "The Mystery of the Anointed Sovereigns", *Orthodox Life*, vol. 32, no. 4, July-August, 1982, pp. 44, 45.

root is from satan. The Soviet authority is not authority, because by its nature it cannot fulfill the law, for the essence of its life is evil.

"It may be said that the Soviet authority, in condemning various crimes of men, can still be considered an authority. We do not say that a ruling authority is totally lacking. We only affirm that it is an anti-authority. One must know that the affirmation of real power is bound up with certain actions of men, to whom the instinct of preservation is natural. And they must take into consideration the laws of morality which have been inherent in mankind from ages past. But in essence this authority systematically commits murder physically and spiritually. In reality a hostile power acts, which is called Soviet authority. The enemy strives by cunning to compel humanity to acknowledge this power as an authority. But the Apostolic teaching on authority is inapplicable to it, just as evil is inapplicable to God and the good, because evil is outside God; but the enemies with hypocrisy can take refuge in the well-known saying that everything is from God.

"This Soviet anti-authority is precisely the collective Antichrist, warfare against God..."¹⁵⁹

The canonist of the Russian Church Abroad, Bishop Gregory Grabbe, pointed out the similarity between Soviet power and that of Julian the Apostate: "With regard to the question of the commemoration of authorities, we must bear in mind that now we are having dealings not simply with a pagan government like Nero's, but with the apostasy of the last times. Not with a *so far unenlightened* authority, but with apostasy. The Holy Fathers did not relate to Julian the Apostate in the same way as they did to the other pagan Emperors. And we cannot relate to the antichristian authorities in the same way as to any other, for its nature is purely satanic."¹⁶⁰

Soviet power was similar to that of Julian the Apostate both in its rejection of the tradition of the Christian Empire and in its support for the Jewish Antichrist. It both trampled on the memory and legitimacy of Tsar-Martyr Nicholas and all the anointed kings before him, and resurrected antichristian Jewish power both in Russia (in 1917) and in the newly-formed State of Israel (in 1948), of which it was one of the sponsors. Therefore it was rejected by the Fathers and Martyrs of the Russian Church as illegitimate and satanic just as Julian's power had been rejected by the Fathers of the Byzantine Church.

Conclusion: What Power is of God?

The preceding discussion suggests a general criterion whereby we can distinguish that power which is of God, and must be obeyed, from that power which is not of God, but of the devil, and which must therefore be resisted by all means. The power that is of God is the power that has the royal anointing, Roman power, the power of the right-believing kings. The power that is not of God, on the other hand, is that power which both denies the unction of the truly anointed ones, the right-believing

¹⁵⁹ I.M. Andreyev, *Russia's Catacomb Saints*, Platina, Ca.: St. Herman of Alaska Press, 1982, pp. 541-42.

¹⁶⁰ Grabbe, *Pis'ma*, Moscow, 1998, p. 85.

kings, overthrowing it by revolutionary action, war and genocide, and directly prepares the way for the Jewish Antichrist, the pseudo-anointed pseudo-god-king.

The sacrament of royal anointing is that mystery of lawfulness which holds back the mystery of lawlessness, the Antichrist, and whose removal therefore ushers in the last times. It was first manifested in its full splendour in the New Christian Roman Empire founded by St. Constantine, and was transferred by lawful succession to the Third Rome of Russia. A fourth Rome there will not be, according to the prophecy, so the final fall of Russia will usher in, as St. Ambrose of Optina prophesied, the era of the Apocalypse.

In Christian history so far, the sacrament has been removed three times in the three major regions of the Orthodox world: Byzantium, the West and Russia. In Byzantium it was removed temporarily when Julian the Apostate came to power, and was removed again more permanently when the empire was subdued politically by the antichristian power of Islam and spiritually by the antichristian power of Papism. In the West it was removed when the antichrist Pope crushed the power of the western anointed kings, trampling on their holy unction. And in Russia it was removed temporarily when a papist ruled in the Kremlin in the time of troubles, and again for a longer period when the last truly anointed Emperor, Nicholas II, was cast down from his throne and murdered by the antichristian power of the Soviets.

We live in an age in which there are no anointed kings, no fully legitimate political authority. There are some authorities that more or less preserve order in their realms; to that extent they are legitimate. But they are weak, and are sliding ever more deeply into an abyss of godlessness. In Russia, meanwhile, the power of Putin may not call itself Soviet, but it recognizes Soviet power, praises it and sees itself as its legitimate successor. But how can the "legitimate successor" of the most illegitimate and anti-Christian power in history be itself legitimate – or Christian?

However, there is still hope. According to the vision granted to the faithful in 1917 through the "Reigning" icon of the Mother of God, since the fall of the Russian Autocracy the royal anointing has not ceased to exist, but has been assumed by the Mother of God herself, the Queen of Russia. The royal child whose destiny was to rule all nations with a rod of iron was taken up to the throne of God, there to wait for the appointed time when the nations will again be ready to accept his rule (Revelation 2.27, 12.5). For at a time known only to the Mother of God and the King of kings, Christ God, the royal anointing will be returned to earth for a short time, to prepare and protect the world before the last battle against the mystery of iniquity, the power that is not of God. In the meantime, there is no fully legitimate and grace-filled political power on earth, no guardian to protect the Church of Christ from her external enemies. ...

*Wherefore in repentance we cry out: O Lord, through the intercession of the great passion-bearer, the martyred Tsar, grant Thou to the suffering Russian land deliverance from them that contend against God and the restoration of the throne of our Orthodox tsars.*¹⁶¹

July 4/17, 1998; revised February 1/14, 2014 and February 15/28, 2020.

¹⁶¹ *Menaion*, July 4. From the Service to the Holy Royal Martyrs of Russia. Vespers, "Lord, I have cried..", verse.

5. ON MONARCHISM, TRUE AND FALSE

On May 19, 1990, the birthday of Tsar Nicholas II, when Soviet power was beginning to collapse following the multi-party elections in March, the Orthodox Monarchist Order met in Moscow and called for the restoration of the senior member of the Romanov family, Grand-Duke Vladimir Kirillovich, to the throne of all the Russias. Grand-Duke Vladimir was at that time a member of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad (ROCOR), and in the following eighteen months the cause both of True Orthodox monarchism and of ROCOR prospered. Many parishes were opened on Russian territory, and the possibility of a real regeneration both of Church and State in Russia beckoned.

However, when the Grand Duke returned to Russia, he kissed the cross, not of the true hierarchs of the Free Russian Orthodox Church, but of Patriarch Alexis of the Moscow Patriarchate (MP); and his apostasy from Orthodoxy was sealed by his speedy death as a member of "the Church of the evil-doers". Shortly after that, the mission of ROCOR inside Russia also began to falter, and in February, 1995 the ROCOR Synod dealt itself a fatal blow by uncanonically expelling five of her Russian bishops from her midst. Since then, ROCOR has continued to exist, but "limping", in the words of the Prophet Elijah, "on two feet": one foot still clings to the firm, dry land of True Orthodoxy, while the other seeks vainly to establish a toe-hold in the treacherous bogs of "World Orthodoxy".

This ambiguity of confession is reflected in a recent unsigned article on monarchism in a ROCOR publication.¹⁶² On the one hand, much space is devoted to such traditional themes as the superiority of the hereditary principle over the elective one, the necessity of faithfulness to the Romanov dynasty, as enjoined by the 1613 Council of the Russian Church, and the views of Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) and St. John Maximovich in support of these views. On the other hand, it is argued that Russia already now, before the convening of a Zemsky Sobor on the model of the 1613 Council, has a true Empress – Maria Vladimirovna Romanova, the daughter of the same Grand Duke Vladimir Kirillovich, who apostasised from ROCOR in 1991.

The anonymous author makes no reference to the fact that Grand-Duke Kirill Vladimirovich, the grandfather of the present "Empress", was rejected from the line of succession by Tsar-Martyr Nicholas himself. However, we pass over this fact and come to a still more fundamental one: the fact, namely, that *Maria Vladimirovna Romanovna cannot possibly be considered as either a present or a future "Empress of Russia" so long as she (together with her son, the supposed Heir Apparent) are participants in the sergianist and ecumenist heresies.* For the Empire exists for Orthodoxy, not Orthodoxy for the Empire, and it is better to have no Empire than to have one that pursues a pseudo-Orthodox ideal which, because of its superficial approximation to the truth, may lead even more people away from the truth.

¹⁶² "Nasledstvennost' ili Vybory?" ("Inheritance or Election?"), *Svecha Pokaiania* (Candle of Repentance) (Tsaritsyn), № 4, February, 2000, pp. 11-13.

Previous generations of ROCOR theologians were not slow to see the dangers of a pseudo-monarchism or patriotism. Thus Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) wrote in 1922: "Is it not sufficient to call on the people to unite around the task of expelling the Bolsheviks? Is it rational to impose on them a lawful monarchy before that? Nobody has spoken of imposition, nobody has spoken about how precisely Russia is to be restored. The [1921 All-Emigration] Council proposed that we pray for her restoration, that is, the restoration of a monarchical and theocratic Russia such as existed before the revolution. But now I shall tell you: to unite on a negative principle is a lost cause. The struggle for liberation will be strong and firm only if the hearts of the warriors and of all the actors will be filled with... a positive ideal and hope to regenerate that Holy Rus' which is dear to all and for which it is sweet to die. If Denikin's army had inscribed this on their standards their cause would not have ended so sadly, they would not have lost the love of the people.

"Unfortunately, the most noble and pious leader of that army listened to useless counsellors foreign to Russia who sat on his Special Convention and destroyed the cause. To the Russian people, the real people, the believing and struggling people, the bare formula of a "united and undivided" Russia is not necessary. Nor does it need a "Christian" or a "Faithless" or a "Tsarist" or an "Aristocratic" (by which they always mean a republican) Russia; it needs the combination of three dear words – for the Faith, the Tsar and the Fatherland. Most of all it needs the first word, as ruling the whole of state life; it needs the second word as protecting and guarding the first, and the third as the bearer of the first two – and that is all...."¹⁶³

Today, alas, ROCOR, in accordance with its more favourable attitude to the heretical Moscow Patriarchate, appears also to be adopting a more favourable attitude to the idea of a MP tsar. Having abandoned the hope of a truly Holy Russia (since the "mother church" refuses to reform her ways), she is concentrating her hopes on a Tsarist Russia. Thus her formula is: Tsar, Fatherland and (in the last place) Faith.

Let us recall that after, during the Time of Troubles, when the Poles and renegade Russians forced Tsar Basil Shuisky to abdicate and installed a Catholic tsar in the Kremlin, Patriarch Hermogen not only anathematised the new "tsar" and all who followed him, but called on the Orthodox to rise up in armed rebellion against the usurper.

Such a step had precedents in Church history. Thus in the fourth century, St. Basil the Great prayed for the destruction of Julian the Apostate – and his prayer was answered. Again, in the sixth century, St. Hermenegild, prince of Spain, rose up in rebellion against his heretical father, the king, for the sake of Holy Orthodoxy. The prince was defeated and suffered martyrdom for refusing to receive communion from an Arian bishop. But after his and his father's death, the Spanish Visigothic élite accepted Orthodoxy. Again, in 1066, the Pope blessed the invasion of "schismatic" England by the usurper Duke William of Normandy, who was then crowned the first Catholic king of England. Two brother-bishops from the north of England, Ethelwine

¹⁶³ Khrapovitsky, "Tserkovnost' ili politika?" ("Churchness or Politics?"), *Pravoslavnaia Rus'* (Orthodox Russia), № 9 (1558), May 1/14, 1996.

and Ethelric, led the opposition. They anathematised the Pope and rejected the king, dying as confessors in prison.

By contrast with Byzantium, where the Emperor did not receive his legitimacy from the Church's anointing, but from the acclamation of "the Senate and People of Rome", and where anointing was not introduced until the tenth century at the earliest, in Russia (and some Western Orthodox countries, such as Spain and England) it was the Church that had the decisive voice in legitimising a new tsar, first in receiving the tsar's confession of the Orthodox Faith and then in anointing him "into the kingdom". The anonymous author of the article under discussion considers the act of anointing to have been of secondary significance, even in Russia, because the Russian tsars regularly entered upon their royal duties many months before their coronation and anointing. However, we must distinguish the situation in which the heir to the throne enters naturally and without dispute into the rights of the kingdom on the death of his father, from the situation in which there has been an interregnum (*mezhdutsartstvie*), a period of civil war, and there are several candidates for the throne, perhaps even candidates of different faiths. In both cases the formal anointing to the kingdom is vital in conferring those gifts of the Holy Spirit without which the new tsar cannot carry out his duties in a God-pleasing manner. For, as Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow said: "The Sovereign receives his entire legitimacy from the Church's anointment". (This is not to deny, of course, that, as the anonymous author points out, the early Byzantine tsars, being raised to the kingdom according to pagan rather than fully Christian traditions, may have received their anointing in an invisible manner from God, and that, as Metropolitan Philaret points out, even the pagan King Cyrus of Persia received an invisible anointing (*Isaiah* 45.1)). But in the second case the sacrament of anointing not only confers the gift of the Holy Spirit: it also ends the argument about the succession, cutting off the last excuse for rebellion. We know, for example, that when there was more than one candidate for the throne of Orthodox England in 975, the archbishop of Canterbury, St. Dunstan, ended the argument by anointing one of the two candidates, St. Edward the Martyr.

Now the situation in Russia today is that of an interregnum similar to that of the Time of Troubles. Although the antichristian power of the Soviets, anathematised by the Church, has fallen, the Orthodox State has not been restored and its restoration does not appear imminent. The reason for this is simple: the vast majority of the population are not Orthodox. If anyone has any doubts on this question, he is advised to read the results of an extensive poll carried out by the Institute of Sociology at the Russian Academy of Sciences carried out by Professor Vladimir Andreenkov. Even many in the most religious segment of the population, in itself very small, were found to hold various views which are contrary to the Orthodox faith. St. Constantine came to power in the Roman Empire when between 5-10% of the population of the Empire was Christian - Christians, moreover, of a very high calibre, many of whom had passed through the fire and water of torments at the hands of pagan persecutors. Of course, Russia today also has living confessors of the faith; but they, together with all the True Orthodox Christians, still constitute only a tiny percentage of the population.

In view of this, it is useless to actively pursue the goal of the restoration of an Orthodox tsar in the near future (as opposed to spreading the Orthodox teaching on

politics, which is both useful and an integral part of the Orthodox Faith). Such agitation is putting the cart before the horse. If a truly Orthodox tsar happened to come to power today, he would almost immediately be overthrown, finding very little support in a population that pursues quite other aims than the salvation of its soul. Only when a sufficient proportion of the population has received the true faith and a spiritual fervour capable of firing those around them with the same fervour, will society be capable of receiving the gift of the Orthodox kingdom to its profit and not to its condemnation. For while the Lord is always ready to bestow his good things on the faithful, He will not bestow them before they are spiritually ready to receive them.

But if it is useless to agitate for the restoration of the Orthodox kingdom through the enthronement of a truly Orthodox tsar now, it is worse than useless to agitate for the creation of an heretical kingdom, even if "Orthodox" by name, through the enthronement of a heretical tsar. And yet that, sadly, is what our anonymous author appears to be doing. He appears not to understand that a tsar of the sergianist-ecumenist faith, of whatever royal pedigree he might be, would very likely persecute the True Orthodox Christians and complete the final destruction of Russian Orthodoxy begun by the communists...

A tsar of the sergianist-ecumenist faith would almost certainly both believe in and be a constitutional monarch – that is, a king who recognizes his power as coming from the people, whose representative he is. But this is the opposite of the Orthodox understanding of the Tsardom, according to which the Tsar's power comes from God, to Whom alone He is responsible. The Tsar represents the people only in the sense that he shares their faith and obedience to God, and represents their moral-religious ideal; for the "the supreme power," writes L.A. Tikhomirov, "expresses the whole spirit, traditions, beliefs and ideals of the people", since it is "not the representative of some kind of will of the people, albeit Christian, but is the expresser of the people's moral-religious ideal."¹⁶⁴

It was this relationship between the Tsar and the people which explained the indifference of Russians to the western idea of a constitution limiting the monarchy or "protecting" the people from it. As Dostoyevsky put it: "Our constitution is mutual love. Of the Monarch for the people and of the people for the Monarch."¹⁶⁵ Elder Barsanuphius of Optina expressed this contrast in the Eastern and Western conceptions as follows: "The devotion of the Orthodox Russian people to their Tsars is not at all the same as the devotion of the western peoples to their sovereigns. According to modern western conceptions, the sovereign is nothing other than a representative of his people - and the western peoples love their representatives and willingly submit to them when they faithfully carry out this mission, or when by the power of their genius they draw the people after them and blind them by the brilliance of glory and state power, like Napoleon in France and Frederick in Prussia [and, we might add, Mussolini in Italy and Hitler in Germany]; but this love is self-serving and egoistical. In the West it is themselves that the people love in their sovereigns. If the

¹⁶⁴ Tikhomirov, *Monarkhicheskaia Gosudarstvennost'* (Monarchical Statehood), Buenos Aires, 1968, pp. 80, 143.

¹⁶⁵ Dostoyevsky, in Lossky, N.O. *Bog i mirovoye zlo* (God and World Evil), Moscow: "Respublika", 1994, pp. 234-235.

king by his personal character is unable to be the faithful reflection and representative of the will of the people and the strivings, ideas and passions that rule in it, then they restrict and constrict his will by means of constitutional vices. But if the king does not submit to these attempts, and is unable to submit to the taste and character of his subjects, then he is deprived not only of the love of the people, but also of the throne, as it was with Charles X and Louis-Philippe and the Sardinian king Albert.

"It is not at all like that with us in Russia: our Tsar is the representative of the will of God, and not the people's will. His will is sacred for us, as the will of the Anointed of God; we love him because we love God. If the Tsar gives us glory and prosperity, we receive it from him as a Mercy of God. But if we are overtaken by humiliation and poverty, we bear them with meekness and humility, as a heavenly punishment for our iniquities, and never do we falter in our love for, and devotion to, the Tsar, as long as they proceed from our Orthodox religious convictions, our love and devotion to God."¹⁶⁶

It is often pointed out that Metropolitan Sergius was more successful in deceiving the Russian people than the renovationists because he retained the external form of Orthodoxy while denying its inner essence. In the same way a sergianist tsar might well be very successful in deceiving the Russian people by adopting, on the one hand, the "Orthodox" faith of the sergianist heretics, and on the other, by adopting all the external trappings of the ancient Russian tsardom, including "Orthodox anointing" at the hands of the sergianist "Orthodox patriarch" in the Kremlin Dormition cathedral. Nor is such a scenario possible only in Russia. It is reported that monarchist sentiment is rising throughout Eastern Europe (with the exception of Greece, where anti-westernism is combined with anti-monarchism). Moreover, exiled royal families of impeccable Orthodox ancestry are waiting to ascend the thrones of all the East European countries (including Greece). Unfortunately, their long residence in the West, where they still prefer to live, has meant that their "Orthodoxy" is of the heretical, "World Orthodox" variety. Moreover, their attitude towards monarchy is also westernized – constitutionalist rather than strictly autocratic.

Protopriest Lev Lebedev once speculated: "Everything could begin with a transitional period of democratic, constitutional monarchy. Even in such a form it could help Orthodox enlightenment. But Orthodox enlightenment will 'work' on the idea of transforming the constitutional monarchy into an autocratic one, such as existed in the Russian land from ancient times."

In the view of the present writer, this is a dangerous illusion. In the present state of the world, and in view of the faith and education of the present candidates for the thrones of Russia and Eastern Europe, a constitutional monarchy would inevitably base itself on western ideas of statehood and Church-State relations, and could serve as the channel only of western "enlightenment" in all spheres – albeit with an Orthodox "packaging".

¹⁶⁶ Schema-Archimandrite Barsonuphius (Plikhankov), *Kelejnye Zapiski* (Cell Notes), Moscow, 1991, p. 44.

Let us consider perhaps the closest historical precedent – the Greek constitutional monarchy after the revolution of 1821. The new State of Greece, writes Charles Frazee, "looked to the west, the west of the American and French Revolutions, rather than to the old idea of an Orthodox community as it had functioned under the Ottomans. The emotions of the times did not let men see it; Orthodoxy and Greek nationality were still identified, but the winds were blowing against the dominant position of the Church in the life of the individual and the nation..."

Thus, forgetting the lessons of the council of Florence four hundred years earlier, the new State and Church entered into negotiations with the Pope for help against the Turks. Metropolitan Germanus of Patras was even empowered to speak concerning the possibility of a reunion of the Churches. However, it was the Pope who drew back at this point, pressurised by the other western States, which considered the sultan to be a legitimate monarch. The western powers helped Greece again when, in 1827, an Allied fleet under a British admiral destroyed the Turkish-Egyptian fleet at Navarino. But after the assassination of the president of Greece, Count Kapodistrias, in 1832, the country descended further into poverty and near civil war.

Then, in 1833, the western powers appointed a Catholic prince, Otto of Bavaria, as king of Greece, with three regents until he came of age, the most important being the Protestant George von Maurer. Maurer proceeded to work out a constitution for the country, which proposed autocephaly for the Church under a Synod of bishops, and the subordination of the Synod to the State on the model of the Bavarian and Russian constitutions, to the extent that "no decision of the Synod could be published or carried into execution without the permission of the government having been obtained". In spite of the protests of the patriarch of Constantinople and the tsar of Russia, and the walk-out of the archbishops of Rethymnon and Adrianople, this constitution was ratified by the signatures of thirty-six bishops on July 26, 1833.

In the following years, although the monarchs accepted Orthodoxy, the spiritual decline continued. Thus under pressure from the State, all monasteries with fewer than six monks were dissolved, and heavy taxes imposed on the remaining monasteries. And very little money was given to a Church which had lost six to seven thousand clergy in the war of liberation against the Turks, and whose remaining clergy had an abysmally low standard of education.

Thus an "Orthodox" constitutional monarchy turned out to be worse for the European Greeks than the absolutist Muslim empire (for rebellion against which they remained under the anathema of the Ecumenical Patriarchate until 1851). Moreover, the constitutional monarchy of the nineteenth century was not a "transitional period" leading to the restoration of full autocracy, as many Greeks hoped. On the contrary, in 1924, and again in the 1960s, the monarchy was overthrown, and remains in exile (and rather unpopular) to the present day.

Of course, Russia is not Greece, and there are other possible scenarios. Let us consider another one. George Vladimirovich Romanov, the present Heir to the Throne, according to our anonymous author, is enthroned in the Dormition cathedral by Patriarch Alexis Ridiger. Being young and inexperienced, and not well versed in

Russian history or contemporary Russian politics, he comes to rely more and more on his spiritual father, Patriarch Alexis. Not that this is disapproved of by the Russian people: on the contrary, the relationship between Patriarch Alexis and Tsar George is hailed as being in the image of the relationship between Patriarch Philaret and his son Tsar Michael Fyodorovich in the early seventeenth century.

Having taken full power into his hands, while hiding behind the authority of the Tsar, the Patriarch takes it upon himself to restore the Empire of the Third Rome, renouncing the democratic ideology of the 1990s and adopting that of the "Orthodox" patriots. Having first reunited the Ukraine, Belorussia and much of Central Asia to the Russian State, and installed friendly "Orthodox" monarchies in the other states of Eastern Europe from Serbia to Georgia, he decides to realise the dream of the Romanov tsars by invading Constantinople. This provokes a war not only with the Muslims, but also with the West and China...

The dream of the restoration of the Orthodox Empire headed by an Orthodox tsar is not a harmful one, and has the support of several Orthodox prophecies (Greek as well as Russian). However, it is essential to place the accent on the fact that such a tsar must be *truly* Orthodox and ruling over a *truly* Orthodox people. Otherwise, the dream could turn into a nightmare, in which a wolf is accepted in sheep's clothing, the Antichrist in the cap of Vladimir Monomakh. As Fr. Basil Redechkin writes: "In these 70 years there have been a large quantity of people who have been devoted in mind and heart to Russia, but we can still not call them the regeneration of Russia. For such a regeneration a real unity into a society is necessary. Such a unity in fulfilment of the prophecies is possible only on the basis of true Orthodoxy. Otherwise it is in no way a regeneration. Thus even if a tsar is elected, he must unfailingly belong to the true Orthodox Church. And to this Church must belong all the people constituting a regenerated Russia..."¹⁶⁷

We find the same emphasis on the king's confession of the true faith in the Holy Scriptures. Thus the Lord said to the people through Moses: "When thou shalt come unto the land which the Lord thy God shall choose, and shalt possess it, and shalt dwell therein, and shalt say, I will set a king over me, like as all the nations that are about me: thou shalt in any wise set him king over thee, whom the Lord thy God shall choose: one from among thy brethren shalt thou set king over thee: thou mayest not set a stranger over thee, which is not thy brother... And it shall be, when he sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write him a copy of this law in a book out of that which is before the priests, the Levites. And it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life: that he may learn to fear the Lord his God, to keep all the words of this law and these statutes, to do them: that his heart be not lifted up above his brethren, and that he turn not aside from the commandment, to the right hand, or to the left: to the end that he may prolong his days in his kingdom, he, and his children, in the midst of Israel" (Deuteronomy 17.14-15,18-20).

¹⁶⁷ Redechkin, "Rossia voskresnet" ("Russia will be resurrected"), *Pravoslavnaia Rus'* (Orthodox Russia), № 18 (1495), September 15/28, 1993, p. 11.

Thus God blessed the institution of the monarchy, but stipulated three essential conditions if His blessing was to continue to rest on it. First, the people must itself desire to have a king placed over it. Secondly, the king must be someone “whom the Lord thy God shall choose”; a true king is chosen by God, not man. Such a man must be a “brother”, that is a member of the People of God, of the Church: if he is not, then God has not chosen him. Thirdly, he must govern in accordance with the Law of God, which he will strive to fulfil in all its parts.

In the period from Moses to Saul, the people were ruled by the Judges, many of whom, like Joshua, Jephtha and Gideon, were holy, truly charismatic leaders. However, towards the end of the period, since “there was no king in Israel; everyone did what seemed right to him” (Judges 21.25), and barbaric acts, such as that which almost led to the extermination of the tribe of Benjamin, are recorded. In their desperation at the mounting anarchy, the people called on God through the Prophet Samuel to provide them with a king.

God fulfilled their request. However, since the people’s motivation in seeking a king was not pure, not for the sake of being able to serve God more faithfully, He gave them at first a king who brought them more harm than good. For while Saul was a mighty man of war and temporarily expanded the frontiers of Israel at the expense of the Philistines and Ammonites, he persecuted True Orthodoxy, as represented by the future King David and his followers.

Moreover, he committed two specific sins which particularly angered the Lord. The first was his invasion of the sphere of the priesthood by sacrificing to the Lord before a battle with the Philistines. This, the sin of caesaropapism, was followed by a second, the sin of democratism: he spared Agag, the king of the Amalekites, together with the best of his livestock, instead of killing them all, as God had commanded, because, as Saul protested, “I listened to the voice of the people” (I Kings 15.20). In other words, he abdicated his God-given authority and, *became, spiritually speaking, a democrat, a constitutionalist*, listening to the people rather than to God.

And so Samuel said to him: "Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, the Lord also shall reject thee from being king over Israel" (I Kings 15.23). Soon Saul was defeated by the Philistines at Mount Gilboa and committed suicide. Worst of all, the Ark, the symbol of God’s grace and presence among the people, was captured by the enemy.

Thus the greatest tragedy in Israelite history to that time was caused by the people’s premature asking for a king. The fact that he was anointed according to all the rites of the Church saved neither him nor the people from disaster. And the situation was restored only through the ascension to the throne of David, a man who truly loved God and brought the Ark back to Zion.

Another example of this important spiritual truth is provided by the history of the northern kingdom of Israel after the schism from Judah. Although the northern kingdom had illegally separated from Judah, it continued to be accorded some legitimacy by the prophets. However, no sin is without its evil consequences; and soon

there ascended the throne the evil King Ahab, whose Tyrian wife Jezabel tried to make Baalism the official religion of the State and began to persecute those who resisted her. In this, probably the first specifically religious persecution in history, the holy Prophet Elijah rose up in defence of the true faith, working miracles in the sight of all and slaughtering the priests of Baal and the soldiers whom Ahab sent against him.

After Elijah's ascension to heaven his disciple Elisha continued the struggle in a new and highly significant way: he ordered the anointing of a new king, Jehu, in the place of Ahab's dynasty. Jehu led the counter-revolution which killed Jezabel and restored the true faith to Israel. Here, then, we see the first application of a very important principle, namely, that *loyalty to the autocracy is conditional on its loyalty to the true faith.*

Many have rightly said that the primary cause of Russia's tragedy has been her disloyalty to her lawful anointed sovereign, and that regeneration can come only through repentance for this betrayal. The beginnings of repentance are certainly discernible in the Russian people, together with an increased veneration for Tsar-Martyr Nicholas; and these must be good portents for the future. However, a confused regret without a full, clear, truly Orthodox understanding of the real nature of the sin is not real repentance, and a vaguely emotional veneration for the Autocracy, without a full, clear, truly Orthodox understanding of *why* the Tsar-Martyr was so beloved of God and why only a *truly* Orthodox sovereign such as he can lead us to prosperity, can only lead to further sin and disaster, to further kings such as Saul and disasters such as Gilboa, before they usher in the reign of the Russian David and the true regeneration of the Russian land.

April 5/18, 2000.

6. GOD, THE NATIONS AND NATIONALISM

And the nations of those who are saved shall walk in its light, and the kings of the earth shall bring their glory and honour into it.
Revelation 21.24.

Introduction

The love of one's country is one of those forces in human nature which can be used for good or for evil, for the love of God and the building up of His Kingdom, or for the hatred of one's neighbour and the destruction of mankind. In a sermon delivered in the revolutionary year of 1905, St. John of Kronstadt said: "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." Nearly forty years later, however, some Catholic Croat murderers of Orthodox Serbs, when told (by a Catholic) that they would go to hell for their actions, replied: "Alright, so long as the Serbs will be there also"! Such is the power of national hatred, that it can willingly barter eternal life for the grim satisfaction of destroying one's national enemy.

As we approach the end of the twentieth century, it looks as if national hatred has replaced ideological hatred as the major passion tearing mankind apart. Whether in the former Yugoslavia or the former Soviet Union, in Somalia or Ruanda or East Timor, it is wars between tribes, nationalist wars, that are making rivers of blood flow and causing "the international community" to despair. Characteristic is the remark of Jacques Delors, president of the European Commission and one of the leading internationalists of our time: "I have lived through two humiliating moments in my life. The first was when I was 15 and the Germans invaded France. I saw the population fleeing before the enemy, including soldiers on bicycles whose only thought was to save their own skin. I swore then that such a thing must never happen again. But the same thing is happening again today, in Bosnia. I am ashamed. Soon I will turn 69. One day I will die, and I will have done nothing to stop all that."¹⁶⁸

However, instead of wringing our hands, we should take sober note why it is that, in our age of unparalleled international cooperation and gigantic efforts to overcome national antagonisms - the age of the League of Nations and the United Nations, of the Soviet Union and the European Union - everything seems to be falling apart and nationalism in its evil mode is as virulent as ever. It is obvious that the world-view on which these grand schemes were based is false, that they have not penetrated to the mystery of the nation and the nature of nationalism. Their intentions may have been good (in some cases), but the experience of the twentieth century shows - and the experience of the last few years of it may show even more clearly - that these good intentions have only led to hell - hell on earth and hell in the life to come.

¹⁶⁸ Delors, in "The Czar of Brussels", *Newsweek*, May 30, 1994, p. 24.

What, then, is the error inherent in these views? And what is the correct solution? In other words: what is God's view of the nation and nationalism, and His solution for the problem how nations can live together?

1. Two Nations

Holy Scripture recognizes only two nations or races in the strict sense of the word: the race of fallen mankind, which derives its origin from the first Adam, and the race of redeemed mankind, which derives its origin from the last Adam, Christ.

The race of fallen mankind lost its original unity as a consequence of sin – the sin of paganism in particular, and the building of the Tower of Babel. In order to check the spread of sin, God separated the nations both geographically and linguistically. However, the memory of their original unity was never lost. That they were and are of one blood is asserted by the Apostle Paul in his sermon to the Athenians: “God made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their pre-appointed times and the boundaries of their dwelling.” (Acts 17.26).

Nationalism contradicts this primordial fact of the original unity of mankind in Adam. No man or race of men is *essentially, by nature* higher or lower than any other; for as the Apostles Paul and Barnabas said to the pagans of Lystra who wanted to make them gods: “We also are men with the same nature as you” (Acts 14.15; cf. James 5.17). However, one nation may become higher than another *by grace* because of its greater love for God.

At Pentecost, our original unity was restored by our receiving the Holy Spirit which transplanted us, as it were, onto a new root – Christ; for “we hear [the word of God], each in our own language in which we were born” (Acts 2.8). From a physical, genetic point of view, there is no difference between the two races, but from the spiritual point of view the difference is enormous. In a word, fallen mankind has lost the Spirit of God (Genesis 6.3), whereas redeemed mankind has been born again “of water and the Spirit” (John 3.5).

As the Apostle Paul says: “It is written, ‘The first man Adam became a living being.’ The last Adam became a life-giving spirit. However, the spiritual is not first, but the natural, and afterward the spiritual. The first man was of the earth, made of dust; the second Man is the Lord from heaven. As was the man of dust, so also are those who are made of dust; and as is the heavenly Man, so also are those who are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly Man.” (I Corinthians 15.45-49).

In the race of redeemed mankind, which is the Orthodox Church founded by Christ, national differences become of minor importance. For “there is neither Jew nor Greek;... for you are all one in Christ Jesus” (Galatians 3.28). The very first Church Council, and the very first doctrinal decision of the Church, was concerned to abolish any essential distinction between Jews and Gentiles in the New Testament Church (Acts 15).

At the same time, national differences continue to exist and play a role in the mystery of God's Providence. This is particularly emphasized by the Apostle Paul in his words on the relationship between the Jews and the Gentiles (Romans 9-11). The Jews, he says, have been cut off from the race of redeemed mankind, while the Gentiles have been grafted in. However, this position can be reversed, so there is no reason for "anti-semitism" - "do not be haughty, but fear" (Romans 11.20). Thus the Christians, both Jews and Gentiles, are "a chosen race, a holy priesthood, a holy nation, a people whom he has gained" (I Peter 2.9). Indeed, there is an important sense in which the Christians are the only true nation, the only nation which will endure to eternity. For "you [when you were pagans] were once not a people, but now are the people of God, and you did not seek after mercy but now have received mercy" (I Peter 2.10). As the Lord said through the Prophet Hosea: "I shall say unto them which were not My people, Thou art My people" (2.23).

2. What is a Nation?

This is a very brief summary of the first principles of the Orthodox Church's teaching on the nations and nationalism. Let us now turn to some contemporary definitions of the nation, and how they apply to some contemporary nations.

In an article written in 1970, and entitled "Three Attitudes to the Homeland", the Russian Slavophile Vladimir Osipov proposes the following set of criteria: "What is a nation? Faith, blood, language and the land. Religion, and even a certain complex of rites, are a part - indeed, the most important part - of the spirit of a nation. An individual person can get by without religion. But without religion, an individual nation cannot survive as a nation... A people disintegrates literally before one's eyes when faith in God disintegrates..."¹⁶⁹

Here we find the religious approach to the problem of nationalism - the importance attached to the faith of the nation - that is characteristic of almost all Russian writers. It is not that the call of blood, language and land are not felt by Russians - especially the latter. But the strength of the Orthodox Christian tradition in defining the Russians' consciousness of themselves and of others remains strong, even after 70 years of atheist and internationalist socialist propaganda. And this tradition declares that blood, after all, is not a defining quality of nations (especially in such a racially mixed nation as Russia). As for language and land, they change and develop without the essential spirit of a country changing - although there is no doubt that a deep knowledge of the language and living contact with the land has an important role in keeping the spirit of a nation alive.

The Russian parliamentarian and philosopher Viktor Aksyuchits echoes this judgement: "The positivist definitions of a people - for example, common origin (blood), language, territory, economic structure, culture, state unity - do not embrace the concept of that mysterious unity which is the people, the nation. All such

¹⁶⁹ Osipov, quoted in Walters, P. "A New Creed for Russians?", *Religion in Communist Lands*, vol. 3, No 4, 1976.

definitions are only partial. They cannot, for example, explain the existence of such a people as the Jews, who in the thousands of years of their existence have become mixed in blood [the Ashkenazi Jews of Eastern Europe are mainly of the Turkic race of the Khazars], have changed their language and culture, have not had a common territory, or economic structure, or their own statehood, but have nevertheless been fully preserved as a people."¹⁷⁰

The example of the Jews is indeed instructive, and there can be little doubt that the only major bond holding them together as a nation since the destruction of their statehood in 70 A.D. has been their faith. This faith is a nationalistic faith – as A.V. Kartashev writes, “Judaism established itself on a primordial, ethnically closed-in-on-itself nationalism of the blood”.¹⁷¹ But while blood alone cannot hold a nation together, *faith* in blood, even though it must be a false faith, as we have seen, can give a nation a terribly powerful – and powerfully terrible – strength and unity, as the whole history of the Jews since Christ has demonstrated.

When faith begins to weaken, however, a nation resorts to other means, such as land, language and blood, to hold itself together. Thus when the Jewish leaders felt that the identity of their nation was being threatened through assimilation with the European nations in the nineteenth century, they founded the Zionist movement in 1897 with the explicit aim of strengthening the Jewish identity by a return to the land of Israel. Since then, moreover, it has been felt necessary to resurrect the Hebrew language and to make common blood a condition of citizenship in the state of Israel.

Also important in helping a nation to define itself and hold together is a common tradition of statehood. It is interesting that most nations with a strong sense of identity have been monarchies, while democracy has tended to undermine a nation’s identity. This is because monarchy, being based on conservative, rather than revolutionary principles, helps to preserve a nation’s memory and therefore its sense of who and what it is.

Democracy, however, usually begins with a revolution that denies the legitimacy of the pre-revolutionary past. Moreover, every new democratic government comes to power on the promise of doing better than its inadequate predecessor; so the emphasis is on constant change and renewal – “permanent revolution”.

Now since faith is so important in defining a nation’s identity, a change of faith can mean the death of one nation and the birth of another, even when genetic, linguistic and territorial ties have not been broken. Thus in a real sense the Jewish nation died when it killed Christ. And Holy Scripture affirms that anti-Christian Jews are not true Jews (cf. Romans 2.28; Revelation 2.9). And so the return of the Jews to Christ will indeed be, as the Apostle Paul says, “life from the dead” (Romans 11.15), the resurrection of the true spiritual identity of the Jewish people.

¹⁷⁰ Aksyuchits, "O sovremennykh natsional'nykh problemakh" (On Contemporary National Problems"), *Posev* (Sowing), March-April, 1990, p. 111.

¹⁷¹ Kartashev, *Ocherki po istorii Russkoj Tserkvi* (Sketches in the History of the Russian Church), Paris: YMCA Press, 1959, p. 501.

Let us take another example, that of England. Now the faith that made England a single nation with a clear self-identity was Orthodox Christianity. And for several centuries before the Norman Conquest of 1066, England was a traditional hereditary monarchy of the Orthodox type. Her kings were crowned by the Church and revered, as in Byzantium and Russia, as the Anointed of God. Disobedience to the king was considered a sin, not only against the state, but also against the faith.¹⁷²

However, “apparently as the result of one day’s fighting” in 1066, writes the historian R.H.C. Davis, “England received a new royal dynasty, a new aristocracy, a virtually new Church, a new art, a new architecture and a new language”.¹⁷³ As the nineteenth-century historian Edward Augustus Freeman put it: “The Norman Conquest is the great turning-point in the history of the English nation... Its whole importance is not the importance which belongs to a beginning, but the importance which belongs to a turning point. So far from being the beginning of our national history, the Norman Conquest was the temporary overthrow of our national being.”¹⁷⁴ This break in the national traditions, and therefore the national self-awareness of the English, was so radical that until recently English schoolchildren were taught English history beginning from 1066 – as if the thousand or so years of Orthodox Christian history before that were of no significance. There was some teaching about Britain’s pre-Christian, pagan past; but England’s Golden Age, the Age of the Saints, was dismissed as Dark Age barbarism. Only recently has some publicity begun to be given to English Orthodoxy, as in the recent excavation of the remains of the nave of St. Dunstan’s cathedral in Canterbury.

Together with the other English Orthodox traditions, the tradition concerning the monarchy also suffered damage after the Norman Conquest. Although the king continued to be crowned by the Church, the idea of the holiness of the monarchy was gradually lost. In 1216 the powers of the monarchy were limited by the Magna Carta to take account of the interests of the nobility; and further limitations followed.

However, in the 16th century Shakespeare still had a strong feeling for it, as we can see in his play, Richard II; and even today, centuries after the democratic revolution of 1642 deprived the monarchy of any real power or sanction by making it constitutional, the English still have an instinctive veneration for the institution. This witnesses to a kind of schizophrenia in the English soul. For while the dominant faith of the English is undoubtedly democratic and materialistic, the monarchy still serves as a link with that past when England had a different faith – and was in effect a different nation...

Another instructive, and still more complex example is Greece. Before their conversion to Christ, the Greeks had already had a long and complex existence as a nation. At first they lived in a multitude of independent city-states, each with his own god, such as Athene of Athens and “Diana of the Ephesians”. But in spite of their

¹⁷² See the tenth-century Abbot Aelfric's *Catholic Homily on Palm Sunday*.

¹⁷³ Davis, *The Normans and their Myth*. London: Thames & Hudson, 1976, p. 103.

¹⁷⁴ Freeman, *The History of the Norman Conquest*, vol. 1, p. 1.

political and religious divisions, the Greeks always felt their unity as a nation; and the distinction between Greeks and Barbarians is a very ancient one. Only the Jews and the Chinese, among the very ancient nations, have a similarly clear, ethnocentric view of the universe.

Then, in the fifth and fourth centuries before Christ, the Greeks' faith in their gods began to wane under the influence of philosophy and democracy; for, as Alexei Khomyakov pointed out, the rise of democracy is usually accompanied by a decline in religion. This prepared the way for Alexander the Great, under whom the Greeks acquired a world empire and an imperialist state structure. Then Greece itself became simply one province in the new world-empire of Rome, although Hellenic culture continued to extend its influence, mixing with both eastern and western elements to become the foundation civilization of Europe and the Mediterranean world from Hadrian's wall on the Scottish border to the Euphrates river on the Persian border.

With the coming of St. Constantine the Great, the empire became Christian and the Greeks were reborn as the "Christian Romans" or Romeioi – a name that the Greeks of Pontus and the Eastern coast of the Black Sea continued to retain for themselves well into this century. During this period, the prestige of Christianity was so great that the Christian Greeks took no particular pride in Hellenism, which was associated with the pagan, pre-Christian past; for they now redefined themselves as Christians and Romans. The best elements in Hellenism were incorporated into the Byzantine Christian synthesis, while the pagan elements were discarded and derided.

However, when Constantinople, the New Rome, fell in 1453, and especially after the liberation of Greece in 1821, the Greeks started redefining themselves again as Hellenes, and began to look back to their pagan past with pride, as if that were no less a real part of their national identity than their Christianity. And in our time this has led to a real crisis of identity. For the contemporary Greeks have to decide who their real spiritual ancestors are: the pagan democratic Greeks like Pericles and Sophocles, the pagan imperialist Greeks like Alexander of Macedon and Antiochus Epiphanes (one of the great persecutors of the people of God), or the Christian Roman Greeks such as the Holy Fathers of the Orthodox Church and the New Martyrs of the Turkish yoke. Their membership of the democratic confederation of the European Union makes them emphasize their pagan democratic past. The dispute over Macedonia leads them to emphasize their pagan imperial past. And only rarely do they hark back to their Christian Roman past in its spiritual, universalist profundity. It is this schizophrenia in the Greek soul that makes it so difficult for them to define themselves and their aims, both to themselves and to the outside world.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷⁵ David Brewer points to "the conflict between two archetypes of the Greek temperament, the Hellene and the Romios. This was first proposed by Patrick Leigh Fermor in his 1966 book *Roumeli*, and no anthropologist working in Greece can now be without it. The Hellene, says Leigh Fermor, was the heir of ancient Greece, Hellas; the Romios was shaped by Byzantium, the new Rome, and by four centuries of Turkish occupation of Greece. He went on to list sixty-four characteristics of the Romios and the Hellene, in opposing pairs except for a few which were common to both, such as unstinting hospitality and a passion for the political sections of newspapers. Whereas the Romios favours practice, for instance, the Hellene favours theory; Romios lived by instinct, Hellene by principle and logic; the former is at home with demotic Greek, the latter with katharevousa. The argument is that in

3. Spirit, Soul and Body

From this discussion, we can see that a nation is in many ways like an individual person. Like an individual person, each nation can be said to have a spirit, a soul and a body. Its "spirit" is that which unites it with God and unites it with all other nations that are in God. If every nation has a spirit in this sense, it is nevertheless sadly a fact that most nations have lost their spirit, or replaced it with another, ungodly one. How many nations lost their Christian spirits, at least temporarily, in this way – the Jews to the nationalist spirit of Zionist Judaism, the other Christians of the Middle East to Islam or Monophysitism, the West European nations to Catholicism and Protestantism, and many of the East European nations to Marxism-Leninism.

The spirit of a nation is sometimes so strong that it is felt that a person cannot belong to the nation in any way unless he also confesses the faith of that nation. A clear example is Old Testament Israel in its peak period from Moses to Solomon, when "Israel" referred both to a faith and to the people confessing that faith. A modern example is Iran, whose internal identity and external foreign policy are almost completely dependent on its self-appointed status as the guardian of the Shiite Muslim faith. Another important example is "Holy Russia" in the Muscovite period, when to be Russian meant necessarily to be Orthodox Christian.¹⁷⁶

At the same time, there are important differences, even in very religious societies, between the Church (in Christian societies) and society or the nation in general. One of these differences, as Fr. Stefan Krasovitsky points out, is that "the nucleus of society is the family, whereas the nucleus of the Church is the person. Within the Church a person is united with other persons without any loss of his individuality, for this unity takes place in the Super-Person (Divine Person) of Jesus Christ... [As to so-called 'human rights',] they are provided (in the conditions of a morally healthy society) within the family in accordance with the familial status of each member of this unit of

all Greeks there are elements of both, and that this is the origin of an inner turmoil in the Greek psyche which can lead to reactions which are incomprehensible to outsiders" ("Ethnic Truth and Modern Greek History", *History Today*, vol. 51 (5), May, 2001, p. 21).

¹⁷⁶ As Archbishop Anthony (Khrapovitsky) wrote in 1916: "If you take away Orthodoxy from our Russian people and our Russian life, as Dostoyevsky justly observed, nothing specifically Russian will remain. In vain have people begun to talk about some kind of national Russian Church: such a Church does not exist, only an ecclesiastical nationality exists, our ecclesiastical people (and to some extent even our ecclesiastical society), which is recognized as our own and native only to the extent that it is in agreement with the Church and her teaching, and which does not recognize the Russian Stundists as Russian, but sees no difference between itself and foreign Orthodox - Greeks, Arabs and Serbs. Tell our peasant: 'Do not curse the Jews, you know - the All-Holy Mother of God and all the Apostles were Jews'. And what will he reply? 'That's not true,' he will say. 'They lived at a time when the Jews were Russians.' He knows very well that the Apostles did not speak Russian, that the Russians did not exist at that time, but he wants to express a true thought, namely, that at that time the Jews who believed in Christ were of that same faith and Church with which the Russian people has now been merged and from which the contemporary Jews and their ancestors who were disobedient to the Lord have fallen away." ("Chej dolzhen byt' Konstantinopol'" (Whose must Constantinople Become"), quoted in S. Fomin, *Rossia pered Vtorym Prishestviem* (Russia before the Second Coming), Sergiev Posad, 1994, p. 203.

society. So a normal society should defend, not 'human rights' ... but *the rights of the family*, defending them from suppression and destruction."¹⁷⁷

Moreover, even in such spiritually intense and unified societies, the idea of the nation is never completely exhausted by the content of its faith. For if the faith is a universalist one, it will also be incarnate in other nations having different souls but the same faith or spirit. And even if the faith is not universalist, but exclusive to one and one only nation, like "Diana of the Ephesians", the nation concerned will differentiate itself from the other nations not only in terms of its faith but also in terms of many other, less spiritual characteristics.

For the soul of a nation is tied up in certain very specific and unique ways with its history, its geography, its climate, and the physical and psychological make-up of its members. Thus for an Englishman, regardless of his faith or the faith of his country at any particular time, his Englishness contains what might be called a specifically geographical element – the feeling of belonging to the island which Shakespeare in *Richard II* compared to "a silvery stone set in a silvery sea"; and this element may contribute to what other nations see as the Englishman's reserved, self-contained, insular nature. On the other hand, the expansiveness and tendency to extremism that characterizes the Russians in their own and others' estimation, has been considered by some – for example, Berdyaev – to be conditioned by the limitless flat steppes of their homeland.¹⁷⁸

In some nations, the spiritual element in its national feeling is so weak as to be almost non-existent. But since man cannot exist without some guiding principle, the spiritual vacuum thus created will be filled by the deification of the nation itself, or of the state or leader in which its national life is temporarily incarnate – that is, in nationalism or totalitarian statism. In pagan societies the tendency towards statism is expressed especially in the deification of the king. Hence the god-kings and emperors of Ancient Egypt, Babylon and Imperial Rome.

In Western, post-Christian societies, this tendency finds a less religious expression, as in Fascist Italy or Nazi Germany – although the tendency to deify the leader is never far absent even in western nationalist societies.

However, there are some societies in which both religious faith and national feeling have been reduced to a pale shadow of themselves. The spiritual and emotional vacuums thus created will then be filled, on the one hand, by a frenzy of economic activity, and on the other hand, by an extreme elaboration of state structures of every kind. This almost exclusive cult of the body, in both its personal and collective forms, is a comparatively modern development; but today, in the shape of western capitalist, democratic civilization, it has spread throughout the world.

¹⁷⁷ Krasovitsky, "Dva tipa kollektivizma" ("Two Types of Collectivism"), *Angel Valaama* (The Angel of Valaam), 9 July, 1994, p. 4.

¹⁷⁸ Berdyaev, N. *Sud'ba Rossii* (The Destiny of Russia), Moscow, 1990.

However, even when men have agreed that the main purpose of life is to satisfy material, bodily needs, and that the best instrument to this end is through the body of the nation – the state, they still remain essentially spiritual beings whose spiritual and emotional nature cannot be satisfied by bread alone. Therefore the builders of modern western societies have provided them with something else: circuses. For whereas the religious societies of the past spent vast sums on the construction of cathedrals or temples or mosques, and the nationalist societies of more recent times spent equally vast sums on the construction of the thrones and palaces of their god-kings, modern democratic societies spend substantial (but comparatively much smaller) sums on the construction of sports halls and stadia, cinemas and concert-halls. Here the need to worship something or someone greater than oneself – a sports team or a rock star – can be satisfied. And here nationalist passions can be expressed and defused in comparative safety.¹⁷⁹

Thus just as in an individual person the weakening of the spirit inevitably leads to the domination of the flesh, so is it in the life of nations. When the soul of the nation ceases to worship God, it worships either itself or its passions. This is the origin both of nationalism and of democratism, in which “the pursuit of happiness” – material happiness – becomes the constitutional foundation of society.

It follows that to say of nationalism that it is “caused by wounds, some form of collective humiliation”¹⁸⁰ is misleading. For it implies that the excesses of fallen nationalism are purely psychological in nature and can therefore be cured by some kind of “collective therapy”; whereas the roots of the disease are spiritual and come from a loss of faith. Just as the fire of fallen desire is kindled when the fire of the Holy Spirit is quenched in the individual soul, so the fire of nationalism is kindled when the fire of love for the super-nation of the Church is weakened in the nation.

However, it is no less dangerous to believe that nationalism can be cured by abolishing nations, or by merging them into super-nations. The Soviet Union is a vivid example of this fallacy. The Bolsheviks first tried to use and incite national feeling in order to destroy the multi-national empire of Russia. Then they imposed their own brand of internationalism upon all the nations of the former empire, suppressing the old nationalisms in favour of a new “Soviet patriotism”. But the old nationalisms were not destroyed; and now that the dead hand of Bolshevism has been removed they have emerged in a still more virulent form.¹⁸¹

The European Union appears to be repeating this mistake, albeit in a less crude way. The architects of the Union give as its main justification the avoidance of those nationalistic wars, especially between France and Germany, which have so disfigured the region’s history. But the old nationalisms show no sign of dying; and in traditionally insular countries, such as Britain, or traditionally Orthodox ones, such as

¹⁷⁹ However, the phenomenon of football hooliganism has caused many deaths, as St. Barsanuphius of Optina prophesied it would.

¹⁸⁰ Sir Isaiah Berlin, “The Bent Twig: On the Rise of Nationalism”, in *The Crooked Timber of Humanity*, London: John Murry, p. 245.

¹⁸¹ See I. Shafarevich, “Obosoblenie ili sbliuzhenie” (“Isolation or Coming Closer”), in A. Solzhenitsyn, *Iz-Pod Glyb* (From Under the Rubble), Paris: YMCA Press, 1974, p. 106.

Greece, attempts to force them into an unnatural union with other nations with quite different traditions appear to be increasing centrifugal tendencies.

A true union of nations is possible only on the basis of the common acceptance of a single spirit or faith. If the basis of the union is not spirit, but flesh – economic self-interest – then the union is bound to fail; for materialism pits nations no less than individual men against each other. Or if it succeeds, it can do so at only at the cost of the physical disappearance of the weaker nations and the spiritual death of all of them.

But if a nation is like an individual person, the disappearance of a nation cannot be justified by any super-national aims, however superficially laudable. For this would be murder. So we come back to the question: to what extent can we say that a nation is like an individual person? Is it really as eternal as a person? Or are some nations destined to disappear forever?

The view that a nation is a person in all significant respects has been expressed with characteristic eloquence by Alexander Solzhenitsyn: “Recently it has become fashionable to speak of the levelling of nations, and the disappearance of peoples in the melting-pot of contemporary civilization. I do not agree with this, but to discuss it is a separate question, and at this point I think it fitting to say only that the disappearance of nations would impoverish us no less than if all individual people were assimilated into one character, one person. Nations are the wealth of humanity, its social personalities; the smallest of them bears its own special traits, and hides within itself a special facet of the Divine plan...

“It is precisely he who gives the highest value to the existence of nations, who sees in them not a temporary fruit of social formations, but a complex, vivid, unrepeatable organism that cannot be invented by men – he it is who recognizes that nations have a fullness of spiritual life, a fullness of ascents and falls, a range extending from holiness to villainy (though the extreme points are achieved only by individual personalities).

“Of course, all this changes greatly in the course of time and the flow of history; that most mobile line dividing good from evil is always swaying, sometimes very stormily, in the consciousness of a nation, - and for that reason every judgement and every reproach and self-reproach, and repentance itself, is tied to a specific time, flowing away with the passing of that time and remaining only as memorial contours in history.

“But, you know, in the same way even individual persons in the same way, under the influence of its events and their spiritual work, change to the point of unrecognizability in the course of their lives. (And this is the hope, and salvation, and punishment of man, that we can change, and are ourselves responsible for our own souls, and not birth or the environment!) Nevertheless, we take the risk of evaluating people as “good” and “bad”, and no-one contests this right of ours.

“Between a person and a nation there is the deepest similarity – in the mystical nature of the uncreatedness of both the one and the other. And there are no human

reasons why, in allowing ourselves to evaluate the changeability of the one, we forbid it for the other."¹⁸²

Viktor Aksyuchits has qualified, without radically changing, this idea of the nation-person: "A person is an individual subject, an eternal individual soul. But a people is a conciliar [*sobornij*] subject, its soul is conciliar. Therefore a people is not a person, but a conciliarity [*sobornost'*], although many characteristics of a person extend to the conciliar soul of a people. A people possesses the freedom of historical self-definition, but this freedom is conciliar, and not individual. The historical responsibility of a people and its moral accountability also have a conciliar character.

"All the metaphysical characteristics of a people are structured around conciliarity. Conciliarity is not the mechanical sum of individuals, but their free unity. A people is a conciliar unity of eternal human souls... It is the idea of the Creator concerning their common mission and the responsible thought of eternal souls concerning the unity of their historical calling."¹⁸³

Even with this qualification, however, there are limits to the extent we can talk about nations as persons. Thus while persons have eternal souls, this can be said of nations only in a metaphorical sense. Vladimir Soloviev spoke interestingly about "the idea that God has of [the nation] in eternity".¹⁸⁴ But this analogy should not be taken too far. Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow explicitly rejects it: "for earthly kingdoms and peoples, their kingly and popular existence can only have an earthly character".¹⁸⁵

Again, as Dora Shturman points out, however much individual people change, each still has one mind and one conscience. A nation, however, is composed of many people with often sharply differing aims and outlooks.¹⁸⁶

Another criticism of the nation-person metaphor is that whereas at the Last Judgement "all the nations will be gathered before Him" (*Matthew* 25.32), and men can be said to have a collective responsibility for their nation's actions, in the final analysis it is only individuals that are sent to heaven or hell. Thus a man can free himself from responsibility for the crimes of his nation by condemning them, like the Germans who refused to accept Nazism – or the Jews who refused to mock Christ. And in the same way a man can deprive himself of the honour of belonging to a great nation by his betrayal of its noble ideals, like the Greeks who converted to Islam – or the Russians who joined the revolution.

We may wonder, moreover, whether every nation is called to an eternal destiny. In the Old Testament the Lord "destroyed seven nations in the land of Canaan" (*Acts* 13.19), demanding of King Saul the complete extirpation of the Amalekites. For, as

¹⁸² Quoted in Shturman, *Gorodu i Miru* (To the City and the World), New York: Tretia Vol'na, 1988, pp. 327, 333-334.

¹⁸³ Aksyuchits, *op. cit.*, pp. 111-112.

¹⁸⁴ Soloviev, quoted by Borisov, V., "Natsional'noe vozrozhdenie i natsia-lichnost'" ("National Regeneration and the Nation-Person"), in Solzhenitsyn, *op. cit.*, p. 208).

¹⁸⁵ Metropolitan Philaret, *Sochinenia* (Collected Works), volume II.

¹⁸⁶ Shturman, *op. cit.*, p. 334.

Jesus the son of Sirach writes, “the Lord plucks out the roots of nations... He removes some of them and destroys them, and puts an end to their memory on the earth” (Sirach 10.15, 17). In both Old and New Testament times we see nations, such as the Assyrians, who rise and fall so rapidly that it seems as if their only purpose was to chastise the people of God and then disappear once this purpose was accomplished. For, as the Lord says through the Prophet Isaiah: “Shall the axe vaunt itself over Him Who hews it?” (Isaiah 10.15)).

But in every age there have been those who have fled from their doomed nation and joined themselves to the nation that lives for ever, such as Rahab the Canaanite or Ruth the Moabite or Cornelius the Centurion or Prince Peter of the Tatar horde. And if that doomed nation can be said to be eternal, it is only in the persons of these rare individuals who renounced it. For in them alone is the word fulfilled: “All the nations whom Thou hast made shall come and shall worship before Thee, O Lord, and shall glorify Thy name” (Psalms 85.9).

Even those Orthodox nations which have over the centuries evolved a collective personality that can be termed essentially Christian and therefore eternal by nature have to struggle to preserve that personality to the end. Thus “the glory that was Greece” will remain a phrase in the past mode if the Greeks exchange the truly “great idea” (megali idea) of Christian Rome for the petty nationalism of a neo-pagan Greece. And Serbia will become “greater” only in the territorial sense if she abandons the universalist vision of St. Savva.

4. The Russian Nation

All these themes acquire a burning relevance when we approach the maelstroms of nationalist passion that are the former Yugoslavia and the former Soviet Union today. From what we have already said we can safely make the following generalizations:-

(1) The causes of the nationalist conflicts in these areas are at root spiritual, rather than psychological or economic. This is particularly obvious in Bosnia, where the three warring parties share a common language, blood and territory. Historically speaking, the Serbs, Croats and Muslim Bosnians acquired different national identities only on the basis of the fact that they confessed different religions – Orthodoxy, Catholicism and Islam, respectively. And even if they often now seem to be fighting out of blood-hatred or for the sake of territorial gain, it is clear that a radical resolution of their differences can come about only by going to the root of what made them different in the first place – their religion.

(2) The internationalist solutions imposed by the communists Lenin and Tito, and sanctioned by “the international community”, have proved to be not only failures, but have actually exacerbated the problems. In a sense these were religious, and therefore appropriately radical “solutions”, insofar as the nations were supposed to come together on the basis of a common confession of a religion – the atheist religion of Marxism-Leninism. But since that religion was false, the passions it tried to heal were not healed. For it is only “the leaves of the tree of life” – that is, Christ – which “are for the healing of the nations” (Revelation 22.2).

(3) When the international community saw that its internationalist solutions were failing, it proposed the opposite and still more dangerous “cure” based on the principle of national self-determination. For, as Milorad Ekmečić writes, “the present Yugoslav crisis is the result of efforts by the countries of the European Union and the United States to aid separatism in the Catholic regions of the former Yugoslav state and thereby facilitate their inclusion in a future federal European state... [But] the right to self-determination was taken away from the Serbian people...”¹⁸⁷

Let us now look a little more closely at what the West sees as the “problem” of Russian nationalism... Since there can be no solution to any national problem unless there is an understanding of the nation in question, we must first try and penetrate to the mystery of the Russian national identity. And this is no easy task if we look only at Russia in this century; for in our century Russia has passed from theocracy to democracy to satanocracy to democracy again, from multi-national empire to anti-national anti-empire to nation-state. And yet from a longer historical viewpoint the perplexities disappear: “the Russian idea” is – Orthodoxy.

For the Russians are sharply distinguished from other great Christian nations, such as the Greeks and the Romans, by the fact that almost their entire history has been Orthodox Christian. And this has been a great advantage for them in defining themselves; for whereas, as we have seen, the Greeks have often had a problem in deciding which is more essentially Greek – their pagan past or their Christian past, for the Russians there has been no contest: at least until 1917, the Russian soul was an Orthodox Christian one. It is as if the pagan Russian past had not existed: it was an obscure period of “pre-history” swallowed up in the blinding light of the primal act of her true history – her baptism at the hands of the enlightener of Russia, the holy Great-Prince Vladimir. And Vladimir himself, by his dramatic and complete conversion from savage, lustful paganism to self-sacrificial Christianity, symbolized the rebirth that had taken place in the Russian soul. This was no tentative, half-hearted conversion, but a complete change of spirit; and so it was with the Russian people as a whole.

Thus whatever other temptations Russia has had to endure since her Baptism in 988, a full-scale return to paganism was not one of them – until the critical turning-point of 1917. Paganism in Russia was comparatively weak, disorganized and, above all, provincial. It was no match for the superior civilization and universalist grace and power of the Christian Gospel, supported as it was both by the political power and charisma of St. Vladimir and by the spiritual power of the Great Church of Constantinople at her height.

The history of the Baptism of Russia explains many of the antinomies which Berdyaev and others have seen in the Russian soul.

¹⁸⁷ Ekmečić, “The historical aspect of the Serbian question in the Yugoslav crisis”, *Balkan News*, May 22-28, 1994, p. 2.

First, the speed and completeness with which the Baptism of Russia unified all the widely-scattered and hitherto disunited tribes of the Eastern Slavs, Finno-Ungrians and others goes some of the way to explaining why religion, the spiritual realm, is, and continues to be, so important in the Russian land, as opposed to the more worldly and material factors which have served to unite other nations and which have therefore played a greater role in their subsequent development. It was religion that united the Russian land. Only religion could have united the Russian land. Only religion will reunite the Russian land. Therefore it is in terms of religion that Russians see themselves and their relationship to other nations. In a perverse kind of way, this is true even of the Soviet period, when Russia seemed to lose her religion. For it was then as if the Apostle Paul returned to being the persecutor Saul without losing his burning zeal for religion.

On the other hand, the great importance which St. Vladimir played in the Baptism – for it was indeed a conversion of the people “from the top down” – laid the foundations for the very powerful development of a centralized State in Russia, and the close links between the monarchy and the Church – closer, probably, than in any other Christian nation. Thus in the Russian soul, spirituality and statehood, the Cross and the Crown, are not felt to be the opposites that they have tended to become in the West; for it was the Crown, in the person of St. Vladimir, that won Russia for the Cross, and the Russian people have continued to see in the will of the Tsar the expression of the will of God.

As St. Barsanuphius of Optina said: “The devotion of the Orthodox Russian people to their Tsars is not at all the same as the devotion of the western peoples to their sovereigns. According to modern western conceptions, the sovereign is nothing other than a representative of his people – and the western peoples love their representatives and willingly submit to them when they faithfully carry out this mission, or when by the power of their genius they draw the people after them and blind them by the brilliance of glory and state power, like Napoleon in France and Frederick in Prussia [and, we might add, Mussolini in Italy and Hitler in Germany]; but this love is self-serving and egoistical. In the West it is themselves that the people love in their sovereigns. If the king by his personal character is unable to be the faithful reflection and representative of the will of the people and the strivings, ideas and passions that rule in it, then they restrict and constrict his will by means of constitutional vices. But if the king does not submit to these attempts, and is unable to submit to the taste and character of his subjects, then he is deprived not only of the love of the people, but also of the throne, as it was with Charles X and Louis-Philippe and the Sardinian king Albert.

“It is not at all like that with us in Russia: our Tsar is the representative of the will of God, and not the people’s will. His will is sacred for us, as the will of the Anointed of God; we love him because we love God. If the Tsar gives us glory and prosperity, we receive it from him as a Mercy of God. But if we are overtaken by humiliation and poverty, we bear them with meekness and humility, as a heavenly punishment for our iniquities, and never do we falter in our love for, and devotion to, the Tsar, as long as

they proceed from our Orthodox religious convictions, our love and devotion to God."¹⁸⁸

A second antimony in the Russian soul which is largely explained by the history of the Baptism of Russia is the contrast between the Russians' great receptiveness to foreigners and foreign ideas, on the one hand, and their great pride in their own country, on the other.

For, on the one hand, the Baptism of Russia came from outside; Russia received its faith, literature and almost its entire civilization from the hands of Greeks and Bulgarians. For, as we have seen, the Christian faith and Christian civilization in Russia did not have to contend with a powerful and highly developed native pagan tradition, as it did in Greece and Rome. Hence the innate respect for foreigners, who brought to Russia almost everything that the Russians treasure in themselves.

On the other hand, no nation has more thoroughly absorbed the Christian Gospel than the Russians. In spite of sins and falls, to which every Christian nation has succumbed, the Russians have equalled their foreign teachers in their devotion to Christ, as is witnessed by the extraordinary abundance of their saints and martyrs – not least in the Soviet period, when the Russian Church added many times more martyrs to the Heavenly Church than the 350,000 which, according to the menologia, were acquired by the whole Church from the time of the Apostles.¹⁸⁹ And for this reason the Russians feel justly proud of their country.

These two antinomies of the Russian soul – spirituality and statehood, and universality and nationalism – have marked the whole history of Russia. At particular times, one or the other pole of the antimony has become more dominant, but only temporarily. Thus if we examine the spirituality-statehood antimony, we note that during the later Kievan period, and under the Mongol yoke, the centralizing state disappeared and centrifugal forces appeared in the Russian lands. And this went together with a decrease in spiritual power. However, the revival of spirituality associated with the name of St. Sergius of Radonezh in the fourteenth century also led to the revival of a powerful centralized state in the form of Moscow. Again, the centralized state collapsed during the Time of Troubles at the end of the sixteenth century, when the Poles conquered Moscow and placed a Catholic tsar, the false Dmitri, on the throne. But a revival of faith and courage led by St. Hermogen, patriarch of Moscow, led to the restoration of the monarchy under the Romanov dynasty which survived until the revolution. Finally, a still steeper decline in spirituality led to the revolution and the collapse of the Russian state in 1917.

With regard to the second, universality-nationalism antimony, we see a similar pattern. Generally speaking, the Kievan period may be described as broadly universalist, the Muscovite period increasingly nationalist, and the Petersburg period again universalist. But as long as the dominant religion and ethos of the state and

¹⁸⁸ Schema-Archimandrite Barsanuphius, *Kelejni Zapiski (Cell-Notes)*, Moscow, 1991, p. 16.

¹⁸⁹ See Archbishop Anthony of Los Angeles, "The Glorification of the New Martyrs of Russia is our Sacred Moral Duty", *Orthodox Life*, vol. 29, № 3, May-June, 1979, p. 31.

people remained Orthodox Christianity, the poles of this antimony were kept in balance, and extremists, such as the anti-national universalist Socialists or the anti-universalist nationalist Old Believers, remained on the borders of society.

5. Modern Russian Nationhood

However, the revolution of 1917 destroyed the balance of antinomies in the Russian idea and introduced what was in essence a quite different idea, the Soviet idea, corresponding to the emergence of a new nation, the Soviet nation.

The balance between spirituality and statehood was destroyed by the complete dominance of the state in all spheres of life and the attempted complete destruction of the Orthodox Church and spirituality. Of course, the Soviet Union was not without a spirituality of its own, but it was a demonic spirituality, a spirituality that exalted "history" over morality, the flesh over the spirit, hatred over love. It was a state possessed by demons, like the town of Dostoyevsky's prophetic novel, *The Demons*.

The balance between universalism and nationalism was also destroyed. Everything that was native and Russian was despised and trampled on; the very word "Russia" was removed; and the leaders of the revolution were almost all non-Russians who hated Russia. In the place of the ideas and traditions of the Russians were introduced the ideas and traditions of the West carried to their logical and absurd conclusions. Of course, the Soviet regime claimed to be internationalist; but in actual fact it was rigorously anti-nationalist, and was aimed at the destruction of all national cultures – first of all the Russian and Orthodox cultures, and then all the others, Catholic, Protestant, Muslim and pagan. Only in the "the Great Patriotic War", as the Soviets deceptively called it, was a perverted form of Russian nationalism reintroduced in order to save the state against German Fascism – only to be vigorously suppressed again after the danger had passed.

The revolution therefore presented, as Solzhenitsyn has eloquently argued, an almost complete break in the history and spiritual identity of the Russian nation.¹⁹⁰

¹⁹⁰ Thus, refuting the thesis put forward by Professor Tucker "that the Stalinist period of the Communist leviathan was created by a borrowing from the 16th and 18th centuries of Russian history", Solzhenitsyn writes: "Is it really a scientific argument that Stalin, in order to crush the heads of his enemies and terrorize the population, needed the example of Ivan the Terrible? He wouldn't have thought it up without the Terrible? Does world history offer few examples of tyranny? The deep recognition that a tyrant must keep the people in terror could have been gleaned by Stalin from a primary schoolbook on general history, or perhaps - from the history of Georgian feudalism, or still earlier - from his own wicked and malicious nature: something which he understood from birth, and which he didn't have to read about anywhere. Or, writes Tucker: the GULAG derives from forced labour under Peter I, - it seems that forced labour was invented in Russia! But why not from the Egyptian Pharaohs? Or nearer to our age: democratic England, France and Holland used forced labour in their colonies, and the USA - even on its own territory, and they were all later than Peter... When Dostoyevsky's 'Notes from the Dead House' first appeared in translation in England (1881), one of the leading journals [*The Athenaeum*, № 2788, April 2, 1881, p. 455] noted the absence of severity which 'would have terrified an English gaoler'. Another ancient Russian trait is declared to be the seizure of territory - though England's seizures were greater, and France's only a little less. Does that mean that the English and French peoples are rapacious by nature? Yet nonetheless the kolkhozes - the universal Socialist idea of the commune - are explained as a manifestation of Russian serfdom.

"Is it really scientific method to affirm the transfer of methods of administration and institutions over four centuries - in the absence of any concrete bearers, transmitters, parties, classes, persons, right through the total annihilation of all social institutions in 1917, - some mystical transfer, evidently, through genes in the blood? (Or, as Professor Dalin expresses it more elegantly, - 'something in the Russian soil, created by inheritance or the environment'.) And yet at the same time 'not to notice' the direct inheritance over 5-10 years of all the necessary traditions and ready-made institutions from Lenin and Trotsky of that same Cheka-GPU-NKVD, those same 'troikas' instead of a court (was that also there under Alexander III?), that same (already present) GULAG, that same article 58, that same mass terror, that same party, that same ideology - within the bounds of the same generation and through living carriers who were good at killing both there and here, and that same principle of industrialization (suppress the people's need even to eat by heavy industry) which was promoted by Trotsky? (The 'ambiguity' in Lenin and Trotsky's inheritance, which Dalin is looking for, does not exist).

"I refuse to ascribe such improbable blindness to Professor Tucker! I am forced to see in this a conscious effort to whitewash the Communist regime, as if all its diabolical crimes and institutions generally did not exist, but were created later by Stalin, who as if 'destroyed' Bolshevism, - and which were derived, it is said, from Russian tradition. What is this 'revolution from above' (Tucker uses a well-worn Marxist term) that Stalin is supposed to have accomplished? He honourably and consistently deepened and strengthened the Leninist inheritance he acquired in all its forms. But even if Tucker (and the many who think like him) succeeded in demonstrating the impossible: that the Cheka, the revolutionary tribunals, the institution of hostages, the robbery of the people, the total enforced unanimity of opinions, the party ideology and dictatorship were taken not from their own Communists and not from the Jacobins, but from Ivan IV and Peter I. - Tucker would still have to cut through 'Russian tradition'. The point is that for the national thinkers of Russia both these Tsars were an object of derision, and not of admiration, while the people's consciousness and folklore decisively condemned the first as an evildoer and the second as an antichrist. That Peter I tried to destroy Russian life, customs, consciousness and national character, and suppressed religion (and met with rebellions from the people) - is clear to see, everyone knows about it.

"Is this ancient Russian tradition really: Communist subversive activity activity throughout the world, the system of economic sabotage, ideological corruption, terror and revolutions? Today's Central Asian boiling point allows us to understand the difference. Yes, the Bukhara emirate (not Afghanistan) was seized by Russia - in that same 19th century when all the democratic countries of Europe were permitting themselves, with moral light-mindedness, to make any conquests. (England, too, attempted, but without success, to take Afghanistan.) I am sad and ashamed that my country participated in the general European forcible subjection of weak peoples. But during the 50 years of the Russian protectorate in Central Asia there was peace: religion, everyday life, personal freedom was not suppressed - and there were no movements to rebel. But hardly had Lenin seized power, when from 1921 he prepared, under the guise of a 'revolutionary federation', the seizure of Turkey, Persia and Afghanistan. And from 1922, in the Khiva and Bukhara areas, in response to Communist methods there exploded a Mohammedan war of revolt, as today in Afghanistan, which lasted for 10 years, and which was put down already in Stalin's time with ruthless reprisals against the population. That's the 'tradition' which produced the invasion of Afghanistan...

"From the fact that Communism is an international phenomenon does it follow that all national traits or circumstances are completely excluded? Not at all, for Communism has to work on living earth, in the midst of a concrete people, and willy-nilly has to use its language (distorting it for its own ends). In China they persecute wall-posters, in the USSR - samizdat. The Russian urban population was forcibly expelled to work in the potato fields, and the Cuban - to work in the sugar plantations. In the USSR the population was annihilated by exile into the tundra, and in Cambodia - into the jungle. In Yugoslavia the manoeuvre was performed in one way: Tito successfully carried out mass killings in 1945, - and then dressed up in sheep's clothing so as to get Western aid. Ceaucescu won his share of independence in foreign affairs in a virtuoso manner - but through the strengthening of the internal totalitarian spirit by more than 100%. According to East German Communism it is clear that the country must not be united, but according to North Korean it is equally clear that it must... Is it not clear to all that neither in Estonia, nor in Poland, nor in Mongolia and nowhere at any time has Communism served the national interests? Communist governments are not squeamish about making an addition to Communist propaganda - why not make clever use of nationalism? But

Far from being a logical continuation of the Russian idea, as some have argued, it was a complete denial of that idea. So what the Mongols in the 13th century, the Judaizers in the 15th, the Poles in the 16th and 17th, and even the westernizing reforms of Peter the Great in the 18th centuries had failed to achieve was achieved by Lenin and Stalin.

In view of this, it is only natural to regard the revival of Russian national and religious feeling that began in the 1970s and gathered pace in the 80s and 90s as a lawful and healthy reaction to the nightmare of the Soviet period, and the only sure and organically based path to the restoration of Russia as the great and civilized nation she was before it. However, there is a view that is widely held both in the West and in Russia that this national-religious renaissance of Russia is in fact the greatest possible threat to the civilized world. According to this view, the nationalisms of the small countries of the former Soviet Union - of the Baltic states, of the Ukraine, of the Caucasian and Central Asian republics - are only right and natural; but the nationalism of Russia - the nation which suffered most from Communism, while offering the strongest opposition to it - is somehow of a quite different, and much more sinister nature, involving a kind of mixture between Communism and Fascism which has been given the name "National Bolshevism".

The main critic of "National Bolshevism" in the Gorbachev period, Alexander Yanov, argued that all Russian nationalism, whether religious or irreligious, was irremediably inclined towards authoritarianism, and that all Russian regimes since Ivan the Terrible, including those of Lenin and Stalin, were simply phases (reform, counter-reform or stagnation) of a single, cyclically recurring authoritarian idea, which he called "the Russian idea". Soviet society under Gorbachev, said Yanov, was going through a reform phase of the cycle, which, if encouraged and not allowed, as on all previous occasions, to stagnate, might lead to a breaking of the cycle altogether and the introduction of "real" civilization, i.e. Western-style democracy, into Russia. If, on the other hand, this anti-Western, anti-semitic (as he claimed) Russian nationalism were allowed to triumph, this would represent a turning of the cycle towards counter-reform, i.e. the transformation and revitalization of the Soviet State into a neo-Fascist monster. For the sake of the peace of the world, said Yanov, this must be prevented.¹⁹¹

It would be foolish to deny that the creation in Russia of a National Bolshevik state is both possible and even likely. As we have noted, the Soviet state was able to yoke in its defence a perverted form of Russian nationalism in the Second World War, and this could well happen again. As long as there exist people of a basically Soviet mentality whose knowledge of Russian history and true Russian spirituality is

does that mean that 'Communism is different in every country'? No, it is identical everywhere: everywhere it is totalitarian, everywhere it suppresses the personality, the conscience, and even annihilates life, everywhere it uses ideological terror and everywhere it is aggressive: the final goal of world Communism, of all kinds of Communism - is to seize the whole planet, including America..." (Solzhenitsyn, A. "Imet' Muzhestvo Videt'" ("Having the Courage to See"), *Russkoe Vozrozhdenie* (Russian Regeneration), (IV), № 12, 1980, pp.13-14)

¹⁹¹ Yanov, *The Russian Challenge*. Oxford: Blackwells, 1987.

meagre, the possibility will exist of their claiming that their essentially Soviet "spirituality" is a continuation and incarnation of "the Russian idea".¹⁹²

But it is a grave mistake to label all Russian nationalists and patriots as "National Bolsheviks", still more to think that the whole of Russian history is simply a recurring cycle of authoritarianism interspersed with brief and insecure periods of relative democracy. And in fact Yanov's thesis is itself an example of the Soviet type of thinking which he claims to be warning against. For this is precisely the distorted view of Russian history which the West began to develop in the nineteenth century, which was taken over by the Russian omogenisati liberals, and which then became the justification for the Russian revolution. The truth is that the true Russian nationalism is inextricably bound up with Orthodoxy. So the way to avert "National Bolshevism" is to revive the true Russian nationalism - that is, to regenerate Russian Orthodoxy.

A healthier - and more typical - example of Russian religious nationalism is represented by the thought of Vladimir Osipov. We may recall that Osipov considered that four elements go to make up a nation - faith, blood, language and land. But he accepted that the most important of these elements was the faith: "Christ and His teachings are in the final analysis more important for me than nationalism."

At the same time he recognized at the time he was writing - over 20 years ago - that the national element in the Russian religious-national movement was more important than the religious: "I know the soul of the contemporary Russian: the national principle is at the moment more clear and alive for him than the religious principle. Hence patriotism, national self-consciousness and self-respect provide at the moment the only reliable bridge to moral, cultural and biological salvation."¹⁹³

The question then arises: has this position changed now, in 1994?

Of course, the existence of such extreme and perverted forms of Russian nationalism as the society Pamyat' and the party of Vladimir Zhirinovskiy indicates that at least a part of the Russian national movement has remained incorrigibly chauvinist. Moreover, the official Russian Orthodox Church, the Moscow Patriarchate, is still led by KGB agents from the Brezhnev era whose opportunism and lack of real spirituality is proven beyond reasonable doubt.¹⁹⁴ Just as these hierarchs enthusiastically embraced "Leninist norms" and "Soviet patriotism" in the 1970s and 80s, and then democracy and westernism in the early 1990s, so now they are quite capable of changing again into Zhirinovskiy-type Russian nationalists. And if the majority of the Russian Orthodox people follow them, the outlook is indeed bleak. For then we shall see the emergence of an unholy alliance between a National Bolshevik state and a "Soviet Orthodox" Church which will be a cruel caricature of the true Russian theocracy.

¹⁹² Aksyuchits, "Zapadniki i Pochvenniki Segodnia" ("Westerners and Indigenists Today"), *Vestnik Khristianskogo Informatsionnogo Tsentra* (Bulletin of the Christian Information Centre), № 30, September 22, 1989.

¹⁹³ Quoted in Walters, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

¹⁹⁴ See Potapov, Protopriest V. "Molchaniem predaetsa Bog" ("God is Betrayed by Silence"), Moscow: Isikhiya, 1992.

If, however, such a caricature does come to power, it is not likely to last long, but will be destroyed as its expansion comes up against the power of stronger nations, such as China or America. And then, through the prayers of the millions of new martyrs of the Soviet period, a resurrection of Holy Russia led by a truly Orthodox Tsar will take place. Of this, as New Hieromartyr John of Latvia, one of the many non-Russians who acquired sanctity as a citizen of Holy Russia, said, "we can and must be convinced".

In the meantime, the social basis for this resurrection can be prepared by a gradual national-religious regeneration of Russian society from below, under the leadership, not of the Moscow Patriarchate, but of the truly Orthodox Church. Kartashev has indicated how such a regeneration of society from below could proceed: "Through the Christian transfiguration of the 'inner man', by itself, gradually and imperceptibly, the whole environment in which the spiritually renewed Christian lives and acts – society, culture, the State – will be transfigured. The latter live and develop according to their own natural laws, which are exterior for Christianity, but can be subjected to its influences and, if only to a certain degree, transfigured. In the last analysis they are impenetrable for Christianity, for they are foreign by their nature. They are categories, not of a spiritual, but of a cosmic, order. The Lord opposed Himself to 'this world', and the apostle of love commanded us 'not to love this world'. The category 'society' is of 'this world', and for that reason the Christian heart must not cleave to it. Social life is a certain mechanism of the concatenation of personalities and is fatally subject to a certain mechanical conformity with law, which is foreign to the kingdom of spiritual freedom – that is, the Christian religion, the Church. Being a true member of this mystical society, the individual Christian, and through him the whole Church, is 'spiritually-automatically', inwardly, imperceptibly enlightening, exalting and transfiguring external, sinful society. All other methods except this, which goes from the depths of the personal transfiguration of the spirit, are non-Christian methods."¹⁹⁵

Aksyuchits writes: "The essence of what we are living through now could be expressed in the words: we as a nation have suffered a deep spiritual fall – we have renounced God, which is also to say, the meaning of life. But in spite of the 'common sense' of history, we have not been finally annihilated, we are still alive and have the chance of living on and being regenerated. But this is possible only if we become ourselves in our best qualities, and again bring to light the muddied image of God in ourselves.

"Being at the bottom of a historical funnel, we as a fact of our lives have acquired the possibility of seeing in the past of Russia not only a series of errors and vices, but also the image of a renewed, transfigured Russia, and the contours of that ideal which the Russian people was giving birth to in torments, and to which it was striving in spite of all sins and falls. There were moments in the history of Russia when the Russian idea shone forth with an unfading light – this was the light, above all, of Russian sanctity. There were periods when the idea of a national calling was eclipsed

¹⁹⁵ Kartashev, A. "Lichnoe i Obschestvennoe Spasenie vo Khriste" ("Personal and Social Salvation in Christ"), *Russkoe Vozrozhdenie* (Russian Regeneration), 1984 (II), № 26, pp. 26-34.

and consigned to oblivion. But it was never cut off entirely, but was enriched by the tragic experience of history. And this unbroken line is the line of our life, it is the ordinance of God concerning the Russian people from generation to generation. And only the living spirit of this theandric ordinance, only the assimilation of the Russian idea gives us as a people and each one of us as a personality the possibility of holding out, surviving and transfiguring our lives..."¹⁹⁶

This truly Christian Russian nationalism is found especially among the holy new martyrs and confessors of Russia. For example, during the 1970s the great wonderworker nicknamed the "Tsar of Mordovia", Hieromonk Michael Yershov, after half a century in the Soviet camps and psychiatric torture-hospitals still retained a burning faith in the resurrection of Russia. And Eugene Vagin, who met Fr. Michael, reported that this faith was common to all the members of his Church: "All members of this Church, even the 'uneducated', are characterized by a special suffering over the fate of Russia, which is placed by them in the center of all the world's events (this is often interpreted in a very original way, always in apocalyptic, eschatological tones). Their 'Russianness' is not set aggressively against other nations and peoples, but is accepted inwardly and in confidential conversations, as a sign of a 'special chosenness'. I have often heard in their midst the old proverb applied to the fate of Russia: 'Whom the Lord loves more, He makes to suffer more.'..."¹⁹⁷

This faith in the chosenness of the Russian people by no means implies a blindness to her faults. On the contrary, Russia, in the understanding of the Catacomb Church, is suffering so much now precisely because by her actions she has rejected her great calling. For with a great calling go great responsibilities.

The Russian religious philosopher I.A. Ilyin described the true patriotism as follows: "To love one's people and believe in her, to believe that she will overcome all historical trials and will arise from collapse purified and sobered – does not mean to close one's eyes to her weaknesses and imperfections, perhaps even her vices. To accept one's people as the incarnation of the fullest and highest perfection on earth would be pure vainglory, sick nationalist conceit. The real patriot sees not only the spiritual paths of his people, but also her temptations, weaknesses and imperfections. Spiritual love generally is not given to groundless idealization, but sees soberly and with extreme acuteness. To love one's people does not mean to flatter her or conceal from her her weak sides, but honourably and courageously criticize them and tirelessly struggle with them."¹⁹⁸

6. The National Ideas

Finally, we may ask the question which still worries many: is the Russian idea, even when purified of all Soviet dross, really compatible with the national ideas of other nations – the Jews, for example, or the Chinese, or the Americans?

¹⁹⁶ Aksyuchits, V. "Russkaia Idea" ("The Russian Idea"), *Vybor (The Choice)*, № 3, pp. 191-192.

¹⁹⁷ I.M. Andreev, *Russia's Catacomb Saints*, Platina, Ca.: St. Herman of Alaska Brotherhood, 1982, p. 562.

¹⁹⁸ Ilyin, *Put' dukhovnogo obnovenia* (The Path of Spiritual Renovation); quoted by Fr. Victor Potapov in *Put' Dukhovnogo Obnovenia Rossii* (The Path of the Spiritual Regeneration of Russia), p. 5 (MS).

Of course, the answer to this question does not depend only on the nature of the Russian idea, but also on the natures of the other national ideas. And even if the answer to the question may be “no” in a particular instance, we should not assume that the fault must lie with the Russian idea. Thus the Jewish idea, as we have seen, is in essence hostile to the ideas of all other nations, being in essence chauvinist and racist. Again, the Chinese idea is similar in essence to the ideas of the ancient pagan satanocracies, and is now allied with the definitely satanic idea of Communism. Even the American idea, in spite of the altruistic assertions of successive presidents, is felt by many nations as a threat to their own national identity; for “making the world safe for democracy” means making the world unsafe for those for whom democracy is not the supreme ideal.

The Russian idea is in essence the Orthodox Christian idea. It is the idea that the whole of society, from the structure of the state to the personal lives of every citizen, should be subordinate to Christ in the Orthodox Church. As such, it is not chauvinist, but universalist; for Orthodoxy, even in its national incarnations, is a universal faith.

Is it expansionist? Insofar as all universalisms have an implicitly messianic character, it is spiritually expansionist – that is, it seeks to altruistically communicate the truth of its own idea to other nations. But spiritual expansionism is a process of peaceful persuasion, and entails physical expansionism only in certain circumstances. Russia (as opposed to the Soviet Union) has never forcibly annexed any Orthodox territory to itself with the exception of Bessarabia in 1812. Even the annexation of Georgia in 1801 took place only after the repeated requests of Georgian princes over the course of more than two centuries. And the liberation of Romania, Bulgaria and Serbia in the late nineteenth century was just that – a liberation, not an annexation.

As regards non-Orthodox nations, the situation is more complex. Russia first began to expand eastwards in the sixteenth century, and this took place partly through the peaceful colonization of sparsely inhabited areas, as in the Russian north and Siberia, and partly through military conquest, as in Ivan the Terrible’s conquest of Kazan. However, it must be remembered that the wars against the Tatars were wars against the former conquerors of Russia herself, and the Golden Horde continued for many centuries to be a threat to the existence of Russia both physically and spiritually. With regard to the West – to the Poles, the Swedes, the French and the Germans – Russia’s wars have almost always been defensive in character, involving the recapture of Russian lands with large Russian populations whose spiritual and physical identity was most definitely under the most serious threat. Only very rarely has Russia embarked upon a purely offensive war; and as Henry Kissinger has remarked, “Russia has exhibited a curious phenomenon: almost every offensive war that it has fought has ended badly, and every defensive war victoriously – a paradox.”¹⁹⁹ A paradox, perhaps; but one with a clear explanation: when Russia has fought in defence of her Orthodox Christian idea, the Lord has given her victory, withdrawing His support only when she has betrayed that idea. Therefore as long as Russia remains true to her

¹⁹⁹ Kissinger, “Russian and American Interests after the Cold War,” in Sestanovich, S. (ed.) *Rethinking Russia's National Interests*. Washington, D.C.: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1994, p. 3.

idea, we can expect her to come into conflict with other nations only when that idea is itself under threat. At the present time, that idea is not yet incarnate within Russia herself; for neither Soviet Russia, nor Democratic Russia, nor Zhirinovskiy's Russia is the true Russia - Holy Russia. But as the true and holy Russia struggles to surface from under the rubble of forces and ideologies alien to herself, we can expect a reaction from her enemies.

First, and most immediately, there is the conflict between the Russian idea and the Muslim idea - two universalisms which have struggled with each other for many centuries and whose radical incompatibility is evident to any unprejudiced observer. Conflicts between the present Russian regime and the Muslim world are already present in Bosnia, in the Caucasus and in Central Asia - and these conflicts are likely to intensify if the present regime is succeeded by either a National Bolshevik or a truly Orthodox one. For the pseudo-theocracy of Islam is expansionist in both the spiritual and physical senses, and will always be tempted to undertake a jihad or "holy war" against the Orthodox Christian theocracy.

Secondly, there is an inherent conflict between the Russian idea and the chauvinist ideas of certain western states, such as the Baltic states and Ukraine, on the one hand, and the democratic ideas of other western states, such as America, on the other. In the former case, large Russian minorities (over 25 million all told) feel under threat, and almost any kind of Russian regime, including the present democratic one, will feel obliged to protect their interests. The problem is exacerbated by the use which the universalist Catholic idea of the Vatican is making of these chauvinisms in order to drive out Russian Orthodoxy - in Western Ukraine, Orthodoxy has already been almost completely destroyed. As regards the democratic states, these have both supported the chauvinist states against Russia, and have themselves contributed further to the disintegration and polarization of Russian society by encouraging the premature introduction of the omogenis processes of the free market and unrestrained party warfare. And in the wake of the American capitalists have come the no less dangerous hordes of American Protestant evangelists with their openly anti-Orthodox message.

Thirdly, there is bound to come a conflict between Russia and China. Already in the early 1960s a gulf opened up between the world's two largest communist satanocracies, and now China, while keeping the communist regime intact, has embarked on an ambitious, and so far very successful programme of economic liberalization which is making her more powerful than ever. It would be ironic - but also poetic and Divine justice - if the final death-blow to Sovietism, whether in its internationalist or nationalist form, should come in a war with the greatest achievement of Soviet messianism.

In his famous "Pushkin speech", Dostoyevsky emphasized the "proclivity for universal susceptibility and all-reconciliation" of the Russian soul²⁰⁰, as opposed to the narrow egoism of the non-Orthodox European nations. This judgement has been mocked by many, of various nations, who prefer to see in Russia the precise opposite.

²⁰⁰ Dostoyevsky, F. *The Diary of a Writer*, Haslemere: Ianmead, 1984, p. 961

However, as a westerner by blood and education who has become Russian Orthodox by faith, the present writer believes that Dostoyevsky's judgement is correct and contains a challenge, not only for Russians who might wish to distort the Russian idea in a democratic or chauvinist direction, but also for the West.

This challenge might be formulated as follows. If you truly want a true, and not a false peace, and a real, and not an illusory harmony of nations, then you have nothing to fear from Russia becoming herself once again. On the contrary, since the Russian idea is universal and true, being in essence the idea that the Creator and King of the nations has for all the nations, you should embrace it yourselves! For the Orthodox Christian idea, which has become the Russian idea, can also become the Jewish, and the American, and the Chinese idea, with each nation bringing its own physical and psychological individuality and talents to the service of every other nation, and the King of the nations, Christ God. For of His Kingdom and Nation on earth, the Orthodox Church, the Lord says: "Your gates shall be open continually; day and night they shall not be shut; that men may bring to you the wealth of the nations, with their kings led in procession. For the nation and kingdom that will not serve you shall perish; those nations shall be utterly laid waste..." (Isaiah 60.11-12).

7. THE EUROPEAN UNION: A NEW TOTALITARIANISM?

Stealthily, unnoticed even by the great majority of its own citizens, a totalitarian monster has been born in the heart of Western Europe. Although this monster, the European Union, is the creation of a group of democratic states and is situated in the heartland of modern democracy, it has already to a large extent superseded the process of democratic decision-making in the member states and replaced it by an unelected body, the European Commission, which, together with the equally unelected European Court, has the power to issue directives that override all national legislation and which is steadily penetrating every nook and cranny of the political, economic, social and religious life of the member states, from the permitted shape of cucumbers to the date of Pascha. Moreover, the Maastricht treaty of 1992 legislated that by 1997 a single European Currency would be created run by a single (again unelected) European Bank - an institution the creation of which, in the opinion of the president of the American Federal Reserve Bank, Alan Greenspan, must necessarily be accompanied by irreversible political union and the creation of a single European state.

When national sovereignty has gone and national parliaments become emasculated talking shops (a process that is already far advanced), only the European Parliament may perhaps have the power to withstand the power of the Commission-Politburo. However, all the indications are that the European Parliament, like the Soviet Central Committee, will be a toothless institution populated by people who have already imbibed the socialist spirit of the European institutions and enthusiastically accepted the ideology of the European super-state. The only real function of the European parliament, according to the well-known Anglo-French industrialist and politician, Sir James Goldsmith, "is to provide cover for the Commission"²⁰¹; and he argues that "at the moment the work of the European Parliament is overwhelmingly either a waste of time or downright destructive."²⁰²

Like all socialist revolutions, the modern European revolution claims to be democratic while actually working against the people and in secret from it. Thus Goldsmith writes: "The European Union was built in secret: not through carelessness or casualness, but in a deliberately planned and skilfully executed manner. Claude Cheysson, the former French Minister of Foreign Affairs and a member of the European Commission from 1985 to 1989, described the mechanism in an interview in *Le Figaro* on 7 May 1994. He explained proudly that the European Union could only have been constructed in the absence of democracy, and he went on to suggest that the present problems were the result of having mistakenly allowed a public debate on the merits of the Treaty of Maastricht.

"The British newspaper *The Guardian* lodged a case before the European Court of Justice in Luxembourg complaining of the secrecy in which European decisions were taken. Lawyers for the European Council of Ministers responded by stating to the judges that 'there is no principle of community law which gives citizens the right to

²⁰¹ Goldsmith, *The Trap*, London: Macmillan, 1994, p. 73.

²⁰² Goldsmith, *op. cit.*, p. 75.

EU documents.’ They went on to make the astounding claim that although heads of government had repeatedly called for more openness in EU affairs, their declarations ‘were of an eminently political nature and not binding on the community institutions’. So they asked the judges to ignore the repeated declarations at EU summit meetings in the past two years in favour of greater openness. Statements by the twelve heads of government were no more than ‘policy orientations’ and had no binding effect.

“This belief that the nomenklatura knows best and that the public is no more than a hindrance explains why there now exists a profound and dangerous divorce between European societies and their governing elites.”²⁰³

This should come as no surprise to those who have studied history; for history shows that the power “of the people, by the people, for the people” always eventually gives birth to the power of *one* man or oligarchy – *over* the people and *against* the people. Thus the English revolution of 1642 gave birth to the dictatorship of Cromwell. And the French revolution of 1789 gave birth to the dictatorship of Napoleon. And the Russian revolution of 1917 gave birth to the dictatorship of Lenin and Stalin. There is no reason why the quiet European-wide revolution that began with the Treaty of Rome in 1956 should not similarly give birth to the dictatorship of a European Antichrist.

If we go still further back in history, then we shall find a very interesting, and alarming, parallel to the modern European Union – the ninth-century empire of Charlemagne, which covered the same territory as the core nations of the modern European Union and whose capital, Aachen, is not far from the modern European capital of Brussels.

The empire was born on Christmas Day, 800, when Pope Leo III crowned Charlemagne as “Holy Roman Emperor”. This was not simply the birth of another Christian kingdom, but a direct challenge to the authority of the Eastern Roman Empire and the latter’s claim to be the only Christian empire. From now on there would be two kingdoms claiming to be the one and only Christian Roman empire – and soon thereafter, two Churches claiming to be the one and only Holy Catholic Church.

In the course of the next century, the Carolingian empire declined in strength and eventually broke up into separate kingdoms which became the ancestors of the modern France, Germany and the Benelux countries. However, before it died the empire’s rebellious spirit was reincarnated in the heretical Roman papacy, which, in the persons of the first Frankish Popes Nicholas I and Gregory VII (Hildebrand), became the new, de facto “Holy Roman Empire”. In the Middle Ages, there were many attempts to revive the political structure of the “Holy Roman Empire” north of the Alps – but still under the leadership of the Pope. And in modern times it seemed more than once as if the Empire had indeed come to life again, notably when Napoleon conquered most of Europe and was crowned by the Pope, and when Hitler did the same with the acquiescence of the Pope. However, these attempts have always been

²⁰³ Goldsmith, op. cit., pp. 64-65.

foiled by the cooperation of two powers at the western and eastern extremities of Europe respectively – Britain and Russia.

Britain was never part of the Carolingian empire (although she retained good relations with it); and ever since her conquest by the Normans and with the blessing of Pope Gregory VII in 1066, she has viewed the formation of continental empires with suspicion. It is therefore significant that the greatest opposition to the socialist and totalitarian tendencies of the European Union within Europe has come from Britain. Indeed, Britain was not one of the founder-states of the European Community in 1956, and joined it in the 1970s only on the understanding that it would remain no more than a trading community and would never become a super-state. Just recently, the British people has woken up to the fact that it has been deceived, and that the price of remaining in this trading community is going to be the extinction of their centuries-old national sovereignty.

Although an urgent and furious debate is now taking place in the British parliament and within the country as a whole, it looks unlikely that the country will be able to free itself from the quicksands of European union. If even the iron-willed Mrs Thatcher failed, her weaker successor is hardly likely to succeed. And if, as again seems probable, the Socialists win the next election, they are committed to accepting a single European Currency with all the irreversible consequences for British national sovereignty that that implies.

The British government is now desperately trying to push through the enlargement of the EU to include the states of Central and Eastern Europe in the hope that the enormous task of integrating so many countries will prove beyond the capacity of the Brussels technocrats, who will be forced to concede more decentralization. However, the Europeans have turned the tables on the British by saying that enlargement from twelve to fifteen or over twenty states will require the abolition of each nation's right of veto (a right that the British Prime Minister has promised never to give up), otherwise decision-making will come to a halt if unanimity is required on every major decision. Thus it is quite possible that enlargement will actually lead to a diminution in the power of the member nations and a consequent increase in the power of Brussels.

European political union and enlargement will have profound effects on the life of the Orthodox nations of Eastern Europe. The difference in economic level between the richer countries in the north and west, and the poorer countries in the south and east, will lead to large-scale emigration in search of work from the poorer to the richer countries, with consequent large-scale unemployment and social disruption in the poorer countries. This can already be observed in Greece, which has been a member of the EU for some years. The problems are likely to be even worse in such countries as Bulgaria, Romania and Ukraine, which are not yet in the Union but which want to enter because they cannot sell their goods in the Union without access to the market that membership provides. The Treaty of Maastricht proposed to solve this problem with its special protocol on "Economic and Social Cohesion"; but this envisages typically socialist planning institutions and transfers of funds which have failed in the past and are not likely to succeed in the future.

The only country on the European mainland which the EU (and NATO) does not aim to incorporate within itself is *Russia*. The reason is as follows. The EU can expand eastwards to include even such a large country as Ukraine without changing its essential nature or its present centre of gravity – Germany. Indeed, German power is likely to grow as the EU expands eastwards. But the incorporation of Russia would inevitably shift the balance of power eastwards, not only because Russia is much larger even than Germany, but also because it would have the largest army in the Union and might use it to assert political dominance within it.

However, the fact that Russia can never form part of the EU or NATO does not mean that Europe does not want to exert influence over her and weaken her. For a powerful Russia remains, together with the Islamic world, the principal threat to the EU's ever-increasing power. Europe has attempted to weaken Russia in various ways. First, she has tried to *divide* her. Secondly, she has tried to *democratise* her. And thirdly, she has tried to *demonize* her.

Let us look briefly at each of these in turn.

1. The Division of Russia. Europe has tried to divide Russia not only from the non-Slavic republics of the former Soviet Union, with whom she has less in common, but even from the Slavic republics, with which she shares so much. This has resulted in the fact that 25 million Russians now live outside the borders of Russia. Europe has very vigorously supported the rights to national self-determination of the various Baltic, Caucasian and Central Asian peoples, while almost ignoring these 25 million Russians, whose interests almost any kind of Russian government feels bound to defend.²⁰⁴ Even the present, greatly contracted boundaries of the Russian state, are not sacred to the Europeans, as was made clear in the recent Chechen war. For although Europe did not openly call for the independence of Chechens, who are responsible for so much of the organized crime in Russia today, it did not conceal its sympathy for them.

There is a profound irony here. The EU is trying to unite into a single state nations like the Germans and the Greeks which are profoundly different and which have *never* been parts of the same state (except for a brief spell under the Nazis). On the other hand, it is trying to drive apart nations such as the Russians, the Belorussians and the Ukrainians which for most of their history have been united, and which have very close genetic, linguistic, cultural and religious ties.

What kind of logic is this? Why create artificial nations in the west while breaking up natural nations in the east? There is in fact a profound logic here. It is the demonic dialectical logic of *the destruction of the nation*. And in pursuing this logic, the EU is following a clear historical example – that of Lenin.

²⁰⁴ Stankevich, S. "Towards a New 'National Idea'", in Sestanovich, S. (ed.), *Rethinking Russia's National Interests*, Washington, D.C.: Center for Strategic and International Studies.

Before the revolution, Lenin called for the break-up of the Russian empire on the basis of the principle of national self-determination. When he came to power, he handed over vast areas of Russia to German control at the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk – an act of treachery that was condemned by his Holiness Patriarch Tikhon. However, when he felt that his power was secure, at the end of the Civil War, Lenin proceeded to suppress the independence of all the nationalities whose freedom he had demanded earlier. This was in accordance with his understanding of the aim of socialism, which was “not only the annihilation of the dividedness of humanity into small states and isolated nations, not only the drawing together of the nations, but also their fusion” – i.e. their destruction.²⁰⁵ For, as Dostoyevsky wrote, “socialism deprives the national principle of its individuality, undermining the very foundations of nationality.”²⁰⁶

The paradox that socialism both incites nationalism and destroys the nation is one aspect of the general paradox of the revolution, that while preaching freedom it practises slavery, while proclaiming inequality it creates inequality, and while dreaming of brotherhood it incites fratricidal war. In the same way, the French revolution proclaimed the freedom and equality of all nations; but its first appearance on the international arena was in the form of Napoleonic imperialism, which strove to destroy the freedom of all the nations of Europe. And paradoxically, it was autocratic Russia, the conqueror of Napoleon, which, despite its reputation as “the prison of the nations”, guaranteed the survival of the nations of the West for at least another century.

The truth is that the revolution, while inciting the passions for personal and national freedom in order to destroy the old church and state structures, was aimed at the destruction of all freedom, both personal and national. Only Russia saw this clearly and only Russia had, moreover, the power to back up her words with deeds. That is why the propaganda of “progressive” Europe was directed primarily against her; and that is why the contemporary European Union is doing all it can to prevent the re-emergence of Russia as a strong and independent nation.

2. The Democratization of Russia. If Russia cannot be destroyed as a nation, think the European socialists, then she must be at any rate neutralized by making her into a *democracy*; for it is of the nature of democracies to become so similar and interconnected with each other, that war between them is unthinkable. For, as Goldsmith writes: “Enlightenment liberals today believe that if the world consists exclusively of democratic states there will be no war. Therefore, the corollary must also be true: radically different regimes cannot coexist in harmony. That is how Enlightenment thinkers have concluded that worldwide cultural homogenisation is a precondition of peace. It follows that any community which resists the absorption or destruction of its culture by the West is a threat to peace.”²⁰⁷

²⁰⁵ Lenin, in Borisov, "Natsional'noe vozrozhdenie i natsia-lichnost'" ("National Regeneration and the Nation-Person"), in Solzhenitsyn, A. (ed.) *Iz-Pod Glyb* (From Under the Rubble), Paris: YMCA Press, 1976, p. 202.

²⁰⁶ Dostoyevsky, *The Diary of a Writer*, May-June, 1877, Haslemere: Ianmead, p. 738.

²⁰⁷ Goldsmith, *op. cit.*, p. 184.

Now the underlying philosophy of democracy is that of *human rights*, by which is meant the rights of *the individual man or woman* as opposed to the rights of any larger group, such as the nation or the family. Of course, decisions are made in democracies by means of majority voting; but the majority is not a natural group, since it constantly changes, not only on different issues but even on one and the same issue. Therefore the only constant unit in democratic society is the individual person, only not the person in his full and unique personality, but the person as the *binary digit* – the “yes” or “no” of the ballot box.

However, in making the individual and his egotistical “rights” the basis of society, democracy actually undermines the very foundations of society. For, as Fr. Stefan Krasovitsky writes, “the nucleus of society is the family, whereas the nucleus of the Church is the person. Within the Church a person is united with other persons without any loss of his individuality, for this unity takes place in the Super-Person (Divine Person) of Jesus Christ... [As to so-called ‘human rights’,] they are provided (in the conditions of a morally healthy society) within the family in accordance with the familial status of each member of this unit of society. So a normal society should defend, not ‘human rights’... but *the rights of the family*, defending them from suppression and destruction.”²⁰⁸

Traditionally, it has been patriarchal and monarchical societies that have best defended the rights of the family. Thus Holy Russia was seen as a single family headed by the Tsar-Batyushka, or “little father”. And the legitimacy of the Tsar as the head of the family of Russia was seen as a natural extension of the legitimacy of the father of every Russian family, both supporting and being supported by it.

As Tuskarev writes: “The cell of the State is the family. In the family the father is the head by nature, while the son is subject to him; the authority of the father is not the result of elections in the family, but is entrusted to him naturally by the law of God (Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow). Just as from the extended family of the tribe there arises the people, so out of the family headed by one man there arises tsarist autocracy. Both the familial and the monarchical organization are established by God for the earthly existence of the sinful, fallen man. The first-created man, living in living communion with God, was not subject to anyone besides God, and was the lord of irrational creation. But when man sinned, destroying the Divine hierarchy of submission and falling away from God, he became the servant of sin and the devil, and as a consequence of this became subject to a man like himself. The sinful will of man requires submission for the restraint of his destructive activity. This Divine ordinance has in view only the good of man – the limitation of the spread of evil. And history itself shows that whatever the inadequacies of monarchies, they bear no comparison with that evil that revolutions and anarchies have brought to the peoples.”²⁰⁹

²⁰⁸ Krasovitsky, “Dva tipa kollektivizma” (“Two Types of Collectivism”), *Angel Valaama* (The Angel of Valaam), 9 July, 1994, p. 4.

²⁰⁹ Tuskarev, *Tserkov' o Gosudarstve* (The Church on the State), Tver, 1992, p. 9.

It follows that with the fall of the authority of the Tsar, the authority of all heads of families suffers, with disastrous consequences for the family as a whole. And so we find in all modern democracies the break-up of the family unit, the increase of divorces and single-parent families, the corruption of youth, adolescent crime, prostitution, etc. The Russian democracy of 1917 opened the floodgates for all these evils, and the ever-widening corruption of the Soviet years was a further consequence of that original disaster. For a lover of Russia, therefore, it would be natural to hope for a return to the patriarchal, monarchical society that preceded the disaster and which has been the traditional pattern of Russian society throughout its history. However, the Europeans have done everything in their power to prevent such a return.

Thus they have persistently labelled the major non-democratic political forces as “anti-semitic” or communist or both, and have backed the Freemason Yeltsin against his rivals, forgetting that he, too, was once a communist. Again, they have insisted on the more-or-less immediate creation of a free market as a condition for economic aid, although in such an antiquated economy this was bound to lead to massive unemployment with further disruption of the already seriously threatened family. Again, they have imposed the democratic ethos of unlimited freedom, which exposes children and adults to all the corrupting influences of greed, promiscuity, drugs, pornography, rock music, etc.

Fr. Stefan Krasovitsky has defined democratic freedom as a western type of collectivism which is only superficially opposed to the eastern, socialist type of collectivism. The western type, he writes, “presupposes (under the pretext of ‘free expression’) the abolition of all the previous very strict moral and sexual taboos which subconsciously and genetically separate one person from another, turning their merging together into a single collective plasma with its corrupt intimacy.” And he goes on: “Since the second [western] type of collectivism has deeper roots than its more superficial [eastern] analogue, it does not demand the fulfilment of the well-known unpleasant characteristics of the first type of collectivism, such as: the suppression of ‘social freedoms’, etc. On the contrary, *in the conditions of the second type of collectivism, true, real freedom is inversely proportional to social freedoms*. Man loses his freedom as a person (or individual essence), but not as a member of a collectivist society, since he is merged genetically and subconsciously into a collective plasma with its rotten collective intimacy.

“‘Perestroika’ signifies the merging together of both types of collectivism into one with the effect of an atomic explosion, which can no less be localized within Russia than the Socialist revolution with its consequences.”²¹⁰

3. The Demonization of Russia. If a man has lost his nation, and even his family, he can still survive and be regenerated by his personal relationship with God in the Church. But in Russia the Europeans (and Americans) have struck even at that. For just as they have imposed internationalism and democracy, hamburgers, rock music and Hollywood on the shell-shocked Russians, so have they imposed the still more demonic and dangerous brews of Protestant evangelism and inter-faith Ecumenism.

²¹⁰ Krasovitsky, *op. cit.*

Moreover, in sharp contrast with the period after the fall of Nazi Germany in 1945, when the West demanded a complete purging of the Nazis, and the public and prolonged repentance of the German nation, since the fall of communism they have insisted on nothing of the kind. The result is that *not a single leading communist has been convicted for the crimes of the communist period*, and unrepentant communists, miraculously transformed into capitalists and democrats, have been allowed to continue occupying all the important posts in Church and State. And this has been the more tragic in the Church as the Church is so much more important than the State; for it is only on the basis of a regenerated and purified Church that the rebuilding of the State can truly begin.

The fact that, even after the fall of communism, the communist commissars and patriarchs still rule has created a very dangerous apathy in the hearts of Orthodox Russians. And the further fact that, after suffering all the torments and humiliation of the Soviet period, the official Orthodox Church has still not been freed inwardly, and has exchanged the unholy union with God-hating atheism for the no less unholy union with Jews and Muslims and western heretics, has exposed them to the truly demonic temptation of *despair*. "What is truth?" said Pilate wearily – and would not stay for an answer. "Where is Orthodoxy?" says the contemporary Russian – and gives up the search for the truly Orthodox Church. But for those who have ceased to search for the truth and the Church, there is destined only surrender to the snares of him "whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders,... because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved" (II Thessalonians 2.9-10).

And yet perhaps now we, at last, we are seeing the beginning of a more widespread regeneration of Russian society in the emergence of an opposition to Ecumenism. It is right that it should begin here, in the purely spiritual, dogmatic sphere; for true faith is the foundation of all good, and "without faith it is impossible to please God" (Hebrews 11.6). On the basis of the regeneration of the individual person's relationship to God through true faith, the regeneration of the family, and then of the nation, can begin. Then, and only then, will Russians be Russians again and not simply eastern clones of Western Man. Then, and only then, will the expansion of the European Antichrist come to a halt, and begin to retreat...

*February 18 / March 3, 1995.
St. Leo the Great, Pope of Rome.*

(Adapted from "The European Union: A New Totalitarianism?", published in *Orthodox Life*, vol. 45, № 2, March-April, 1995, and translated into Russian in *Pravoslavnaia Tver'*, №№ 5-6, May-June, 1995.)

8. WHAT PRICE FREEDOM?

For at least the last two hundred years, the value most highly valued in western society has been freedom. Even those, such as the monarchists, fascists and communists, whose programmes have advocated a greater degree of State control, have had, at least for propaganda purposes, to pay lip-service to the value of liberal democracy. Thus monarchists have tended to be constitutional monarchists, fascists – populists claiming to express the will of the people, and communists – self-appointed champions of the oppressed against imperialist and capitalist oppressors.

It requires an effort of historical imagination to realize that the absolute value of freedom has been by no means self-evident to previous generations. In Roman times, for example, the value most prized in Roman rule was *peace*, and the loss of their freedom was considered by most of the empire's subject peoples (the Jews were the main exceptions) to be a price well worth paying for the Pax Romana. Certainly the Christians never agitated for political freedom.

When the Roman empire became Christian, the supreme value of external peace was replaced by that of spiritual peace, which is based on *right belief* or *Orthodoxy*. And this value was transferred from the New Rome of Constantinople to the “Third Rome” of Moscow. In the medieval West the same ideal prevailed, albeit in a very corrupted form; and both popes and kings justified their rule by claiming to be God-appointed “vicars of Christ” or “defenders of the Faith”.

Of course, the fact that a society values peace or Orthodoxy above all else does not necessarily mean that freedom is despised or thought not worth fighting for. Indeed, a certain measure of freedom in some spheres may be considered a necessary condition for the attainment of the supreme value. Thus in the Orthodox East, with few exceptions, the principle of freedom of expression was upheld, and if heretics were punished they were exiled rather than tortured – unlike in the West, where the torture of heretics was officially proclaimed to be Christian at the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215.²¹¹ But history shows that societies in which freedom is the supreme value form a distinct type, liberal democracy. The question is: is it the best type?

Now freedom means different things to different people. To a Christian it means full spiritual freedom, freedom from sin, “the law of liberty” (James 1.25), of which Christ spoke when He said: “Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (John 8.32). The truth makes us free because, in the person of Truth Incarnate, the Lord Jesus Christ, it frees us from sin. If we were free of sin, we would be truly free, whatever physical or political environment we lived in. But being the slaves of sin, we bring upon ourselves every other kind of slavery.

²¹¹ Probably the first clear example of the torture of heretics in the Orthodox East was the burning of some of the leading Judaizers in Muscovy in the early sixteenth century. Some think this was done under the influence of the contemporary Spanish Inquisition. St. Nilus of Sora immediately objected to the practice. Some of the heretical Eastern emperors, especially the iconoclasts, also resorted to torture; but they were, by definition, not Orthodox.

For sin is the cause not only of spiritual slavery, but also of physical slavery. “The first cause of slavery,” writes St. Augustine, “is sin; that is why man is subjected to man in the state of slavery. This does not happen apart from the judgement of God, with Whom is no injustice and Who knows how to apportion varying punishments in accordance with the differing deserts of those who do wrong.

“The heavenly Lord declares: ‘Everyone who commits sin is the slave of sin’ (John 8.34). That is why, when, as often happens, religious men are slaves of unjust masters, their masters are not free. ‘For whatever a man is overcome by, to that he is enslaved’ (II Peter 2.19). And it is better to be the slave of a man than a slave of lust. For lust is a most savage master and one that devastates the hearts of men; this is true, to give only one example, of the lust for mastery itself. But in the peaceful order of human society, where one group of men is subjected to another, slaves are benefited by humility and masters are harmed by pride. By nature, as God first created man, no one is the slave, either of man or of sin. But slavery is ordained as a form of punishment by that law which enjoins the preservation of the natural order and prevents its disturbance. Had that law never been broken, there would have been no need for its enforcement by the punitive measure of slavery. So the apostle instructs slaves to be subject to their masters and to serve them wholeheartedly. Thereby, if they cannot get freedom from their masters, they can make their slavery into a kind of freedom, by performing this service not in deceitfulness and fear but in faithfulness and love, until injustice passes away and all dominion and human power are brought to nothing and God is all in all...”²¹²

The liberal democracies speak very little of this spiritual kind of freedom. This does not *necessarily* mean that liberal democracy is not conducive to it. However, the Church teaches that if we do not place spiritual freedom as our supreme goal, we shall not attain to it; and it must be admitted that as societies in the West have become more liberal and democratic they have at the same time become less free in the Christian sense. Christian liberals may argue that this development is the result of quite other factors – the rise of science, perhaps, or the industrial revolution. But the fact remains that, whatever the reason, England, say, in the later twentieth century is a less religious and Christian country than England in the early seventeenth century.

Many – many even who call themselves Christian – welcome this, arguing that the religiosity of seventeenth-century England was in fact bigotry and fanaticism, and the humanism of twentieth-century England – a sign of our greater humaneness. They even argue that the humanism of twentieth-century England is closer to real Christianity than the seventeenth-century version. I believe that if one examines such a person’s ideal of freedom, it will turn out to have very little to do with spiritual freedom as Christ defined it, and will be much closer to freedom of conscience, of speech and of the press. People are free, according to this definition, not because they *know* the truth, but because they can speak the truth or (more usually) falsehood without being prosecuted. Sometimes this ideal is combined with an agnosticism about the existence of any absolute truth; at others – with a belief that the truth can be

²¹² St. Augustine, *The City of God*, XIX, 15.

attained and retained by the greatest number of people only if the maximum freedom is given to those in error to express their error and, hopefully, have it refuted.

But freedom of thought, it is argued, is possible only if all power is not in the hands of one man holding one point of view. Hence the need for political freedom, or democracy. For although the ruling democratic party or leader cannot express and put into effect all points of view, he will at any rate express the *majority* point of view, and he must continue to take the views of the majority into account if he wants to remain in power.

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At this point I should like to make the assumption that absolute truth does exist, that that truth is Christianity, and that spiritual freedom is an absolute value attainable only through knowledge of the truth that is Christ. The question now is: is this spiritual freedom more surely attained and retained in a society locating its absolute values, not (or at any rate, not explicitly) in spiritual freedom, but in free speech and political freedom, or by a society which places some restrictions on the latter for the sake of the same spiritual freedom? It should be obvious that we are not here contrasting democracy and dictatorship of the Leninist or Hitlerite varieties; for the latter's highest values were explicitly anti-Christian. The contrast is rather between a modern democracy such as ours and a more authoritarian but also more explicitly Christian society such as ninth-century Byzantium or nineteenth-century Russia. It should also be obvious that the greater technological sophistication and wealth of the one kind of society is not relevant here, except insofar as one society is deemed to be more conducive to the accumulation of wealth, and this in turn is deemed to help or hinder the attainment of spiritual freedom.

Now a vital preliminary question that must be asked is: do men *begin* from a condition of freedom or slavery, spiritually speaking? The answer is: yes and no. Yes, insofar as man has freewill and therefore cannot escape responsibility for his actions. And no, insofar as he is born in a condition of fallenness or original sin, which, without removing his freewill, nevertheless distorts his thinking, heavily influences his feeling and weakens and diverts his willing. Thus it is Christian teaching that man cannot be liberated spiritually by his own efforts alone.

If man cannot liberate himself, then another must help him, even push him, along the way to freedom. We can see this most clearly in the case of children. We do not leave children to find out for themselves that fire burns, that arsenic kills, that reading and writing are useful skills, or that Jesus is God. We *tell* them these necessary truths, and we do not feel that we are violating their freedom in so doing. Rather, we feel that it is the one who deprives them of this knowledge that is restricting their freedom.

This is the principle of *education*, and it applies throughout life. Thus the great scientific advances of modern civilization are the result of the accumulation of knowledge over many generations, and each succeeding generation makes advances by taking the truths discovered by previous generations on trust, and then building on them. Thus we are *told* that electricity and bacteria exist, and that the earth is *not*

flat. These are not presented as one man's point of view, no better than any other's, but as *fact* – dogma, if you like. But no one objects to this kind of scientific dogmatism – even if some contemporary scientific dogmas, such as Darwinism, are in fact untrue – because we know that a person who continues to believe that the earth is flat, for example, is going to be at a severe disadvantage in the struggle of life.

Of course, if a person, contrary to all that his teachers tell him, continues to believe that the earth is flat, he is not imprisoned or tortured for his wrong belief. This is because we believe that gentle persuasion is a better means of convincing him, and/or that his error does not constitute a major threat to society as a whole. But we do penalize him in other ways – by ridicule, for example, or by failing him in his exams. And in general, if we did not penalise what we considered to be wrong belief in any way the foundations of society would quickly crumble. No society is completely liberal; societies differ not so much in their degree of liberalism as in the things they are liberal about.

In modern Britain, for example, it is forbidden to use corporal punishment to discipline one's children, but homosexuality is allowed; it is forbidden to emit certain industrial effluents into rivers, but abortion is allowed; it is forbidden to make racial or anti-semitic remarks, but the crudest blasphemy against Jesus Christ and Christians is allowed (blasphemy laws do exist, but they are never invoked). These laws may be counted as liberal by some, but they go directly counter to the law of liberty preached in the Gospel. According to that law, "he that spareth his rod hateth his son" (Proverbs 13.24); homosexuality is a deadly sin which brought about the destruction of Sodom and Gomorra; abortion is murder; and "if any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema" (I Corinthians 16.22).

Of course it is true that truth and virtue cannot be instilled at the point of a gun. At the end of the day the evil will will manifest itself, whatever the incitements to good, just as the good will will manifest itself whatever the enticements to evil. Thus the angel of the Apocalypse says: "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still; and he that is holy, let him be holy still" (Revelation 22.11).

And yet this truth must not be understood in a Calvinist sense, as if no amount of persuasion or external pressure makes men one whit better or worse than they would be otherwise. Both the Gospel and the common experience of mankind demonstrate that we as individuals and society as a whole both can and do influence our fellow men to good and evil, to heaven and hell. And that without violating their basic freedom of choice. Thus there can be no doubt that a society which, for whatever reason, condones homosexuality and abortion makes the incidence of those crimes that much more likely, while a society that forbids them on pain of imprisonment or worse will deter at least some who might otherwise be tempted to sin. And those who are thus deterred, far from suffering a diminution of their freedom, will be saved from that terrible slavery of the soul – far more terrible than any physical slavery – which ultimately leads down to the eternal bonds of hell.

It is an old maxim that liberty is not licence. And no society, we repeat, can license everything. The society, if such exists, which licenses everything is the lawless society.

Thus we read that in America “in order to protect ourselves from the unprincipled preferences of others a system of laws had to be devised, and every law in the code restricts someone’s freedom in order to protect someone else’s rights. In our republican form of government, each person’s rights have to be protected from incursion by the majority. Unfortunately, unjust laws can be passed which make moral rights illegal and immoral activities legal – abortion laws being a case in point. And so-called natural law, the common ground on which church and state could co-exist peaceably, has been eliminated as a foundation for societal law. Even the Constitution is being eroded by moral relativism.”²¹³

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If we begin from Christian, as opposed to humanist principles, then the best society is that which most encourages and helps men along the path to salvation, which is attained by obedience to the dogmatic truths and moral commandments ordained and revealed by God. In essence, such a society is what is commonly called “theocracy”; that is, it is ruled by God, or by a king anointed by God and responsible to Him alone – *not* by the people. This is not to say that the democratic or elective principle is entirely lacking in such societies – in the theocratic society of Ancient Israel, for example, the judges were sometimes elected by the people (Judges 11.11), and the first Romanov Tsar was elected by the zemsky sobor, the assembly of the Russian land. What it means is that all authority in the theocratic society, however it is established – whether by right of primogeniture in the case of kings, or canonical election in the case of bishops, or educational qualifications in the case of teachers and magistrates, or physical parenthood in the case of fathers and mothers – is acknowledged to be providentially instituted and preserved by God, so that rebellion against these authorities is ultimately rebellion against God (unless, of course, the authorities themselves have rebelled against God, as they did in Russia in 1917). “For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God” (Romans 13.1).

Now it is important to note that all the world’s leading western democracies, which have become the model for the rest of the world, have been founded on the explicit rejection of the theocratic principle. Thus the English revolution of 1649 explicitly rejected the Divine right of kings and killed the king, thereby adding murder to oath-breaking. And having abolished one pillar of the theocratic society, the Monarchy, it proceeded to dethrone another – the Church, the two being replaced (temporarily) by the Puritan republic.

The American revolution of 1776 began with a refusal to pay taxes to the lawful king. It involved less of a radical change in society than the other democratic revolutions, partly because the States were already of necessity largely self-governing

²¹³ Presbytera Valeri Brockman, “Abortion: The Continuing Holocaust”, *The True Vine*, Summer, 1991, № 10, p. 18.

through their distance from Britain. However, an important new principle was added to the Constitution: the right to “the pursuit of happiness”, by which was clearly meant material prosperity and psychological well-being rather than the blessedness of the Saints. Moreover, the American revolution showed that when the virus of the lust for freedom is let loose, it is not only kings who suffer, but also the democratically elected parliaments that replace them. For, as an American historian writes, it showed that “parliamentary supremacy was vulnerable to riot, agitation and boycott...”²¹⁴

The French revolution of 1789 was by far the most bloodthirsty and radical of the revolutions so far. Not only were the Monarchy and the Church overthrown, and a terrible persecution unleashed against the propertied classes, but a completely new and in essence atheist religion, the worship of the goddess Reason, was instituted. It was in reflecting on the French revolution that Dostoyevsky uttered his famous saying: “If God does not exist, then everything [that is, everything that is evil] is permitted.” The French revolution conquered even in “reactionary” countries that feared and opposed it. For everywhere its subjectivist principles of personal and political freedom became more powerful than the objective principle of spiritual freedom.

The Russian diplomat and poet Tyutchev expressed these principles as follows: “The human I, wishing to depend only on itself, not recognizing and not accepting any other law besides its own will – in a word, the human I, taking the place of God, – does not, of course, constitute something new among men. But such it has become when raised to the status of a political and social right, and when it strives, by virtue of this right, to rule society. This is the new phenomenon which acquired the name of the French revolution in 1789...”²¹⁵

As the logical conclusion of all the previous revolutions came the Russian revolution of 1917. The overthrow of the Tsar was welcomed by the western democracies, although he had been their most faithful ally in the world war against Germany and Austria-Hungary. And as Dostoyevsky had foreseen and Solzhenitsyn has clearly demonstrated, it was the persistent agitation for “freedom” by liberals both within and outside Russia that led to the imposition of the most illiberal and destructive tyranny the world has ever seen.

Nor did the western democracies show any consistent zeal against the communist regimes they had done so much to install. The Anglo-American expeditionary force withdrew from North Russia in the Civil War when it seemed on the point of breaking through to Moscow. Britain and America both recognized the Soviet Union at a time when persecution of the Faith was at its height. British journalists gave glowing reports of the Soviets at the height of dekulakization. Stalin remained “Uncle Joe” even after the end of the Second World War, when he had enslaved Eastern Europe. The Allies, and especially the United States, did fight against communism in Greece, Korea, Malaysia and Vietnam, but not in Yugoslavia, Hungary, Indonesia, Cambodia or Ethiopia. Red China was admitted to the United Nations, but democratic Taiwan

²¹⁴ Barbara Tuchman, *The March of Folly*, London: Michael Joseph, 1984, p. 166.

²¹⁵ Tyutchev, F.I. *Politicheskije Stat'i* (Political Articles), Paris: YMCA Press, p. 34.

was expelled. Castro and Ortega were warred against, but Brezhnev, Mao, Tito and Ceausescu were feted. The real bogey-men for western liberals remained South Africa and Chile, even liberal America, not the communist regimes which had vowed to destroy all religion and every capitalist state. Even as communism began to collapse under the weight of its own contradictions, the West hesitated to recognize the openly anti-communist democrats and feared above all a return to "fascist" Orthodox regimes.

This brief historical synopsis tells us many things about the real nature of modern democracy and its worship of freedom:-

1. Its root is anti-God. Therefore its fruit cannot be godly. For "either make the tree good, and its fruit good; or make the tree bad, and its fruit bad; for the tree is known by its fruit" (Matthew 12.33). The fruits we are now seeing are blasphemy, murder, greed and sexual immorality on a vast scale. It is difficult indeed to be a Christian in a modern democracy.

2. The major argument produced in favour of democracy – that it prevents the emergence of imperialist or totalitarian regimes – is false. British imperialism really began *after* the English revolution. Napoleon was a direct product of the French revolution. Russian democracy gave birth to Lenin. German democracy voted Hitler into power. The spread of communism in the twentieth century was in large measure due to the apathy and dividedness of the western democracies, whose anti-monarchical and anti-Christian ideology had infected the educated elites of the eastern countries, and most of whose leading intellectuals were socialist in their sympathies. The world has not been made safe by or for democracy. Communism was defeated (if it has been truly defeated), not by western democracy, but by the blood of the new martyrs of Russia and the thirst for freedom and truth (spiritual as well as political) of the subjugated eastern peoples.

3. The major argument in favour of unlimited free speech – that it constitutes the best conditions for the discovery of the truth – is false. If unlimited freedom, i.e. licence, is given to the publication of blasphemous and immoral material, then the result, given the fallenness of our nature and its inclination towards evil, will be an increase in blasphemy and immorality. This in turn will lead to pressure for the muzzling of those few publications and individuals who speak the truth. Already it is difficult to speak out freely against, say, Judaism or homosexuality, or in favour of monarchism, in liberal England and America. Absolute power may corrupt absolute rulers (although history shows many exceptions to that rule); but absolute freedom is no less corrupting. And it corrupts, not just a few people at the top (who arrived there, most often, because they were already corrupt), but vast numbers of people at every level of society, from the power-hungry politicians to the youngest and most powerless children.

4. Perhaps the greatest, most irreplaceable casualty of liberal democracy has been the concept of absolute, objective truth. Christianity proclaims that spiritual freedom comes from the knowledge of objective truth, which comes from the revelation of God. Liberal democracy reverses this relationship, and says that the knowledge of the truth

comes from surveying the subjective choices of the people; vox populi – vox veritatis. Sometimes vox populi is refined to mean the voice of experts, wise men in scientific laboratories or government commissions or central banks. But since the opinions of experts are as fickle and changeable as those of the masses, this hardly improves the situation. In any case, when it comes to the most important choices and propositions, those concerning morality and religion, subjectivity reigns supreme; “situation ethics” has dispensed with all objective moral judgements, while inter-faith ecumenism has decreed that all religions lead to God, even when they contradict each other on the most basic points. Thus choosing what to believe about God, or whether to believe in him at all, becomes as subjective, personal and, ultimately, inconsequential an act as choosing a pair of shoes or a variety of ice-cream. As for right and wrong, there is only one right – to express oneself as freely, as outrageously, as possible, and only one wrong – to express oneself in a significantly different way from the majority.

However, human nature abhors a vacuum; and the dissolution of constant, absolute truths and values in the inconstant ocean of liberal, ecumenical democracy will inevitably elicit a reaction. This will be the reaction of the man who, after enjoying the freedom of the waves for a time, suddenly realizes that he is *drowning* and that he must reach dry land. And so he will follow anyone who can offer him dry land – that is, absolute truth. Only the danger is that, since he has never been on dry land, and has never flexed his mental muscles on the hard, unyielding surface of truth, he will very easily mistake quicksand for land, and a mirage for the truth. And he will finally touch the real thing only when he sets foot on – the ocean floor. “Save me, O God, for the waters are come in unto my soul. I am stuck fast in the mire of the deep, and there is no sure standing...” (Psalm 68.1-2).

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What, then, are we to do, who live in modern democracies but seek to live in accordance with absolute truth?

One temptation we should avoid at the outset. We must understand, first of all, that no real change for the better can come about in society by attempting to change the political system alone, without a change in the hearts of men. For, as Dostoyevsky warned when discussing the emancipation of the serfs in 1861, it is not *formal structures* – or not formal structures alone – that must change, but the *spiritual content* that underlies them and brought them into being.

Liberal democracy, together with its offspring, communism, came into being as the result of a change in the spirit of the western peoples, a change involving a decrease in faith in God, and an increase in the belief that man can control his destiny independently of God. So theocracy, rule by God, was rejected in favour of democracy, rule by the people. In essence, this was the spirit of rebellion, the same spirit which cast Satan out of heaven. The nature of that spirit has been masked by fine-sounding slogans, such as “freedom, equality and fraternity”, “glasnost’ and perestroika”. But its true nature has been revealed by the unprecedented horrors of the twentieth century, most of which have been carried out in the name of the same high-flown ideals.

The spirit of a society can change only when the spirit of its individual members has changed. Thus a truly theocratic society can come into being only when each individual has truly decided to make God his King. Then, and only then, will God – not man – act to change the structure of society in order that it may reflect and confirm the new spirit that reigns in its members.

And there is another reason why political action would be fruitless at this moment, before the Spirit of truth has brought forth fruit in individual souls. We live in the age of apostasy foretold by the prophets. And as Bishop Ignatius Brianchaninov wrote: “The apostasy is permitted by God. So do not try to stop it with your powerless hand. Flee from it yourself, protect yourself from it; that is enough for you. Learn to know the spirit of the age, study it, so that whenever possible you will be able to avoid its influence... Only God’s special mercy is able to stop this all-destroying moral epidemic, to stop it for awhile, because it is necessary that everything foretold by the Scriptures should come to pass...”²¹⁶

Therefore, says the apostle, “live as free men, yet without using your freedom as a pretext for evil; but live as servants of God” (I Peter 2.16).

(October 26 / November 8, 1996; adapted from the article published in *Orthodox America*, January-February, 1992)

²¹⁶ Brianchaninov, *Patericon*, Brussels, 1963, p. 549.

9. THREE FAITHS, THREE POLITICAL SYSTEMS

If we look around us today, in 1997, it would seem as if one socio-politico-religious doctrine has conquered everywhere: democracy, human rights, anti-nationalism, free-market economics and religious indifference (ecumenism). There are still a few dictators; but very few who advocate dictatorship or absolute monarchy as such. There are still some highly nationalist, even racist regimes; but none - with the important exception of Israel - where a form of racism has the status of a state religion. There are still at least two communist countries - North Korea and China - where democracy and human rights are regularly trampled on; but China, at any rate, has a flourishing semi-capitalist economy. Only in the Muslim countries do we see an alternative doctrine of human society fervently and widely expressed; and the ideal of the Orthodox Theocracy lives on, albeit as a distinctly minority belief, in some Orthodox countries, notably Russia.

These three world-views, which we may call Democracy, Islam and Orthodoxy for short, are essentially the same three world-views which Vladimir Soloviev, in an article written in 1877 and entitled "Three Forces", identified as incarnating the three basic forces which have determined the whole of world history.

Soloviev characterized Islam as being under the dominating influence of what he called the first force, and which he defined as "the striving to subject humanity in all its spheres and at every level of its life to one supreme principle which in its exclusive unity strives to mix and confuse the whole variety of private forms, to suppress the independence of the person and the freedom of private life." Democracy he characterized as being under the dominating influence of the second force, which he defined as "the striving to destroy the stronghold of dead unity, to give freedom everywhere to private forms of life, freedom to the person and his activity; ... the extreme expression of this force is general egoism and anarchy and a multitude of separate individuals without an inner bond." The third force, which Soloviev believed was incarnate especially in the Slavic world, is defined as "giving a positive content to the two other forces, freeing them from their exclusivity, and reconciling the unity of the higher principle with the free multiplicity of private forms and elements."²¹⁷

In more recent times, Professor I.M. Andreev characterized essentially the same three forces in their relationship to religion as follows: "Of the three forms of state power - monarchy, democracy and despotism - strictly speaking, only the first (monarchy) is based on a religious-ethical principle, the second (democracy) is based on an a-religious-ethical principle, and the third (despotism) is based on an anti-religious (satanic) principle."²¹⁸

1. Democracy. Let us begin by examining Democracy. "Every sphere of activity," wrote Soloviev, "every form of life in the West, keeping aloof and separate from the others, strives in its separation to achieve an absolute significance, excluding all the

²¹⁷ Soloviev, "Tri Sily" ("Three Forces"), reprinted in *Novy Mir* (New World), № 1, 1989, pp. 198-199.

²¹⁸ Andreev, "Pomazannik Bozhij" ("The Anointed of God"), *Pravoslavniy Put'* (The Orthodox Way), 1951, p. 129.

rest, and to become the one for all. Instead of that, however, in accordance with the unfailing law of ultimate existence, it comes in its isolation to powerlessness and nothingness; and in taking over a sphere that is foreign to it, it loses power over its own. Thus the western church, having separated from the state, but assuming to itself the significance of a state in this separation, has herself become an ecclesiastical state, and ends up by losing all power both over the state and over society. In exactly the same way, the state, on being separated both from the church and the people, and having assumed to itself an absolute significance in its exclusive centralization, is finally deprived of all independence, and is turned into.. the executive tool of the people's voting, while the people or zemstvo itself, rising up both against the church and against the state, falls apart into warring classes and then must finally fall apart into warring individuals, too. The social organism of the West, having separated from the beginning into private organisms that are hostile to each other, must finally split up into its final elements, into the atoms of society, that is, individual people; and corporative, caste egoism must be translated into personal egoism."²¹⁹

The history of the world in the century since these words were written fully bears out their truth. The widening and deepening of democracy has coincided with a catastrophic increase in the atomization of society on all levels. Thus the existentialist term "alienation" has with justice been used to describe a common condition of democratic, especially urban democratic man. Now it is a question whether democracy causes atomization, or is simply one of its manifestations, the true cause being the falling away of European man from the true faith following the primary act of self-assertive atomism - the rebellion of the Pope. However, what is clear is that the institution of party warfare in democratic politics has not checked, but has rather strengthened the warfare between individuals that we see all around us, in the rise of crime and selfishness of all kinds.

This fact is most clearly illustrated by the history of Russian democracy in 1917. Thus none of the democratic leaders of the Provisional Government, from Milyukov to Lvov to Kerensky, offered any real opposition to the revolution, but rather claimed that they were acting by its authority. Indeed, as Novgorodtsev wrote: "Prince Lvov, Kerensky and Lenin were bound together by an unbroken bond. Prince Lvov was as guilty of Kerensky as Kerensky was of Lenin. If we compare these three actors of the revolution, who each in turn led the revolutionary power, in their relationship to the evil principle of civil enmity and inner dissolution, we can represent this relationship as follows. The system of guileless non-resistance to evil, which was applied by Prince Lvov as a system of ruling the state, with Kerensky was transformed into a system of pandering to evil camouflaged by phrases about 'the revolutionary leap' and the good of the state, while with Lenin it was transformed into a system of openly serving evil clothed in the form of merciless class warfare and the destruction of all those displeasing to the authorities. Each of the three mentioned persons had his utopian dreams, and history dealt with all of them in the same way: it turned their dreams into nothing and made of them playthings of the blind elements. The one who most appealed to mass instincts and passions acquired the firmest power over the masses. In conditions of general anarchy the path to power and despotism was most open to

²¹⁹ Soloviev, op. cit., pp. 200-201.

the worst demagoguery. Hence it turned out that the legalized anarchy of Prince Lvov and Kerensky naturally and inevitably gave way to the demagogic despotism of Lenin."²²⁰

The truth of the historical law that democracy leads to anarchy which leads to despotism had already been demonstrated by the English revolution, which ushered in the dictatorship of Cromwell, and by the French revolution, which ushered in the Jacobins and Napoleon. And it was to be demonstrated once again in 1933, when democratic Germany, rocked by conditions of general anarchy, voted Hitler into power. So Lenin had history on his side when, in an address to American trade unionists in 1920, he mocked those western democrats who recognized the legitimacy of the revolutions of 1642 and 1789, but not that of 1917: if the first two were democratic, he said, so was the third, which differed from the first two only in its greater consistency with the bloody principles they all shared.

Of course, democracy and communism are traditionally thought to be opposing principles; and if we compare Soviet Russia and America between the years 1917 and 1991, there are indeed large superficial differences. However, both societies were born of the same historical philosophical process - the anti-Orthodox and anti-monarchical revolution of the West; both societies have been exploited and dominated by Jews; and both societies, as is becoming clearer by the hour, are descending into the atomistic chaos and hatred that is the ultimate end of the revolution. The reason for the superficial differences between these societies is the fact that they emphasized two mutually contradictory principles arising out of the same democratic world-view - human rights and the will of the people.

Thus 'neither 'human rights' nor 'the will of the people', nor both together can be the foundation of human society. For the one contradicts the other: 'the rights of the human personality', understood as the final foundations of society, deny the primacy of social unity; 'the will of the people', as an absolute social basis, denies the principle of personality. There can be, and in fact is, only some kind of eclectic, unprincipled compromise between the two principles, which witnesses to the fact that neither is the primary principle of society. If one genuinely believes in the one or the other, then one has to choose between the unlimited despotism of social unity, which annihilates the personality - and boundless anarchy, which annihilates social order and together with it every personal human existence."²²¹

American democracy champions human rights - that is, the will of the individual over the will of the people as a whole. The Soviet Union, on the other hand, emphasized the opposite - the will of the collective over the will of the individual. Of course, this collective will in fact turned into the will of a small clique and even of a single man. Nevertheless, it is only partly true to say that communism was imposed

²²⁰ Novgorodtsev, P. "Vostanovlenie svyatykh" ("The Restoration of the Holy Things"), *Put'* (The Way), № 4, June-July, 1926, p. 44.

²²¹ Berdyaev, N. "Religioznye osnovy obshchestvennosti" ("The Religious Foundations of Society"), *Put'* (The Way), № 1, September, 1925, p. 13.

on the Soviet masses. Even if the masses did not know what their choice was leading to, by their actions they effectively put Lenin in power.

It is this close philosophical kinship between Western democracy and Soviet communism which explains the paradoxical pandering of the western democracies to Soviet communism for most of the period 1917-1991. When the Tsar fell in February, 1917, all the western democracies rejoiced and hastened to recognize the new regime, although the Tsar had close relations with the ruling families of Europe, he had been a faithful ally of the West during the war against Germany and it was obvious that his fall was not in the West's military interests. This attitude may be explained partly by the fact that the leaders of the West and of the new Russian democracy were almost all Freemasons. However, this is only a partial explanation; for when Lenin came to power in October, 1917, and declared his absolute hostility to all the institutions of the West, including Freemasonry, the West's attitude did not change radically. True, British, American, French and Japanese armies did intervene on the side of the Whites in the Russian civil war. But this effort was half-hearted, and the armies were withdrawn even when they were on the point of victory. In the years that followed all the western democracies recognized the Soviet Union, even though its tyrannical essence was clear for all to see. Indeed, western trade with Stalin during the 1930s was a key element in the build-up of the Soviet Union's industrial capacity. And even when Stalin was starving 14 million Ukrainian peasants to death during the first Five-Year Plan, socialist-minded western journalists turned a blind eye.

The phenomenon of western collusion with Bolshevism has been well analyzed by Richard Pipes: "The affinities between liberalism and revolutionary socialism... derive from the fact that both ideologies believe that mankind, being entirely shaped by sensory perceptions (that is, devoid of inborn ideas and values), can attain moral perfection through the restructuring of its environment. Their disagreement is over the means toward that end, liberals preferring to reach it gradually and peacefully, through legislation and education, while radicals prefer a sudden and violent destruction of the existing order. Psychologically, liberals feel defensive toward genuine radicals, who are bolder and prepared to take greater risks: the liberal can never quite rid himself of the guilty feeling that while he talks the radical acts. Liberals, therefore, are predisposed to defend revolutionary radicalism and, if necessary, to help it, even as they reject its methods. The attitude of Western liberals toward Communist Russia did not much differ from that of Russian democratic socialists toward Bolshevism before and after 1917 - an attitude distinguished by intellectual and psychological schizophrenia, which greatly contributed to Lenin's triumph. Russian socialists in emigration perpetuated it. While urging Western socialists to condemn the Communist 'terroristic party dictatorship', they nevertheless insisted that it was the 'duty of workers throughout the world to throw their full weight into the struggle against attempts by the imperialist powers to intervene in the internal affairs of Russia.'²²²

When Hitler's Germany invaded Poland in 1939, Britain and France immediately declared war on her. However, when the Soviet Union, as Germany's ally, swallowed

²²² Pipes, R. *Russia under the Bolsheviks, 1919-1924*, London: Fontana, 1994, p. 202.

up the other half of Poland as well as the Baltic States and Bessarabia, the reaction was far less decisive. And when Hitler invaded the Soviet Union in 1941, the British and Americans hastened to enter into alliance with it. Even Churchill, who had been the most anti-communist British politician after the First World War, shook hands with Stalin (he said that if the devil himself helped him against Hitler he would make an honourable mention of him in the House of Commons); while Roosevelt affectionately called him "Uncle Joe". There followed the shameful pacts of Teheran, Yalta and Potsdam, which effectively handed over half of Europe (and hundreds of thousands of anti-communist Russians) to the communists - including Poland, for whose sake Britain had first entered the war, and Yugoslavia, whose lawful king lived in London and whose people had put up such a strong resistance to Nazism.

It was only the beginning of the Cold War, the blockade of Berlin and especially the Korean war which finally made the West wake up to the real nature of the Soviet threat. In 1949, the West created a military alliance against the Soviet Union, NATO; and there can be no doubt that if the West had used its enormous technological, demographic and economic superiority over the Soviet bloc in a determined manner, communism could have fallen - or at least been halted. However, western intellectuals continued to have a sneaking admiration for the Soviets while despising their own system; and the sufferings of the millions under the Soviet yoke elicited little sympathy from the western capitalists, interested as they were only in preserving their comforts and trade. And so international Communism continued to make enormous strides while the West slept: in China, North Korea, Vietnam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Yemen, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Guinea, Afghanistan, Angola, Cuba, Nicaragua...

After the American defeat in Vietnam, the West's determination to fight Communism, already weak, collapsed almost entirely. "Detente" now became the order of the day; and in spite of the overwhelming evidence for the fact that wherever Communism comes rivers of blood flow, friendship between communists and capitalists flourished, just as George Orwell had prophesied in his novel 1984. The Queen of England gave a state banquet for Ceaucescu; the Soviets gained ideological control even over such bodies as the World Council of Churches; and at Red China's insistence democratic Taiwan was thrown out of the United Nations. As late as the early 1980s, when the Soviet Union was intensifying its repression of Christians and dissidents, President Reagan's accurate description of it as "the evil empire" was met with widespread scorn by western intellectuals.

During these years, when in spite of the West's vast economic and military superiority it was surrendering vast areas of the world to communism without a fight, the fundamental weakness of democracy in defending itself was exposed for all to see. No country can survive indefinitely if its people are permitted to abuse their leaders and their country, and openly to side with the enemy. Francis Fukuyama argues that it was the superior attractiveness of liberal democracy that guaranteed its victory.²²³ And yet in the Brezhnev era before Gorbachev came to power this was by no means evident to very many people in both East and West, who judged the communist

²²³ Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man*, London: Penguin Books, 1992.

system superior. Thus communist parties in France, Italy and Greece won very large percentages of the vote, as, in W.B. Yeats' words:

*the best lack all conviction,
while the worst are full of passionate intensity.*

Nor were these votes cast just out of fear of nuclear war. Democratic socialism was, and is, deeply embedded in the ideological consciousness of the West, and had penetrated into the churches and political parties, the media, schools and institutes of higher education. In accordance with this ideology, the communist states were considered to be pursuing essentially the same ideals as the West. And if these ideals were not always attained, this was not considered the fault of socialism as such, but rather of the relics of Russia's pre-communist, Tsarist past - or to the innate servility of the Russian people. What the Soviet bloc needed was not a complete change of mind, but just some more human rights and political parties.

And so it seemed only a matter of time before detente led to the final collapse of the West, if not through military conquest, at any rate through an inner loss of belief in its own superiority. For, as Jean Francois Revel wrote in his long catalogue of democratic timidity in the face of the totalitarian menace: "That a diplomatic policy designed to defend democracy was ruined by democracy itself is a natural consequence of the system's structure", insofar as "democracy by its very nature almost infinitely fragments a society's life and thought."²²⁴

Democracy, according to Dora Shturman, is in essence "a mechanism for the satisfaction of the demands of the consumer-voter".²²⁵ The problem is, that in the absence of a higher religious or national ideal, the demands of the consumer-voter are bound to be multiple, contradictory, changeable, fallen, materialistic and egoistical. Thus the tendency to atomization and self-destruction is built into the very base of democracy like a relentlessly ticking time-bomb. Democracy of its nature cannot be stable; it can only be a transition between the more stable and ancient forms of government; and in modern times it has represented an ever-quickening descent from the theocracy it overthrew to the satanocracy it is becoming. It cannot be more than a transition because the rule of the people by the people is a contradiction in terms.

What is the religious faith underpinning Democracy? Alexis Khomyakov pointed out that, in ancient times as well as modern, democracy has been associated with a decline in religion, whatever the ruling religion may be. Thus since the Reformation, Democracy has been linked with *Protestantism*, which represents a disintegration of Catholic Christianity; and certainly, the Protestant rejection of all forms of authority except the individual human mind fits in well with the democratic ideal.

In the West today Democracy is yoked with *Ecumenism*, whose leaders are usually ex-Protestants who have lost faith in Christ. However, insofar as ecumenism is in essence simply indifference to religious truth, the real religion of Democracy must be

²²⁴ Revel, *How Democracies Perish*, London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1985, pp. 125, 160.

²²⁵ Shturman, *Gorodu i Miru (To the City and the World)*, New York: Tretia Vol'na, 1988, p. 165.

considered to be *atheism*. Thus Democracy is the political system which best expresses the ideal of atheist man, his desire to run his own affairs in accordance with his own desires without interference from any higher authority.

2. *Despotism.* Let us now turn to Islam, or the despotic principle. In the seventh century, at a time of crisis in the Orthodox Christian Empire, a rival empire, and a rival concept of the relationship between religious and political power, arose in the East - Islam. In the eleventh century, a second rival empire arose in the West - the Roman Catholic papacy. Catholicism is strikingly similar to Islam in its theocratic conception of politics and society, and from this point of view we may regard Catholicism as a variant of Islam. Certainly, in the field of political thought it is more useful to consider Islam and Catholicism as one form of reaction to, and deviation from, the Orthodox Christian ideal of separation but "symphony" between Church and State.

Thus Miloslavskaya and Miloslavsky write: "At the base of the socio-political doctrine [of Islam] lies the idea that society must be ruled by the commands of Allah, and not by the laws of men, since Allah is the only source of power. People are only conductors of the divine will, whose realization is the basic function of earthly power. The second fundamental thesis declares that the caliphate's secular and spiritual powers (the sultanate and the imamate) are indivisible."²²⁶

Thus there is no separation between secular and religious power in Islam corresponding to the separation between Church and State that we find in Orthodox Christianity. Whereas the Orthodox Church forbids bishops and priests to engage in political activity and receive political posts, since this involves being subject to two masters (*Apostolic Canons* 30, 81), the sight of imams at the head of Islamic states has become familiar to us since the Islamic revolution led by Ayatollah Khomeini in Iran. And although there has never been a time, since the early caliphates, when all Muslims have been united under one religio-political power, the ideal of such a unity remains a powerful force in the Islamic world.

According to the "Muslim Brothers" movement, the distinctive Islamic path of development, which sets the Muslim world apart from the rest of humanity, consists in an increasing cultural, political and economic cooperation between Muslim countries, which should be followed by the formation of a "union of Islamic nations" under the caliphate and the election of an imam who would be seen as the "means of unification" of the Islamic world. This religio-political leader who will unite all Muslims is reminiscent of the religio-political leadership of the Pope in Catholicism. Only the Pope, of course, already exists as the unquestioned head of Catholicism, whereas such a centre of unity is only a wished-for ideal in the Muslim world.

²²⁶ Miloslavskaya, T.P., Miloslavsky, G.V., "Kontseptsia 'Islamskogo Edinstva' i Integratsionnie Protssy v 'Musul'manskom Mire'" ("The Conception of 'Islamic Unity' and the Processes of Integration in the 'Muslim World'"), in *Islam i Problemy Natsionalizma* (Islam and the Problems of Nationalism), Moscow: Nauka, 1986, p. 12.

Dostoyevsky and the Russian Slavophiles were fond of pointing out the links between Catholicism and the pagan cult of the imperator-pontifex maximus, on the one hand, and Socialism, on the other. As Dostoyevsky said, the Roman Church swallowed up the Roman State, becoming a State in the process. Certainly, Catholicism may be said to represent the rebirth, in Christian guise, of the classically pagan idea of the divine priest-king, having supreme authority in both Church and State, over both the souls and the bodies of men. From the eleventh century, the Popes were not simply religious leaders, but also secular kings, possessing lands and armies and even fighting in them - to the horror of Byzantine writers such as Anna Comnena. Moreover, they blessed the invasion of Christian lands for their own purposes, as when Pope Alexander blessed the invasion of England in 1066.

The totalitarian pretensions of the medieval papacy gave birth to long and bitter conflicts between Church and State in several western states. It was only to be expected that secular rulers would not lightly hand over all their power to the Pope. Thus a prolonged struggle for power took place between Pope Gregory VII and the German Holy Roman Emperor Henry IV, and there were further struggles between the Popes and King John of England and King Philip the Fair of France.

The Crusades were the logical expression of the new theory of papal power. Since the Eastern Orthodox Christians had refused to accept papal jurisdiction, and had anathematized the papacy in 1054, the Pope felt justified in launching the Crusades to bring "the schismatic Romans" to heel. Thus, although ostensibly aimed at the liberation of the Eastern Christian lands from the Muslim yoke, the practical effect of the Crusades was to devastate Orthodox Christianity in these lands and to replace the Muslim yoke by the much crueller yoke of the Latins. Latin kingdoms and patriarchates were set up in Jerusalem, Syria, Cyprus and Constantinople; and a determined, but unsuccessful, effort was made to conquer Western Russia. The horrific sacking and destruction of Constantinople by the soldiers of the Fourth Crusade in 1204 set the seal to this process, and made the schism between Orthodox and Western Christianity permanent.

Since the sacking of Constantinople, by far the greatest city of the civilized world, had disturbed even some western minds, it was necessary for the Popes to provide some doctrinal justification for it. This was duly forthcoming at the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215, which declared that it was lawful to kill heretics. Then came the "two swords" theory, according to which God had entrusted the Popes with the swords both of ecclesiastical and of political power. For, according to the bull Unam Sanctam of 1302, submission to the Pope in all things was held to be absolutely necessary for the salvation for every creature on earth. It is doubtful whether any rulers in history, not excluding even the totalitarian dictators of the twentieth century, have made such extravagant claims to power as did the medieval popes - and their claims have never been officially denied by the papacy to the present day.

However, since the decline of Catholicism and the apostasy of vast numbers of Catholics to the rival faith of Ecumenism-Democracy, it has been left to a revived Islam to resurrect the pseudo-theocratic idea. So far, as we have seen, the political and theological divisions within the Islamic world have prevented the emergence of an

Islamic Pope. However, there is no theoretical objection to the emergence of such a figure; and if he does appear, then we can expect jihad-crusades against the West and Russia which would make the Muslim campaigns in Bosnia and Chechnya insignificant by comparison.

History demonstrates that fervent religious zeal, even if it is "not according to knowledge", will in the long run triumph over Laodicean indifference to the truth. Islam has large numbers of adherents who fervently detest the decadence of the West and who are prepared to die for what they see to be the truth. Only a third force, comprising zealots for a faith that has all the insuperable strength of the Truth Himself, can hope to triumph over it...

3. Orthodoxy Autocracy. In 1926 the bishop-confessors on Solovki wrote: "The Church is not concerned... with the political organization of power, for She is loyal with regard to the government of all the countries within whose frontiers She has members. She gets on with all forms of State structure from the eastern despotism of old Turkey to the republics of the North-American States." However, while Orthodoxy may coexist with States that either reject the influence of religion on politics, or completely merge the two, there is no question that it flourishes best in the system known as the "symphony of powers", in which the Church lives as the soul and sanctifying principle of the body politic, being neither separate from, nor completely merged with it.

Bishop Gregory (Grabbe) has explained the basis of this conception with admirable clarity: "The aim of human life on earth must be the salvation of the soul, that is, in the words of Christ, the constant perfection of one's moral nature on the path to the not-completely-realizable ideal of the perfection of God (Matthew 5.48). In consequence of the fall of the first men, the attainment of this perfection is bound up, for each of us, with great labour on ourselves - the Kingdom of God is won by violence (Matthew 11.12). But the sin of the forefathers drew with itself not only the corruption of the moral nature of man, but also, instead of the easy life of Paradise, made the physical struggle for existence necessary: our bread is consumed in the sweat of our brow.

"The difficulties of earthly existence did not permit men to live in isolation and led to the union of tribes into societies that gradually developed into States. But if these are the external, material reasons for the origin of States, it would be a great mistake to disregard the other aspect of the question. A man is composed not only of a body, but also of a soul. The burdens of life often lie more heavily on the latter than on the body, and mutual moral support is no less necessary for men than physical support. Thus it was not only bodies, but also souls that were united in peoples.

"Human nature has revealed a capacity for massive spiritual perfection or collapse. A people is a collective organism which has as its main properties its separate members. Therefore the State, depending on the principles which it strives to realize, exerts very powerful pressure on each of its individual subjects, creating conditions of life which either further or hinder the salvation of the soul. So-called democracy leads the peoples to moral collapse. Prince D.N. Khilkov, a very educated and observant man, after living in America came to the conclusion that a republic 'incites

in a man the worst of his instincts and qualities. While preaching equality, which does not in fact exist, it corrupts all his concepts, and in fact - as, for example, in America - leads to the dominion of the basest and most shameful ideals' ('Letters', *Bogoslovnij Vestnik*, July-August, 1916). That is why one must not limit the meaning of the existence of States to the simple satisfaction of material needs (economic, policing, etc.). Its main task is material, earthly, but it must not in serving the body forget the soul, although its salvation is the responsibility, not of it, but of the Church, to which the State is bound to afford every kind of support.

"But even if it casts off these above-mentioned idealistic aims, the State must help the Church in every way for its own sake, for the healthy morality of the people, which is impossible without the religious influence on it, is also necessary for the State as such. A people that is not penetrated by any higher religious-moral principles, a people without faith, soon becomes depraved and earlier or later leads the State to complete breakdown. The destruction of the ancient empires was bound up, first of all, with the spiritual-moral fall of their peoples. From this it is evident how important it is both for the Church and for the State to establish their mutual relations on a correct basis so that the State, in fulfilling its own direct tasks, should not hinder, but help the Church, and that the Church, in giving health and perfection to the people, should strengthen the right-believing State. I say 'right-believing State' because the relations between the Church and the State depend first of all on the ideals which are the basis of the latter. If these ideals are antichristian, then the Church cannot fail to struggle in one way or another with the State that realizes them. In this case her very existence is the struggle with it, and she is naturally in the position of being persecuted (ancient Rome, the USSR). But in the irreligious State, which is not distinguished by militant antichristianity, but does not confess Christianity either, the Church is *de facto* in the position of being merely a tolerated society. The complete development of the beneficial influence of the Church on the people is attainable only when there is a union between Her and the State, and this is possible only if the latter is Orthodox, that is, if it conforms its life to the teaching of the Church concerning faith and virtue. Of course, this is bound up with the moral subjection to the Church of the State, which, however, should not frighten Christians, for if they in their private lives strive to fulfil the teaching of Christ the Saviour, they should strive for it in union with the people.

"But the Church has never striven for such a merging with the State (or, more exactly, swallowing up of the State), whereby the hierarchs, for example, would be at the same time provincial governors. She wishes only that State life in its general direction should be directed in accordance with her teaching. In the same way, in the private life of her individual sons, the Church through the pastors constantly teaches them virtue, but does not interfere, for example, in housework or business as long as they do not clearly violate the commandment of God in these activities.

"It goes without saying that normal relations between the Church and the State are not attainable with every form of government. It is not part of our task to discuss the nature of these relations with democratic regimes, under which the Church in Russia will always be, if not persecuted, at best tolerated. The Church, which is based on the hierarchical principle and obedience, is too opposed to an order based on the primacy of the people's will, restricted by no religious principle. Therefore a real union between

the Church and the State is possible only with an Autocratic Monarchy, which places as the basis of its own power the will of God. But even with a Monarchy mutual relations may be incorrectly set. Tikhomirov lists three types of relationship between the Monarchy and religion:

"1. 'The conversion of the supreme State power into the centre of religion. Here there are various degrees of the divinization of the Monarch. Such a relationship is typical of pagan States. But in Christian States it appears in various degrees of so-called caesaropapism.

"2. The complete opposite of this type of State-Religion relations is the subjection of the State to the institution of the Church. This refers to various forms of priestocracy, hierocracy and papocaesarism. In essence there is no monarchical power here.

"3. The third type of relationship is the union of the State with the Church, which is attained by the subjection of the Monarch to the religious idea and his personal belonging to the Church, with the independence of the supreme power of his State. It is possible to call this the true expression of theocracy (and not hierocracy), that is, the dominion of God through the Tsar, who is delegated by God (and not by the ecclesiastical authority).' (*Monarkhicheskaia Gosudarstvennost'*, volume III, p. 67).

"Tikhomirov goes on to point out that for a 'pure', that is, Autocratic Monarchy, only the third type of relationship is possible. The point is that with people's power, on which the majority of contemporary States is based, the State is not supposed to be ruled by the ethical principle. The aim of democracy is supposed to be to provide for only the material interests of its citizens, placing them in a position of equal rights. At the foundation of democracy is the defence of rights, and not the consciousness of duty and responsibility. On the contrary, the Monarchy is founded on the supremacy of the ethical principle, the source of which is the Church with her teaching on virtue, which leads the Monarchy to consciously seek union with the Church."²²⁷

The three faiths of Democracy, Islam and Orthodoxy, with their corresponding political structures, are in a state of constant conflict with each other. However, Democracy and Islam can come to mutually beneficial agreements with each other (as in Bosnia in the recent war), whereas Orthodoxy can compromise with either of the others only at the cost of her very soul. In 1453, Orthodoxy in the form of the New Rome of Constantinople fell to Islam, having previously compromised with Catholicism at the council of Florence in 1439. In 1917, Orthodoxy in the form of the Third Rome of Moscow fell to Democracy, having previously compromised with the revolution through the Tsar's Manifesto of 1905. Resurrection is possible, but only by consciously correcting both errors: by rejecting ecumenism, which would reconcile Orthodoxy with the false faiths of Islam and Catholicism, and by rejecting the revolution, which would reconcile Orthodoxy with the rule of the people rather than the rule of God...

²²⁷ Bishop Gregory, "Tserkov' i Gosudarstvo v Budushchej Rossii" ("The Church and the State in the Future Russia"), in *Tserkov' i Yeia Uchenie v Zhizni* (The Church and Her Teaching in Life), volume III, Holy Trinity Monastery, Jordanville, 1992, pp. 313-316.

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10. A CRITIQUE OF LIBERAL DEMOCRACY

Introduction

By 1789, and especially after the first phase of the French revolution reduced the power of the French king to that of a constitutional monarch, liberalism became the most popular political theory among the educated classes of Europe. Liberalism in politics seemed the natural counterpart of reason and enlightenment in philosophy, morals and theology as a whole.

The popularity of liberalism has remained strong to the present day. In spite of the shocks of the French revolution and other national revolutions in the nineteenth century, and the still greater shocks of the Russian revolution and the other communist and fascist revolutions in the twentieth, liberalism has retained its place as the leading political ideology. But how sound are its foundations in actual fact?

Hieromonk Seraphim (Rose) explained both the positive teaching of Orthodoxy on political authority and why, for the Orthodox, liberalism rests on shaky foundations: "In the Christian order, politics... was founded upon absolute truth... The principal providential form of government took in union with Christian Truth was the Orthodox Christian Empire, wherein sovereignty was vested in a Monarch, and authority proceeded from him downwards through a hierarchical social structure... On the other hand... a politics that rejects Christian Truth must acknowledge 'the people' as sovereign and understand authority as proceeding from below upwards, in a formally 'egalitarian' society. It is clear that one is the perfect inversion of the other; for they are opposed in their conceptions both of the source and of the end of government. Orthodox Christian Monarchy is government divinely established, and directed, ultimately, to the other world, government with the teaching of Christian Truth and the salvation of souls as its profoundest purpose; Nihilist rule - whose most fitting name... is Anarchy - is government established by men, and directed solely to this world, government which has no higher aim than earthly happiness.

"The Liberal view of government, as one might suspect, is an attempt at compromise between these two irreconcilable ideas. In the 19th century this compromise took the form of 'constitutional monarchies', an attempt - again - to wed an old form to a new content; today the chief representatives of the Liberal idea are the 'republics' and 'democracies' of Western Europe and America, most of which preserve a rather precarious balance between the forces of authority and Revolution, while, while professing to believe in both.

"It is of course impossible to believe in both with equal sincerity and fervor, and in fact no one has ever done so. Constitutional monarchs like Louis Philippe thought to do so by professing to rule 'by the Grace of God and the will of the people' - a formula whose two terms annul each other, a fact as evident to the Anarchist [Bakunin] as to the Monarchist.

"Now a government is secure insofar as it has God for its foundation and His Will for its guide; but this, surely, is not a description of Liberal government. It is, in the

Liberal view, the people who rule, and not God; God Himself is a 'constitutional monarch' Whose authority has been totally delegated to the people, and Whose function is entirely ceremonial. The Liberal believes in God with the same rhetorical fervor with which he believes in Heaven. The government erected upon such a faith is very little different, in principle, from a government erected upon total disbelief; and whatever its present residue of stability, it is clearly pointed in the direction of Anarchy.

"A government must rule by the Grace of God *or* by the will of the people, it must believe in authority *or* in the Revolution; on these issues compromise is possible only in semblance, and only for a time. The Revolution, like the disbelief which has always accompanied it, cannot be stopped halfway; it is a force that, once awakened, will not rest until it ends in a totalitarian Kingdom of this world. The history of the last two centuries has proved nothing if not this. To appease the Revolution and offer it concessions, as Liberals have always done, thereby showing that they have no truth with which to oppose it, is perhaps to postpone, but not to prevent, the attainment of its end. And to oppose the radical Revolution with a Revolution of one's own, whether it be 'conservative', 'non-violent', or 'spiritual', is not merely to reveal ignorance of the full scope and nature of the Revolution of our time, but to concede as well the first principle of the Revolution: that the old truth is no longer true, and a new truth must take its place."²²⁸

In order to study the difference between Orthodoxy and liberalism more deeply, let us examine the theories of two of the most famous liberal thinkers: the nineteenth-century philosopher, John Stuart Mill, and the twentieth-century political scientist, Francis Fukuyama.

A. Mill on Liberty

The 1850s saw England at her peak from an external, material point of view. Her navies ruled the seas; her trade and industry was far greater than any other country's (though America and Germany were catching up fast). And while liberalism was checked on the continent after 1848 as monarchy revived and the proletariat raged, in England it remained remarkably stable. It was to give a theoretical underpinning to this English variety of liberalism, that John Stuart Mill wrote his famous essay *On Liberty*, which remains to this day the most elegant and influential defence of English liberalism.

Mill was especially influenced in the writing of this book by Alexis de Tocqueville's *Democracy in America*. De Tocqueville had pointed to a serious flaw in American democracy which he called "the tyranny of the majority". Mill was determined to put forward a system that ruled out "the tyranny of the majority" and defended minorities.

To protect society against this tyranny he proposed a single "very simple" principle which would place a limit on the ability of the state to interfere in the life of the

²²⁸ Rose, *Nihilism*, Platina, Ca.: Fr. Seraphim Rose Foundation, 1994, pp. 28-30.

individual: "The object of this essay is to assert one very simple principle, as entitled to govern absolutely the dealings of society with the individual in the way of compulsion and control, whether the means to be used by physical force in the form of legal penalties or the moral coercion of public opinion. That principle is that the sole end for which mankind are warranted, individually or collectively, in interfering with the liberty of action of any of their number is self-protection. That the only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of a civilized community, against his will, is to prevent harm to others. His own good, either physical or moral, is not a sufficient warrant. He cannot rightfully be compelled to do or forbear because it will be better for him to do so, because it will make him happier, because, in the opinion of others, to do so would be wise or even right. These are good reasons for remonstrating with him, or reasoning with him, or persuading him, or entreating him, but not for compelling him or visiting him with any evil in case he do otherwise. To justify that, the conduct from which it is desired to deter him must be calculated to produce evil to someone else. The only part of the conduct of anyone or which it is amenable to society is that which concerns others. In the part which merely concerns himself, his independence is, of right, absolute. Over himself, over his own body and mind, the individual is sovereign."²²⁹

Mill asserted that this "Liberty Principle" or "Harm Principle" applied only to people in "the maturity of their faculties", not to children or to "those backward states of society in which the race itself may be considered as in its nonage."²³⁰ For "Liberty, as a principle, has no application to any state of things anterior to the time when mankind have become capable of being improved through free and equal discussion".²³¹

This qualification provided a neat justification for the spread of the British Empire among the pagan nations. And in general, in spite of the fact that Mill was concerned above all to protect the liberty of the individual against the tyranny of the majority and popular morality, his theory fitted in remarkably well with the prejudices of the majority in the England of his time. Thus the English prided themselves on their freedom of speech, and their giving refuge to political exiles of every kind, from Louis XVIII and Louis Napoleon to Herzen and Bakunin, Kossuth and Marx. No tyranny of the majority here!

Thus Dostoyevsky described how a Member of Parliament, Sir Edward Watkins, welcomed Don Carlos to England: "Of course, he himself knew that the newly arrived guest was the leading actor in a bloody and fratricidal war; but by meeting him he thereby satisfied his patriotic pride and served England to the utmost of his ability. Extending his hand to a blood-stained tyrant, in the name of England, and as a member of Parliament, he told him, as it were: 'You are a despot, a tyrant, and yet you came to the land of freedom to seek refuge in it. This could have been expected:

²²⁹ Mill, *On Liberty*, London: Penguin Classics, 1974, pp. 68-69.

²³⁰ Mill, *On Liberty*, p. 69.

²³¹ Mill, *On Liberty*, p. 69.

England receives everybody and is not afraid to give refuge to anyone: entree et sortie libres. Be welcome!"²³²

Mill provided a passionate defence of the widest possible freedom of thought and speech. "First," he argued, "the opinion which it is attempted to suppress by authority may possibly be true. Those who desire to suppress it, of course, deny its truth; but they are not infallible. They have no authority to decide the question for all mankind and exclude every other person from the means of judging. To refuse a hearing to an opinion because they are sure that it is false is to assume that *their* certainty is the same thing as *absolute* certainty. All silencing of discussion is an assumption of infallibility."²³³

But this is not true: there is a difference between certainty and the assumption of infallibility. A man may consider himself to be a wretched sinner and prone to all kinds of errors, and yet be completely certain of some things. All true religious belief is of this kind - and much false religious belief also. For faith, according to the definition of the Apostle, is certainty in the existence of invisible realities (Hebrews 11.1); it is incompatible with the least doubt. But even if one is not completely certain about something, one may be sure enough to censor what one considers a false opinion. Thus a government may not be completely certain that a certain drug has serious side effects, but may still act to ban it, and ban any propaganda in its favour, in the belief that the risks are sufficiently great to warrant such action. Mill may be able to accommodate this example with his "Harm Principle", but not on the grounds that to exclude a certain opinion on the grounds that it is likely to be false amounts to a belief in one's infallibility.

Mill anticipates this objection, formulating it as follows: "Men and governments must act to the best of their ability. There is no such thing as absolute certainty, but there is assurance sufficient for the purposes of human life. We may, and must assume our opinions to be true for the guidance of our own conduct; and it is assuming no more when we forbid bad men to pervert society by the propagation of opinions which we regard as false and pernicious."²³⁴

But Mill will have none of this; it is only by allowing our opinion to be contested by those who think otherwise, he argues, that we come to know whether it is really deserving of confidence, and hence whether the opposite opinion should be censored. "The most intolerant of churches, the Roman Catholic Church, even at the canonization of a saint admits, and listens patiently to, a 'devil's advocate'. The holiest of men, it appears, cannot be admitted to posthumous honours until all that the devil could say against him is known and weighed."²³⁵

In practice, this means that no opinion should ever be censored; "the lists have to be kept open" in case someone appears who will expose the flaw in the accepted

²³² Dostoyevsky, *The Diary of a Writer*, 1876, London: Cassell, part I, trans. Boris Brasol, pp. 262-263.

²³³ Mill, *On Liberty*, p. 77.

²³⁴ Mill, *On Liberty*, p. 79.

²³⁵ Mill, *On Liberty*, p. 81.

“truth”. And this applies even if the dissenting opinion goes against one’s most treasured and vital convictions concerning God or morality. For “however positive anyone’s persuasion may be, not only of the falsity but of the pernicious consequences – not only of the pernicious consequences, but (to adopt expressions which I altogether condemn) the immorality and impiety of an opinion – yet if, in pursuance of that private judgement, though backed by the public judgement of his country or his contemporaries, he prevents the opinion from being heard in its defence, he assumes infallibility. And so far from the assumption being less objectionable or less dangerous because the opinion is called immoral or impious, this is the case of all others in which it is most fatal. These are exactly the occasions on which the men of one generation commit those dreadful mistakes which excite the astonishment and horror of posterity.”²³⁶

And then Mill cites the examples of Socrates and Jesus Christ, who, though the most admirable of men, became the victims of the censoriousness of their generation.

Mill’s most powerful argument in favour of complete liberty of speech – an argument expressed before him in More’s *Utopia* and Milton’s *Areopagitica* – is that it is only in an atmosphere of complete intellectual freedom that truth can be truly understood and become well rooted. “Truth gains more even by the errors of one who, with due study and preparation, thinks for himself than by the true opinions of those who only hold them because they do not suffer themselves to think. Not that it is solely, or chiefly, to form great thinkers that freedom of thinking is required. On the contrary, it is as much and even more indispensable to enable average human beings to attain the mental stature which they are capable of. There have been, and may again be, great individual thinkers in a general atmosphere of mental slavery. But there never has been, nor ever will be, in that atmosphere an intellectually active people.”²³⁷

Mill goes on to cite the Reformation in Europe, the late eighteenth-century in France and the early nineteenth-century in Germany as admirable periods of intellectual freedom. “In each, an old mental despotism had been thrown off, and no new one had yet taken its place. The impulse given at these three periods has made Europe what it now is. Every single improvement which has taken place either in the human mind or in institutions may be traced distinctly to one or other of them.”²³⁸

However, the citing of these three periods exposes the false assumptions of Mill’s argument. The Reformation was indeed an intellectually exciting period, when many of the abuses and falsehoods of the medieval period were exposed. But did it lead to a greater understanding of *positive* truth? By no means. Similarly, the late eighteenth century was the period in which the foundations of Church and State were so effectively undermined as to lead to the bloodiest revolution in history to that date, a revolution which most English liberals quite rightly abhorred. As to the early nineteenth century in Germany, its most dominant thinker was Hegel, who, as we shall see, constructed probably the most pompous and contradictory – indeed, strictly

²³⁶ Mill, *On Liberty*, p. 84.

²³⁷ Mill, *On Liberty*, p. 91.

²³⁸ Mill, *On Liberty*, p. 96.

nonsensical - of all philosophical systems, which is considered, with some justice, to be an ancestor of both communism and fascism.

As for the Anglo-Saxon world, in the one-and-a-half centuries since Mill's time, although it has attained a still greater degree of freedom of thought and speech than prevailed in those three epochs. And yet it has been at the expense of the almost complete decay of traditional Christian belief and morality - evidently, freedom does *not* necessarily lead to truth. Nor did the Truth incarnate ever claim that it would, declaring rather the reverse, namely, that "ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8.32). In other words, truth leads to freedom, not freedom to truth.

And part of the truth consists in the sober recognition that men's minds are fallen, and for much of the time do not even *want* the truth, so that if given complete freedom to say what they like, the result will be the falling away of society from truth into the abyss of destruction.

As Timothy Snyder writes, interpreting the lessons of George Orwell's *1984* for today's mass democracies: "The core texts of liberal toleration, such as Milton's *Areopagitica* and Mill's *On Liberty*, take for granted that individuals will wish to know the truth. They contend that in the absence of censorship, truth will eventually emerge and be recognised as such. But even in democracies this may not always be true."²³⁹

Mill's arguments in favour of complete freedom of expression rest on the assumption, as he freely admitted, that the men who are given this freedom are not children or barbarians. And yet the corruption of mind and heart we associate with the word "barbarian" is present in every single man; this is what we mean by the term "original sin". And if men were not very often children in mind, the Apostle Paul would not have been forced to say: "Brethren, be not children in your thinking; be babes in evil, but in thinking be mature" (I Corinthians 14.20).

James Fitzjames Stephen, in his *Liberty, Equality, Fraternity* (1873) pointed to further important flaws in Mill's argument. Liberty was like fire, he said; it could be used for good and ill; to assume otherwise was naïve and dangerous. It was by no means certain that full freedom from interference by others would lead to greater searching for truth; it could just as easily lead to idleness and lack of interest in social affairs. Moreover, writes Gertrude Himmelfarth, "what disturbed him about Mill's doctrine was the possibility that its adoption would leave society impotent in those situations where there was a genuine need for social action. Implicit too was the possibility that the withdrawal of social sanctions against any particular belief or act would be interpreted as a sanctioning of that belief or act, a licence to do that which society could not prohibit."²⁴⁰

Stephen's line of argument has been developed in our time by Lord Devlin in his essay entitled *The Enforcement of Morals* (1968). "The occasion for Devlin's essay,"

²³⁹ Snyder, "War is Peace", *Prospect*, November, 2004, p. 33.

²⁴⁰ Himmelfarth, in Mill, *On Liberty*, p. 40.

writes Himmelfarth, “was the Report of the Wolfenden Commission recommending the legalization of homosexuality between consenting adults. Against the Commission’s claim that private morality and immorality were ‘not the law’s business’, Devlin argued that ‘the suppression of vice is as much the law’s business as the suppression of subversive activities; it is not more possible to define a sphere of private morality than it is to define private subversive activity.’”²⁴¹

As we know, the Wolfenden Commission’s recommendation with regard to homosexuality was accepted by the English parliament, which demonstrates the power – the highly destructive power – that the application of Mill’s Principle has acquired in our times, a power that Mill himself would probably have deplored. Indeed, a completely consistent application of the Principle would probably lead to the sweeping away of prohibitions against such activities as euthanasia and incest on the grounds that these are within the sphere of private morality or immorality and so of no concern to the State.

Take the case of prostitution, which is already fully legal in most countries. “If prostitution,” asks Devlin is... not the law’s business, what concern has the law with the ponce or the brothel-keeper...? The Report recommends that the laws which make these activities criminal offences should be maintained... and brings them... under the heading of exploitation.... But in general a ponce exploits a prostitute no more than an impresario exploits an actress.”²⁴²

Mill justifies the prohibition of certain acts, such as public decency, on the grounds that they “are a violation of good manners, ... coming thus within the category of offences against others”.

And yet, as Jonathan Wolff points out, it is difficult to see how such a prohibition can be justified on the basis of the Harm Principle alone. For “what harm does ‘public indecency’ do? After all, Mill insists that mere offence is no harm. Here Mill, without being explicit, seems to allow customary morality to override his adherence to the Liberty Principle. Few, perhaps, would criticize his choice of policy. But it is hard to see how he can render this consistent with his other views: indeed, he appears to make no serious attempt to do so. Once we begin to consider examples of this kind we begin to understand that following Mill’s ‘once simple principle’ would lead to a society of a kind never seen before, and, perhaps, one which we would never wish to see...”²⁴³

And so, while English liberalism of the Mills variety carefully sought to protect society both from the continental-style tyranny of one man, and from the American-style tyranny of the majority, it ended up delivering society into a series of *tyrannies of the minorities*, which is best exemplified by the European Human Rights Act that is devastating Christian faith and morality in contemporary Europe and Britain.

²⁴¹ Himmelfarth, in Mill, *On Liberty*, p. 41.

²⁴² Devlin, in Jonathan Wolff, *An Introduction to Political Philosophy*, Oxford University Press, 1996, p. 141.

²⁴³ Wolff, *op. cit.*, pp. 140-141. For the difficulties created for Mills’ theory by public indecency, see several articles in *Philosophy Now*, issue 76, November-December, 2009.

Now a religious minority, for example, can prosecute you for “stirring up religious hatred”, or (in pseudo-liberal Russia) for “extremism”. A worker is not allowed to wear a cross because it offends the Muslims. And a historian cannot put forward a new hypothesis about the Holocaust because it might offend the Jews...

B. Fukuyama on the End of History

Let us now examine probably the best-known and best-articulated defence of liberalism that has appeared in the last twenty-five years, *The End of History and the Last Man* by the Harvard-trained political scientist Francis Fukuyama. In view of the fame of this thesis, any anti-modernist world-view, and in particular any truly coherent defence of our Orthodox Christian faith, must take into account what Fukuyama says and refute it, or, at any rate, show that his correct observations and analyses must lead to different conclusions from the ones he draws. What makes Fukuyama's thesis particularly interesting to Orthodox Christians is that it is possible for us to agree with 99% of his detailed argumentation while differing fundamentally from him in our final conclusions.

Fukuyama's original article entitled "The End of History?" argued, in his words, "that liberal democracy represented 'the end point of mankind's ideological evolution' and 'the final form of human government,' and as such constituted 'the end of history'. That is, while earlier forms of government were characterized by grave defects and irrationalities that led to their eventual collapse, liberal democracy was arguably free from such fundamental internal contradictions. This was not to say that today's stable democracies, like the United States, France, or Switzerland, were not without injustice or serious social problems. But these problems were ones of incomplete implementation of the twin principles of liberty and equality on which modern democracy is founded, rather than flaws in the principles themselves. While some present-day countries might fail to achieve stable liberal democracy, and others might lapse back into other, more primitive forms of rule like theocracy or military dictatorship, the *ideal* of liberal democracy could not be improved on."²⁴⁴

Fukuyama's original article appeared in the summer of 1989, and it received rapid and dramatic support from the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe almost immediately after. Thus by 1991 the only major country outside the Islamic Middle East and Africa not to have become at least nominally democratic was Communist China - and cracks were appearing there as well. Not that Fukuyama predicted this outcome: as he honestly admits, only a few years before neither he nor the great majority of western political scientists had anticipated the fall of communism any time soon. Probably the only prominent writers to predict both the fall of communism and the nationalist conflicts and democratic regimes that followed it were Orthodox Christian ones such as Gennady Shimanov and Alexander Solzhenitsyn, neither of whom was noted as being a champion of democracy. This fact alone should make us pause before trusting too much in Fukuyama's judgements about the future of the world and the end of history. Nevertheless, it must be admitted that at the present time History *appears* to be going his way. It is another question whether this direction

²⁴⁴ Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man*, Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1992, p. xi.

is the *best* possible way, or whether it is possible to consider other possible outcomes to the historical process...

1. Reason, Desire and Thymos

Why, according to Fukuyama, is History moving towards world-wide democracy? At the risk of over-simplifying what is a lengthy and sophisticated argument, we may summarise his answer under two headings: *the logic of scientific advance*, and *the logic of human need*, in particular *the need for recognition*. Let us look briefly at each of these.

First, the survival of any modern State militarily and economically requires that *science and technology* be given free rein, which in turn requires the free dissemination of ideas and products both within and between States that only political and economic liberalism guarantees. "The scientific-technical elite required to run modern industrial economies would eventually demand greater political liberalization, because scientific inquiry can only proceed in an atmosphere of freedom and the open exchange of ideas. We saw earlier how the emergence of a large technocratic elite in the USSR and China created a certain bias in favor of markets and economic liberalization, since these were more in accord with the criteria of economic rationality. Here the argument is extended into the political realm: that scientific advance depends not only on freedom for scientific inquiry, but on a society and political system that are as a whole open to free debate and participation."²⁴⁵ Nor can the advance of science be halted or reversed for an indefinite period. Even the destruction of civilization through a nuclear or ecological catastrophe, and the demand for a far more careful evaluation of the effects of science and technology such a catastrophe would elicit, would not alter this. For it is inconceivable that the principles of scientific method should be forgotten as long as humanity survives on the planet, and any State that eschewed the application of that method would be at an enormous disadvantage in the struggle for survival.

Fukuyama admits that the logic of scientific advance and technological development does not by itself explain why most people in advanced, industrialized countries prefer democracy. "For if a country's goal is economic growth above all other considerations, the truly winning combination would appear to be neither liberal democracy nor socialism of either a Leninist or democratic variety, but the combination of liberal economics and authoritarian politics that some observers have labeled the 'bureaucratic authoritarian state,' or what we might term a 'market-oriented authoritarianism.'"²⁴⁶

Interestingly, as an example of such a "winning combination" Fukuyama mentions "the Russia of Witte and Stolypin" - in other words, of Tsar Nicholas II...

Since the logic of scientific advance is not sufficient in itself to explain why most people and States choose democracy, Fukuyama has resort to a second, more powerful argument based on a Platonic model of human nature. According to this model, there are three basic components of human nature: reason, desire and the force denoted by

²⁴⁵ Fukuyama, *op. cit.*, p. 117.

²⁴⁶ Fukuyama, *op. cit.*, p. 123.

the almost untranslatable Greek word thymos. Reason is the handmaid of desire and thymos; it is that element which distinguishes us from the animals and enables the irrational forces of desire and thymos to be satisfied in the real world. Desire includes the basic needs for food, sleep, shelter and sex. Thymos is usually translated as "anger" or "courage"; but Fukuyama defines it as that desire which "desires the desire of other men, that is, to be wanted by others or to be *recognized*".²⁴⁷

Now most liberal theorists in the Anglo-Saxon tradition, such as Hobbes, Locke and the founders of the American Constitution, have focused on desire as the fundamental force in human nature because on its satisfaction depends the survival of the human race itself. They have seen thymos, or the need for recognition, as an ambiguous force which should rather be suppressed than expressed; for it is thymos that leads to tyrannies, wars and all those conflicts which endanger "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness". The American Constitution with its system of checks and balances was designed above all to prevent the emergence of tyranny, which is the clearest expression of what we may call "megalothymia". Indeed, for many the prime merit of democracy consists in its prevention of tyranny.

A similar point of view was expressed by the Anglican writer, C.S. Lewis: "I am a democrat because I believe in the Fall of Man. I think most people are democrats for the opposite reason. A great deal of democratic enthusiasm descends from the ideas of people like Rousseau, who believed in democracy because they thought mankind so wise and good that everyone deserved a share in government. The danger of defending democracy on those grounds is that they are not true. And whenever their weakness is exposed, the people who prefer tyranny make capital out of the exposure. I find that they're not true without looking further than myself. I don't deserve a share in governing a henroost, much less a nation. Nor do most people - all the people who believe in advertisements, and think in catchwords and spread rumours. The real reason for democracy is just the reverse. Mankind is so fallen that no man can be trusted with unchecked power over his fellows..."²⁴⁸

But this argument is deficient on both logical and historical grounds. Let us agree that Man is fallen. Why should giving very many fallen men a share in government reverse that fall? In moral and social life, two minuses do not make a plus. Democratic institutions may inhibit the rise of tyranny in the short term; but they also make it almost certain that democratic leaders will be accomplished demagogues prepared to do almost anything to please the electorate. One man's thymos may check the full expression of another's; but the combination of many contradictory wills can only lead to a compromise which is exceedingly unlikely to be the best decision for society as a whole.

In fact, if wisdom in politics, as in everything else, comes from God, "it is much more natural to suppose," as Trostnikov says, "that divine enlightenment will descend upon the chosen soul of an Anointed One of God, as opposed to a million souls at

²⁴⁷ Fukuyama, *op. cit.*, p. 146.

²⁴⁸ Lewis, "Equality", *The Spectator*, CLXXI (27 August, 1943), p. 192; *The Business of Heaven*, London: Collins, 1984, p. 186.

once".²⁴⁹ The Scripture does *not* say *vox populi - vox Dei*, but: "The heart of the king is in the hand of the Lord; he turns it wherever He will" (Proverbs 21.1).

In spite of his being a democrat, Lewis was very perceptive about the evil uses to which the word "democracy" could be put. Thus his Screwtape (an imaginative incarnation of the devil) writes: "*Democracy* is the word with which you must lead them by the nose. The good work which our philological experts have already done in the corruption of human language makes it unnecessary to warn you that they should never be allowed to give this word a clear and definable meaning. They won't. It will never occur to them that *democracy* is properly the name of a political system, even a system of voting, and that this has the most remote and tenuous connection with what you are trying to sell them. Nor of course must they ever be allowed to raise Aristotle's question: whether 'democratic behaviour' means the behaviour that democracies like or the behaviour that will preserve a democracy. For if they did, it could hardly fail to occur to them that these need not be the same.

"You are to use the word purely as an incantation; if you like, purely for its selling power. It is a name they venerate. And of course it is connected with the political ideal that men should be equally treated. You then make a stealthy transition in their minds from this political ideal to a factual belief that all men *are* equal. Especially the man you are working on. As a result you can use the word *democracy* to sanction in his thought the most degrading (and also the most enjoyable) of all human feelings... The feeling I mean is of course that which prompts a man to say *I'm as good as you*. The first and most obvious advantage is that you thus induce him to enthrone at the centre of his life a good, solid, resounding lie.

"Now, this useful phenomenon is in itself by no means new. Under the name of Envy it has been known to the humans for thousands of years. But hitherto they always regarded it as the most odious, and also the most comical, of vices. Those who were aware of feeling it felt it with shame; those who were not gave it no quarter in others. The delightful novelty of the present situation is that you can sanction it - make it respectable and even laudable - by the incantatory use of the word *democracy*."²⁵⁰

In any case, has democracy really been such a defence against tyranny? Let us take the example of the first and most famous democracy, Athens.

In the sixth century BC, Athens had been ruled by Solon, one of the wisest and most benevolent of autocrats, who showed his superiority to personal ambition by retiring into voluntary exile at the height of his fame. Later, in the fifth century, Athenian democracy was led by a good leader, Pericles. But by the end of the century Socrates, the state's most distinguished citizen, had been executed; Melos had been reduced and

²⁴⁹ Trostnikov, V.N. "The Role and Place of the Baptism of Rus' in the European Spiritual Process of the Second Millenium of Christian History", *Orthodox Life*, vol. 39, № 3, May-June, 1989, p. 34.

²⁵⁰ Lewis, *op. cit.*, pp. 190-191. In another place Lewis admits that "monarchy is the channel through which all the *vital* elements of citizenship - loyalty, the consecration of secular life, the hierarchical principle, splendour, ceremony, continuity - still trickle down to irrigate the dustbowl of modern economic Statecraft". ("Myth and Fact", in *God in the Dock: Essays on Theology*, edited by Walter Hopper, Fount Paperbacks, 1979)

its population cruelly butchered; and a futile and morale-sapping war against Sparta had been lost.

The lessons were not lost on the philosophers of the next century: Plato turned from democracy to the ideal of the philosopher-king; while Aristotle, as we have seen, distinguished between "democratic behaviour" meaning "the behaviour that democracies like" and "democratic behaviour" meaning "the behaviour that will preserve a democracy" - the two do not coincide. The behaviour that democracies like is peaceful money-making and pleasure-seeking. The behaviour that will preserve a democracy is war and strict discipline, in which the rights of the individual must be subordinated to the will of the state. Moreover, in order to *attain* democracy, the rights of individuals must be not only subordinated, but destroyed, sometimes on a massive scale. As Shakespeare put it in *Julius Caesar* (II, 1):

Ligarius. *What's to do?*

Brutus. *A piece of work that will make sick men whole.*

Ligarius. *But are not some whole that we must make sick?*

Thus it is a striking fact that all the greatest tyrants of modern times have emerged on the back of violent democratic revolutions: Cromwell - of the English revolution; Napoleon - of the French revolution; Lenin - of the Russian revolution. And was not Hitler elected by the German democracy? Again, democracies have been quite prepared to throw whole peoples to the lions of tyranny for ephemeral gains. We think of the Helsinki Accords of 1975, by which the West legitimised the Soviet conquest of Eastern Europe; or Taiwan's expulsion from the United Nations at the insistence of Red China.

So thymos is an aspect of human nature that the Anglo-Saxon liberal tradition has difficulty in accommodating. Liberals approve of the use of thymos in overthrowing tyrannies, but are short of ideas on how to tame it within an existing democracy. Recognizing this weakness in the Anglo-Saxon model, Fukuyama turns to a consideration of the German idealist tradition, as represented by the philosopher Friedrich Hegel, who attributed a much more positive value to thymos.

Hegel agreed with the Anglo-Saxons that democracy was the highest form of government, and therefore that the triumph of democracy - which for some mysterious reason he considered to have been attained by the tyrant Napoleon's victory at Jena in 1806 - was "the End of History". But democracy was the best, in Hegel's view, not simply because it attained the aim of self-preservation better than any other system, but also, *and primarily*, because it gave expression to thymos in the form of "isothymia" - that is, it allowed each citizen to express his thymos to an equal degree. For whereas in pre-democratic societies the satisfaction of thymos in one person led to the frustration of thymos for many more, thereby dividing the whole of society into one or a few masters and a great many slaves, as a result of the democratic revolutions of the eighteenth century the slaves overthrew their masters and achieved equal recognition in each other's eyes. Thus *through the winning of universal human rights everyone, in effect, became a master.*

Hegel's philosophy was an explicit challenge to the Christian view of political freedom and slavery.

Christians regard slavery as a secondary evil that could be turned into good if used for spiritual ends. "For he that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lord's freeman: likewise also he that is called, being free, is Christ's servant" (I Corinthians 7.22; Onesimus). So "live as free men, yet without using your freedom as a pretext for evil; but live as servants of God" (I Peter 2.16).

St. Augustine developed this teaching, and asserted that if slaves "cannot get freedom from their masters, they can make their slavery into a kind of freedom, by performing this service not in deceitfulness and fear but in faithfulness and love, until injustice passes away and all dominion and human power are brought to nothing and God is all in all..."²⁵¹

But this doctrine offended Hegel's pride, his thymos. So without arguing in detail against it, he rejected it as unworthy of the dignity of man. And he rejected Anglo-Saxon liberalism for similar reasons, insofar as he saw placing self-preservation as the main aim of life and society as effete and degrading. Thus Hegel would have agreed with Shakespeare's words in *Hamlet*, IV, 4:

*What is a man,
If his chief good and market of his time
Be but to sleep and feed? A beast, no more.*²⁵²

The essence and glory of man consists in his love of glory and honour:

*Rightly to be great
Is not to stir without great argument,
But greatly to find quarrel in a straw
When honour's at the stake.*

For the greatness of man lies in his *transcendence* of self-preservation, in his capacity for self-sacrifice. And this is a manifestation of thymos.

Fukuyama develops the Hegelian critique of Anglo-Saxon liberalism as follows: "It is precisely the moral primacy accorded to self-preservation or comfortable self-preservation in the thought of Hobbes and Locke that leaves us unsatisfied. Beyond establishing rules for mutual self-preservation, liberal societies do not attempt to define any positive goals for their citizens or promote a particular way of life as superior or desirable to another. Whatever positive life may have has to be filled by the individual himself. That positive content can be a high one of public service and private generosity, or it can be a low one of selfish pleasure and personal meanness.

²⁵¹ St. Augustine, *The City of God*, XIX, 15; translated by Maurice Wiles and Mark Santer, *Documents in Early Christian Thought*, Cambridge University Press, 1977, pp. 241-242.

²⁵² Shakespeare was the favourite author of the German idealists. But a careful reading of his plays demonstrates that he was no democrat, but rather a convinced defender of the hierarchical order in society. See *Richard II* and *Henry V*.

The state as such is indifferent. Indeed, government is committed to the tolerance of different 'lifestyles', except when the exercise of one right impinges on another. In the absence of positive, 'higher' goals, what usually fills the vacuum at the heart of Lockean liberalism is the open-ended pursuit of wealth, now liberated from the traditional constraints of need and scarcity.

"The limitations of the liberal view of man become more obvious if we consider liberal society's most typical product, a new type of individual who has subsequently come to be termed pejoratively as the *bourgeois*: the human being narrowly consumed with his own immediate self-preservation and material well-being, interested in the community around him only to the extent that it fosters or is a means of achieving his private good. Lockean man did not need to be public-spirited, patriotic or concerned for the welfare of those around him; rather, as Kant suggested, *a liberal society could be made up of devils, provided they were rational* [italics added]. It was not clear why the citizen of a liberal state, particularly in its Hobbesian variant, would ever serve in the army and risk his life for his country in war. For if the fundamental natural right was self-preservation of the individual, on what grounds could it ever be rational for an individual to die for his country rather than trying to run away with his money and family? Even in times of peace, Hobbesian or Lockean liberalism provided no reason why society's best men should choose public service and statesmanship over a private life of money-making. Indeed, it was not clear why Lockean man should become active in the life of his community, be privately generous to the poor, or even make the sacrifices necessary to raise a family.

"Beyond the practical question of whether one can create a viable society in which all public-spiritedness is missing, there is an even more important issue as to whether there was not something deeply contemptible about a man who cannot raise his sights higher than his own narrow self-interests and physical needs. Hegel's aristocratic master risking his life in a prestige battle is only the most extreme example of the human impulse to transcend merely natural or physical need. Is it not possible that the struggle for recognition reflects a longing for self-transcendence that lies at the root not only of the violence of the state of nature and of slavery, but also of the noble passions of patriotism, courage, generosity, and public spiritedness? Is recognition not somehow related to the entire moral side of man's nature, the part of man that finds satisfaction in the sacrifice of the narrow concerns of the body for an objective principle that lies beyond the body? By not rejecting the perspective of the master in favor of that of the slave, by identifying the master's struggle for recognition as somehow at the core of what is human, Hegel seeks to honor and preserve a certain moral dimension to human life that is entirely missing in the society conceived of by Hobbes and Locke. Hegel, in other words, understands man as a moral agent whose specific dignity is related to his inner freedom from physical or natural determination. It is this moral dimension, and the struggle to have it recognized, that is the motor driving the dialectical process of history."²⁵³

Now to the Christian ear there is an inner contradiction in this critique. While agreeing that there is something profoundly repellent in the bourgeois liberal's selfish

²⁵³ Fukuyama, *op. cit.*, pp. 160-161.

pursuit of comfortable self-preservation, we cannot agree that the struggle for recognition is anything other than a different, and still more dangerous, form of egoism. For what is self-transcending in the pure affirmation of self? Patriotism, courage and generosity are indeed noble passions, but if we attribute them to the simple need for recognition, are we not reducing acts of selflessness to disguised forms of selfishness?

And so if Anglo-Saxon liberalism panders to the ignoble passion of lust, does not Hegelian liberalism pander to the satanic passion of pride?

It follows from Fukuyama's analysis that the essential condition for the creation of a perfect or near-perfect society is the rational satisfaction both of desire and of thymos. But the satisfaction of thymos is the more problematic of the two requirements. For while the advance of science and open markets can be trusted to deliver the goods that desire - even the modern consumer's highly elastic and constantly changing desire - requires in sufficient quantities for all, it is a very tricky problem to satisfy everyone's thymos without letting any individual or group give expression to megalothymia.

However, democracy has succeeded by replacing megalothymia by two things. "The first is a blossoming of the desiring part of the soul, which manifests itself as a thorough-going *economization* of life. This economization extends from the highest things to the lowest, from the states of Europe who seek not greatness and empire, but a more integrated European Community in 1992, to the college graduate who performs an internal cost-benefit analysis of the career options open to him or her. The second thing that remains in place of megalothymia is an all pervasive isothymia, that is, the desire to be recognized as the equal of other people."²⁵⁴

In other words, democracy rests on the twin pillars of greed and pride: the rational (i.e. scientific) manipulation of greed developed *without* limit (for the richer the rich, the less poor, eventually, will be the poor, the so-called "trickle down" effect), and pride developed *within* a certain limit (the limit, that is, set by other people's pride). There are now no checks on fallen human nature except *laws* - the laws passed by fallen human beings - and the state's apparatus of law-keeping. That may be preferable to *lawlessness*, as Solzhenitsyn pointed out in the 1970s, comparing the West with the Soviet Union; but it means that within the limits of the laws the grossest immorality is permitted. Truly a house built on sand!

2. Democracy and Nationalism

Now there are two "thymotic" phenomena that will have to be controlled and neutralized if the democrat's ideal of a satisfied, isothymic citizenry is to be achieved: religion and nationalism.

Nationalism is a threat because it implies that all men are not equal, which in turn implies that it is right and just for one group of men to dominate another. As

²⁵⁴ Fukuyama, op. cit., p. 190.

Fukuyama admits, "Democracy is not particularly good at resolving disputes between different ethnic or national groups. The question of national sovereignty is inherently uncompromisable: it either belongs to one people or another - Armenians or Azerbaijanis, Lithuanians or Russians - and when different groups come into conflict there is seldom a way of splitting the difference through peaceful democratic compromise, as there is in the case of economic disputes. The Soviet Union could not become democratic and at the same time unitary, for there was no consensus among the Soviet Union's nationalities that they shared a common citizenship and identity. Democracy would only emerge on the basis of the country's breakup into smaller national entities. American democracy has done surprisingly well dealing with ethnic diversity, but that diversity has been contained within certain bounds: none of America's ethnic groups constitutes historical communities living on their traditional lands and speaking their own language, with a memory of past nationhood and sovereignty."²⁵⁵

Since democracy cannot contain give expression to nationalism without contradicting its own egalitarian principles, it has to undermine it - not by force, of course, but in the democratic way, that is, by sweet reason and material inducements. However, sweet reason rarely works when passions run high and deep, so in the end the warring nations have to be *bribed* to keep the peace. This works up to a point, but experience shows that even economically advanced countries whose desire is near to being satisfied cannot control the eruption of thymotic nationalist passions. Thus "economic development has not weakened the sense of national identity among French Canadians in Quebec; indeed, their fear of homogenization into the dominant Anglophone culture has sharpened their desire to preserve their distinctness. To say that democracy is more functional in societies 'born equal' like the United States begs the question of how a nation gets there in the first place. Democracy, then, does not necessarily become more functional as societies become more complex and diverse. In fact, it fails precisely when the diversity of a society passes a certain limit."²⁵⁶

In spite of this fact, the ideologues of democracy continue to believe that nationalism is a threat that can only be contained by building ever larger supra-national states. Thus the European Community was founded in 1956 on the premise that, besides the economic rewards to be reaped from the Union, it would prevent the recurrence of war between the European states in general and France and Germany in particular. Of course, the bloody breakdown of supra-national states such as the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia does not speak in support of this argument. But the democrats riposte by declaring that it is not supranationalism as such that was to blame for these breakdowns, but rather the communist system, which suppressed the thymotic aspirations of its citizens and so fuelled nationalism instead of sublimating it.

So is the democratic model of supranationalism represented by the European Union solving the problem of nationalism? The evidence seems to point in the opposite direction. Thus as the moment of the irreversible surrender of national sovereignties, i.e. monetary union, drew nearer, resistance stiffened in several

²⁵⁵ Fukuyama, *op. cit.*, p. 119.

²⁵⁶ Fukuyama, *op. cit.*, p. 121.

countries, as witnessed by the majorities against it in many national polls. And as this resistance became stronger, so the sweet reason of the Eurocrats turned into the harsh language of threatened coercion. Thus the French Prime Minister proposed that those countries who decided not to join the monetary union (he had in mind especially Great Britain, the most sceptical of the Union's nation states) should be subject to economic penalties. And the German Chancellor said (again, his remarks were aimed particularly at Britain) that the result of a failure to unite in Europe would mean *war*. This is in spite of the fact that there had been no war or even threat of war in Western Europe for the past fifty years!

So much for the "voluntary" union of states in the spirit of democracy and brotherhood! If you don't surrender your sovereignty, we will crush you! This is the language of nationalist hatred in supra-national guise, and it points to a central paradox or internal contradiction in democracy.

The contradiction consists in the fact that while democracy prides itself on its spirit of peace and brotherhood between individuals and nations, the path *to* democracy, both within and between nations, actually involves an unparalleled destruction of personal and national life. For much has been said, and truly said, about the destructive power of nationalism; but much less about how it protects nations and cultures and people *from* destruction (as, for example, it protected the Orthodox nations of Eastern Europe from destruction under the Turkish yoke). Again, much has been said, and truly said, about how democracy creates a culture of peace which has prevented the occurrence of major wars between democratic states; much less about how democracy has drastically weakened the bonds created by societies other than the state, from the ethnic group and the church to the working men's club and the mother's union, with the result that, deprived of community identities, atomized, democratic man has found himself in a state of undeclared war against, or at any rate alienation from, his neighbour.

This may explain why, at just the moment when democracies seem to have matured and solved all major internal contradictions and inequalities, new nationalisms are appearing - the Basque, Scottish and North Italian nationalisms, for example, in the modern European Union. For men must feel that they *belong to a community*, and not just to such an amorphous community as "the European Union", still less "the International Community". But to create a community means to create partitions - not hostile partitions, not impermeable partitions, but partitions nevertheless, partitions that show who is inside and who is outside the community, criteria of membership which *not* everyone will be able to meet. The resilience of nationalism in both its positive and negative modes is a sign of the perennial need for *community*, a need which democracy has abysmally failed to satisfy.

However, while Fukuyama fully accepts the existence and seriousness of this lack in democratic society, he still seems to think that the most important and powerful sources of community life, religion and nationalism, are either already out or on the way out. Thus in an uncharacteristically bold and unqualified statement he declares that "contrary to those who at the time believed that religion was a necessary and

permanent feature of the political landscape, *liberalism vanquished religion in Europe* [his italics].²⁵⁷

As for nationalism, he recognizes that this is likely to continue and even increase in some regions for some time yet. But in the end it, too, is destined to "wither away". Thus he considers the rise of nationalism in the highly cultured, democratic and economically advanced Germany of the 1920s and 30s to have been "the product of historically unique circumstances". "These conditions are not only not latent in most developed societies, but would be very hard (though not impossible) to duplicate in other societies in the future. Many of these circumstances, such as defeat in a long and brutal war and economic depression, are well known and potentially replicable in other countries. But others have to do with the special intellectual and cultural traditions of Germany at the time, its anti-materialism and emphasis on struggle and sacrifice, that made it very distinct from liberal France and England. These traditions, which were in no way 'modern', were tested by the wrenching social disruptions caused by Imperial Germany's hothouse industrialization before and after the Franco-Prussian War. It is possible to understand Nazism as another, albeit extreme, variant of the 'disease of the transition', a byproduct of the modernization process that was by no means a necessary component of modernity itself. None of this implies that a phenomenon like Nazism is now impossible because we have advanced socially beyond such a stage. It does suggest, however, that fascism is a pathological and extreme condition, by which one cannot judge modernity as a whole."²⁵⁸

Pathological and extreme Nazism may be, but it cannot be dismissed as simply an ugly but easily excised wart on the superbly toned body of Modernity. Hitler was elected in a democratic manner, and Nazism was the product of one of the fundamental internal contradictions of democracy, the fact that while promising fraternity, it nevertheless atomizes, alienates and in many other ways pulverizes the "brothers", making them feel that life is a jungle in which every man is essentially alone. Sovietism was also a product of democracy, and an exposure of another of its internal contradictions - that between freedom and equality. These "deviations" to the right and left do not point to the righteousness of a supposed "royal way" in between. Rather, they are symptoms, warning signs pointing to the inner pathological nature of the ideal they both professed and to which they both owed their existence - democracy, the rule of the people.

The European Union gives as its main justification the avoidance of those nationalistic wars, especially between France and Germany, which have so disfigured the region's history. But even if France and Germany are friends now, most of the old nationalisms show no sign of dying. Moreover, the crisis in the Eurozone has reanimated traditional antipathy towards the most powerful state in it, Germany. For pious exhortations are as useless in the face of nationalist fervour as exhortations to chastity in the face of aroused lust. In both cases *grace* is required to give power to the word.

²⁵⁷ Fukuyama, *op. cit.*, p. 271.

²⁵⁸ Fukuyama, *op. cit.*, p. 129.

The problem is that when the grace that holds apparent opposites in balance is absent, it is very easy for a nation, as for an individual person, to swing from one extreme to the other, as the history of the twentieth century, characterised by lurches from nationalist Fascism to internationalist Communism shows.

Late in the nineteenth century Constantine Leontiev saw that the nationalism of the states of Europe could lead to a no less dangerous internationalist abolition of states "... A state grouping *according to tribes and nations* is... nothing other than the preparation - striking in its force and vividness - for the transition to a cosmopolitan state, first a pan-European one, and then, perhaps, a global one, too! This is terrible! But still more terrible, in my opinion, is that fact that so far in Russia nobody has seen this or wants to understand it..."²⁵⁹ "A grouping of states according to pure nationalities will lead European man very quickly to the dominion of internationalism."²⁶⁰

More recently, Gabriel Robin has written: "The two ideologies, of Communism and of Europe, have much more in common than they [the Euroenthusiasts] like to admit... One had its apparatchiks, the other its Eurocrats... Their respective credos come together [in many respects including their belief in] the inevitable withering away of the nation-state..."²⁶¹

3. Democracy and Religion.

The second threat to democracy, according to Fukuyama, is religion. Religion is a threat because it postulates the existence of absolute truths and values that conflict with the democratic lie that it doesn't matter what you believe because one man's beliefs are as good and valid as any other's. That is why, as the Russian Slavophile Alexei Khomyakov pointed out, religion always declines under democracies.

Fukuyama writes: "Like nationalism, there is no inherent conflict between religion and liberal democracy, *except at the point where religion ceases to be tolerant or egalitarian.*"²⁶² It is not surprising, therefore, that the flowering of liberal democracy should have coincided with the flowering of the ecumenical movement in religion, and that England, the birthplace of liberal democracy, should also have supplied, in the form of the Anglican Church, the model and motor for the creation of the World Council of Churches. For ecumenism is, in essence, the application of the principles of liberal democracy to religious belief.

Paradoxically, Fukuyama, following Hegel, recognizes that the idea of the unique moral worth of every human being, which is at the root of the idea of human rights, is Christian in origin. For, according to the Christian view, "people who are manifestly unequal in terms of beauty, talent, intelligence, or skill, are nonetheless equal insofar as they are moral agents. The homeliest and most awkward orphan can have a more

²⁵⁹ Leontiev, "Tribal Politics as a Weapon of Global Revolution", letter 2. Constantine Leontiev, *Selected Works*, edited and with an introductory article by I.N. Smirnov, Moscow, 1993, p. 314.

²⁶⁰ Leontiev, "On Political and Cultural Nationalism", letter 3, *op. cit.*, p. 363.

²⁶¹ Robin, in Bernard Connolly, *The Rotten Heart of Europe*, London: Faber and Faber, 2012, p. xlvii.

²⁶² Fukuyama, *op. cit.*, p. 216. Italics added.

beautiful soul in the eyes of God than the most talented pianist or the most brilliant physicist. Christianity's contribution, then, to the historical process was to make clear to the slave this vision of human freedom, and to define for him in what sense all men could be understood to have dignity. The Christian God *recognizes* all human beings universally, recognizes their individual human worth and dignity. The Kingdom of Heaven, in other words, presents the prospect of a world in which the isothymia of every man - though not the megalothymia of the vainglorious - will be satisfied."²⁶³

Leaving aside for the moment the question whether this is an accurate representation of the Christian understanding of freedom and equality, we may note that, however useful this idea has been in bringing the slave to a sense of his own dignity, it has to be rejected by the democrat because it actually reconciles him with his chains rather than spurring him to throw them off. For Christianity, as Hegel - and, it would seem, Fukuyama, too - believes, is ultimately an ideology of slaves, whatever its usefulness as a stepping stone to the last ideology, the ideology of truly free men, Democracy. If the slaves are actually to become free, they must not be inhibited by the ideas of the will of God (which, by definition, is of greater authority than "the will of the people") and of the Kingdom of Heaven (which, by definition, cannot be the kingdom of this world). The Christian virtues of patience and humility must also go, and for very much the same reason. For the revolution needs *proud* men, *greedy* men, *impatient* men, not ascetic hermits - even if, after the revolution, they have to limit their pride and impatience, if not their greed, for the sake of the stability of democracy.

But this last point leads Fukuyama to a still more important admission: that religion is useful, perhaps even necessary, to democratic society even *after* the revolution. For "the emergence and durability of a society embodying rational recognition appears to *require* the survival of certain forms of irrational recognition."²⁶⁴

One example of such a survival is the "Protestant work-ethic", which is the recognition that work has a value in and of itself, regardless of its material rewards.

The problem for the democrats is that the thymotic passions which were necessary to overthrow the aristocratic masters and create democratic society tend to fade away when the victory has been won but the fruits of the victory still have to be consolidated and defended. It is a profound and important paradox that men are much more likely to give their lives for unelected hereditary monarchs than for elected presidents or prime ministers, even though they consider the latter more "legitimate" than the former. The reason for this is that very powerful religious and patriotic emotions attach to hereditary monarchs that do not attach to democratic leaders precisely because, whether consciously or unconsciously, they are perceived to be kings *not* by the will of the people, but by the will of God, Whose will the people recognizes to be more sacred than its own will.

Fukuyama struggles bravely with this ultimately intractable problem: "The liberal state growing out of the tradition of Hobbes and Locke engages in a protracted

²⁶³ Fukuyama, *op. cit.*, p. 197.

²⁶⁴ Fukuyama, *op. cit.*, p. 207.

struggle with its own people. It seeks to homogenize their variegated traditional cultures and to teach them to calculate instead their own long-term self-interest. In place of an organic moral community with its own language of 'good and evil', one had to learn a new set of democratic values: to be 'participant', 'rational', 'secular', 'mobile', 'empathetic', and 'tolerant'. These new democratic values were initially not values at all in the sense of defining the final human virtue or good. They were conceived as having a purely instrumental function, habits that one had to acquire if one was to live successfully in a peaceful and prosperous liberal society. It was for this reason that Nietzsche called the state the 'coldest of all cold monsters' that destroyed peoples and their cultures by hanging 'a thousand appetites' in front of them.

"For democracy to work, however, citizens of democratic states must forget the instrumental roots of their values, and develop a certain irrational thymotic pride in their political system and way of life. That is, they must come to love democracy not because it is necessarily better than the alternatives, but because it is *theirs*. Moreover, they must cease to see values like 'tolerance' as merely a means to an end; tolerance in democratic societies becomes the defining virtue. Development of this kind of pride in democracy, or the assimilation of democratic values into the citizen's sense of his own self, is what is meant by the creation of a 'democratic' or 'civic culture'. Such a culture is critical to the long-term health and stability of democracies, since no real-world society can long survive based on rational calculation and desire alone."²⁶⁵

Quite so; but is it rational to believe that telling the people that "they must come to love democracy not because it is necessarily better than the alternatives, but because it is *theirs*" is going to fire them more than the ideas of Islamic Jihad or "The Mystic Union of the Aryan race"? Is not loving an ideology just because it is *my* ideology the ultimate irrationality? Is not an ideology - any ideology - that appeals to a Being greater than itself going to have greater emotional appeal than such infantile narcissism? Moreover, the "purer" a democracy, the more serious the problem of injecting warmth into "the coldest of all cold monsters". For what "democratic" or "civic culture" can replace, even from a purely psychological point of view, full-blooded religion - believing in absolute truths and values that are not just projections of our desires?

Fukuyama discusses at some length how democratic society allows its megalothymic citizens to harmlessly "let off steam" - that is, excess thymos - through such activities as entrepreneurialism, competitive sport, intellectual and artistic achievement, ecological crusading and voluntary service in non-democratic societies. He has much less to say about how thymos is to be *generated* in relation to the central values and symbols of democratic society when that society is becoming - in this respect, at any rate - distinctly anaemic and "microthymic". Why, for example, should I go to war to make the world safe for democracy? To defend the good of "tolerance" against the evil of "intolerance"? But why shouldn't my "enemy" be intolerant if he wants to? Doesn't tolerance itself declare that one man's values are just as good as any other's? Why should I kill him just because, by an accident of birth, he hasn't reached

²⁶⁵ Fukuyama, *op. cit.*, pp. 214-215.

my level of ecumenical consciousness and remains mired in the fanaticism of the pre-millennial, non-democratic age?..

The fact is that whereas democracy wages war on "bigoted", "intolerant", "inegalitarian" religion, it desperately needs some such religion itself.

4. The Dialectics of Democracy.

In the last section of his book, entitled "The Last Man", Fukuyama examines two threats to the survival of democracy, one from the left of the political spectrum and one from the right.

From the left comes the challenge constituted by the never-ending demand for equality based on an ever-increasing list of supposed inequalities. "Already, forms of inequality such as racism, sexism, and homophobia have displaced the traditional class issue for the Left on contemporary college campuses. Once the principle of equal recognition of each person's human dignity - the satisfaction of their isothymia - is established, there is no guarantee that people will continue to accept the existence of natural or necessary residual forms of inequality. The fact that nature distributes capabilities unequally is not particularly just. Just because the present generation accepts this kind of inequality as either natural or necessary does not mean that it will be accepted as such in the future..

"The passion for equal recognition - isothymia - does not necessarily diminish with the achievement of greater de facto equality and material abundance, but may actually be stimulated by it...

"Today in democratic America there is a host of people who devote their lives to the total and complete elimination of any vestiges of inequality, making sure that no little girl should have to pay more to have her locks cut than a little boy, that no Boy Scout troop be closed to homosexual scoutmasters, that no building be built without a concrete wheelchair going up to the front door. These passions exist in American society because of, and not despite, the smallness of its actual remaining inequalities..."²⁶⁶

The proliferation of new "rights", many of them "ambiguous in their social content and mutually contradictory", threatens to dissolve the whole of society in a boiling sea of resentment. Hierarchy has all but disappeared. Anyone can now refuse obedience to, or take to court, anyone else - even children their parents. Bitter nationalisms re-emerge even in "the melting pot of the nations" as Afro-Americans go back to their roots in order to assert their difference from the dominant race. The very concept of degrees of excellence as something quite independent of race or sex is swept aside as, for example, Shakespeare's claim to pre-eminence in literature is rejected because he is he had the unfair advantage of being "white, male and Anglo-Saxon".

²⁶⁶ Fukuyama, op. cit., pp. 294, 295.

Fukuyama rightly points out that the doctrine of rights springs directly from an understanding of what man is. But the egalitarian and scientific revolutions undermine the Christian concept of man which the founders of liberalism, both Anglo-Saxon and German, took for granted, denying that there is any essential difference between man and nature because "man is simply a more organized and rational form of slime". It follows that essential human rights should be accorded also to the higher animals, like monkeys and dolphins, who can suffer pain as we do and are supposedly no less intelligent.²⁶⁷

"But the argument will not stop there. For how does one distinguish between higher and lower animals? Who can determine what in nature suffers, and to what degree? Indeed, why should the ability to experience pain, or the possession of higher intelligence, become a title to superior worth?²⁶⁸ In the end, why does man have more dignity than any part of the natural world, from the most humble rock to the most distant star? Why should insects, bacteria, intestinal parasites, and HIV viruses not have rights equal to those of human beings?"²⁶⁹

The paradox is that this new understanding of life, human and sub-human, is in fact very similar to that of Hinduism, which has evolved, in the form of the Indian caste system, probably the most stubbornly inegalitarian society in history!

Fukuyama concludes his examination of the challenge from the Left: "The extension of the principle of equality to apply not just to human beings but to non-human creation as well may today sound bizarre, but it is implied in our current impasse in thinking through the question: What is man? If we truly believe that he is not capable of moral choice or the autonomous use of reason, if he can be understood entirely in terms of the sub-human, then it is not only possible but *inevitable* that rights will gradually be extended to animals and other natural beings as well as men. The liberal concept of an equal and universal humanity with a specifically human dignity will be attacked both from above and below: by those who assert that certain group identities are more important than the quality of being human, and by those who believe that being human constitutes nothing distinctive against the non-human. The intellectual impasse in which modern relativism has left us does not permit us to answer either of these attacks definitively, and therefore does not permit defense of liberal rights traditionally understood..."²⁷⁰

Fukuyama goes on to examine "a still greater and ultimately more serious threat" coming from the Right. This amounts to the accusation that when democratic man has

²⁶⁷ On December 27, 1995, British Television (Channel 4) screened "The Great Ape Trial", a quasi-legal debate on the question whether apes should have human rights - that is, the rights to life, liberty and freedom from torture. Evidence was heard from a variety of academic "experts" from around the world who spoke about the apes' similarity or otherwise to human beings in tool-using and making, language, social relations, emotionality, and genetic makeup. The conclusion reached by the "jury" (with the exception of a journalist from *The Catholic Herald*) was that apes should indeed have human rights since they belong to "a community of equals" with us.

²⁶⁸ This point has been developed by Joanna Bourke, Professor of History at London University, in *What It Means to be Human*, London: Virago, 2011.

²⁶⁹ Fukuyama, *op. cit.*, pp. 297-298.

²⁷⁰ Fukuyama, *op. cit.*, p. 298.

won all his universal human rights, and become totally free and equal, he will be, to put it crudely, *a worthless nonentity*.

For individuals striving for something that is purer and higher are more likely to arise "in societies dedicated to the proposition that all men are *not* created equal. Democratic societies, dedicated to the opposite proposition, tend to promote a belief in the equality of all lifestyles and values. They do not tell their citizens how they should live, or what will make them happy, virtuous, or great. Instead, they cultivate the virtue of toleration, which becomes the *chief* virtue in democratic societies. And if men are unable to affirm that any particular way of life is superior to another, then they will fall back on the affirmation of life itself, that is, the body, its needs, and fears. While not all souls may be equally virtuous or talented, all bodies can suffer; hence democratic societies will tend to be compassionate and raise to the first order of concern the question of preventing the body from suffering. It is not an accident that people in democratic societies are preoccupied with material gain and live in an economic world devoted to the satisfaction of the myriad small needs of the body. According to Nietzsche, the last man has 'left the regions where it was hard to live, for one needs warmth.'

"One still works, for work is a form of entertainment. But one is careful lest the entertainment be too harrowing. One no longer becomes poor or rich: both require too much exertion. Who still wants to rule? Who obey? Both require too much exertion.

"No shepherd and one herd! Everybody wants the same, everybody is the same: whoever feels different goes voluntarily into a madhouse.'

"It becomes particularly difficult for people in democratic societies to take questions with real moral content seriously in public life. Morality involves a distinction between better and worse, good and bad, which seems to violate the democratic principle of tolerance. It is for this reason that the last man becomes concerned above all for his own personal health and safety, because it is uncontroversial. In America today, we feel entitled to criticize another person's smoking habits, but not his or her religious beliefs or moral behavior. For Americans, the health of their bodies - what they eat and drink, the exercise they get, the shape they are in - has become a far greater obsession than the moral questions that tormented their forbears."²⁷¹

"Modern education... stimulates a certain tendency towards relativism, that is, the doctrine that all horizons and value systems are relative to their time and place, and that none are true but reflect the prejudices or interests of those who advance them. The doctrine that says that there is no privileged perspective dovetails very nicely with democratic man's desire to believe that his way of life is just as good as any other. Relativism in this context does not lead to the liberation of the great or strong, but of the mediocre, who were now told that they had nothing of which to be ashamed. The slave at the beginning of history declined to risk his life in the bloody battle because he was instinctively fearful. The last man at the end of history *knows* better than to risk his life for a cause, because he recognizes that history was full of pointless battles in

²⁷¹ Fukuyama, *op. cit.*, pp. 305-306.

which men fought over whether they should be Christian or Muslim, Protestant or Catholic, German or French. The loyalties that drove men to desperate acts of courage and sacrifice were proven by subsequent history to be silly prejudices. Men with modern educations are content to sit at home, congratulating themselves on their broadmindedness and lack of fanaticism. As Nietzsche's Zarathustra says of them, 'For thus you speak: "Real are we entirely, and without belief or superstition." Thus you stick out your chests - but alas, they are hollow!'"²⁷²

"A dog is content to sleep in the sun all day provided he is fed, because he is not dissatisfied with what he is. He does not worry that other dogs are doing better than him, or that his career as a dog has stagnated, or that dogs are being oppressed in a distant part of the world. If man reaches a society in which he has succeeded in abolishing injustice, his life will come to resemble that of the dog. Human life, then, involves a curious paradox: it seems to require injustice, for the struggle against injustice is what calls forth what is highest in man."²⁷³

For a man is in fact more than a dog or a log. Even when all his desires have been satisfied, and even when all injustice has been eradicated, he wants, not to sleep, but to *act*. For he has a free will that depends on nothing outside itself...

The basis of this irrational freedom was described by Dostoyevsky's underground man as: "one's own free, unrestrained choice, one's own whim, be it the wildest, one's own fancy, sometimes worked up to a frenzy... And where did these sages pick up the idea that man must have something which they feel is a normal and virtuous set of wishes? What makes them think that man's will must be reasonable and in accordance with his own interests? All man actually needs is *independent* will, at all costs and whatever the consequences..."²⁷⁴

Here we come to the root of the democratic dilemma. Democracy's *raison d'être* is the liberation of the human will, first through the satisfaction of his most basic desires, and then through the satisfaction of every other person's desires to an equal extent. But the problem is that the will, thus satisfied, has only just *begun* to manifest itself. For the will is not essentially a will *to* anything - not a will not to eat, not a will to power; it is simply will *tout court*. "I *will*, therefore I *am*. And if anyone else wills otherwise, to hell with *him*! And if I myself will otherwise, to hell with *me*!"

So perhaps *war* (and suicide) must be permitted in the society whose purpose is "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness"? Of course, this was not the Founding Fathers' intention. They were reasonable men. But perhaps they did not pursue their reasoning through to its logical conclusion. Perhaps they did not understand that those bloody Roman dictators were not stupid when they defined the desires of the mob as bread and circuses, in which "circuses" had to include gladiatorial *murder*.

²⁷² Fukuyama, *op. cit.*, pp. 306-307.

²⁷³ Fukuyama, *op. cit.*, p. 311.

²⁷⁴ Dostoyevsky, *Notes from Underground*, New York: Signet Classics.

Hegel, unlike the Anglo-Saxons, did have a place for violence and war in his system - not war for war's sake, but war for democracy's sake. "A liberal democracy that could fight a short and decisive war every generation or so to defend its own liberty and independence would be far healthier and more satisfied than one that experienced nothing but continuous peace. Hegel's view of war reflects a common experience of combat: for while men suffer horribly and are seldom as frightened and miserable, their experience if they survive has the tendency of putting all things in a certain perspective."²⁷⁵

But for men who believe in nothing beyond themselves, whether democracy or any other value, there is nothing ennobling or purifying about war. It simply debases them still further. That has been the fate of those Russian soldiers, who, on returning from the war in Chechnya, continue the war in mindless murders of their own people. For such men, war has become an end in itself. In a world in which all objective values have been radically undermined, killing is the only way they have to prove to themselves that they exist, that they, at any rate, can make an objective difference to their surroundings.

For "supposing", continues Fukuyama, "that the world has become 'filled up', so to speak, with liberal democracies, such that there exist no tyranny and oppression worthy of the name against which to struggle? Experience suggests that if men cannot struggle on behalf of a just cause because that just cause was victorious in an earlier generation, then they will struggle *against* the just cause. They will struggle for the sake of struggle. They will struggle, in other words, out of a certain boredom: for they cannot imagine living in a world without struggle. And if the greater part of the world in which they live is characterized by peaceful and prosperous liberal democracy, then they will struggle *against* that peace and prosperity, and against that democracy."²⁷⁶

As examples of this phenomenon, Fukuyama cites the événements in France in 1968, and the scenes of patriotic pro-war enthusiasm repeated in Paris, Petrograd, London, and Vienna in August, 1914. And yet there is a much better example much closer to home - the *crime* that has become such a universal phenomenon in modern democracies from London to Johannesburg, from Bangkok to Sao Paulo, from Washington to Moscow. It is as if Dostoyevsky's underground man has now become a whole class - the underclass of the metropolitan octopuses, whose tentacles extend ever wider and deeper into the major institutions and governments of the world.

Democratic man, unable to free himself from the shackles of democratic thought, superficially ascribes the causes of crime to poverty or unemployment, to a lack of education or a lack of rights. But most modern criminals are not hungry, nor are they struggling for rights; there is no *need* as such in most modern crime, no *idealism*, however misguided. Their only need is to kill and to rape and to steal - not for the sake of revenge, or sex, or money, but just for their own sake. And their only ideal is to express their own, "independent will, at all costs and whatever the consequences". Thus the logical consequence of the attainment of full democracy is *nihilism, the*

²⁷⁵ Fukuyama, *op. cit.*, pp. 329-30.

²⁷⁶ Fukuyama, *op. cit.*, p. 330.

*universal war of every man against every man, for the sake of no man and no thing. For "modern thought raises no barriers to a future nihilistic war against liberal democracy on the part of those brought up in its bosom. Relativism - the doctrine that maintains that all values are merely relative and which attacks all 'privileged perspectives' - must ultimately end up undermining democratic and tolerant values as well."*²⁷⁷

Conclusion

Fukuyama should have concluded his superbly consistent argument at this point, saying: "Democracy is doomed; we must find some other truths and values - *absolute* truths and values, or we shall all perish in a morass of relativism and nihilism." But at this point the limitations of his democratic education - or is it just American optimism? - lead him to make his only act of mauvaise foi. Like a Shostakovich symphony, which, after plumbing the depths of tragic despair, must perforce have a bombastic finale, Fukuyama declares his faith that democracy will win out in the end, if only because all other systems are dead or in the process of dying. And in an aptly American metaphor he compares the progress of democracy to a wagon train that, having crossed the Rockies in a raging blizzard and having withstood all the assaults of wild Indians and howling coyotes, comes to rest in - smog-filled, drug-addicted, crime-infested Los Angeles?... Only in the very last sentence does he - very tentatively, as if fearing to have his head shot off by a last Indian sniper - recover himself somewhat and look over the parapet of democracy's last stand: "Nor can we in the final analysis know, provided a majority of the wagons eventually reach the same town, whether their occupants, having looked around a bit at their new surroundings, will not find them inadequate and set their eyes on a new and more distant journey..."²⁷⁸

At the time of writing, liberal democracy appears to have triumphed over all other politico-economic systems. It has survived the socialist and fascist revolutions of the period 1789-1945, has won the Cold War, and even appears to be on the point of "turning" the last and most powerful survival of the revolutionary ethos, Communist China. But Fukuyama, an avid supporter of democracy, still has his doubts - even if these doubts are overridden by his conviction that democracy represents "the end of history", the final, and best, politico-economic system. The basic doubt can be expressed as follows: can a system built, not on the eradication, but on the exploitation and rational management of man's fallen passions, and not on absolute truth, but on the relativisation of all opinions through the ballot box, bring lasting peace and prosperity?

In a sense there is no competition; for the only system that is *radically* different from liberal democracy, Orthodox Autocracy, sets itself a quite different goal: not peace and prosperity in this life, but the salvation of the soul in the next. Even if it could be proved that liberal democracy satisfied the earthly needs of men better than Orthodox Autocracy, this in no way invalidates Autocracy, insofar as the true subjects of Autocracy would gladly exchange happiness and prosperity in this life for salvation in the next. For while the purpose of democracy is the fullest satisfaction of man's

²⁷⁷ Fukuyama, op. cit., p. 332.

²⁷⁸ Fukuyama, op. cit., p. 339.

fallen nature, the purpose of Autocracy is the creation of the political and social conditions maximally conducive to the recreation of man's original, *unfallen* nature in the image of Christ. Democracy seeks *satisfaction*, but Autocracy – *salvation*.

But it may be doubted whether liberal democracy will achieve its own stated ends. The cult of reason and liberalism, wrote the former revolutionary L.A. Tikhomirov, "very much wants to establish worldly prosperity, it very much wants to make people happy, but it will achieve nothing, because it approaches the problem from the wrong end.

"It may appear strange that people who think only of earthly prosperity, and who put their whole soul into realising it, attain only disillusionment and exhaustion. People who, on the contrary, are immersed in cares about the invisible life beyond the grave, attain here, on earth, results constituting the highest examples yet known on earth of personal and social development! However, this strangeness is self-explanatory. The point is that *man* is by his nature precisely the kind of being that Christianity understands him to be *by faith*; the aims of life that are indicated to him *by faith* are precisely the kind of aims that he has in reality, and not the kind that reason divorced from faith delineates. Therefore in educating a man in accordance with the Orthodox world-view, we conduct his education *correctly*, and thence we get results that are good not only in that which is most important [salvation] (which unbelievers do not worry about), but also in that which is secondary (which is the only thing they set their heart on). In losing *faith*, and therefore ceasing to worry about the most important thing, people lost the possibility of developing man in accordance with his true nature, and so they get distorted results in earthly life, too."²⁷⁹

Thus even the most perfectly functioning democracy will ultimately fail in its purpose, for the simple reason that while man is fallen, he is not *completely* fallen. He is still made in the image of God, so that even when all his fallen desires have been satisfied there will still be an unsatisfied longing for something higher, something to satisfy the God-shaped hole at the centre of his being (St. Augustine). "Happiness" – the supreme "right" of man, according to the American Constitution – is unattainable as long as only our own, and not other people's happiness, our own glory, and not God's glory, is the goal; and even if attained on earth, it will only be brief and bring inevitable ennui; for it will immediately stimulate a desire for the infinitely greater happiness of heaven, eternal joy in God. The revolutionary age that followed the age of reason highlighted this truth, albeit in a perverted, demonic way; for it showed that there is more in heaven and earth and in the soul of man – far greater heights, as well as far more abysmal depths – than was ever dreamt of in the complacent psychology of the liberal philosophers.

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²⁷⁹ Tikhomirov, "Dukhovenstvo i obshchestvo v sovremennom religioznom dvizhenii" ("The Clergy and Society in the Contemporary Religious Movement"), in *Khristianstvo i Politika* (Christianity and Politics), Moscow, 1999, pp. 30-31.

11. THE HEREDITARY PRINCIPLE

In 1613, with the enthronement of the first Romanov tsar, the Muscovite kingdom was established on the twin pillars of the Orthodox Faith and Hereditary succession. The requirement of Orthodoxy had been passed down from the Byzantines. Hereditary Succession was not a requirement in Rome or Byzantium (which is one reason why so many Byzantine emperors were assassinated by usurpers); but in Russia, as in some Western Orthodox autocracies (for example, the Anglo-Saxon), it was felt to be a necessity. Both pillars had been shaken during the Time of Troubles, after the death of the last Rurik tsar. But Orthodoxy had been restored above all by the holy Patriarchs Job and Hermogenes refusing to recognise a Catholic tsar, and then by the national army of liberation that drove out the Poles; while the Hereditary Principle, already tacitly accepted if mistakenly applied by the people when they followed the false Demetrius, had been affirmed by all the estates of the nation at the Zemsky Sobor in 1613.

Since the hereditary principle is commonly considered to be irrational because it places the government of the State "at the mercy of chance", it may be worth pausing to consider its significance in Russian Orthodox statehood in the thinking of two Russian writers: Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow and Ivan Lukyanovich Solonevich.

Beginning with the English philosophers Hobbes and Locke, the West opposed to the hereditary principle – the elective principle, and to the principle of one-man rule by right of birth – the creation of a government (whether despotic or democratic) on the basis of a mythical *social contract*, which remains the foundation of the theory of liberal democracy to this day. Metropolitan Philaret criticised – more precisely: demolished – the idea of the social contract as follows: "It is obligatory, say the wise men of this world, to submit to social authorities on the basis of a social contract, by which people were united into society, by a general agreement founding government and submission to it for the general good. If they think that it is impossible to found society otherwise than on a social contract, - then why is it that the societies of the bees and ants are not founded on it? And is it not right that those who break open honeycombs and destroy ant-hills should be entrusted with finding in them... a charter of bees and ants? And until such a thing is done, nothing prevents us from thinking that bees and ants create their societies, not by contract, but by nature, by an idea of community implanted in their nature, which the Creator of the world willed to be realised even at the lowest level of His creatures. What if an example of the creation of a human society by nature were found? What, then, is the use of the fantasy of a social contract? No one can argue against the fact that the original form of society is the society of the family. Thus does not the child obey the mother, and the mother have power over the child, not because they have contracted between themselves that she should feed him at the breast, and that he should shout as little as possible when he is swaddled? What if the mother should suggest too harsh conditions to the child? Will not the inventors of the social contract tell him to go to another mother and make a contract with her about his upbringing? The application of the social contract in this case is as fitting as it is fitting in other cases for every person, from the child to the old man, from the first to the last. Every human contract can have force only when it is entered into with consciousness and good will. Are there many people in society who

have heard of the social contract? And of those few who have heard of it, are there many who have a clear conception of it? Ask, I will not say the simple citizen, but the wise man of contracts: when and how did he enter into the social contract? When he was an adult? But who defined this time? And was he outside society before he became an adult? By means of birth? This is excellent. I like this thought, and I congratulate every Russian that he was able - I don't know whether it was from his parents or from Russia herself, - to agree that he be born in powerful Russia... The only problem is that neither he who was born nor his parents thought about this contract in their time, and so does not referring to it mean fabricating it? And consequently is not better, as well as simpler, both in submission and in other relationships towards society, to study the rights and obligations of a real birth instead of an invented contract - that pipe-dream of social life, which, by being recounted at the wrong time, has produced and continues to produce material woes for human society. 'Transgressors have told me fables, but they are not like Thy law, O Lord' (Psalm 118.85)."²⁸⁰

It is sometimes argued that since the first Romanov tsar was "elected", this shows that democratic election is prior, both chronologically and logically, to hereditary autocracy. However, the fact that the first Romanov tsar was "elected" does not mean that he was in any way not a complete autocrat, any more than the election of Jephtha as judge of Ancient Israel (Judges 11.11) meant that he was not a truly autocratic judge of Israel, answerable to God alone. The point is rather that, after the breakdown of government during the Time of Troubles, the people freely chose to reinstall hereditary autocracy; they freely chose to restrict their own freedom, to renounce the right to choose their ruler, for the sake of the general good. For, as the tenth-century English Abbot Aelfric wrote, "the people can choose whomever they like as king. But after he is consecrated as king, then he has dominion over the people, and they cannot shake his yoke from their necks."²⁸¹

In any case, it is incorrect to describe the Zemsky Sobor of 1613 as a democratic election. For, as Ivan Solonevich writes, "when, after the Time of Troubles, the question was raised concerning the restoration of the monarchy, there was no hint of an 'election to the kingdom'. There was a 'search' for people who had the greatest hereditary right to the throne. And not an 'election' of the more worthy. There were not, and could not be, any 'merits' in the young Michael Fyodorovich. But since only the hereditary principle affords the advantage of absolutely indisputability, it was on this that the 'election' was based."²⁸²

St. John Maximovich writes: "What drew the hearts of all to Michael Romanov? He had neither experience of statecraft, nor had he done any service to the state. He was not distinguished by the state wisdom of Boris Godunov or by the eminence of his race, as was Basil Shuisky. He was sixteen years old, and "Misha Romanov", as he was generally known, had not yet managed to show his worth in anything. But why

²⁸⁰ Metropolitan Philaret, *Sochinenia* (Works), Moscow, 1877, vol. 3, pp. 448, 449; reprinted in *Pravoslavnaia Zhizn'* (Orthodox Life), 49, № 9 (573), September, 1997, pp. 3-4.

²⁸¹ Abbot Aelfric, *Catholic Homily on Palm Sunday*.

²⁸² Solonevich, *Narodnaia Monarkhia* (Popular Monarchy), Minsk, 1998, pp. 82-83.

did the Russian people rest on him, and why with his crowning did all the quarrels and disturbances regarding the royal throne come to an end? The Russian people longed for a lawful, "native" Sovereign, and was convinced that without him there could be no order or peace in Russia. When Boris Godunov and Prince Basil Shuisky were elected, although they had, to a certain degree, rights to the throne through their kinship with the previous tsars, they were not elected by reason of their exclusive rights, but their personalities were taken into account. There was no strict lawful succession in their case. This explained the success of the pretenders. However, it was almost impossible to elect someone as tsar for his qualities. Everyone evaluated the candidates for their point of view. However, the absence of a definite law which would have provided an heir in the case of the cutting off of the line of the Great Princes and Tsars of Moscow made it necessary for the people itself to indicate who they wanted as tsar. The descendants of the appanage princes, although they came from the same race as that of the Moscow Tsars (and never forgot that), were in the eyes of the people simple noblemen, "serfs" of the Moscow sovereigns; their distant kinship with the royal line had already lost its significance. Moreover, it was difficult to establish precisely which of the descendants of St. Vladimir on the male side had the most grounds for being recognised as the closest heir to the defunct royal line. In such circumstances all united in the suggestion that the extinct Royal branch should be continued by the closest relative of the last "native", lawful Tsar. The closest relatives of Tsar Theodore Ioannovich were his cousins on his mother's side: Theodore, in monasticism Philaret, and Ivan Nikitich Romanov, both of whom had sons. In that case the throne had to pass to Theodore, as the eldest, but his monasticism and the rank of Metropolitan of Rostov was an obstacle to this. His heir was his only son Michael. Thus the question was no longer about the election of a Tsar, but about the recognition that a definite person had the rights to the throne. The Russian people, tormented by the time of troubles and the lawlessness, welcomed this decision, since it saw that order could be restored only by a lawful "native" Tsar. The people remembered the services of the Romanovs to their homeland, their sufferings for it, the meek Tsaritsa Anastasia Romanova, the firmness of Philaret Nikitich. All this still more strongly attracted the hearts of the people to the announced tsar. But these qualities were possessed also by some other statesmen and sorrowers for Rus'. And this was not the reason for the election of Tsar Michael Romanovich, but the fact that in him Rus' saw their most lawful and native Sovereign.

"In the acts on the election to the kingdom of Michael Fyodorovich, the idea that he was ascending the throne by virtue of his election by the people was carefully avoided, and it was pointed out that the new Tsar was the elect of God, the direct descendant of the last lawful Sovereign."²⁸³ Fr. Lev Lebedev puts it as follows: "Tsars are not elected! And a Council, even a Zemskij Sobor, cannot be the source of power. The kingdom is a calling of God, the Council can *determine* the lawful Tsar and *summon* him."²⁸⁴

²⁸³ St. John Maximovich, *Proiskhozhdenie Zakona o Prestolonasledii v Rossii* (The Origin of the Law of Succession in Russia), Shanghai, 1936, Podolsk, 1994, pp. 43-45.

²⁸⁴ Lebedev, *Velikorossia* (Great Russia), St. Petersburg, 1999, p. 126.

The indisputability of the hereditary tsar's rule is linked with his *inviolability*. As Metropolitan Philaret writes: "A government that is not fenced about by an inviolability that is venerated religiously by the whole people cannot act with the whole fullness of power or that freedom of zeal that is necessary for the construction and preservation of the public good and security. How can it develop its whole strength in its most beneficial direction, when its power constantly finds itself in an insecure position, struggling with other powers that cut short its actions in as many different directions as are the opinions, prejudices and passions more or less dominant in society? How can it surrender itself to the full force of its zeal, when it must of necessity divide its attentions between care for the prosperity of society and anxiety about its own security? But if the government is so lacking in firmness, then the State is also lacking in firmness. Such a State is like a city built on a volcanic mountain: what significance does its hard earth have when under it is hidden a power that can at any minute turn everything into ruins? Subjects who do not recognise the inviolability of rulers are incited by the hope of licence to achieve licence and predominance, and between the horrors of anarchy and oppression they cannot establish in themselves that obedient freedom which is the focus and soul of public life."²⁸⁵

There are certain laws, like that concerning the hereditary principle itself, which are *fundamental*, that is, which even the tsar cannot transgress, insofar as they define the very essence of the Orthodox hereditary monarchy. In general, however, the hereditary autocrat is above the law. For, as Solonevich writes: "The fundamental, most fundamental idea of the Russian monarchy was most vividly and clearly expressed by A.S. Pushkin just before the end of his life: 'There must be one person standing higher than everybody, higher even than the law.'

"In this formulation, 'one man', Man is placed in very big letters above the law. This formulation is completely unacceptable for the Roman-European cast of mind, for which the law is everything: *dura lex, sed lex*. The Russian cast of mind places, man, mankind, *the soul* higher than the law, giving to the law only that place which it should occupy: the place occupied by traffic rules. Of course, with corresponding punishments for driving on the left side. Man is not for the sabbath, but the sabbath for man; not man for the fulfilment of the law, but law for the preservation of man...

"The whole history of humanity is filled with the struggle of tribes, people, nations, classes, estates, groups, parties, religions and whatever you like. It's almost as Hobbes put it: 'War by everyone against everyone'. How are we to find a neutral point of support in this struggle? An arbiter standing above the tribes, nations, peoples, classes, estates, etc.? Uniting the people, classes and religions into a common whole? Submitting the interests of the part to the interests of the whole? And placing moral principles above egoism, which is *always* characteristic of every group of people pushed forward the summit of public life?"²⁸⁶

²⁸⁵ Metropolitan Philaret, *Sochinenia (Works)*, 1848, vol. 2, p. 134; *Pravoslavnaiia Zhizn'* (Orthodox Life), 49, № 9 (573), September, 1997, p. 6.

²⁸⁶ Solonevich, *op. cit.*, pp. 84, 85.

The idea that the tsar is higher than the law, while remaining subject, of course, to the law of God, is also defended by Metropolitan Philaret: "The tsar, rightly understood, is the head and soul of the kingdom. But, you object to me, the soul of the State must be the law. The law is necessary, it is worthy of honour, faithful; but the law in charters and books is a dead letter... The law, which is dead in books, comes to life in acts; and the supreme State actor and exciter and inspirer of the subject actors is the Tsar."²⁸⁷

But if the tsar is above the law, how can he not be a tyrant, insofar as, in the famous words of Lord Acton, "power corrupts, and absolute power absolutely corrupts"? First, as we have seen, the tsar's power is not absolute insofar as he is subject to the law of God and the fundamental laws of the Kingdom, which the Church is called upon to defend. Secondly, it is not only tsars, but all rulers of all kinds that are subject to the temptations of power. Indeed, these temptations may even be worse with democratic rulers; for whereas the tsar stands above all factional interests, an elected president will necessarily represent the interests only of his party (or clique within the party) at the expense of the country as a whole. "Western thought," writes Solonevich, "sways from the dictatorship of capitalism to the dictatorship of the proletariat, but no representative of this thought has even so much as thought of 'the dictatorship of conscience'."²⁸⁸

"The distinguishing characteristic of Russian monarchy, which was given to it at its birth, consists in the fact that the Russian monarchy expressed the will not of the most powerful, but the will of the whole nation, religiously given shape by Orthodoxy and politically given shape by the Empire. The will of the nation, religiously given shape by Orthodoxy will be 'the dictatorship of conscience' Only in this way can we explain the *possibility* of the manifesto of February 19, 1861 [when Tsar Alexander II freed the peasants]: 'the dictatorship of conscience' was able overcome the terrible opposition of the ruling class, and the ruling class proved powerless. We must always have this distinction in mind: the Russian monarchy is the expression of the will, that is: the conscience, of the nation, not the will of the capitalists, which both French Napoleons expressed, or the will of the aristocracy, which all the other monarchies of Europe expressed: the Russian monarchy is the closes approximation to the ideal of monarchy in general. This ideal was never attained by the Russian monarchy – for the well-known reason that no ideal is realisable in our life. In the history of the Russian monarchy, as in the whole of our world, there were periods of decline, of deviation, of failure, but there were also periods of recovery such as world history has never known."²⁸⁹

Now State power, which, like power in the family or the tribe, always has an element of coercion, "is constructed in three ways: by inheritance, by election and by seizure: monarchy [autocracy], republic [democracy], dictatorship [despotism]. In practice all this changes places: the man who seizes power becomes a hereditary

²⁸⁷ Metropolitan Philaret, *Sochinenia* (Works), 1861, vol. 3, p. 226; *Pravoslavnaia Zhizn'* (Orthodox Life), 49, № 9 (573), September, 1997, p. 8.

²⁸⁸ Solonevich, *op. cit.*, pp. 85-86.

²⁸⁹ Solonevich, *op. cit.*, p. 86.

monarch (Napoleon I), the elected president becomes the same (Napoleon III), or tries to become it (Oliver Cromwell). The elected 'chancellor', Hitler, becomes a seizer of power. But in general these are nevertheless exceptions.

"Both a republic and a dictatorship presuppose a struggle for power – democratic in the first case and necessarily bloody in the second: Stalin – Trotsky, Mussolini-Matteotti, Hitler-Röhm. In a republic, as a rule, the struggle is unbloody. However, even an unbloody struggle is not completely without cost. Aristide Briand, who became French Prime Minister several times, admitted that 95% of his strength was spent on the struggle for power and only five percent on the work of power. And even this five percent was exceptionally short-lived.

"Election and seizure are, so to speak, rationalist methods. Hereditary power is, strictly speaking, *the power of chance*, indisputable if only because the chance of birth is completely indisputable. You can recognise or not recognise the principle of monarchy in general. But no one can deny the existence of the positive law presenting the right of inheriting the throne to the first son of the reigning monarch. Having recourse to a somewhat crude comparison, this is something like an ace in cards... An ace is an ace. No election, no merit, and *consequently* no quarrel. Power passes without quarrel and pain: the king is dead, long live the king!"²⁹⁰

We may interrupt Solonevich's argument here to qualify his use of the word "chance". The fact that a man inherits the throne only because he is the firstborn of his father may be "by chance" from a human point of view. But from the Divine point of view it is *election*. As Bishop Ignatius Brianchaninov writes: "There is no blind chance! God rules the world, and everything that takes place in heaven and beneath the heavens takes place according to the judgement of the All-wise and All-powerful God."²⁹¹ Moreover, as Bishop Ignatius writes, "in blessed Russia, according to the spirit of the pious people, the Tsar and the fatherland constitute one whole, as in a family the parents and their children constitute one whole."²⁹² This being so, it was only natural that the law of succession should be hereditary, from father to son.

Solonevich continues: "The human individual, born by chance as heir to the throne, is placed in circumstances which guarantee him the best possible professional preparation from a technical point of view. His Majesty Emperor Nicholas Alexandrovich was probably one of the most educated people of his time. The best professors of Russia taught him both law and strategy and history and literature. He spoke with complete freedom in three foreign languages. His knowledge was not one-sided.. and was, if one can so express it, *living knowledge*...

"The Russian tsar was in charge of everything and was obliged to know everything - it goes without saying, as far as humanly possible. He was a 'specialist' in that sphere which excludes all specialisation. This was a specialism standing above all the specialisms of the world and embracing them *all*. That is, the general volume of

²⁹⁰ Solonevich, *op. cit.*, p. 87.

²⁹¹ Brianchaninov, "On the Judgements of God".

²⁹² Brianchaninov, *Pis'ma* (Letters), Moscow, 2000, p. 781.

erudition of the Russian monarch had in mind that which every philosophy has in mind: the concentration in one point of the whole sum of human knowledge. However, with this colossal qualification, that 'the sum of knowledge' of the Russian tsars grew in a seamless manner from the living practice of the past and was checked against the living practice of the present. True, that is how almost all philosophy is checked - for example, with Robespierre, Lenin and Hitler - but, fortunately for humanity, such checking takes place comparatively rarely....

"The heir to the Throne, later the possessor of the Throne, is placed in such conditions under which temptations are reduced... to a minimum. He is given everything he needs beforehand. At his birth he receives an order, which he, of course, did not manage to earn, and the temptation of vainglory is liquidated in embryo. He is absolutely provided for materially - the temptation of avarice is liquidated in embryo. He is the only one having the Right - and so competition falls away, together with everything linked with it. Everything is organised in such a way that the personal destiny of the individual should be welded together into one whole with the destiny of the nation. Everything that a person would want to have for himself is already given him. And the person automatically merges with the general good.

"One could say that all this is possessed also by a dictator of the type of Napoleon, Stalin or Hitler. But this would be less than half true: everything that the dictator has he *conquered*, and all this he must constantly defend - both against competitors and against the nation. The dictator is forced to prove every day that it is precisely he who is the most brilliant, great, greatest and inimitable, for if not he, but someone else, is not the most brilliant, then it is obvious that that other person has the right to power...

"We can, of course, quarrel over the very principle of 'chance'. A banally rationalist, pitifully scientific point of view is usually formulated thus: the chance of birth may produce a defective man. But *we*, we will elect the best... Of course, 'the chance of birth' can produce a defective man. We have examples of this: Tsar Theodore Ivanovich. Nothing terrible happened. For the monarchy 'is not the arbitrariness of a single man', but 'a system of institutions', - a system can operate temporarily even without a 'man'. But simple statistics show that the chance of such 'chance' events are very small. And the chance of 'a genius on the throne' appearing is still smaller.

"I proceed from the axiom that a genius in politics is worse than the plague. For a genius is a person who thinks up something that is new in principle. In thinking up something that is new in principle, he invades the organic life of the country and cripples it, as it was crippled by Napoleon, Stalin and Hitler...

"The power of the tsar is the power of the average, averagely clever man over two hundred million average, averagely clever people... V. Klyuchevsky said with some perplexity that the first Muscovite princes, the first gatherers of the Russian land, were completely average people: - and yet, look, they gathered the Russian land. This is quite simple: average people have acted in the interests of average people and the line of *the nation* has coincided with the line of power. So the average people of the Novgorodian army went over to the side of the average people of Moscow, while the

average people of the USSR are running away in all directions from the genius of Stalin.”²⁹³

Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow expressed the superiority of the hereditary over the elective principle as follows: “What conflict does election for public posts produce in other peoples! With what conflict, and sometimes also with what alarm do they attain the legalisation of the right of public election! Then there begins the struggle, sometimes dying down and sometimes rising up again, sometimes for the extension and sometimes for the restriction of this right. The incorrect extension of the right of social election is followed by its incorrect use. It would be difficult to believe it if we did not read in foreign newspapers that elective votes are sold; that sympathy or lack of sympathy for those seeking election is expressed not only by votes for and votes against, but also by sticks and stones, as if a man can be born from a beast, and rational business out of the fury of the passions; that ignorant people make the choice between those in whom wisdom of state is envisaged, lawless people participate in the election of future lawgivers, peasants and craftsmen discuss and vote, not about who could best keep order in the village or the society of craftsmen, but about who is capable of administering the State.

“Thanks be to God! It is not so in our fatherland. Autocratic power, established on the age-old law of heredity, which once, at a time of impoverished heredity, was renewed and strengthened on its former basis by a pure and rational election, stands in inviolable firmness and acts with calm majesty. Its subjects do not think of striving for the right of election to public posts in the assurance that the authorities care for the common good and know through whom and how to construct it.”²⁹⁴

“God, in accordance with the image of His heavenly single rule, has established a tsar on earth; in accordance with the image of His almighty power, He has established an autocratic tsar; in accordance with the image of His everlasting Kingdom, which continues from age to age, He has established a hereditary tsar.”²⁹⁵

We may now define more precisely why the hereditary principle was considered by the Russian people to be not simply superior to the elective principle, but as far superior to it as heaven is to the earth. For while an elected president is installed by the will of man, and can be said to be installed by the will of God only indirectly, insofar as God has *allowed* it, without positively *willing* it; the determination of who will be born as the heir to the throne is completely beyond the power of man, and therefore entirely within the power of God. The hereditary principle therefore ensures that the tsar will indeed be elected – but by God, not by man.

²⁹³ Solonevich, *op. cit.*, pp. 87-88, 89-90, 91-92.

²⁹⁴ Metropolitan Philaret, *Sochinenia* (Works), 1861, vol. 3, pp. 322-323; *Pravoslavnaia Zhizn'* (Orthodox Life), 49, № 9 (573), September, 1997, p. 9.

²⁹⁵ Metropolitan Philaret, *Sochinenia*, 1877, vol. 3, p. 442; *Pravoslavnaia Zhizn'*, 49, № 9 (573), September, 1997, p. 5.

12. CHRIST AND THE NATIONS

Words such as “universalism” and “cosmopolitanism” have acquired bad connotations among the Orthodox – and for understandable reasons. For they are associated with such undoubtedly evil phenomena as ecumenism and the masonic new world order. Nevertheless, in times such as these, when “the rulers of the darkness of this world” are directing so much of their attention to the destruction of patriotism and the last vestiges of the nations that still bear the name of Orthodoxy, it is easy to forget that one of the greatest achievements of Christianity was its breaking down of national enmities and its creation of a new, universal Christian nation.

1. The Christian Nation

Of all the divisions created by sin, the divisions between the nations were the last to be healed in the economy of God’s salvation. Already at the Annunciation the gulfs between God and man, between man and woman, and between man and the angels had been bridged when the Word became flesh, the new Eve was united with the new Adam and the Archangel Gabriel took the place of the fallen angel as man’s nearest counsellor and minister. And yet at the Crucifixion it looked – temporarily – as if all this had been destroyed. And by what? *By nationalist passion*. For, as Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) of Kiev demonstrated, it was the nationalist pride of the Jews that was their primary motive in killing their King.²⁹⁶ For “if we leave Him alone,” said the chief priests and Pharisees, “all men will believe on Him: and *the Romans shall come and take away our place and nation*. And one of them, named Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all, nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, *and that the whole nation perish not*” (John 12.48-50).

But Christ rose from the dead, destroying the death caused by sin through His own sinless and sin-destroying Death, and reaffirming in His own incorruptible flesh the unbreakable union of the Divine and human natures. Once again the angels approached the women, and once again the new Adam spoke words of joy to the new Eve in the garden. And then, at Pentecost, when “men out of every nation under heaven” (Acts 2.5) were gathered for the feast, the Holy Spirit came down and created out of these many nations one nation speaking one language: a new nation – the new Israel, the Church of Christ, and a new language – the language of repentance and faith, hope and love. As we chant in the kontakion for the feast of Pentecost: “Once, when He descended and confounded the tongues, the Most High divided the nations; and when He divided the tongues of fire, He called men into unity; and with one accord we glorify the All-Holy Spirit”.

Only in the Church, the Body of Christ, is a true union of nations possible, for in Christ “there is neither Greek nor Jew” (Galatians 3.28); the non-Jewish peoples “are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God” (Ephesians 2.19). In the communion of Christ’s Holy Body and

²⁹⁶ Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky), “Christ the Savior and the Jewish Revolution”, *Orthodox Life*, vol. 35, № 4, July-August, 1988, pp. 11-31.

Blood all nations literally become of one blood and one spirit with each other. For “you have the Son within you,” writes St. John Chrysostom, “and are fashioned after His pattern, having been brought into one kindred and nature with Him... He that was a Greek, or Jew, or slave yesterday, carries about with him the form, not of an Angel or Archangel, but of the Lord of all. Indeed, he displays in his own person the Christ.”

Of course, we are of one blood already through our common descent from the old Adam; for as St. Paul says, God “hath made of one blood all nations of men” (Acts 17.26). However, the blood of the old Adam has been poisoned by sin and become the nourisher of the passions, passions that divide and destroy; and it is of these passions that the apostle says: “Flesh and blood cannot enter the Kingdom of God” (I Corinthians 15.50).

So it is not enough to say – as, for example, the leaders of the French revolution said – that since the brotherhood of man is a biological fact, it must necessarily become a spiritual and a political fact. It is not enough to say – as the modern ecumenists say – that we are all children of the Heavenly Father, so we must just ignore all the divisions between us as if they were unimportant or did not exist. For biological brotherhood is of no avail where there is no spiritual sonship; the fact that we are all created by one Creator will not help us if we all together rebel against the Creator. Were not Cain and Abel brothers – and Isaac and Ishmael, and Jacob and Esau? And do they not represent the eternal enmity that exists between the spiritual man and the carnal man? We have to be reborn in the Son to become true children by adoption of the Heavenly Father; we have to become “a new creature” in the new Adam in order to be recognized by the Creator of the old Adam. The humanists exhort us to be one simply because we have a common mortal father, without having even the beginnings of a notion of how to make this pious wish a reality. But Christ does not simply exhort us: through the life-creating power of the Spirit He *makes* us one in the most concrete way, by grafting us onto the true Vine of His Body and Blood. In this way does Christ become the new and immortal Father of a new, immortal race of men, being “the mighty God, *the everlasting Father*, the Prince of peace...” (Isaiah 9.7).

Thus the unity of the nations is not achieved horizontally, as it were, through bilateral or multilateral talks or negotiations. It is achieved vertically – that is, *sacramentally* – through each nation emptying itself, as it were, and receiving a new faith, a new nationality and a new blood, the Nation and the Blood of Christ. As St. Paul says to the Gentile nations: “At that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus ye who at one time were far off are made nigh by the Blood of Christ. For He is our Peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; having abolished in His Flesh the enmity,... for to make in Himself of twain one new man, so making peace; that He might reconcile both unto God in One Body through the Cross” (Ephesians 2.12-16).

And yet this supreme achievement, this dream fulfilled of the brotherhood of all men in “One Body and One Spirit,.. One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism, One God and

Father of all" (Ephesians 4.4-6), has been clearly seen only fitfully and fleetingly. Even in the early Church in Jerusalem, which has been for all succeeding generations the image par excellence of Christian love and unity, we read that "there arose a murmuring of the Greeks against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministrations" (Acts 6.1). For when grace begins to depart, it is the divisions of race that re-emerge first of all; when men begin to complain of their lot, they will first of all blame the stranger in their midst, and only when no such stranger is found will they blame their own – and last of all, of course, themselves.

The Lord said to the Pharisees: "Why do you not understand My speech? Even because ye cannot hear My Word" (John 9.43). In other words, our failure to understand others – even when we speak the same natural language as they – is the result of a lack of spiritual perception in ourselves. "For the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (I Corinthians 2.14). This lack of mutual spiritual comprehension is found even between people of the same nation (as were Christ and the Pharisees). How much greater is the possibility of such misunderstanding when the parties belong to different nations!

To overcome racial suspicion and hatred a special force of love is required. It is always easier to sympathize with, and to see the point of view of, our own kind; with them we have language, culture, memory and so much more in common. On the other hand, it is easy to misunderstand the foreigner, to see coldness where there is no coldness but only an inborn reserve, to see rudeness where there is no rudeness but only different habits of social communication. We must strive to enter the soul of the foreigner, penetrate beneath the strange exterior to the soul within, which has not only been created in the image of God but which – if he is a member of the Church – has been reborn in Christ, chosen by Him from before all ages, his name inscribed by the angels in the Book of Life. If we cannot see and sympathize with the humanity he has in common with us, then our own humanity has clearly been impaired; if we cannot see the grace that he has received from the same font and the same chalice as we, then it is clear that we are quenching the grace that is in us.

2. The Roman Nation

It is perhaps in order to teach us this love that the Lord so often brings people of many different nations together in one local Church. At the Tower of Babel the Lord scattered the nations and divided their tongues, so that they could not understand each other and the evil of one nation could not spread – or could spread only slowly – to another. But as the time of His Coming drew near, when He was to call all nations together again through the Cross, a certain providential cosmopolitanism is discernible, a cosmopolitanism having three main sources.

First, in both Israel (among the later prophets) and in the pagan world (among the Greek Stoic philosophers) the unity of mankind begins to be stressed more and more. Thus the Lord through the Prophet Malachi says: "From the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same My name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto My name, and a pure offering; for My name

shall be great among the heathen, saith the Lord of hosts" (1.11). For "have we not all one Father? Hath not one God created us?" (2.10).

As for the Stoics, their essential idea, as summarised by Copleston, was as follows: "Every man is naturally a social being, and to live in society is a dictate of reason. But reason is the common essential nature of all men: hence there is but one Law for all men and one Fatherland. The division of mankind into warring States is absurd: the wise man is a citizen, not of this or that particular State, but of the World. From this foundation it follows that all men have a claim to our goodwill, even slaves having their rights and even enemies having a right to our mercy and forgiveness."²⁹⁷

Secondly, the Jewish diaspora planted the seeds of the true faith throughout the Mediterranean basin, and many pagans from many nations began to accept circumcision. Of course, some of these conversions were not to the pure faith of Ancient Israel, but to the hate-filled nationalism of the Pharisees, of whom the Lord said: "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves" (Matthew 23.15). Nevertheless, the Jews of Gentile blood were to prove an important element in the rapid spread of Christianity through the Mediterranean in the first century, as we see in the story of the Roman Centurion Cornelius (Acts 10).

Thirdly, the cultural unity of the Mediterranean world in Hellenistic civilization and its political unity under Rome began to draw men closer together. This unity, being as yet not spiritual, had its dangers for the people of God; which is why the Maccabees fought, and fought righteously, against the penetration of pagan Greek culture among the Jews. Nevertheless, when the Jews fell away from God and the Church began to spread her influence westwards, the common Greek language, supported by a common Roman legal system and political framework, greatly assisted the work of the missionaries.

The Romans did more: they adopted the creed of cosmopolitanism more deeply than any ancient people; which is perhaps why their empire, though pagan in essence, was chosen by God as the first earthly home of His Church. Thus the universalist religion of Christ, in which "there is neither Greek nor Jew, neither circumcised nor uncircumcised, neither barbarian nor Scythian, neither slave nor freeman, but Christ is all, and in all" (Colossians 3.11), grew and prospered in the universalist civilization of Rome. The Jews were not inclined either to accept or to propagate this creed; for in spite of the universalist hints contained in the prophets, the racial distinction between Jew and Gentile (or goy) became the fundamental divide in Jewish thought, especially after the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. Similarly, the Greeks, even in the persons of their greatest philosophers, Plato and Aristotle, looked on slaves, women and barbarians (i.e. all foreigners) as unable to partake fully in the splendours of Hellenic civilization. True, as we have seen, there was a universalist, cosmopolitan element in the Hellenistic philosophy of the Stoics. However, it was not the Greeks, but the

²⁹⁷ Frederick Copleston, *A History of Philosophy*, Westminster, Maryland: The Newman Press, volume I, part II, p. 143.

Romans who adopted Stoicism most eagerly, demonstrating thereby that typically Roman trait of being able, in Polybius' words, "more than any others before them have ever been to change their customs and to imitate the best".

But it was the Romans' embracing of Christianity in the person of St. Constantine that was the critical event giving birth to *Christian civilization*, that combination of Romanitas and Christianitas that has been the inspiration of all truly Orthodox social and political thinkers ever since. For, as Sordi writes, "the Romans and the Christians, albeit in different ways and from different points of view, both represented a way of overcoming the Graeco-Barbarian and Graeco-Jewish antimony which the Hellenistic culture, despite all its ecumenical claims, actually contained within itself."²⁹⁸

The Romans were able to create a political framework that gave practical expression to the universalist leanings of the Roman and Christian soul. The classical Greek concepts of citizenship and equality before the law were now given a vastly deeper connotation and wider denotation. While a purely ethnic snobbery was not completely eliminated, Rome was soon offering her subject peoples equal rights with her own native sons, which meant that these subjects could both identify with the empire as their own country - one of the keys to Rome's stability and longevity - and rise to the highest positions within it.

Thus already from the beginning of the second century, we find non-Roman emperors of Rome; they came from as far afield as Spain and Arabia, Dacia and Africa. This international variety in the choice of Emperors continued after the conversion of St. Constantine. Thus Constantine himself was a Roman, but Theodosius I was a Spaniard, Justinian I was a Slav or Illyrian (Albanian) from Skopje, Maurice and Heraclius were Armenians and Leo the iconoclast was Syrian.

Again, as early as the first century we see in St. Paul a member of a savagely treated subject nation, the Jews, who could nevertheless say without shame or sense of contradiction: "Civis romanus sum", "I am a Roman citizen". The poet Claudian wrote that "we may drink of the Rhine or the Orontes", but "we are all one people". And it was Rome that had created this unity among the nations:

*She is the only one who has received
The conquered in her arms and cherished all
The human race under a common name,
Treating them as her children, not her slaves.
She called these subjects Roman citizens
And linked far worlds with ties of loyalty.²⁹⁹*

It was more accurate to say, however, that this unity among the nations had been created by Christ, Who simultaneously founded the Church as the spiritual core of this unity and the Roman Empire as its social-political guardian. For His Birth, which marked the beginning of the Eternal Kingdom of God on earth, coincided almost

²⁹⁸ Professor Marta Sordi, *The Christians and the Roman Empire*, London: Routledge, 1994, p. 147.

²⁹⁹ Michael Grant, *The Fall of the Roman Empire*, London: Phoenix, 1996, p. 128.

exactly with the birth of the Roman Empire under its first emperor, Augustus. For several of the Holy Fathers and ecclesiastical writers, this coincidence pointed to a certain special mission of the Roman empire, as if the Empire, being born at the same time as Christ, was Divinely established to be a vehicle for the spreading of the Gospel to all nations. The Roman Empire came into existence, according to the Fathers, precisely for the sake of the Christian Church, creating a political unity that would help and protect the spiritual unity created by the Church. The one rule established by Augustus over the whole civilised world was both an image of God's rule over the whole universe, and as it were a ladder helping men to ascend from the earthly homeland below to the Heavenly Kingdom.

Thus in the third century Origen wrote: "Jesus was born during the reign of Augustus, the one who reduced to uniformity, so to speak, the many kingdoms on earth so that He had a single empire. It would have hindered Jesus' teaching from being spread throughout the world if there had been many kingdoms... Everyone would have been forced to fight in defence of their own country."³⁰⁰

Again, in the fifth century, St. Leo the Great wrote: "Divine Providence fashioned the Roman Empire, the growth of which was extended to boundaries so wide that all races everywhere became next-door neighbours. For it was particularly germane to the Divine scheme that many kingdoms should be bound together under a single government, and that the world-wide preaching should have a swift means of access to all people, over whom the rule of a single state held sway."³⁰¹

This teaching was summed up in a liturgical verse as follows: "When Augustus reigned alone upon earth, the many kingdoms of men came to an end: and when Thou was made man of the pure Virgin, the many gods of idolatry were destroyed. The cities of the world passed under one single rule; and the nations came to believe in one sovereign Godhead. The peoples were enrolled by the decree of Caesar; and we, the faithful, were enrolled in the Name of the Godhead, when Thou, our God, wast made man. Great is Thy mercy: glory to Thee."³⁰²

Within this single Judaeo-Christian, Greco-Roman civilisation there was only one Christian people, the people of the Romans; and Greeks and Latins, Celts and Germans, Semites and Slavs were all equally *Romans*, all equally members of the Roman commonwealth of nations. Together with this unity of faith, culture and citizenship in Rome there came a new patriotism, Roman patriotism. Thus St. John Chrysostom, though a Syrian Greek by race, did not call himself Greek, but Roman: "Greek" was for him synonymous with "pagan". It was only towards the end of the Byzantine empire that the word "Greek" again became a term of honour, although the empire was still officially "Roman" to the end; while the inhabitants of Old Rome, having fallen away from Orthodoxy, were not called "Romans" but "Latins".

³⁰⁰ Origen, *Against Celsus* II, 30.

³⁰¹ St. Leo, *Sermon 32*, P.L. 54, col. 423.

³⁰² *Festal Menaion*, Great Vespers for the Nativity of Christ, "Lord, I have cried", Glory... Both now...

There also came a new definition of political legitimacy: *that power is legitimate which is Roman, or is recognized by Rome, or shares in the Roman Faith, Orthodox Christianity.* Thus the British apostle of Ireland, St. Patrick, called the Scottish chieftain Coroticus a “tyrant” because his power was not from Rome, and considered himself and all other Britons to be still citizens of Rome although the last Roman legions had left the island in the year 410. British and English kings continued to use Roman and Byzantine titles and symbols until late in the tenth century.

Thus Fr. George Metallenos’ words concerning the Eastern Empire could be applied, without major qualification, to the whole vast territory from Ireland and Spain in the West to Georgia and Ethiopia in the East: "A great number of peoples made up the autocracy but without any 'ethnic' differentiation between them. The whole racial amalgam lived and moved in a single civilization (apart from some particularities) - the Greek, and it had a single cohesive spiritual power - Orthodoxy, which was at the same time the ideology of the oikoumene - autocracy. The citizens of the autocracy were Romans politically, Greeks culturally and Orthodox Christians spiritually. Through Orthodoxy the old relationship of rulers and ruled was replaced by the sovereign bond of brotherhood. Thus the 'holy race' of the New Testament (I Peter 2.9) became a reality as the 'race of the Romans', that is, of the Orthodox citizens of the autocracy of the New Rome."³⁰³

Christian Rome was both an arena of struggle in which the nations learned to live together and love each other, and a demonstration that international peace and harmony is not an unattainable ideal, but possible in Christ God for Whom all things are possible. It had obvious defects. And yet Christian Rome has continued to be for all later Christians the model and inspiration of that unity of all believers of all nations in Christ that we are called to achieve.

3. Anti-Roman Nationalism

However, the nations did not disappear within the one super-nation of Christian Rome. And although nationalism as such is usually considered to be a modern phenomenon stemming from the French Revolution, something similar to nationalism is certainly evident in antiquity. Significantly, however, it almost always appeared in the wake of religious schism or heresy...

The first and clearest example is that of the history of the Jews after Christ. In the Old Testament, the faith of the Jews, though necessarily turned in on itself in order to protect itself from the pagan nations surrounding them, contained the seeds of a truly universalist faith. Thus God commanded Abraham to circumcise not only every male member of his family, but also “him that is born in the house, or bought with money of any stranger, which is *not* of thy seed” (Genesis 17.12). The Canaanite Rahab and the Moabite Ruth were admitted into the faith and nation of the Jews. Solomon prayed that the Lord would listen to the prayers also of non-Jews in his holy temple, “that all people of the earth may know Thy name” (II Chronicles 6.33). The Lord said through

³⁰³ Metallenos, “Apo ti Romaiki oikoumenikotita ston Ethnistiko Patriotismo” (“From Roman Universalism to Ethnic Patriotism”), *Exodo* (Exodus), Athens, 1991, p. 38 (in Greek).

the Prophet Malachi: "My Name was been glorified among the Gentiles, and in every place incense shall be offered to My Name" (1.11). And by the time of Christ, there was a large diaspora spreading the faith of the Jews throughout the oikoumene. Christ would be, as the holy Elder Symeon said, not only "the glory of Israel", but also "a light to lighten the Gentiles".

However, the Pharisees, who came to dominate Jewry, were interested only in converts to the cause of Jewish nationalism. It was the Pharisees who incited Christ's death because He preached a different kind of spiritual and universalist Kingdom that was opposed to their nationalist dreams. And after His death the Jews became possessed by an egoistical, chauvinist spirit that is so strongly expressed in their "sacred" book of the Talmud that, as Rabbi Solomon Goldman put it, "God is absorbed in the nationalism of Israel."

The Jews especially hated the Romans, and in spite of the fact that the Roman Emperors, both pagan and Christian, granted special concessions to Judaism (until 634, when the Emperor Heraclius ordered all Jews to be baptized because they had welcomed and joined in the Persian conquest of Jerusalem in 614), they continually strove to undermine the Empire. The Jews alone among all the nations of the Mediterranean basin refused to benefit from, or join in, the Pax Romana. Having asserted, before Pilate, that they had no king but Caesar, they nevertheless constantly rebelled against the Caesars and slaughtered thousands of Christians.

A somewhat similar process is discernible in the history of the Armenians. Armenia can lay claim to having been the first Christian kingdom, having been converted by St. Gregory the Illuminator in the early fourth century. However, in the middle of the fifth century, in the wake of the Byzantine Emperor Marcian's refusal to support an Armenian revolt against Persia, the Armenian Church ignored and then rejected the Council of Chalcedon. From this time the Armenian Church was alienated from Orthodoxy, but not completely from Romanity. Thus in the council of Dvin in 506, they sided with the Monophysites who were being persecuted by the Persian government at the instigation of the Nestorians. As Jones writes, they "affirmed their unity with the Romans, condemning Nestorius and the council of Chalcedon, and approving 'the letter of [the Monophysite] Zeno, blessed emperor of the Romans'.

"However, when Justin and Justinian reversed [the Monophysite Emperor] Anastasius' ecclesiastical policy, they were apparently not consulted, and did not follow suit. This implied no hostility to Rome, however, for when in 572 they revolted against Persia they appealed to Justin II. He insisted on their subscribing to Chalcedon as a condition of aid, but they soon went back to their old beliefs. Maurice [an Armenian himself] again attempted to imposed the Chalcedonian position upon them, but the bishops of Persian Armenia refused to attend his council, and excommunicated the bishops of Roman Armenia, who had conformed. It was thus not

hostility to Rome which led the Armenians into heresy... But having got used to this position they were unwilling to move from it."³⁰⁴

After the Muslim conquest, the Armenian Church became more and more entrenched, not only in Monophysitism, but also in a nationalism that made it the first national church in the negative sense of the word – that is, a church that was so identified with the nation as to lose its universalist character. In this way the Armenian Church contrasts with other national Churches in the region, such as the Orthodox Georgian, which did not allow nationalist pride to tear them away from the greater society of Christian Rome.

Another, rather clearer example of doctrinal discord becoming entwined with national hatred and leading to a schism from Romanity was the Celtic Church of Wales (Western Britain) in the seventh and eighth centuries. Unlike the neighbouring Irish Church, the older Church of Wales so hated the pagan Anglo-Saxons, who had conquered Eastern Britain and driven them to the West, that they refused to undertake any missionary work to convert them to Christ. Thus when the Roman St. Augustine, the first archbishop of Canterbury, sought union with the Welsh, asking only that they adopt the Roman-Byzantine Paschalion, correct some inadequacy in their administration of the rite of Baptism, and cooperate with him in the conversion of the pagan Anglo-Saxons, the Welsh refused. St. Augustine prophesied that if the Welsh did not help in the conversion of the pagan English, they themselves would be punished by God at the hands of the pagans. This prophecy was fulfilled when the pagans destroyed the great monastery of Bangor and killed hundreds of monks. But two generations later, the Welsh still stubbornly rejected the decrees of the Synod of Whitby (664), which brought about a union of the Celtic and Roman traditions in the British Isles through the acceptance of the Byzantine-Roman Paschalion. As a seventh-century Irish canon put it, "the Britons [of Wales] are... contrary to all men, separating themselves both from the Roman way of life and the unity of the Church".³⁰⁵

This multi-ethnic character of Orthodox England in its "golden age" is characteristic of almost all the flourishing kingdoms of Orthodox history - Bulgaria in the tenth century, for example (Bulgars, Slavs and Vlachs), or Georgia in the twelfth (Georgians, Alans, Abkhaz, Ossetians, Mingrelians, etc.) - and not only of the Orthodox empires. It is as if the Lord's words, that "where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am with them" (Matthew 18.20), apply to nations as well as to individuals. It is as if the schooling in the love of one's neighbour which having to live together under one roof with "foreigners" provides, stimulates a more general flowering of Christian faith and love. On the other hand, living in "pure" isolation appears to generate feelings of nationalist pride and hatred of other races.

³⁰⁴ A.H.M. Jones, "Were Ancient Heresies National or Social Movements in Disguise?", *Journal of Theological Studies*, 1959, X, p. 293.

³⁰⁵ A.W. Haddan & W. Stubbs, *Councils and Ecclesiastical Documents relating to Great Britain and Ireland*, Oxford: Clarendon, 1869, 1964, volume I, p. 122. In the eighth century, however, the Welsh repented, and by the tenth century they formed part of the multi-ethnic kingdom of Orthodox England composed of the three nations of the Celts, the Anglo-Saxons and the Danes.

From about the death of the Emperor Justinian late in the sixth century, the universalist ideal of Christian Rome began to weaken in the hearts of many of her constituent peoples. In the East, the Monophysite Copts and Syrians, although not explicitly anti-Roman, nevertheless caused grave problems for the Orthodox autocracy centred in Constantinople, and soon their lands were swallowed up by the Muslim hordes. In the West, political leaders such as the Frankish Emperor Charles the Great and religious leaders such as the Roman Pope Nicholas I, while not abandoning Roman universalism, nevertheless tried to create a new definition of the Roman people and State, locating its political and spiritual capital, not in Constantinople, but in Old Rome or even in Aachen.

By the late eleventh century the West had fallen away from Orthodoxy, which left only the Greek core of the old Empire centred on Constantinople, together with some independent Slavic, Romanian and Georgian lands who recognized the suzerainty of Constantinople only theoretically and intermittently. Increasingly the once mighty and multi-ethnic empire of Christian Rome was reduced to a very small, predominantly Greek remnant. And by 1453 that, too, had gone.

4. Russia: The Third Rome

Was universalism dead? Was the ideal of the political and cultural, as well as the religious unity of Orthodox Christendom, now unattainable? Were Christians of different nationalities, instead of fighting together against their non-Christian or heretical enemies, now destined to fight no less often against each other - a thought that would have horrified the holy apostles?

Where the Romans and the Greeks had failed, the Lord now raised a third race to carry the burden of the universalist ideal - Russia. The calling of Russia to become the Third Rome had been prefigured as early as the time of Constantine. For the holy emperor saw the sign of the Cross in the sky with the words "By this sign conquer" three times - first before conquering Old Rome, secondly before conquering Byzantium, and thirdly before defeating the Scythians, who occupied the northern shores of the Black Sea which were later occupied by - the Russians.

In many ways, the Russian Great Princes and Tsars inherited the legacy of both the Old and the New Romes. Thus Gytha, daughter of the last Western Orthodox king, Harold II of England, married Great Prince Vladimir Monomakh; while the niece of the last Eastern Orthodox emperor, Sophia Palaeologus, married Tsar Ivan III. Again, the major struggles of the Russian Tsars were against the powers that had overcome those Orthodox autocrats - the Popes in the West and the Sultans in the East. Thus Russia as the Third Rome, the third incarnation of the universalist State called to defend God's Church on earth, was called to finish, and bring to a triumphant conclusion, the struggles begun but not completed by the First and Second Romes.

It is sometimes asserted that Russia was a national State which happened to grow by territorial conquest, rather than an international empire from the beginning, like St. Constantine's Rome. That is not true. From the time of its founding under Rurik in the ninth century, the Russian State encompassed, not only the various tribes of the

Eastern Slavs, but also the Finno-Ungrian tribes – and, as its ruling class, the Scandinavian Varangians. As time passed, this multi-ethnic character of the Russian State increased rather than diminished, as waves of Pechenegs, Polovtsians, Mongols, Khazars and Caucasians from the East, and (on a smaller scale) Germans, Poles, Swedes, Balts and Magyars from the West, settled within its boundaries. We only need to look at the very large number of Russian saints of foreign origin to see that Russia, even while ecclesiastically still only a metropolitan province of the Great Church of Constantinople, was already, politically speaking, an international empire. Of course, it is possible grossly to exaggerate this non-Russian element in the Russian Church and State, as Monk (now “Archbishop”) Ambrose von Sievers has done in his attempt to show that most of the Russian saints were in fact German! Nevertheless, there can be little doubt that, however “Russianness” is defined, it cannot be done in strictly biological terms, insofar as most Russians are now, and have been for many centuries, to some degree of mixed blood.

After the time of troubles at the beginning of the seventeenth century, the Russian realm contracted in on itself and for a short time took on the character of a purely national State, whose first aim was survival and the “gathering of the Russian lands”, not the recreation of a single Christian Empire embracing all the Orthodox lands. At such moments in a nation’s history, a fierce and defensive nationalism is not a negative phenomenon; as in the case of the Balkan peoples under the Turkish yoke, it helps to preserve those values without which the nation will spiritually die.

At the same time, it runs the risk of narrowing and coarsening the nation’s vision – “where there is no vision, the people perish” (Proverbs 29.18). Hardly coincidentally, therefore, in the seventeenth century there broke out the first, and perhaps the only, nationalist schism in Russian history – the schism of the Old Ritualists, who placed Russian Orthodoxy, as symbolized by the decrees of the Stoglav council, above Ecumenical Orthodoxy. But this temptation was overcome by the Russian Church and State; the universalist ideal of the Greco-Russian Church under Moscow as the Third Rome was embraced by Patriarch Nikon, while Tsar Alexis Mikhailovich told Greek merchants that he had not abandoned the dream of re-conquering Constantinople for the Orthodox.

In the eighteenth century, beginning with the reforms of Peter the Great, there was a tendency towards the opposite and no less harmful anti-national extreme of placing everything that was foreign above native Russian and Orthodox values. But, as Hieromonk (now Bishop) Dionysius (Alferov) points out, “the service of ‘him that restraineth’, although undermined, was preserved by Russian monarchical power even after Peter – and it is necessary to emphasize this. It was preserved because neither the people nor the Church renounced the very ideal of the Orthodox kingdom, and, as even V. Klyuchevsky noted, continued to consider as law that which corresponded to this ideal, and not Peter’s decrees.”³⁰⁶

³⁰⁶ Priest Timothy and Hieromonk Dionysius Alferov, *O Tserkvi, pravoslavnom Tsarstve i poslednem vremeni* (On the Church, the Orthodox Kingdom and the Last Times), Moscow, 1998, p. 66.

By the middle of the nineteenth century “Orthodoxy, Autocracy, and Narodnost’” became the official slogan of the Russian Autocracy, with “narodnost’” understood in a non-racial sense and definitely subordinate to Orthodoxy. For “if,” writes M.V. Zyzykin, “it is possible to call the fact that Christianity has become the content of a certain people’s narodnost’ the national property of that people, then such a property belongs also to the Russian people. But we should rather add the term ‘universal’ here, because the very nationality is expressed in universality, *universality has become the content of the narodnost’*.”³⁰⁷ And if the majority of the educated classes did not understand this ideal and warred against it, preferring the universalist, but also anti-national and anti-Orthodox ideology of western democracy, in the masses of the people the simultaneously universalist and patriotic ideology of Holy Russia – the Third Rome continued to live.

And it lived to the greatest degree in the last Tsar Nicholas II, who, though only 1/256th Russian by blood, was more Russian than the “pure” Russians in his love of Russia and Orthodoxy. Nicholas II displayed in himself that correct relationship between patriotism and the higher ideal of citizenship in the Heavenly Kingdom which St. John of Kronstadt had defined in 1905 thus: “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.” In other words, the earthly fatherland is not to be loved as an end in itself, but for the sake of Christ, as a ladder that leads to our true and eternal fatherland in Heaven.

How inseparable Russianness is from Orthodoxy, and how far, therefore, it is from any narrow nationalism, is illustrated by the words of Archbishop Anthony (Khrapovitsky) written in 1916: “If you take away Orthodoxy from our Russian people and our Russian life, as Dostoyevsky justly observed, nothing specifically Russian will remain. In vain have people begun to talk about some kind of national Russian Church: such a Church does not exist, only an ecclesiastical nationality exists, our ecclesiastical people (and to some extent even our ecclesiastical society), which is recognized as our own and native only to the extent that it is in agreement with the Church and her teaching, and which does not recognize the Russian Stundists as Russian, but sees no difference between itself and foreign Orthodox – Greeks, Arabs and Serbs. Tell our peasant: ‘Do not curse the Jews, you know – the All-Holy Mother of God and all the Apostles were Jews’. And what will he reply? ‘That’s not true,’ he will say. ‘They lived at a time when the Jews were Russians.’ He knows very well that the Apostles did not speak Russian, that the Russians did not exist at that time, but he wants to express a true thought, namely, that at that time the Jews who believed in Christ were of that same faith and Church with which the Russian people has now been merged and from which the contemporary Jews and their ancestors who were disobedient to the Lord have fallen away.”³⁰⁸

Conversely, for those Orthodox people of other nations who accepted Russia as the Third Rome, the Russian Tsar was not simply the Russian Tsar, but also the Greek

³⁰⁷ Zyzykin, *Patriarkh Nikon*, Warsaw: Synodal Press, 1931.

³⁰⁸ Khrapovitsky, “Chej dolzhen byt’ Konstantinopol’” (Whose must Constantinople Become”), quoted in S. Fomin, *Rossia pered Vtorym Prishestvoiem* (Russia before the Second Coming), Sergiev Posad, 1994, p. 203.

Tsar – and the Arabic Tsar. “Don’t think,” said an Palestinian Arab after the revolution, “that the Russian Tsar was only Russian. No, he was also Arabic. The Tsar was the all-powerful protector and defender of the Orthodox East.”

On the eve of the revolution Russia had built up the greatest land empire in history, supporting and protecting the Orthodox in the Near East and Eastern Europe, spreading the Gospel in over a hundred languages and with strong missions in China, Japan, Persia and the United States. This was justifiable cause for intense patriotic pride; and yet Russian patriotism – in contrast to the patriotism of some of the smaller Orthodox nations – never lost its universalist dimension, a dimension which may yet manifest itself again in the future, in a last great missionary outreach to the non-Orthodox world.

Nor did Russia lack that capacity for self-criticism which is so essential to the spiritual health both of nations and of individuals, as described by the Russian religious philosopher I.A. Ilyin: "To love one's people and believe in her, to believe that she will overcome all historical trials and will arise from collapse purified and sobered - does not mean to close one's eyes to her weaknesses and imperfections, perhaps even her vices. To accept one's people as the incarnation of the fullest and highest perfection on earth would be pure vainglory, sick nationalist conceit. The real patriot sees not only the spiritual paths of his people, but also her temptations, weaknesses and imperfections. Spiritual love generally is not given to groundless idealization, but sees soberly and with extreme acuteness. To love one's people does not mean to flatter her or hide from her weak sides, but honourably and courageously criticize them and tirelessly struggle with them."³⁰⁹

5. Russia and the Comintern

By the beginning of the twentieth century we see a sharp divergence in views on the significance of the nation, patriotism and Christian universalism in the Orthodox world. On the one hand, in 1900, 222 Chinese Orthodox Christians of the Russian Mission in Peking gave their lives in martyrdom for Christ, thereby exhibiting the wonderful fruits that the true universalism of Russia – the Third Rome had produced in the last and most nationalistic of the great pagan empires. But on the other hand, in 1913 Greek, Serb, Bulgarian and Romanian Orthodox fought a bloody war against each other, stirred up by that nationalist spirit which the Ecumenical Patriarchate had anathematized in 1872 as the heresy of *phyletism* (nationalism). Meanwhile, and in opposition to both, there arose the pseudo-universalism of the communist international, which was to become the vehicle of the revenge of the most fiercely dangerous nationalism of all – Jewish nationalism.

The October revolution in Russia and the promise of a homeland to the Jews in Palestine were reported in a single column of newsprint in the London *Times* of November 9, 1917. This extraordinary “coincidence” pointed to the spiritual connectedness of the two events: the death of the Third Rome was at the same time

³⁰⁹ Ilyin, *Put' dukhovnogo obnovenia* (The Path of Spiritual Renovation); quoted by Fr. Victor Potapov in *Put' Dukhovnogo Obnovenia Rossii* (The Path of the Spiritual Regeneration of Russia), p. 5 (MS).

the birth of the Jewish Antichrist. For while Holy Russia gradually descended into the catacombs of obscurity and martyrdom, Antichristian Israel ascended from the ghettos to take control of the destinies of the apostate peoples.

The London *Times* correspondent for Central Europe, Douglas Reed, proved this point in relation to Russia with some statistics: "The Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party, which wielded the supreme power, contained 3 Russians (including Lenin) and 9 Jews. The next body in importance, the Central Committee of the Executive Commission (or secret police) comprised 42 Jews and 19 Russians, Letts, Georgians and others. The Council of People's Commissars consisted of 17 Jews and five others. The Moscow Che-ka (secret police) was formed of 23 Jews and 13 others. Among the names of 556 high officials of the Bolshevik state officially published in 1918-1919 were 458 Jews and 108 others. Among the central committees of small, supposedly 'Socialist' or other non-Communist parties... were 55 Jews and 6 others."³¹⁰

Even the "pro-Semite" American historian Richard Pipes admits: "Jews undeniably played in the Bolshevik Party and the early Soviet apparatus a role disproportionate to their share of the population. The number of Jews active in Communism in Russia and abroad was striking: in Hungary, for example, they furnished 95 percent of the leading figures in Bela Kun's dictatorship. They also were disproportionately represented among Communists in Germany and Austria during the revolutionary upheavals there in 1918-23, and in the apparatus of the Communist International."³¹¹

The revolution strove to destroy the collective personality of each nation, just as it strove to destroy the image of God, the individual personality of each man. Thus Lenin said that the aim of socialism was not only the drawing together of the nations, but also their fusion - i.e. their destruction. For, as Dostoyevsky wrote, "socialism deprives the national principle of its individuality, undermining the very foundations of nationality." Of course, Lenin was not averse to approving of and stirring up the nationalisms of the smaller nations of the Russian empire in order to destroy the God-bearing nation that he hated and feared the most. But having stirred up nationalist feeling, he then tried to destroy it again, subordinating the nations to the only nation and caste of which he approved - the nation of Jewish internationalism, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

The paradox that socialism both incites nationalism and destroys the nation is one aspect of the general paradox of the socialist revolution, that while preaching freedom it practises slavery, while proclaiming equality it creates inequality, and while dreaming of brotherhood it incites fratricidal war. In the same way, the French revolution proclaimed the freedom and equality of all nations. But its first appearance on the international arena was in the form of Napoleonic imperialism, which strove to destroy the freedom of all the nations of Europe.

³¹⁰ Reed, *The Controversy of Zion*, Durban, S.A.: Dolphin Press, 1978, p. 274.

³¹¹ Pipes, *Russia under the Bolshevik Regime, 1919-1924*, London: Fontana Press, 1995, pp. 112-13.

Paradoxically, it was autocratic Russia, the conqueror of Napoleon, which guaranteed the survival of the West, and its freedom from totalitarianism, for at least another century. For the truth is that the revolution, while inciting the passions for personal and national freedom in order to destroy the old church and state structures, was aimed at the destruction of all freedom and individuality, both personal and national. And while hypocritically invoking those ecumenical ideals which Christianity gave to the world, it actually aimed at their complete destruction by destroying the pivot upon which they all rest – Christ Jesus.

Just as Soviet internationalism was founded on the ruins of Christian universalism, so the Soviet patriotism that emerged during the Second World War was founded on the ruins of the truly Christian patriotism of Holy Russia. Lenin openly despised Russia and killed her last Tsar; Stalin tried to revive the idea of Great (but not Holy) Russia and carefully studied the life of Tsar Ivan the Terrible, whom he called his “teacher”. Neither the sincere hatred of the one nor the hypocritical “love” of the other did anything but plunge Russia ever deeper into the abyss.

Soviet patriotism of the ecclesiastical kind – the “ecclesiastical Stalinism” exemplified by the Almanac *Pravoslavie ili Smert'* and in the panegyrics to Stalin of such priests as Fr. Dmitri Dudko – believes that, in strengthening the state, Stalin (a Georgian) was also trying to create a powerful Russian Orthodox Church, so as to transform the Soviet state into an Orthodox empire, with Stalin himself as emperor. These “Orthodox patriots” do not seem to see any incongruity in the fact that the would-be Orthodox emperor, the protector of the faith, should have been at the same time the greatest persecutor of the faith in history! Fallen nationalist feeling has blinded them to the most elementary moral distinctions.

And led them to the most outrageous blasphemies. Thus on a Moscow Patriarchate website the idea was recently expressed that May 9, the date of the victory of Stalin over the Germans in the Second World War, should be celebrated on a par with “the Feast of feasts”, Pascha – because Stalin by his victory “trampled on death by death”! We see here that fallen nationalist pride can defile even the most central truths of the Christian Faith.

“Universal love” which hates one’s own country, especially if that country is Orthodox Christian, is but the reverse side of universal hatred. For as the English proverb says: “Charity begins at home.” On the other hand, love of one’s country which justifies mass murder and preaches hatred of other nations – as the hierarchs of the Soviet Moscow Patriarchate taught their flock to hate the Germans during the war – degrades the just war for national liberation into an orgy of fallen passion and makes the physically triumphant into the spiritually defeated. For Christ has taught us that, while fighting our enemies, we must still love them...

We must love our country while not making an idol of it, remembering that all nations except the Church of Christ are mortal. Thus Bishop Nicholas Velimirovich writes: “God has always been less interested in states than in peoples, and less in nations than in the salvation of individual souls. We must therefore not take fright and say: ‘The present Christian states and nations will be destroyed, and we shall be

destroyed.' Let it be with states and nations as it must be; no single man or woman who believes in the Lord will be destroyed. God found one righteous man in Sodom - righteous Lot - and He saved him alone when He destroyed Sodom..."³¹²

6. Russia and the Jews

Let us now try and apply the principles expounded in this essay to the most difficult and critical of all the national questions: "the Jewish question". The problem can be stated as follows. On the one hand, the Jews were the first chosen people of God. The father of the Jewish nation, Abraham, is also the father of all the Christian faithful. Not only all the prophets and apostles, but also the Mother of God were Jews. Most important of all, the God Whom we worship, the Lord Jesus Christ, became incarnate as a Jew. "Anti-semitism" would seem to be totally excluded for Christians.

On the other hand, it is perfectly clear that it was the Jews who killed Christ - however much the Judaizing Christians of today's ecumenical movement try to deny the fact. Moreover, they have never repented of that greatest of crimes; their "sacred" book, the Talmud, is filled with such hatred of Christ and Christians - and indeed, of all non-Jews - as to make Hitler's ravings almost civilized by comparison.

Nor has this hatred been proclaimed in words only: for the last two thousand years the most persistent and savage persecutors of the Christians have been the Jews - and the Russians, as we have seen, have suffered more than any. Not without reason, therefore, the fiercest diatribes of the holy Fathers - those of St. John Chrysostom are particularly famous - have been directed against the Jews. And if that "Hebrew of the Hebrews", the Apostle Paul, warned the Gentile Christians of Rome not to exalt themselves against the Jews, since they could fall away and the Jews return to Christ (Romans 11), he nevertheless did not refrain from calling his apostate countrymen "dogs" (Philippians 3.2).

So what should the attitude of Orthodox Christians be? The usual attitude, when presented with this problem, is to soften the paradox in some way, either by devaluing the place of the Jews in the early history of the people of God, or by providing various excuses for them in the later phase. Neither solution is admissible.

While the Church of the Gentiles preceded the Jewish Church of the Old Testament, and, as St. John Chrysostom says, "the Gentiles have the Patriarchs [from Adam to Noah] as their foundation", there can be no question but that the New Testament Church has a Jewish root; so to try and excise the root would be equivalent to cutting down the whole tree. The Christians are "the new Jews", "the Israel of God" (Galatians 6.16); and whatever evils the words "Jew" and "Israel" have been associated with since the Death of Christ, they cannot remove the spiritual heritage implicit in those titles. Besides, to "de-semitize" the Church would be to sin against the communion of saints in a serious manner; for there have been saints and martyrs of Jewish blood

³¹² Velimirovich, "Homily on the Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost", *Homilies*, vol. 2, Birmingham: Lazarica Press, 1998, p. 179.

even since the fall of the synagogue, from St. Epiphanius of Cyprus to New Martyr Alexander Jacobson of Vyatka province.

On the other hand, to lessen the guilt of the Jews in their rejection of Christ would be an even greater sin; for it would deprive them of the possibility of coming to the truth and being saved. Of course, all rebukes must be given with meekness, without hatred, and with consciousness of our own sins. But that is no reason to imitate the pernicious ecumenist habit of denying the plain facts of history, of calling white black and black white.

And what if this elicits accusations of “anti-semitism”? Of course, Orthodox Christians are “anti-Judaists” rather than “anti-semites” because their criticism of Jewry is based on religious rather than racial grounds. Nevertheless, if *all and any* criticism of the Jews is defined as “anti-semitism”, it is better to accept the charge of anti-semitism than consciously to deny the truth. For as Rabbi Dr. Pinchas Hayman has rightly said, Christians must make a choice: “Either to retain their present belief system and be anti-Semitic or to form a partnership with the Jewish people. As long as Christians keep Jesus as God, they will be anti-Semitic because that belief must lead them to believe that those who reject Jesus reject God.”

And if someone objects that it is no use incurring the wrath of the Jews by telling them the truth, because the Jews cannot be saved since the Antichrist will be a Jew and the Jews will follow him, we reply: you know not the Scriptures nor the power of God. There are many hints in the Old and New Testaments, which are confirmed in the writings of the Fathers, that the Jews, after a long period of apostasy, will “look upon Him Whom they have pierced” and will repent (Zechariah 12.10; John 19.37); so that “all Israel” – the Church of the Jews as well as the Church of the Gentiles – “will be saved” (Romans 11.26). This spiritual resurrection of the Jews will not be total, and a large part of them will again apostasize and follow the Antichrist; but the fact of the resurrection cannot be denied and must modify our attitude towards this race, which, though cursed by God, has nevertheless not been totally abandoned by Him, and has preserved them in existence when many other nations have perished, for the sake of the promises He made to Abraham.

And who will convert the Jews if not *the Russians*, who have suffered so much from them, but whose history and culture has become the history and culture of a large part of the Jewish race itself (let us remember that one sixth of the population of Israel is composed of Russian Jews)?

If this seems fantastic in view of the present political, social and spiritual degradation of Russia, let us remember the interpretation of a passage from the book of the Apocalypse given by the holy new Hieromartyr Mark (Novoselov):

"[St. John] with complete clarity speaks about the conversion of the God-fighting people to the Church of Christ, when she, few in numbers and powerless from an external point of view, but powerful with an inner strength and faithfulness to her Lord (Revelation 3.8) will draw to herself the ‘remnant’ of the God-fighting tribe. ‘Behold, says the Lord to the Angel of the Church of Philadelphia, I will make them of

the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and make obeisance before they feet, and to know that I have loved thee.'

"Gazing with the eye of faith at that which the Lord has done before our eyes, and applying the ear of our heart and mind to the events of our days, comparing that which is seen and heard with the declarations of the Word of God, I cannot but feel that a great, wonderful and joyous mystery of God's economy is coming towards us: the Judaizing haters and persecutors of the Church of God, who are striving to subdue and annihilate her, by the wise permission of Providence will draw her to purification and strengthening, so as 'to present her [to Christ] as a glorious Church, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but so that she should be holy and blameless' (Ephesians 6.27).

"And in His time, known only to the One Lord of time, this, according to the son of thunder's strict expression 'synagogue of Satan' will bow before the pure Bride of Christ, conquered by her holiness and blamelessness and, perhaps, frightened by the image of the Antichrist. And if the rejection of the Apostle Paul's fellow-countrymen was, in his words, 'the reconciliation of the world [with God], what will be their acceptance if not life from the dead?' (Romans 11.15)."³¹³

The famous monarchist writer Lev Tikhomirov agrees with this interpretation: "Is this conversion of the Jews that salvation of 'all Israel' which the Apostle Paul foretold? In the Apocalypse it is said that the saved will come 'of the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie'. But not the whole of the 'synagogue' will come, but only 'of the synagogue', that is, a part of it. But even here, where the Apostle Paul says that 'the whole of Israel will be saved', he means only a part: 'for they are not all Israel, which are of Israel... They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed' (Romans 9.6, 8).

"The opinion is widespread among us that the conversion of the Jews will take place at the very appearance of the Saviour, when they shall cry out: 'Blessed is He That cometh in the name of the Lord'. But this is not evident from the Apocalypse. But if the Philadelphian conversion will bring 'all Israel' that is to be saved to Christ, then this will, of course, be a great event, fully explaining the rejoicing of the Heavens. Israel is a chosen people with whom it will not be possible to find a comparison when he begins to do the work of God. The Jews will, of course, multiply the forces of Christianity for the resistance against the Antichrist. 'If the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world,' says the Apostle Paul, 'what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?' (Romans 11.15)."³¹⁴

St. Seraphim of Sarov prophesied that at the end of the world there would be only two important nations: the Russians and the Jews, and that the Antichrist would be a

³¹³ Hieromartyr Mark, *Pisma k Druziam* (Letters to Friends), Moscow, 1994, p. 125. See also pp. 103-104.

³¹⁴Tikhomirov, *Religioznie-Filosofskie Osnovy Istorii* (The Religious-Philosophical Foundations of History), Moscow, 1997, p. 570.

Jew born in Russia. How fitting, then, that the nation which has suffered most from the antichristian Jews should finally convert them to Christianity, so that the former bitter enemies, reconciled in the Body of Christ, should fight together against the Russian-Jewish Antichrist! This would be the final triumph of universal love over national enmity, and the final manifestation of the all-embracing ideal of Christ, Who prayed that the Jews should be forgiven because they knew not what they did, and that they all, Jews and Gentiles, “may be one,... so that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me” (John 17.22,23).

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13. FASCIST ORTHODOXY: THE SERBIAN WARS

As communism collapsed in Eastern Europe in 1989-91, communist leaders held on to power by embracing one or the other of two western ideologies: that of human rights, democracy and ecumenism (this was the path chosen by Yeltsin in Russia), or that of fascism (this was the path chosen by Milošević in Serbia). In the latter case (and to a lesser extent in the former, too), lip-service was paid to Orthodoxy, as being “the historical religion” of the nation; the communist-turned-fascist regime made itself out to be the defender of Orthodoxy against the western and eastern barbarians. But this turned out to be a cruel deception...

Dejan Djokić writes: “As Yugoslavia entered the post-Tito era, there were increasing calls for the pursuit of the... ideal of finding what really happened in Yugoslavia in the Second World War. The official history [which minimised the ethnic elements and called it a ‘national liberation war and a socialist revolution’] was bound to be challenged in the more relaxed political atmosphere which eventually emerged following the death of Tito in 1980, when the so-called ‘hidden’, unofficial, accounts of the war years began to appear. During what one Serbian weekly described as ‘the burst of history’, the official interpretation of Yugoslavia’s recent past was questioned by every engaged intellectual. To many observers in the late 1980s, it must have seemed that the Second World War had broken out for the second time in Yugoslavia – verbally, for the time being...”

“The most controversial and most debated issue was that of Croatian genocide against Serbs during the Second World War. Both the Ustaša-directed project to rid the Independent State of Croatia of its almost two million Serbs (and also Jews and Roma) and the nature and scope of the genocide have been the subject of scholarly works. The issue remains a bone of contention between Serbs and Croats... Moreover, some Serbs argue that anti-Serbianism has always been present among Croats and that the Ustaša genocide was merely the last phase of a long process...”

“The nationalist discourse in Yugoslavia, but especially in Serbia and Croatia in the late 1980s and early 1990s, sought a reconciliation between victors and losers of the Second World War who belonged to the same nation; between Partisans and Četniks in the case of Serbs, and Partisans and Ustašas in the case of Croats. In Yugoslavia at the time ‘reconciliation’ meant a homogenisation of the nation by reconciling ideological differences within the nation...”³¹⁵

The reconciliation between Partisans and Četniks in Serbia was symbolised by the coming to power of Milošević, and between Partisans and Ustašas in Croatia – of Tudjman. Milošević was an atheist who cynically used the religious feeling associated with Kosovo and the battle of Kosovo Polje in 1389 to stir up nationalist feeling at a speech he made at the site of Kosovo Polje on the 600th anniversary of the battle in 1989. The autonomy of Kosovo was revoked, and then that of Vojvodina in the north.

³¹⁵ Djokic, “Coming to Terms with the Past: Former Yugoslavia”, *History Today*, vol. 54 (6), June, 2004, pp. 18-19.

Slovenia was forced out of the union, and then the Serb and Croat leaders made a cynical deal to carve up Bosnia between them...

The Serbian wars began in the spring of 1991. The general feeling then among Serbs was that a repeat not only of 1389, but also of 1941 was taking place, when hundreds of thousands of Orthodox Serbs suffered martyrdom at the hands of Roman Catholic Croats for refusing to renounce Orthodoxy.³¹⁶

That similarities exist between the present and the past cannot be denied. Thus in 1991, as in 1941, the Pope was using the war to further its geopolitical ambitions at the expense of the Orthodox. The Vatican was the first state to recognise Croatia; it was reported that the Catholic Church itself purchased weapons and ammunition that it sent to the Croats³¹⁷; and the Pope called the bloody murderer of Serbs in World War II, Cardinal Stepinac, "undoubtedly the most prominent martyr in Croatia's history".³¹⁸ The destruction of Orthodox churches was a particularly eloquent proof that the forces ranged against the Serbs were indeed of the evil one.

But did the evil of their enemies make the Serbs innocent victims or "martyrs" for Christ, as even some Greek Old Calendarist publications incautiously declared? Let us consider some facts. First, as the Orthodox writer Jim Forest has pointed out, "Serbia is one of Europe's most secularised societies. Tito's anti-religious policies were more effective than those of Stalin, Khrushchev or Brezhnev. Few Serbs are even baptized (the usual estimate is five per cent) and far fewer are active in church life."³¹⁹

As for marriages, in the diocese of Rashka and Prizren, for example, "for 50 long years almost no one was married and all those families lived in a state of adultery. In [Bishop Artemije of Prizren's] diocese, the clergy started pressing for having church weddings. In the beginning it went very slowly and with difficulty, but then people got used to this requirement of the Church and the amount of those who marry increases with each year."³²⁰

Whereas in 1931 barely 0.1% of the population of Yugoslavia declared itself to be without religious affiliation, and only about 12.5% in 1953, the figure was 31.6% in

³¹⁶ Thus in May, 1992, the Holy Synod of the Serbian Church declared: "As of yesterday, the Serbian people in Croatia, Dalmatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina have ceased to exist... Today Serbian Christians commemorate the 50th anniversary of their suffering on the territory of the notorious Nazi 'Independent State' of Croatia, as well as in Kosovo and Metohia - by experiencing new suffering...

"Tens of thousands dead, many more wounded, more than a million evicted and refugees, destroyed churches, houses, devastated villages and desolate homes. With deep sorrow we must state that once again concentration camps are being opened for Serbs in Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina. For instance, in Sukhopol, near Virovitica, Odzhak in Bosanska Posavina; Duvno and Livno, Smiljan in Lika and other places. Refugees testify that once again, as in 1941, bottomless pits are being opened into which innocent Serbs are being cast."

³¹⁷ Antonios Markou, "On the Serbian Question", *Orthodox Tradition*, vol. XI, № 4, 1994, p. 16.

³¹⁸ "'World Orthodoxy's' Sister Church to canonize murderer of the Serbian Orthodox people", *Orthodox Christian Witness*, September 12/25, 1994, p. 2.

³¹⁹ Forest, "An Orthodox Response to the War in Former Yugoslavia", *Orthodox Outlook*, vol. VIII, № 6, 1995, p. 32. It should also be mentioned that baptisms in the Serbian Church are now very often only pourings, not full immersions.

³²⁰ *Church News*, vol. 9, № 8 (64), August, 1997, p. 7.

1987. And the phenomenon of religious non-affiliation was particularly striking precisely in the Serb territories (for example, 54% in Montenegro).³²¹ One survey in 1985 put the proportion of religious believers in Bosnia at 17 per cent.³²²

These figures cast doubt on the oft-heard statement that the Serbian wars are religious in essence. Rather, according to Srđan Vrcan, it is a political conflict that has been given a religious colouring by the warring leaders in order to gain the support of their peoples.³²³ Thus, according to the dean of the Serbian Orthodox Theological Faculty in Belgrade, the conflict in Bosnia was "not in any way a religious war. What is the religious issue which is the main motive? There is none. Rather, this is an ethnic and civil war with some elements of religion... This is just a case of the religious component pressed into service for either ethnic or secular [interests]."³²⁴

Secondly, the attitude of the Serbian Church in this conflict has been highly ambivalent, sometimes criticising the Serbian communist government for having brought so much suffering upon the Serbian people, at others criticising it for not fighting hard enough, and even blessing the activities of some of the most criminal elements in the Serbian forces.

Thus the Swiss Orthodox analyst Jean-François Meyer writes: "The Church has assumed a vocation of guarding 'Serbness' and preserves a lively consciousness of this mission. Thus she has always adopted uncompromising positions with regard to the Kosovo question and energetically defends [Kosovo's] remaining a part of Serbia. As for the Serbs of Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina, since the massacres carried out in the zones under Croat control during the Second World War were also anti-Orthodox operations, the Church has not hidden her sympathy for their worries and their political objectives. Certain Serbian Orthodox circles were able for a time to believe that they had found in Milosevic a politician who shared the general preoccupations in this respect, but the Church was not slow to distance herself on experiencing the chicaneries of the regime. Thus in 1993 one could see the minister responsible for religious affairs in Belgrade accusing the Church of getting involved in political affairs and certain bishops of wanting to 'stir up the people against the government', while the patriarchate replied by describing the minister as a 'servant of the communist ideology'. At least one part of President Milosevic's entourage continues to cultivate the anti-religious heritage of the communist regime, beginning with the president's wife herself, Mira Markovic (ex-president of the 'Federation of communists - Movement for Yugoslavia', then founder in 1995 of a new party, the UYL, that is, the 'United Yugoslav Left'), who deplors the importance of religion in Serbia and considers that the country 'has already reverted spiritually to the Middle Ages'; the tendency of the regime to retrieve Serb nationalist symbols does not prevent the wife of the president from criticising the cult of Saint Sabbas, which is very important in the Serbian Orthodox tradition. Wishing to be a guarantor of the unity of all Serbs, the

³²¹ Sergej Flere, "Denominational Affiliation in Yugoslavia, 1937-1987", *East European Quarterly*, XXV, № 2, June, 1991, pp. 145-165.

³²² This figure cited in Norman Malcolm, *Bosnia. A Short History*, London: Papermac, 1996, p. 222.

³²³ Vrcan, "The War in Former Yugoslavia and Religion", *Religion, State and Society*, 22/4, 1994, pp. 374-75.

³²⁴ Cited in Norman Cigar, *Genocide in Bosnia*, Texas A&M University Press, 1995, p. 67.

Serbian Church has again reasserted her opposition to the Belgrade regime when the latter tried to distance itself from the Bosnian Serbs so as to obtain a lifting of the embargo imposed by the international community. When the Serbs fled from Krajina in August, 1995, the leaders of the Serbian Church again published a solemn declaration sharply criticising the 'incapacity' of the 'neo-communist' Belgrade regime, which has led to 'a total impasse' and is preventing 'the spiritual, moral and political recovery' of the Serbian people."³²⁵

This gesture of defiance towards the communist government was a welcome change from the Serbian Church's "sergianism" in relation to the communists over the previous forty years.³²⁶ On the other hand, as Cigar wrote: "Notwithstanding general condemnations of violence by Patriarch Pavle, the Serbian Orthodox Church continued to lend its mantle of respectability to even the most extreme nationalist elements. Arkan provided bodyguards for the Serbian Orthodox metropolitan Amfilohije of Montenegro, who has reportedly used them to intimidate dissidents. In July, 1993, on the occasion of the city of Belgrade's holy day, Arkan marched prominently beside Patriarch Pavle in solemn procession through the city streets. In that same month, Patriarch Pavle himself led an official delegation to Bosnia, where he presided over widely publicized religious ceremonies with the participation of the top Bosnian Serb government and military leaders."³²⁷

There were dissenters against Milošević's policies among the Serbs – but they did not come from the Church's ranks. One was the owner and editor of the Belgrade *Dnevni Telegraph*, Slavko Curuvija, who wrote an open letter to Milošević.

The following is an extract from his letter: "Everything that the Serbs have created in this century has been thoughtlessly wasted... The nation has developed a complex as a vanquished, genocidal aggressor as well as being the last bastion of European communism. The merit and worth of Serbian institutions have been destroyed in a systematic manner. You have brought a university and a local farmers' collective to the same level, equated the Academy of Arts and Sciences with a nursing home, you have degraded the church, the legislature, the media, parliament and the

³²⁵ Jean-François Meyer, *Religions et Sécurité Internationale (Religions and International Security)*, Berne, Switzerland: Office Central de la Défense, 1995, pp. 24-25.

³²⁶ "Comparing the position of the Orthodox Church under the power of communism in Russia and in Yugoslavia, one can say that in the first years of the establishment of the godless power in Russia Patriarch Tikhon anathematized the godless and all their co-workers, and as soon as the betrayal of church liberty by Metropolitan Sergius was comprehended, almost immediately an elemental movement against was formed, under the leadership of the greater and best part of the Episcopate of the Russian Orthodox Church, which later received the name of the Catacomb or Tikhonite Church. Unfortunately, nothing similar took place in the composition of the Serbian Orthodox Church.

"The Serbian Church, which was far from being as cruelly persecuted by the godless as the Russian, made no protest against the participation of their own Patriarch German in the ecumenical movement and even his position as one of the presidents of the WCC. The hierarchy of the Serbian Church did not find in itself enough spiritual strength, as did the Russian Church, to create in its depths an anti-communist and anti-ecumenist popular movement, although individual true holy new martyrs were found in it. For a little more than fifty years of communist dominion in Yugoslavia, not one courageous speech of members of the Serbian hierarchy against godlessness and ecumenism was known abroad." (*Tserkovnie Novosti* (Church News), June-July, 1999, № 4 (80), p. 4).

³²⁷ Cigar, *op. cit.*, pp. 67-68.

government... Nowhere in today's Europe are criminals and the state wedded in such a harmonious marriage as here in Serbia. Organised gangs control the circulation of key goods and services. Paramilitary formations still operate. Street violence and murders are a daily occurrence and the state has in practice abandoned its responsibility for the safety of its citizens and their property... A psychosis of a permanent state of emergency has been imposed on society, in addition to the fear generated by omnipotent police and your henchmen, who boast that they can order executions of the people they dislike. Absolute obedience is demanded from the population. Hysterical, choreographed outpourings of support are set up after every victory that contributes to our decline. Your excellency, your country, your people and your compatriots have been living for years in a state of fear, of psychosis, with nothing but death, misery, terror and despair around them... Hungry and humiliated, your citizens have exhausted their spirits and have no strength to make even verbal protests. Our letter to you is our modest contribution to the struggle against fear."

This was written in the October before the mass murder and rape of Kosovo began. Curuvijas was first fined \$100,000, and then two masked assassins fired 11 shots into him at close range (his wife was clubbed with a gun). 2000 people attended his funeral...

In March, 1999, NATO warplanes bombed Serbia in an attempt to stop the latest tide of "ethnic cleansing" unleashed by the Serbian army against the Muslim Albanians of Kosovo. On March 23, the Synod of the Serbian Church issued the following statement: "In the name of God, we demand and beseech that all conflict in Kosovo and Metohija immediately cease, and that the problems there be resolved exclusively by peaceful and political means. The way of non-violence and co-operation is the only way blessed by God in agreement with human and Divine moral law and experience. Deeply concerned about the threatened Serbian cradle of Kosovo and Metohija and for all those who live there, and especially by the terrible threats of the world's armed forces to bomb our Homeland, we would remind the responsible leaders of the international organisations that evil in Kosovo or anywhere else cannot be uprooted by even greater and more immoral evil: the bombing of one small but honourable European people. We cannot believe that the international organisations have become so incapable of devising ways for negotiation and human agreement that they must resort to ways which are dark and demeaning to human and national honour, ways which employ great violence in order to prevent a lesser evil and violence..."³²⁸

This statement must be commended at least for calling the actions of the Serbs in Kosovo "evil". But in its main import it was both factually and morally wrong. After all, is the uprooting of a whole people, accompanied by the cruellest of tortures and rapes, a "lesser evil" than a war undertaken to defend the victims and restrain the aggressors? Of course, NATO's actions may well have been ill-considered or bungled from a political or military point of view, and it can be argued that these were not the

³²⁸ Translated in *The Shepherd*, vol. XIX, № 8, April, 1999, pp. 18-19.

right means to achieve NATO's stated aims. However, from a *moral* point of view, NATO's aims were surely better than those of the Serbian army in Kosovo.³²⁹

Of course, the patriarch is in a difficult position. As leader of the Serbian Church, he is obliged to work for the unity of the nation in all the parts of the former Yugoslavia, which inevitably involves coming into contact with some of its more murderous leaders, such as Arkan. If he were a hierarch of the stature of St. John Chrysostom or St. Philip of Moscow, he might have been able to combine care for the whole of his flock with forthright condemnation of the Miloševićs and Arkans who mislead and corrupt it. But, being raised in the sergianism of the post-war Serbian Church, he is not able to do this. Nor is any modern-day patriarch of the former Soviet bloc.

Let us remind ourselves of how the Serbian Church reached its present dependence on the State. In July, 1958, on the death of Patriarch Vincent, the communists engineered the election of a puppet patriarch, German, on the model of Stalin's election of the notorious "Patriarch" Sergius of Moscow in 1943. As the Free Serbs of the U.S.A. wrote: "All of his [German's] opponents were eliminated beforehand. Bishop Basil, at that time Bishop of Banja Luka, was arrested in Belgrade and threatened by the UDBA (the Yugoslav secret police) to be returned to Banja Luka and tried by the 'People's Court' for his alleged 'counter-revolutionary activities', if he did not endorse Bishop German's candidacy for patriarch. Once he endorsed German's candidacy he was released, though Bishop German's 'gracious' intervention.

"Father Macarius, abbot of the famed Dechani Monastery, was given 200,000 dinars (\$650) as payment for his coerced vote for German. He came back to his monastery after the election and threw the money at his monks, telling that he 'felt like Judas'.

"Many delegates to the Election were given a special pen and paper on which they were to cast their ballots, in order to show whether they had kept their promise to the agents of the Secret Police. (Two sworn statements by witnesses.)"³³⁰

According to witnesses who were in the patriarch's house, he had a party card. And when he was once accused of embezzlement and threatened with a court trial, the UDBA saved him and paid the money themselves. Thereafter he was, of course, "their man".

³²⁹ Pro-Serbian commentators argue that the West is the victim of anti-Serb propaganda. The present writer has watched many programmes on the Serbian wars on British television in the last eight years. No anti-Serb bias is evident in them. Detailed and generally accurate documentaries have been shown on the sufferings of the Serbs at the hands of the Croats in 1941 and on the significance of Kosovo for the Serbs. Serb representatives are invited to express their point of view in *all* debates on the Serbian wars. On the other hand, Russia's NTV station seems to be the only media outlet in Serbia or Russia which reports "ethnic cleansing" in Kosovo (Anna Blundy, "Russian Viewers finally see case for Nato", *The Times* (London), April 7, 1999, p. 2).

³³⁰ *A Time to Choose – the Truth about the Free Serbian Orthodox Dioceses*, Monastery of the Most Holy Mother of God, Third Lake, Illinois, 1981, p. 11.

In 1960 Archimandrite Justin Popovich, who has been called “the conscience of the Serbian Church”, wrote: “.... The atheist dictatorship has so far elected two patriarchs... And in this way it has cynically trampled on the holy rights of the Church, and thereby also on the holy dogmas.”³³¹

Sad to say, Patriarch Pavle followed in the steps of his predecessor, even as the communist state was almost destroyed. Thus on November 29, 1999 he took part in a festival organised by the communists celebrating the day of the foundation of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in 1945. He was strongly criticised for this by Bishop Artemije, who called this day “the feast of the annihilation of the monarchy of the Serbian people”, and called for “the reestablishment of the monarchy in Serbia and the return of its lawful rights to the House of the Karageorgieviches, of which they were deprived by the decision of the godless communist authorities.”³³²

As the Milošević regime began to fall in the year 2000, the patriarch again returned to an anti-communist position. But by this time it was clear that the Serbian patriarch was no different from his ally, the Moscow patriarch, in always following the dominant political currents in his country, which is the essence of sergianism.

Hardly less important that the Serbian patriarchate’s sergianism was its ecumenism. In 1965, the Serbian patriarchate joined the World Council of Churches, and “Patriarch” German became one of its six presidents. In 1971 Archimandrite Justin broke communion with the patriarch after fiercely denouncing his fall into multiple heresy.³³³

In ecumenism, as in sergianism, Patriarch Pavle has been a faithful follower of his predecessor. Thus in a letter to the Pope dated January 17, 1992 he asked for “a true ecumenical dialogue between our two sister Churches”.³³⁴ Again, he declared that the Christians and the Muslims had the same God; while his bishops, especially Laurence of Sabac, continued to take prominent roles in the World Council of Churches.

In 1994 there was some protest against ecumenism in the Serbian Church. Then, in 1996 about 300 clergy and monastics wrote to the Holy Synod: “We ask ourselves: how long will our Holy Synod of Bishops be silent while facing the fact that one Bishop of the SOC (Bishop Irenej Bulovic of Backa) organized a reception of the Cardinal of Vienna in 1996 in his cathedral church as if someone more important than the Serbian Patriarch was coming. He took the Cardinal to the Holy Sanctuary and allowed him to kiss the Holy Table. During the liturgy he also exchanged the kiss of peace with the same Cardinal. One other Bishop (Lavrentije of Sabac) has often taken part in common prayers with ecumenists, pseudo-Christians, pagans and sectarians.

³³¹ Popovich, “The Truth about the Serbian Orthodox Church in communist Yugoslavia”, translated into Russian in *Vestnik Germanskoj Eparkhii Russkoj Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi za Granitsej (Herald of the German Diocese of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad)*, №№ 2 and 3, 1992.

³³² “Episkop ofitsial’noj serbskoj tserkvi oblichaet svoego patriarkha” (“A Bishop of the Official Serbian Church reproaches his Patriarch”), *Vertograd-Inform*, № 1 (58), January, 2000, p. 13.

³³³ Hieromonk Sabbas of Dechani monastery, personal communication. Some say that Fr. Justin broke only with the patriarch, and not with the other bishops.

³³⁴ Florence Hamlish Levinsohn, *Belgrade: Among the Serbs*, Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 1994, p. 238.

“Do we, Orthodox monks, not have the right to ask a question and require an explanation, which is the last degree of tolerance for our eternal salvation because we do not want to lose our soul by being led by such bishops?

“That is why we require an official explanation about the validity of attitudes which we have hitherto expressed.

“Another question is: Was it necessary to receive the money from the WCC for the new Theology School building in Belgrade so that heretics might teach their heresy to our students of Theology, while our professors of the School force the students to take the blessings from the Protestants and take part in their lectures.”³³⁵

However, Patriarch Pavle remained unmoved, the movement produced no concrete results, and Serbian hierarchs have continued to the present day to pray with heretics, especially Catholics. Thus in 2000 the Catholic Archbishop of Zagreb, Josip Bozanic, celebrated a mass in a suburb of Novi Sad in northern Serbia which was attended by the local Orthodox bishop.³³⁶

The patriarch could truly be said to have been defending Orthodoxy against the Catholic Croats and Muslim Bosnians and Kosovars in the 1990s only if he had actually been confessing the Orthodox Faith against Catholicism and Islam. However, claims to be suffering martyrdom for the Orthodox faith at the hands of wicked Catholics and Muslims are hardly consistent with ecumenist betrayal of that same faith with those same enemies!

Supporters of the Serbs often point to such men as Fr. Justin, as if such True Orthodox confessors justified the present state of the Serbian Church. This argument completely forgets to mention the rather relevant fact that Fr. Justin denounced the apostasy of the Serbian Church in the most scathing terms, and, as we have seen, in fact broke communion with the Serbian Patriarch. The only True Orthodox Serbs in the world today are those who have followed Fr. Justin in breaking communion with the false patriarchate – that is, the True Orthodox Church of Serbia under the leadership of Hieroschemamonk Akakije.

Serbs talk about the sacredness of Kosovo Polje and the terrible injustices they have suffered over the centuries. Terrible suffering and injustice there has undoubtedly been; but true martyrs for Christ do not complain about their sufferings but rather count themselves blessed, in accordance with the Lord’s word. And it goes without saying that they never indulge in revenge killings and rapes. In any case, how is the sacredness of Kosovo Polje, sanctified by the blood of St. Lazar, who chose a Heavenly Kingdom over an earthly, increased by the savagery of men whose aims are quite clearly earthly – or rather satanic, insofar as they involve the rape and murder of

³³⁵ John Chaplain, “Re: [paradosis] Alternative Orthodoxy is loosing its illusory legitimacy...”, May 26, 2004.

³³⁶ “Serbskaia Patriarkhia i Katolicheskaia Tserkov’: ‘V Sovmestnoj Molitve... My Stali Yeshcho Blizhe’” (“The Serbian Patriarchate and the Catholic Church: ‘In Joint Prayer... we have become still closer’”), *Vertograd-Inform*, №№ 7-8 (64-65), July-August, 2000, pp. 18-19.

peaceful civilians? And how was Orthodoxy glorified when the world saw such savagery committed by supposedly Orthodox Christians on their television screens, with no attempt by the Serbian authorities to condemn it as it deserved? The fact that other nations in the region committed similar atrocities is irrelevant to the Christian conscience. We are taught to return evil with good, not with even worse evil.

The terrible pride and cruelty displayed by the Serbs in the 1990s, followed by the complete collapse of their dream of a greater Serbia, is a very serious warning for all the Orthodox of Eastern Europe. For it is not only in Serbia that such tendencies to "Fascist Orthodoxy" or "National Bolshevism with an Orthodox Face" are apparent: we see similar tendencies in Russia and other countries. A monstrous and terribly dangerous cocktail of communism, ecumenism and phyletism (nationalism) - and, which makes it much worse, under the banner of Orthodoxy - is being concocted in the capitals of Eastern Europe. If anything could be more explosively evil than "pure" communism, then this is probably it! Instead of leading the Orthodox peoples to repentance for their terrible fall into communism, and restoring truly Orthodox piety and statehood, the leaders of both Church and State are leading their peoples into still worse crimes - for which the wrath of God will undoubtedly fall on them!

It is significant that the Serbian wars broke out in 1991, when the last significant anti-ecumenist forces in the Serbian Church, the Free Serbs, had just surrendered to the false patriarchate. This suggests that the war was allowed by God as a punishment for apostasy from the True Faith. Now, we must hope, the Serbs - and not only the Serbs, but all the traditionally Orthodox nations still enslaved to apostate hierarchies and totalitarian governments - will see their error, and begin to fight the heretical West and Islam, not physically but spiritually, not by returning evil for evil, but by confessing both the truth and the love of Orthodox Christianity in word and deed.³³⁷ For, as Tim Judah writes, "Milošević had spun the Serbs dreams of the Empire of Heaven and clothed himself in the glory of the Kosovo myth. Unlike Lazar, however, he chose a kingdom on earth, which is not the kingdom of Lazar's truth and justice."³³⁸

1999; revised June 25 / July 8, 2004.

³³⁷ A poll carried out in 2002 by the Ministry for religious affairs of the republic of Serbia indicated that 95% of the population (excluding Kosovo) considers itself to be believing and only 5% - atheist. Out of a population of 7,498,001, 6,371,548, or 85%, were Orthodox (pravoslavie.ru, 20 July, 2003, in *Pravoslavnaia Rus'* (Orthodox Russia), № 16 (1733), August 15/28, 2003, p. 16).

³³⁸ Judah, *The Serbs*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1997, p. 309.

14. THE RESTORATION OF ROMANITY

In his interpretation of the Apocalypse of St. John the Theologian, Archbishop Averky of Syracuse and Holy Trinity Monastery (+1976) writes concerning the Philadelphian Church of Revelation 3: "The Church of Philadelphia is the next-to-last period in the life of the Church of Christ, the epoch contemporary to us, when the Church will in fact have **little strength** in contemporary humanity and new persecutions will begin, when patience will be required."³³⁹ If the Philadelphian Church is indeed to be identified with the Church of our times, then a careful study of these verses must be of great importance for every contemporary Christian. The purpose of this article is to explore Archbishop Averky's insight with the aid of other writings and prophecies of the Fathers and Martyrs of the Church.

3.7-8. And to the angel of the Church in Philadelphia write: These things saith He that is holy, He that is true, He that hath the key of David, He that openeth and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth: I know thy works; behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it; for thou hast a little strength.

There is a striking contrast between the Churches of Sardis and Philadelphia. The former is prosperous externally but poor internally (Rev. 3.1-6). The latter is few in numbers and under great pressure from enemies, but receives the most unqualified praise of all the Churches (Rev. 3.7-13).

Such is the difference in the condition of the Orthodox Church before and after the watershed years 1914-24. In 1914 the Church stood at the highest peak of Her power from an external point of view. Although the Middle East was still under the Moslem yoke, the Orthodox Balkan States had been liberated after centuries of Turkish domination; and the mighty Russian empire spread from the Baltic to the Pacific with important Church missions in Persia, Central Asia, China, Japan and America. Fifteen years later, the situation had completely changed. The Russian empire was gone, her peoples crushed by war, famine and the fanatical persecution of a small band of militant atheists; and the missions abroad, though swelled by many emigrés, were rent by schisms and difficulties of various kinds. In 1924, moreover, the Ecumenical Patriarchate, together with the State Church of Greece and the Church of Romania, had fallen into the schism of the new calendar, which heralded a devastating new heresy - "the heresy of heresies" - ecumenism. It is perhaps significant that the historical Church of Philadelphia in Asia Minor came to an end on earth in precisely this period, during the exchange of populations between Greece and Turkey in 1922-23.

However, in the midst of all this turmoil, the faith of many hitherto lukewarm Christians was renewed. A new age of martyrdom fully comparable to that of the first three centuries began. To His little flock (Luke 12.32) the Lord promised that an open

³³⁹ Averky, *Rukovodstvo k izucheniu Sviashchennykh Pisanij Novogo Zaveta* (Handbook to the Study of the Sacred Scriptures of the New Testament), Holy Trinity Monastery, Jordanville, 1956, vol. I, p. 400 (in Russian); *The Apocalypse in the Teachings of Ancient Christianity*, Platina, Ca.: St. Herman of Alaska Brotherhood, 1995.

door would be presented through His possession of the key of David. And this key, according to Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow, **the key of David** is the Cross of Christ, whereby He was given power to open heaven and hell.³⁴⁰ For although, as L.A. Tikhomirov writes, "the Philadelphian Church will be numerically small and will not have an external position like that of the Sardian or Laodicean Churches, it will be morally so powerful that she will attract the Jews to herself".³⁴¹

The phrase **the key of David** recalls a prophecy from Isaiah: **I will give him the glory of David; and he shall rule, and there shall be none to shut; and he shall shut, and there shall be none to open** (22.22). These words were spoken, in the first place, of Eliakim, the chief minister of King Hezekiah of Judah, who was to succeed to the office of the high priest and temple treasurer Somnas. Jewish tradition relates that Somnas wished to betray the people of God and flee to the Assyrian King Sennacherib; and St. Cyril of Alexandria says of him: "On receiving the dignity of the high-priesthood, he abused it, going to the extent of imprisoning everybody who contradicted him."³⁴²

The picture, then, is one of betrayal at the highest level in the Church at a time of maximum pressure from outside. The Lord, however, as First Hierarch of the Church, promises His faithful remnant that the power of the keys - the charisma of the priesthood, the power to bind and to loose - will remain among them (cf. I Peter 2.25; Matthew 16.19). However much the false priests will strive to exclude the faithful from the Church by means of bans and excommunications, their efforts will come to nothing because the Lord will not recognise their repressive measures - the door into the sacred enclosure of the Church will remain open to the sheep who know His voice (John 10.9).

For there is no infallible authority but God - this is the teaching of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. And while the Church is **the pillar and ground of the truth** (I Timothy 3.15), we cannot be certain that any individual Church or hierarch will remain in the Truth. For **the Spirit of truth blows where it wills** (John 3.8). As the Irish Father St. Columbanus of Luxeuil wrote to a heretical Pope: "[If you err], then those who have always kept the Orthodox Faith, whoever they may have been, even if they seem to be your subordinates,... shall be your judges.. And thus, even as your honour is great in proportion to the dignity of your see, so great care is needful for you, lest you lose your dignity through some mistake. For power will be in your hands just so long as your principles remain sound; for he is the appointed keybearer of the Kingdom of heaven, who opens by true knowledge to the worthy and shuts to the unworthy; otherwise if he does the opposite, he shall be able neither to open nor to shut..."³⁴³

³⁴⁰ Metropolitan Philaret, *Sermons and Speeches*, tome 5, Moscow, 1885, p. 488 (in Russian); cited by Ivan Marchevsky, *An Apocalyptic Perspective on the End of Time in a Patristic Synthesis*, Sophia: "Monarkhichesko-Konservativen Seyuz", 1994, p. 84 (in Bulgarian).

³⁴¹ Tikhomirov, *Religioznie-Filosofskie Osnovy Istorii* (The Religio-Philosophical Foundations of History), Moscow, 1997, p. 570.

³⁴² St. Cyril, *P.G.* 70, 516B.

³⁴³ G.S.M. Walker (ed.), *Sancti Columbani Opera*, 1970, The Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, pp. 47, 49, 51.

Now betrayal at the highest level was a tragic feature of Church life in the 1920s. Thus Greek and Romanian hierarchs sought to betray their flocks into union with western heretics, the first step to which was the introduction of the papal calendar in 1924. However, they were foiled, at least in part, by the determined opposition of a handful of priests and several hundred thousand laymen. Again, in Russia, certain bishops and clergy created the so-called "Living Church" with the blessing of the Soviets in opposition to the true Church led by Patriarch Tikhon. This heretical schism was eventually crushed, but only after wreaking great damage on the Church with the loss of millions of souls. Then, in 1927, came the still more destructive schism of Metropolitan Sergius of Nizhni-Novgorod, who published a declaration placing the official Russian Church into submission to the militantly atheist State.

As Archbishop Averky writes: "Terrible upheavals, unheard of in history since the first ages of Christianity, have been lived through and are still being lived through by our Russian Orthodox Church. But it is not so much these bloody persecutions, likening her to the early Church, that are terrible in themselves, as the inner corruption which began in her and in the whole of the Orthodox Church after the Bolshevik coup. What we have in mind is that corrupting spirit which began to reveal itself openly, and which at first merged into the so-called 'living church' and 'renovationist' movement, and then - into the destructive compromise with the God-fighting communist power. *This was the spirit of Apostasy in the bowels of the Orthodox Church herself*, which engendered all kinds of divisions and schisms, both there in the Homeland enslaved by the atheists, and here, abroad. This spirit of *Apostasy* is, of course, far more dangerous and destructive for souls than open bloody persecutions. *It is the inner betrayal of Christ the Saviour with the preservation of merely external, visible faithfulness to Him.*

"Was it not about this that Bishop Theophanes the Recluse prophesied more than eighty years ago in his interpretation of the Second Epistle to the Thessalonians, when he said: '*Although the name of Christianity will be heard everywhere, and churches and church rites will be seen everywhere, all this will be only appearance, while within will be true apostasy*' (pp. 491-492). Christ Himself in His Sermon on the Mount clearly said that **nobody can serve two masters** (Matthew 6.24); it is impossible simultaneously to serve God and Mammon, that is, **this world lying in evil**; it is impossible at one and the same time to please Christ and Beliar, that is, the servants of the coming Antichrist, in the person of the clear or secret God-fighting authorities (II Corinthians 6.15)."³⁴⁴

"Soon after the publication of Metropolitan Sergius' declaration," writes E. Lopeshanskaya, "Bishop Damascene [one of the faithful martyr-bishops of the Catacomb Church] had thought about the fate of the Russian Orthodox Church in the image of two of the churches of the Apocalypse: those of Philadelphia and Laodicea.

³⁴⁴ Averky, "On the Situation of the Orthodox Christian in the Contemporary World", *Istinnoe Pravoslavie i Sovremennij Mir* (True Orthodoxy and the Contemporary World), Jordanville, N.Y.: Holy Trinity Monastery, 1971, pp. 18-19.

The Church of Patriarch Tikhon was the Church of Philadelphia.. And next to the Church of Philadelphia was the Church of Laodicea - that of Metropolitan Sergius."³⁴⁵

Now this identification of the Philadelphian Church with the Russian Tikhonite or Catacomb Church was disputed by a fellow-martyr of Bishop Damascene's, Metropolitan Cyril of Kazan, who is reported to have said in 1934: "Not we, but those who will come after us are the Philadelphian Church."³⁴⁶ However, we may suppose him to have been thinking of the latter part of the prophecy concerning the Philadelphian Church, which had not been fulfilled in his time and has not been fulfilled even now. This is the promise of **an open door** being extended to her hierarchs:

3.8. I know thy works; behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it; for thou hast a little strength.

The meaning of this phrase is explained by St. Paul's words: **Praying for us also, that God may open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the Mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds; that I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak** (Colossians 4.3-4; cf. I Corinthians 16.9).

The Catacomb Church was in bonds for most of the twentieth century, as Paul was in Rome in the first century. Nevertheless, although the Church **suffers trouble, as an evil-doer, even unto bonds,... the word of God is not bound** (II Timothy 2.9). The Lord can **open the door of faith to the Gentiles** (Acts 14.27) now as He did then; and here He promises the Philadelphian Church, i.e. the True Orthodox Church of Russia and perhaps throughout the world, that since she has kept His word and not denied His name in the midst of the most terrible persecutions, He will release her from bondage and give her the opportunity to proclaim the word of God freely.

"These words," writes St. John of Kronstadt, "in all probability refer to that spreading of the Gospel throughout the world which has penetrated from the Eastern Church into China, Japan, India, Persia, Africa and other pagan countries."³⁴⁷

Looking at the world from a worldly point of view today, it is difficult to see how this prophecy could be fulfilled. In Russia today, it is still the Laodicean Church of Sergianist Ecumenism that is dominant rather than the Philadelphian Church of True Orthodoxy; and faith and morals are in sharp decline throughout the world. The faithful people of the Church are preparing for the coming of the Antichrist rather than a dramatic expansion of the Church of Christ. And yet, as Tertullian said, "the blood of the Christians is the seed of the Church" - and where, if ever, has more blood been shed for Christ than in the past century in Russia? This alone should give us reason to hope for a rich harvest of souls entering the Church before the end.

³⁴⁵ Lopeshanskaia, *Episkopy-Ispovedniki (Bishop-Confessors)*, San Francisco, 1971, p. 91.

³⁴⁶ Hieromartyr Cyril, quoted by Lev Regelson, *Tragedia Russkoj Tserkvi, 1917-1945 (The Tragedy of the Russian Church, 1917-1945)*, Paris: YMCA Press, 1977, p. 566.

³⁴⁷ St. John of Kronstadt, *Nachalo i Konets Zemnago Mira (The Beginning and End of the Earthly World)*, St. Petersburg, 1904.

3.8. For thou hast a little strength, and hast kept My word, and hast not denied My name.

These words are reminiscent of Daniel: **They shall profane the sanctuary of strength, and they shall remove the perpetual sacrifice, and make the abomination desolate. And the transgressors shall bring about a covenant by deceitful ways: but a people knowing their God shall prevail, and do valiantly. And the intelligent of the people shall understand much: yet shall they fall by the sword, and by flame, and by captivity, and by spoil of many days. And they shall be helped with a little help; but many shall attach themselves to them with treachery. And some of them that understand shall fall, to try them as fire, and to test them, and that they may be manifested at the time of the end, for the matter is yet for a set time (11.31-35).**

The parallel between this people and the Christians of the True Orthodox Church is striking. The profanation of the sanctuary of strength and the removal of the perpetual sacrifice refers to the Bolsheviks' destruction of churches and removal into prison of the priests who celebrate the Sacrifice of the Eucharist, replacing them by false priests and churches which do not have the Grace of the sacraments. The deceitfully arranged covenant refers to Metropolitan Sergius' pact with the atheists, which introduced **the abomination of desolation** - militant atheism and anti-theism - into the heart of the Church's administration.

It was of just such a covenant that the Prophet Isaiah wrote: **Thus says the Lord God:... hail will sweep away the refuge of lies, and waters will overwhelm the shelter. Then your covenant with death will be annulled, and your agreement with hell will not stand; when the overwhelming scourge passes through you will be beaten down by it... (Isaiah 28.15, 17-19)**

As for **the abomination of desolation**, this refers to the renovationist "Living Church" according to St. John of Kronstadt's vision of 1908: "We went further, and entered a big cathedral. I wanted to cross myself, but the elder said to me: 'Here is the abomination of desolation'... The cathedral, the priest, the people - these are the heretics, the apostates, the godless, who departed from the Faith of Christ and the Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church and recognised the renovationist living church, which does not have the Grace of Christ."³⁴⁸

The people knowing their God are the believers of the True Orthodox Church, who reject this evil covenant and abomination. They have fallen **by the sword, and by flame, and by captivity, and by spoil of many days** - over seventy years of struggle against the Soviet Antichrist. Just as the Philadelphian Church is said to have **little strength**, so these Christians are said to be helped with **a little help**; and in material and political terms they are indeed weak. **Many shall attach themselves to them with treachery** - and many traitors, KGB agents, have attached themselves to the True Orthodox Christians, causing some of them to fall temporarily, being tried **as with fire**. And all this takes place in the last days, **at the time of the end**, and yet before the

³⁴⁸ St. John of Kronstadt, in Fomin, *op. cit.*, pp. 137-141, *Pravoslavnaia Rus'* (Orthodox Russia), № 20 (517); translated in V. Moss, *The Imperishable Word*, Old Woking, 1980.

final destruction of the tormentor, **the king of the north**, on the mountains of Israel (Daniel 11.36-45; cf. Ezekiel 38 and 39).

3.9. Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and make obeisance before they feet, and to know that I have loved thee.

The phrase **the synagogue of Satan** was used before, in the message to the Church of Smyrna (2.9), which in Archbishop Averky's interpretation represents the second period in the history of the Church. It can be interpreted in two ways. Either it refers to the Jews, who have been at the forefront of the persecutions against the Christians in the twentieth, as in the first three centuries, or to the false brethren who have betrayed **the Israel of God** (Galatians 6.16), the Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church, and thereby ceased to be *true* Jews, i.e. real Christians. **For he is not a Jew, who is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh. But he is a Jew, who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God** (Romans 2.28-29).

Of such true, Christian Jews it is written: **In those days ... ten men of all the languages of the nations shall take hold of the hem of a Jew, saying, We shall go with thee; for we have learned that God is with you** (Zechariah 8.23).

"Here is foretold the mass conversion of the Jews to Christ which must take place in the last, that is, the sixth period in the construction of the Holy Church... This triumphant promise relates, in all probability, to the last times, after the breaking of the sixth seal from the book of the destinies of the world, when great signs in the sun, the moon and the stars will begin to appear, and terrible upheavals in the elements - upheavals which will be restrained from appearing until the conversion to Christianity and return to Palestine of one hundred and forty four thousand Jews is accomplished, as we clearly see in Revelation (7.2-8). They will be regenerated, as some fathers of the Church, in particular St. Ephraim the Syrian and St. Hippolytus of Rome, have surmised, by the Prophet Elijah's preaching of the Gospel of Christ." (St. John of Kronstadt)

The Catacomb Hieromartyr Bishop Mark Novoselov identified the Jews in this passage with the persecutors of the Church in Bolshevik Russia. "[St. John] with complete clarity speaks about the conversion of the God-fighting people to the Church of Christ, when she, few in numbers and powerless from an external point of view, but powerful with an inner strength and faithfulness to her Lord (Revelation 3.8) will draw to herself the **remnant** of the God-fighting tribe. **Behold**, says the Lord to the Angel of the Church of Philadelphia, **I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and make obeisance before they feet, and to know that I have loved thee.**

"Gazing with the eye of faith at that which the Lord has done before our eyes, and applying the ear of our heart and mind to the events of our days, comparing that which is seen and heard with the declarations of the Word of God, I cannot but feel that a great, wonderful and joyous mystery of God's economy is coming towards us:

the Judaising haters and persecutors of the Church of God, who are striving to subdue and annihilate her, by the wise permission of Providence will draw her to purification and strengthening, so as **to present her [to Christ] as a glorious Church, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but so that she should be holy and blameless** (Ephesians 6.27).

"And in His time, known only to the One Lord of time, this, according to the son of thunder's strict expression **synagogue of Satan** will bow before the pure Bride of Christ, conquered by her holiness and blamelessness and, perhaps, frightened by the image of the Antichrist. And if the rejection of the Apostle Paul's fellow-countrymen was, in his words, **the reconciliation of the world [with God], what will be their acceptance if not life from the dead?** (Romans 11.15)."³⁴⁹

Lev Tikhomirov agrees with this interpretation: "Is this conversion of the Jews that salvation of **all Israel** which the Apostle Paul foretold? In the Apocalypse it is said that the saved will come **of the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie**. But not the whole of the **synagogue** will come, but only **of the synagogue**, that is, a part of it. But even here where the Apostle Paul says that **the whole of Israel will be saved**, he means only a part: **for they are not all Israel, which are of Israel... They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed** (Romans 9.6,8).

"The opinion is widespread among us that the conversion of the Jews will take place at the very appearance of the Saviour, when they shall cry out: 'Blessed is He That cometh in the name of the Lord'. But this is not evident from the Apocalypse. But if the Philadelphian conversion will bring **all Israel** that is to be saved to Christ, then this will, of course, be a great event, fully explaining the rejoicing of the Heavens. Israel is a chosen people with whom it will not be possible to find a comparison when he begins to do the work of God. The Jews will, of course, multiply the forces of Christianity for the resistance against the Antichrist. **If the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world**, says the Apostle Paul, **what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?** (Romans 11.15)."³⁵⁰

3.10-11. Because thou hast kept the word of My patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon the whole world, to try those that dwell upon the earth. Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.

"At that time there will be an increased danger of losing faith because of the multitude of temptations. On the other hand, the reward for faithfulness will be, so to speak, right at hand. Therefore it is necessary to be especially watchful so as not to lose the possibility of salvation through lightmindedness, as, for example, the wife of Lot lost it." (Archbishop Averky)

³⁴⁹ Hieromartyr Mark, *Pisma k Druziam* (Letters to Friends), Moscow, 1994, p. 125. See also pp. 103-104.

³⁵⁰ Tikhomirov, *op. cit.*, p. 570.

3.12-13. Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go no more out; and I will write upon him the name of My God, and the name of the city of My God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from My God; and I will write upon him My new name. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the Churches.

Philadelphia was frequently subject to earthquakes, during which the citizens had to flee out of the city. And just before Metropolitan Sergius's infamous declaration of 1927 there was a great physical earthquake in Jerusalem, which prefigured the great spiritual earthquake that the Church of Christ, the New Jerusalem, was about to suffer. But the faithful Christians will escape unharmed from all the traumas that the Russian people has had to undergo. Just as the Philadelphian Christian of the first century was promised that he would not have to **go out** any more, i.e. flee from his house in case it fell on top of him, so the True Russian Christian of the twentieth century is promised that he will not have to flee abroad or into the catacombs any more, but will remain as a **pillar in the temple of My God**.

"The placing of a **pillar** in the Church of Christ which has not been vanquished by the gates of hell (figuratively represented here in the form of a house) indicates that the one who overcomes in temptations belongs to the Church of Christ inviolably; that is, he has a most solid position in the Kingdom of Heaven. The high reward for such a one will also be the writing upon him of a triple name: the name of a child of God, as belonging inseparably to God; the name of a citizen of the new or heavenly Jerusalem; and the name of Christian, as an authentic member of the Body of Christ. The New Jerusalem, beyond any doubt, is the heavenly triumphant Church (21.2; Galatians 4.26), which **cometh down out of heaven** because the very origin of the Church from the Son of God, Who **came down from heaven** (John 3.13), is heavenly; it give to people heavenly gifts and raises them to heaven." (Archbishop Averky)

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There are many prophecies foretelling the resurrection of Holy Russia and a spectacular expansion of the Church throughout the world in the time of the Philadelphian Church. Here are a few of them:-

1. Anonymous Greek Prophecies found in St. Sabbas' Monastery (8th or 9th century):
"The last days have not yet arrived, and it is completely wrong to consider that we are on the threshold of the coming of the antichrist, because one last flourishing of Orthodoxy is still to come, this time in the whole world, headed by Russia. This will take place after a terrible war in which either one half or two thirds of humanity will perish, and which will be stopped by a voice from heaven: 'And the Gospel will be preached throughout the world'.

"1) For until that time there will have been preached, not the Gospel of Christ, but the Gospel distorted by heretics.

"2) There will be a period of universal prosperity - but not for long.

"3) In Russia during this period there will an Orthodox tsar, whom the Lord will reveal to the Russian people.

"And after this the world will again be corrupted and will no longer be capable of correction. Then the Lord will allow the enthronement of the Antichrist."³⁵¹

2. Another Anonymous Prophecy from St. Sabbas' Monastery (8th or 9th century):
"At various times this great people [the Russians] will fall into sin and for this will be chastised through considerable trials. In about a thousand years [i.e. in the 1900s] this people, chosen by God, will falter in its Faith and its standing for the Truth of Christ. It will become proud of its earthly might and glory, will cease to seek the Kingdom and will want paradise not in Heaven but on this sinful earth.

"However not all this people will tread this broad and pernicious path, though a substantial majority will, especially its governing class. On account of this great fall, a terrible fiery trial will be sent from on high to this people which will despise the ways of God. Rivers of blood shall flow across their land, brother shall slay brother, more than once famine shall visit the land and gather its dread harvest, nearly all the churches and other holy places shall be destroyed or suffer sacrilege, many shall perish.

"A part of this people, rejecting iniquity and untruth, will pass over the borders of their homeland and will be dispersed like unto the people of the Jews all over the world. Nevertheless the Lord will not show His wrath on them to the uttermost. The blood of thousands of martyrs will cry to the heavens for mercy. A spirit of sobriety will grow among this chosen people and they will return to God. At last this period of cleansing trial, appointed by the Righteous Judge, will come to an end, and once more Holy Orthodoxy will shine forth and those northern lands will be resplendent with the brightness of a faith reborn.

"This wonderful light of Christ will shine forth from there and enlighten all the peoples of the earth. This will be helped by that part of the people providentially sent ahead into the diaspora, who will create centres of Orthodoxy - churches of God all over the world. Christianity will then be revealed in all its heavenly beauty and fullness. Most of the peoples of the world will become Christian. And for a time a period of peace, prosperity and Christian living will come to the whole world...

"And then? Then, when the fullness of time has come, a great decline in faith will begin and everything foretold in the Holy Scriptures will occur. Antichrist will appear and the world will end."³⁵²

3. An Anonymous Prophet of Mount Athos (1053). After describing the main events of the early 20th century with amazing accuracy, the prophet continues: "New European War [1939-1945]. Union of Orthodox Peoples with Germany [1940]. Submission of the French to the Germans [1940]. Rebellion of the Indians and their separation from the English [1947]. England for the Saxons only...Victory of the

³⁵¹ Quoted in Sergius Fomin, *Rossia pered Vtorym Prishestviem* (Russia before the Second Coming), Sergiev Posad, 1994, p. 316.

³⁵² Archbishop Seraphim of Chicago, "Sud'by Rossii", *Pravoslavnij Vestnik*, (The Orthodox Herald), № 87, January-February, 1996 (Canada); Fomin, *op. cit.*, pp. 316-318; translated in Fr. Andrew Phillips, *Orthodox Christianity and the English Tradition*, English Orthodox Trust, 1995, pp. 299-300.

Orthodox, defeat of the Muslims. General slaughter of the Muslims and of the barbarians by the Orthodox peoples. Anxiety of the world. General hopelessness on the earth. Battle of seven states for Constantinople and slaughter for three days. Victory of the largest state over the six. Union of the six states against the seventh, Russia, and slaughter for three days. *Cessation of the war by an Angel of Christ God*, and handing over of the city to the Greeks. Submission of the Latins to the unerring faith of the Orthodox. Exaltation of the Orthodox faith from the East to the West. Cessation of the Roman papacy. Declaration of one patriarch for the whole of Europe for five or fifty years. In the seventh is no wretched man; no one is banished. Returning to the arms of Mother Church rejoicing. Thus shall it be. Thus shall it be. Amen."

4. St. Agathangelus, after describing the humbling of Rome before Byzantium, writes: "For full fifty years peace shall reign. Truth shall triumph, and the sky will rejoice in true glory. The Orthodox faith will be exalted and will spring from East to West to be blessed and praised... Then God shall be glorified, and man shall see the works of His omnipotence. May it be so. It shall be so. Amen."

5. St. Nilus the Myrrhusher (+16th century). "All the nations of Europe will be armed against Russia. The Tsar [i.e. the Russian leader, whatever his contemporary title] will summon all his European and Asiatic peoples. The belligerents will meet in an immensely wide plain where a terrific battle will be fought and will last for eight days. The result will be a victory of the West over the Russians."³⁵³

6. Monk Abel the Prophet (+1831). In a conversation with Tsar Paul I (+1801), after prophesying the destinies of all the Tsars from Paul I to Nicholas II: "What is impossible for man is possible for God. God delays with His help, but it is said that he will give it soon and will raise the horn of Russian salvation. And there will arise a great prince from your race in exile, who stands for the sons of his people. He will be a chosen one of God, and on his head will be blessing. He will be the only one comprehensible to all, the very heart of Russia will sense him. His appearance will be sovereign and radiant, and nobody will say: 'The Tsar is here or there', but all will say: 'That's him'. The will of the people will submit to the mercy of God, and he himself will confirm his calling... His name has occurred three times in Russian history. Two of the same name have already been on the throne, but not on the Tsar's throne. But he will sit on the Tsar's throne as the third. In him will be the salvation and happiness of the Russian realm."³⁵⁴

7. St. Seraphim of Sarov (+1833) Prince Felix Yusupov wrote: "Many of St. Seraphim's manuscripts were found in his cell. They say that the Holy Synod, on reading them, ordered them to be burned. Nobody knows the reason for this. One piece of paper, with the date 1831, accidentally escaped destruction and was preserved by the monks. In it St. Seraphim wrote that some time after his canonisation, which would take place in summer in Sarov, in the presence of the last Tsar and his Family, an era of woes would begin for Russia and rivers of blood would flow. These terrible

³⁵³ Bishop Gregory of Messenia, *What shall we and our children see?*, Kalamata; A. Panagopoulos, *Saints and Wise Men on what is going to happen*, Athens: Agios Nikodemos (in Greek).

³⁵⁴ *Zhizn' Vechnaia (Eternal Life)*, July, 1996, p. 4.

disasters would be allowed by God so as to purify the Russian people, drag it out of apathy and prepare it for a great destiny predetermined for it by Divine Providence. Millions of Russians would be scattered around the world and would return it to the faith by the example of their courage and humility. A purified and resurrected Russia would again become a great country, and an Ecumenical Council would decide the choice of authority. 'All this will begin one hundred years after my death, and I call on all Russians to prepare themselves for these great events by prayers and patience.'"³⁵⁵

"More than half a century will pass. Then evildoers will raise their heads high. This will happen without fail: the Lord, seeing the impenitent evil of their hearts, will allow their enterprises for a short time. But their sickness will rebound upon their own heads, and the unrighteousness of their destructive plots will fall upon them. The Russian land will become red with rivers of blood...

"Before the birth of the Antichrist there will be a great, protracted war and a terrible revolution in Russia passing all bounds of human imagination, for the bloodletting will be most terrible: the rebellions of Ryazan, Pugachev and the French revolution will be nothing in comparison with what will take place in Russia. Many people who are faithful to the fatherland will perish, church property and the monasteries will be robbed; the Lord's churches will be desecrated; good people will be robbed of their riches and killed, rivers of Russian blood will flow... But the Lord will have mercy on Russia and will bring her along the path of great sufferings to glory."

"The Lord has revealed to me, wretched Seraphim, that there will be great woes on the Russian land, the Orthodox faith will be trampled on, and the hierarchs of the Church of God and other clergy will depart from the purity of Orthodoxy. And for this the Lord will severely punish them. I, wretched Seraphim, besought the Lord for three days and three nights that He would rather deprive me of the Kingdom of Heaven, but have mercy on them. But the Lord replied: 'I will not have mercy on them; for they teach the teachings of men, and with their tongue honour Me, but their heart is far from Me.'"

"But when the Russian land will be divided and one side will clearly remain with the rebels, and the other will clearly stand for the Tsar and the Fatherland and the Holy Church, and the Tsar and the whole of the Royal Family will be preserved by the Lord unseen by His right hand, and will give complete victory to those who have taken up arms for him, for the Church and the good of the undividedness of the Russian land, but not so much blood will be shed as when the right side, standing for the Tsar, will be given victory and will capture all the traitors and give them into the hands of justice, then they will no longer send anybody to Siberia, but will execute all of them. And at that point even more blood will be shed than before. But this will be the last blood, purifying blood, for after this the Lord will bless His people with peace and will raise his anointed David, His servant, a man after His own heart."

³⁵⁵ Quoted in Sergius and Tamara Fomin, *Rossia pered vtorym prishestvoiem* (Russia before the Second Coming), Moscow, 1998, vol. I, p. 367.

"The Lord has ordained that I, poor Seraphim, am to live much longer than 100 years [he died for the first time at the age of 73 in 1833]. By that time the Russian hierarchs will become so impious that they will not even believe in the most important dogma of the Faith of Christ – the resurrection of Christ and the general resurrection. That is why it will be pleasing to the Lord God to take me from this very temporary life for a time and then, for the establishment of the dogma of the resurrection, to raise me, and my resurrection will be like the resurrection of the seven youths in the cave of Okhlon... After my resurrection I will go from Sarov to Diveyevo, when I will preach universal repentance. At this great miracle people will assemble in Diveyevo from all the ends of the earth, and there, preaching repentance to them, I will open four relics. Then Diveyevo will be a universal wonder, for from it the Lord God will send the Light of Salvation not only for Russia, but also for the whole world in the times of the Antichrist. I will open four relics and I myself will lie down between them as the fifth. But then will come the end of everything..."

"The wonder will not be when they raise my bones: the wonder will be when humble Seraphim transfers his flesh to Diveyevo [the Moscow Patriarchate claims to have found his relics and transferred them to Diveyevo in 1991, but this is disputed by many]. Then Diveyevo will be a universal wonder, for from it the Lord God will send the Light of Salvation not only for Russia, but also for the whole world in the times of the Antichrist.

"The Antichrist will be born in Russia between Petersburg and Moscow, in that great town which will be formed (after the union of all the Slavic tribes with Russia) from Moscow and Petersburg. It will be the capital of the Russian people and will be called Moscow-Petrograd, or the City of the End, which name will be given to it by the Lord God, the Holy Spirit.

"Before the birth of the Antichrist there will be a patriarch in the Russian Church. And then an Ecumenical Council will be convened [according to St. Nilus the myrrh-gusher: "a last and eighth Ecumenical Council to deal with the disputes of heretics and separate the wheat from the chaff"], the aim of which will be: 1. To give a last warning to the world against the general antichristian blindness - the apostasy from the Lord Jesus Christ; 2. To unite all the Holy Churches of Christ against the coming antichristian onslaught under a single Head - Christ the Life-Giver, and under a single protection - His Most Pure Mother; 3. to deliver to a final curse the whole of Masonry, Freemasonry, Illuminism, Jacobinism and all similar parties, under whatever names they may appear, the leaders of whom have only one aim: under the pretext of complete egalitarian earthly prosperity, and with the aid of people who have been made fanatical by them, to create anarchy in all states and to destroy Christianity throughout the world, and, finally, by the power of gold concentrated in their hands, to subdue the whole world to antichristianity in the person of a single autocratic, God-fighting tsar - one king over the whole world..."

"The Jews and the Slavs are the two peoples of the destinies of God, the vessels and witnesses of Him, the unbroken arks; but the other peoples will be as it were spittle which the Lord will spit out of His mouth. The Jews were scattered over the face of the whole earth because they did not accept and did not recognise the Lord Jesus

Christ. But in the times of the Antichrist many Jews will be converted to Christ, since they will understand that the Messiah whom they mistakenly wait for is none other than he about whom our Lord Jesus Christ said: 'I have come in the name of My Father, and they have not received Me, another will come in his own name, and they will receive him.' And so, in spite of their great crime before God, the Jews were and are a people beloved before God.

"But the Slavs are beloved of God because they will preserve true faith in the Lord Jesus Christ to the end. They will completely reject the Antichrist and will not accept him as the Messiah, for which they will be counted worthy of great blessings by God. They will be the first and most powerful people on the earth, and there will be no more powerful state than the Russian-Slavic in the world.

"Jesus Christ, the true God-man, the Son of God the Father by the descent of the Holy Spirit, was born in Israel, while the true antichrist-man-god will be born amidst the Slavs and Russians. He will be the son of a virgin adulteress of the tribe of Dan and the son of the devil through the artificial transfer to her of male seed, with which the spirit of darkness will dwell together in her womb. But one of the Russians who will live to the birth of the Antichrist will, like Simeon the God-receiver, who blessed the Child Jesus and announced His nativity to the world, will curse the antichrist at his birth and will announce to the world that he is the true antichrist."³⁵⁶

8. Elder Porphyrius of Glinsk (+1868) said: "In due course, faith will collapse in Russia. The brilliance of earthly glory will blind the mind. The word of truth will be defiled, but with regard to the Faith, some from among the people, unknown to the world, will come forward and restore what was scorned."³⁵⁷

9. Archimandrite Jonah (Miroshnichenko) (+1902) said: "You will see what will happen in fifty years' time: everyone will forsake the Law of God and will fall away from the faith, but then they will again come to their senses and turn back and live in a Christian manner."³⁵⁸

10. Elder Barnabas of Gethsemane Skete (+1906): "Persecutions against the faith will constantly increase. There will be unheard-of grief and darkness, and almost all the churches will be closed. But when it will seem that it is impossible to endure any longer, then deliverance will come. There will be a flowering. Churches will even begin to be built. But this will be a flowering before the end."³⁵⁹

11. St. John of Kronstadt (+1908): "I foresee the restoration of a powerful Russia, still stronger and mightier than before. On the bones of these martyrs, remember, as

³⁵⁶ St. Seraphim, from various sources, including a text supplied by Fr. Victor Potapov. See also *Literaturnaia Ucheba*, January-February, 1991, pp. 131-134.

³⁵⁷ Elder Porphyrius, in Fr. Theodosius Clare, *The Glinsk Patericon*, Wildwood, CA: St. Xenia Skete, 1984, p. 129.

³⁵⁸ Fomin & Fomina, *op. cit.*, volume II, p. 331.

³⁵⁹ Elder Barnabas, in Fr. Seraphim Rose, "The Future of Russia and the End of the World", *The Orthodox Word*, 1981, vol. 17, №№ 100-101, p. 211. Most of Fr. Seraphim's quotations were taken from *Pravoslavnaiia Rus'* (Orthodox Russia), № 21, 1969.

on a strong foundation, will the new Russia we built - according to the old model; strong in her faith in Christ God and in the Holy Trinity! And there will be, in accordance with the covenant of the holy Prince Vladimir, a single Church! Russian people have ceased to understand what Rus' is: it is the footstool of the Lord's Throne! The Russian person must understand this and thank God that he is Russian".³⁶⁰

"The Church will remain unshaken to the end of the age, and a Monarch of Russia, if he remains faithful to the Orthodox Church, will be established on the Throne of Russia until the end of the age."³⁶¹

12. Elder Aristocles of Moscow (+1918): "An evil will shortly take Russia, and wherever this evil goes, rivers of blood will flow. It is not the Russian soul, but an imposition on the Russian soul. It is not an ideology, nor a philosophy, but a spirit from hell. In the last days Germany will be divided. France will be just nothing. Italy will be judged by natural disasters. Britain will lose her empire and all her colonies and will come to almost total ruin, but will be saved by praying enthroned women. America will feed the world, but will finally collapse. Russia and China will destroy each other. Finally, Russia will be free and from her believers will go forth and turn many from the nations to God."³⁶²

"Now we are undergoing the times before the Antichrist. But Russia will yet be delivered. There will be much suffering, much torture. The whole of Russia will become a prison, and one must greatly entreat the Lord for forgiveness. One must repent of one's sins and fear to do even the least sin, but strive to do good, even the smallest. For even the wing of a fly has weight, and God's scales are exact. And when even the smallest of good in the cup tips the balance, then will God reveal His mercy upon Russia."

"The end will come through China. There will be an extraordinary outburst and a miracle of God will be manifested. And there will be an entirely different life, but all this will not be for long."

"God will remove all leaders, so that Russian people should look only at Him. Everyone will reject Russia, other states will renounce her, delivering her to herself - this is so that Russian people should hope on the help of the Lord. You will hear that in other countries disorders have begun similar to those in Russia. You will hear of war, and there will be wars. But wait until the Germans take up arms, for they are chosen as God's weapon to punish Russia - but also as a weapon of deliverance later. The Cross of Christ will shine over the whole world and our Homeland will be magnified and become as a lighthouse in the darkness for all."³⁶³

³⁶⁰ St. John of Kronstadt, in Fomin, *op. cit.*, p. 249. Fomin and Fomina, *op. cit.*, vol. II, p. 331.

³⁶¹ Fomin and Fomina, *op. cit.*, p. 338.

³⁶² Schema-Monk Epiphanius (Chernov), personal communication.

³⁶³ Elder Aristocles, in Rose, "The Future of Russia", *op. cit.*; Fomin & Fomina, *op. cit.*, p. 435; "To the Memory of Abbess Barbara", *Orthodox Life*, vol. 33, № 4, July-August, 1983, and I.K. Sursky, *Otets Ioann Kronshadtstkij* (Father John of Kronstadt), Belgrade, 1941, p. 325. St. John of Kronstadt also prophesied that the deliverance of Russia would come from the East (Sursky, *op. cit.*, vol. 2, p. 24), as

13. Martyr-Eldress Duniushka of Siberia (+1918): "Brother will rise up against brother! They will destroy everything acquired by their ancestors.... They will sweep away religion, and -- most importantly -- there will be no master in the land!" The master in the land, of course, is the Tsar' - God's Anointed One! He cannot go anywhere. This trouble will come upon everyone and grind them up, as though in a meat-grinder... The war will end, and its end will turn the whole country upside-down. Insurgents will appear - leaders - who will incite the people against the Tsar'.... It will be terrible!

"And later, they will seize upon religion. They will sweep away that which has been gathered through the ages and assiduously preserved by our ancestors. But it will be impossible for them to root it out; the roots will remain - and, after many years, they'll give forth a most-beautiful bloom and fruit....

"The Tsar will leave the nation, which shouldn't be, but this has been foretold to him from Above. This is his destiny. There is no way that he can evade it. For this, he will receive a martyr's crown on earth, for which he will then receive an eternal crown, a Heavenly one.... He will be a prayerful Intercessor for the nation and the people, when the chastisement fallen upon dozens of generations for the harm done to God's Anointed One will reach an end.... The generations to come will bear the responsibility for this act on the part of their ancestors... The disaster in the land will disperse the people; they will be scattered to various countries, losing touch with one another. But, wherever Russians go, they will bring their culture and their religion.

"At the far end of Russia, there will be an enormous earthquake. The waters will break out of the ocean, flooding the continent, and many nations will perish. Many diseases beyond understanding will appear.... The face of the earth will change.... The people will comprehend their guilt; they will come to understand how far they have departed from God and from His teachings, and then they will begin to be reborn spiritually, gradually being cleansed physically, as well. People will become vegetarians. By that time, many animals will have vanished. The horse and the dog will only be seen in pictures; and later - the cow, the goat, and the sheep will disappear forever from our planet.... People will no longer be interested in politics, and the spiritual principle of each nation will predominate...

"Russia will be supreme in the world. Her name will be 'Holy Rus'. All sects and religions will pour into Orthodoxy.... But Orthodoxy, and -- essentially speaking -- religion, will draw closer to what it was in Apostolic times. . . . In those centuries to come, there will no longer be any tsars or kings. In 'Holy Rus', a Prince will reign, who will come from the nation that gave us our religion [i.e., Byzantium]. He will be a supremely spiritual person, who will provide the opportunity for uplifting the moral fibre and the spiritual principles of the nation....

"In the course of one of those centuries, Asia will bestir herself; she will try to

did the Elder Theodosius of Minvody (Schema-Monk Epiphanius (Chernov), *Katakombnaia Tserkov' na Zemle Rossijskoj* (The Catacomb Church in the Russian Land) (typescript, Mayford, 1980).

penetrate into Europe, but her attempts will be futile. No one will ever overcome 'Holy Rus', and only through her will salvation come to the world...."³⁶⁴

14. Hieromartyr Andronicus, Archbishop of Perm (+1918): "For its oath-breaking God has for the time being taken reason and will from the whole people, until they repent. It will be slow, but they will repent, at first gradually, but then they will completely recover their spiritual sight, they will feel strength and, like Ilya Muromets, will cast off this horror which has wrapped round the whole of our country... Perhaps I will not be alive, but I do not abandon my hope and confidence that Russia will be resurrected and return to God."³⁶⁵

15. Elder Anatolius (Potapov) of Optina (+1922) "There will be a storm. And the Russian ship will be destroyed. Yes, it will happen, but, you know, people can be saved on splinters and wreckage. Not all, not all will perish..." But he also prophesied that canonical unity would be restored: "A great miracle of God will be revealed. And all the splinters and wreckage will, by the will of God and His might, be gathered together and united, and the ship will be recreated in its beauty and will go along the path foreordained for it by God. That's how it will be, a miracle manifest to all..."³⁶⁶

16. Elder Alexis (Mechev) of Moscow (+1922): "When the time comes, God will send the necessary people, who will do this work and will annihilate the Bolsheviki in the same way that a storm breaks the wood of a mast."³⁶⁷

17. Elder Nectarius of Optina (+1928): "Russia will arise, and materially she will not be wealthy. But in spirit she will be wealthy, and in Optina there will yet be seven luminaries, seven pillars."³⁶⁸

18. Martyr-Eldress Agatha of Belorussia (+1939): "The atheist Soviet power will vanish, and all its servants will perish. The True Orthodox Faith will triumph, and people will be baptised as at one time they were baptized under St. Vladimir."³⁶⁹

19. Archbishop Theophanes of Poltava (+1940): "The coming of the Antichrist draws nigh and is very near. But before the coming of the Antichrist Russia must yet be restored - to be sure, for a short time. And in Russia there must be a Tsar forechosen by the Lord Himself. He will be a man of burning faith, great mind and iron will. This

³⁶⁴ St. Duniushka, <http://www.geocities.com/kitezhgrad/prophets/duniushka.html>. Excerpted from the Diary of) V. Zarskaia-Altaeva. Translated into English by G. Spruksts, from the Russian text appearing in *The Russian Community Bulletin Of Seattle*, vol. 16, № 161, March 1986, pp. 3 - 6.

³⁶⁵ Archbishop Andronicus, *O Tserkvi, O Rossii* (On the Church, On Russia), Fryazino, 1997, p. 124; Fomin and Fomina, *op. cit.*, p. 331.

³⁶⁶ Elder Anatolius, in Rose, *op. cit.*; *Russkij Palomnik* (The Russian Pilgrim), № 7, 1993, p. 38 (in Russian); Fomin and Fomina, *op. cit.*, p. 333.

³⁶⁷ Elder Alexis, in Sursky, *op. cit.*, p. 196;); Fomin and Fomina, *op. cit.*, p. 332..

³⁶⁸ Elder Nectarius, in Rose, *op. cit.*

³⁶⁹ Martyr-Eldress Agatha, in I.M. Andreyev, *Russia's Catacomb Saints*, Platina, Ca.: St. Herman of Alaska Press, 1982, pp. 422-423.

much has been revealed about him...."³⁷⁰ "He will not be a Romanov, but he will be of the Romanovs according to the maternal line."³⁷¹

"I do not speak from myself. But that which I have heard from the God-inspired elders, that I have passed on... The Lord will have mercy on Russia for the sake of the small remnant of true believers. In Russia, the elders said, in accordance with the will of the people, the Monarchy, Autocratic power, will be re-established. The Lord has forechosen the future Tsar. He will be a man of fiery faith, having the mind of a genius and a will of iron. First of all he will introduce order in the Orthodox Church, removing all the untrue, heretical and lukewarm hierarchs. And many, very many - with few exceptions, all - will be deposed, and new, true, unshakeable hierarchs will take their place. He will be of the family of the Romanovs according to the female line. Russia will be a powerful state, but only for 'a short time'... And then the Antichrist will come into the world, with all the horrors of the end as described in the Apocalypse."³⁷²

20. Hieroschemamonk Seraphim (Vyritsky) of Moscow (+1942): "When the East will get stronger, everything will become shaky. Numbers are on their side. But not only that: they have sober workers and industrious people, while there is such drunkenness with us... There will come a time when Russia will be torn into pieces. At first they will divide it, and then they will begin to steal its wealth. The West will do everything to help the destruction of Russia and for a time will give its eastern part to China. The Far East will fall into the hands of Japan, and Siberia - to the Chinese, who will begin to move into Russia, marry Russian women and in the end by cunning and craftiness will seize the territory of Siberia as far as the Urals. But when China will want to go further, the West will resist and will not allow it... The East will be baptised in Russia. The whole heavenly world, together with those on earth, understand this, and pray for the enlightenment of the East."

21. Elder Theodosius (Kashin) of Minvody (+1948) said, shortly after the outbreak of war with Germany in 1941: "Do you really think that that was the war (1941-45)?! The war is still to come. It will begin from the east. And then from all sides, like locusts, the enemies will spread over Russia... That will be the war!"

"During that memorable conversation," wrote Schema-Archimandrite Seraphim (Tyapochkin), "a woman from a Siberian town was present. The elder said to her: 'You will receive a martyr's crown from the hands of the Chinese in your town's stadium, where they will drive the Christians who live there and those who do not agree with their rule. This was the reply to her doubts with regard to the words of the elder that practically the whole of Siberia will be captured by the Chinese. The elder told what had been revealed to him about the future of Russia, he did not name dates, he only emphasized that the time for the accomplishment of his words was in the hands of

³⁷⁰ Fomin & Fomina, *op. cit.*, p. 436.

³⁷¹ Archbishop Theophanes, in Schema-Monk Epiphanius (Chernov), personal communication; Fomin & Fomina, *op. cit.*, p. 436.

³⁷² Archbishop Theophanes, in R. Betts, V. Marchenko, *Dukhovnik Tsarskoj Sem'i* (Confessor of the Royal Family. Hierarch Theophanes of Poltava), Moscow: Russian section of the Valaam Society of America, 1994, pp. 111-112; Fomin & Fomina, *op. cit.*, p. 436.

God, and much depended on how the spiritual life of the Russian Church would develop, insofar as the strength of faith in God among the Russian people would correspond to the believers' struggles in prayer... The elder said that the collapse of Russia, in spite of her apparent strength and the cruelty of the authorities, would take place very quickly. At first the Slavic peoples will be split off, then the Union republics will fall away: the Baltic, Central Asia and Caucasian republics and Moldavia. After this central power in Russia will weaken still more, so that autonomous republics and regions will begin to separate themselves. Then a great collapse will take place: the power of the Centre will cease to be recognized de facto by the autonomous regions, which will try to live independently and will no longer pay any attention to orders from Moscow. The greatest tragedy will be the seizure of Siberia by China. This will not take place through military means: in consequence of the weakening of the authorities and the open frontiers, masses of Chinese will move into Siberia, will snap up property, enterprises and flats. By means of bribery, intimidation and agreements with the authorities, they will gradually take control of the economic life of the towns. Everything will take place in such a way that one morning the Russians living in Siberia will wake up... in a Chinese state. The destiny of those who remain there will be tragic, but not hopeless. The Chinese will deal cruelly with every attempt at resistance. (That was why the elder prophesied a martyric end in the stadium of the Siberian town for many Orthodox and patriots of the Homeland.) The West will assist this creeping conquest of our land and in every way support the military and economic might of China out of hatred for Russia. But then they will see the danger for themselves, and when the Chinese try to conquer the Urals, this time by military might, and go even further, they will by all means hinder this and will even be able to help Russia in deflecting the invasion from the East. Russia must stand her ground in this battle; after sufferings and complete impoverishment she will find in herself the strength to recover. And the coming regeneration will begin in the lands conquered by the enemies, in the midst of Russians left in the former republics of the Union. There Russian people will realise what they have lost, will recognise themselves to be citizens of that Fatherland which is still alive, and will want to help her rise from the ashes. Many Russians living abroad will begin to help the re-establishment of life in Russia... Many of those who are able to flee from persecutions will return to the immemorial Russian lands so as to fill up the abandoned villages, till the neglected fields and use the mineral resources that remain untapped. The Lord will send help, and, in spite of the fact that the country will have lost its main seams of raw materials, they will find the oil and gas without which a contemporary economy cannot work, in Russia. The elder said that the Lord would permit the loss of huge territories given to Russia because we ourselves were not able to use them worthily, but only spoiled and polluted them... But the Lord will leave in Russia's possession those lands which became the cradle of the Russian people and were the base of the Great Russian state. This is the territory of the Great Muscovite Principality of the 16th century with outlets to the Black, Caspian and North seas. Russia will not be rich, but still she will be able to feed herself and force others to reckon with her. To the question: "What will happen to Ukraine and Belorussia?" the elder replied that everything is in the hands of God. Those among those people who are against union with Russia – even if they consider themselves to be believers – will become servants of the devil. The Slavic peoples have one destiny, and the monastic Fathers of the Kiev Caves [Lavra] will yet utter their weighty word – they together with the choir of the new martyrs of Russia will by their

prayers obtain a new Union of the three brother peoples. They posed one more question to him – on the possibility of the restoration of a monarchy in Russia. The elder replied that this restoration must be earned. It exists as a possibility, but not as something pre-determined. If we are worthy, the Russian people will elect a Tsar, but this will become possible before the very enthronement of the Antichrist or even after it – for a very short time.”³⁷³

22. Blessed Pelagia of Ryazan (+1968): “The pre-antichrist time is coming, when the people will finally be deprived of that very reason without which it is impossible for the soul to be saved. The time of the distortion of the image of God is coming!... And again I tell you – it is the fault of the clergy who keep silent!!

“The blessed virgin Pelagia already a long time ago would say that the authorities would change, that before the Antichrist there would be reforms... She also said: and then these communists will come back again! Capitalist or communist, they all care only for themselves... Only the Tsar will care for the people. God will choose him! And almost the whole people – this people that is now corrupted – will choose for themselves the Antichrist!.. That is how it will be! Scarcely will a righteous man be saved!”

“The Antichrist will come to power and will begin to persecute Orthodoxy. And then the Lord will reveal His Tsar in Russia. He will be of royal blood and will be a strong defender of our Faith! Write it down, Petia – for a short time, for two years and eight months. A multitude of people from all over the world will assemble to serve this Tsar. He will not allow the power of the Antichrist in Russia and will himself give an account for every one of his subjects. When the Lord gives us this very intelligent person, life will be good!... The Antichrist will be declared from America. And the whole world will bow down to him except the Tsarist Orthodox Church, which from the beginning will be in Russia. And then the Lord will give His little flock victory over the Antichrist and his kingdom. ‘The Cross is the sceptre of kings... by this conquer!’”

“The bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church will fall away from the truth of the Orthodox Faith, they will not believe in the prophecies of the resurrection of Russia. To reprove them St. Seraphim of Sarov will be raised from the dead... He will reprove the clergy for their treachery and betrayal, and will preach repentance to the whole world. Seraphim of Sarov will explain the whole of history, will recount everything and will reprove the pastors like children, will show them how to cross themselves, and much else... After such wonderful miracles the clergy will have a devotion for the Lord, that is, it will teach the people to serve the batyushka-tsar with all their heart.”³⁷⁴

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³⁷³ Fomin & Fomina, *op. cit.*, vol. II, pp. 473-473.

³⁷⁴ Zhizn' Vechnaia (Eternal Life), №№ 36-37, 1997, № 18, 1996;
<http://pravoslavie.by.ru/library/pelageia.htm>.

15. THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT

1. The Father of the Faithful

Chapters 12 to 22 of Genesis represent, in symbolic and prophetic form, a brief but fully adequate summary of the central message of the Christian life. It is the story of Abraham, the man of faith - whose faith, however, had to be purified and strengthened through a series of trials, in each of which he was called to obey God by performing a *work* of faith. For in him "faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was made perfect" (James 2.22).

These works of faith included: *exile from his native land* (Chaldea), *separation from his relatives* (Lot), *struggle against the enemies of the faith* (the four kings headed by the king of Babylon), *struggle against his fallen desires* (Pharaoh, Hagar) and, finally, *the complete sacrifice of the heart to God* (Isaac). To strengthen him on this path, Abraham was given bread and wine, a figure of the Body and Blood of Christ, by the priest-king Melchizedek, who was a type of Christ.³⁷⁵ The strengthening of faith and the sharpening of hope that came from successfully passing these trials was crowned by the joy of love in the vision of God: "Abraham rejoiced to see My day: He saw it, and was glad" (John 8.56). And as a seal of the truth of this vision, which made the man of faith "an Israelite indeed", that is, one who sees God, he received circumcision, a type both of Baptism by water and the Spirit, whereby all previous sins are washed away, and of the circumcision of the heart, whereby the desire to sin again in the future is cut off.

All this was made possible by faith: faith in God's promise to Abraham that from his seed would come *the Seed*, the Messiah and Saviour of the world, Jesus Christ (Galatians 3.16), in Whom all the nations of the world would be blessed. This meant, as St. Theophan the Recluse explains, that "the blessing given to him for his faith would be spread to all peoples, but not because of Abraham himself or all of his descendants, but because of One of his descendants - *his Seed*, Who is Christ; through Him all the tribes of the earth would receive the blessing."³⁷⁶

The supreme demonstration of Abraham's faith was his belief that "God was able to raise [Isaac] from the dead" (Hebrews 11.19), which was a type of the Resurrection of Christ.

Finally, Abraham is not only a model of the man of faith and the physical ancestor of Christ: he is spiritually the father of all the faithful Christians, being a type of the Apostles, who are "in labour again until Christ is formed" in every Christian (Galatians 4.19).

³⁷⁵ However, Mar Jacob considered it to be no figure of the Eucharist but the Eucharist itself: "None, before the Cross, entered this order of spiritual ministration, except this man alone. Beholding the just Abraham worthy of communion with him, he separated part of his oblation and took it out to him to mingle him therewith. He bore forward bread and wine, but Body and Blood went forth, to make the Father of the nations a partaker of the Lord's Mysteries." ("A Homily on Melchizedek", translated in *The True Vine*, Summer, 1989, no. 2, p. 44)

³⁷⁶ St. Theophan, *Tolkovanie na Poslanie k Galatam* (Interpretation of the Epistle to the Galatians), 3.16.

2. The Peoples of the Covenant

God's promises to Abraham, which are known as *the Abrahamic Covenant*, were so important that they were proclaimed in at least eight different versions, or "drafts" (Genesis 12.1-3, 12.7, 12.13,14-17, 14.18-20, 15.1-19, 16.10-12, 17.1-22, 22.17-18), not to speak of their repetition to Isaac and Jacob. Each successive draft makes the Covenant a little more precise and far-reaching, in response to Abraham's gradual increase in spiritual stature. Of particular interest in the context of this article are the promises concerning the relationship between the two peoples who descend from the two sons of Abraham, Isaac and Ishmael. Isaac is the true heir of Abraham, the freeborn son of Sarah, who inherits the promises and blessings given to Abraham in full measure, being also a man of faith of whom it is also said that in his Seed, Christ, all the nations of the earth shall be blessed (Genesis 26.3-4). Ishmael is the son of a slave, Hagar, and does not inherit those blessings, although he does receive the promise that his heirs will be strong and numerous.

Now according to the popular conception, Isaac is the ancestor of the Jews, and Ishmael – of the Arab peoples. Certainly, the description of Ishmael's race as "wild" and warlike that is given by the Angel of the Lord to Hagar in the desert (Genesis 16.10-12) appears to correspond closely, as St. Philaret of Moscow points out, to the character and life-style of the Arabs until Mohammed and beyond, who were constantly fighting and lived "in the presence of their brethren" – that is, near, or to the east of, the descendants of Abraham from his other concubine, Hetturah – the Ammonites, Moabites and Idumeans.³⁷⁷ Moreover, a similar interpretation of the typology appears to stand true for the next generation, to Isaac's sons Jacob and Esau, who are said to correspond to the Jews (Jacob), on the one hand, and the Idumeans (Esau), on the other. For this interpretation fits very well with the Lord's words to Isaac's wife Rebecca, that "two nations are in thy womb..., and the one people shall be stronger than the other people, and the elder [Esau] shall serve the younger [Jacob]" (Genesis 25.23); for the Jews, from Jacob to David to the Hasmonean kings, almost always showed themselves to be stronger than the Idumeans and often held them in bondage. It was only towards the Coming of Christ that an Idumean, Herod the Great, reversed the relationship by killing the Hasmoneans and becoming the first non-Jewish king of Israel – the event which, according to the prophecy of Jacob, would usher in the reign of the Messiah (Genesis 49.10).

In fact, however, the racial interpretation of the two peoples of the Covenant has only limited validity before the Coming of Christ, and none at all after. For, according to the inspired interpretation of the Apostle Paul, the two peoples – or two covenants, as he calls them – represent, not racial, but *spiritual* categories: "Abraham had two sons: the one by a bondwoman, the other by a freewoman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born according to the flesh, and he of the freewoman through promise, which things are symbolic. For these are the two covenants: the one from Mount Sinai which gives birth to bondage, which is Hagar – for this Hagar is Mount

³⁷⁷ St. Philaret, *Zapiski rukovodstviushchia k osnovatel'nomu razumeniu Knigi Bytia* (Notes leading to a Basic Understanding of the Book of Genesis), Moscow, 1867, part 2, p. 98.

Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But the Jerusalem above is free, which is the mother of us all." (Galatians 4.22-26). In other words, Isaac stands for *the Christians*, both Jewish and Gentile, while Ishmael stands for *the Jews who reject Christ*. For the Christians, - and this includes the Jews before Christ who believed in His Coming, - become through faith in Christ the freeborn heirs of the promises made to Abraham and Isaac, whereas the Jews, by remaining slaves to the Law of Moses and refusing to believe in Christ, show themselves to be the children of the bondwoman, and therefore cannot inherit the promises together with the Christians. Moreover, it can be said of the Jews, as of the men of Ishmael's race, that ever since they rejected Christ they have become "wild", with their hands against all, and the hands of all against them, always striving for "freedom" but remaining voluntarily in slavery to the Law (and to their own kahal).³⁷⁸ It may therefore be that the age-old phenomenon of mutual enmity between the Jews and the Gentiles, of anti-semitism and anti-Gentilism, is prophesied in these verses.

That Isaac is the ancestor of Christ and the Christians is indicated also by his choice of wife, Rebecca, who signifies the Bride of Christ, or the Church. Rebecca is freeborn, being of the family of Abraham, and is an even closer image of the Church than Sarah; for she is Isaac's only wife as the Church is Christ's only Bride. Moreover, the Holy Fathers see in the story of the wooing of Rebecca a parable of Christ's wooing of the Church, in which Eleazar, signifying the Holy Spirit, conveyed Isaac's proposal to her at the well, which signifies Baptism, and gave her gifts of precious jewels, signifying the gifts of the Holy Spirit bestowed at Chrismation.³⁷⁹ Ishmael, on the other hand, receives a wife from outside the holy family - from Egypt. And she is chosen for him, not by a trusted member of the family, but by his rejected mother, the slavewoman Hagar.

The relationship between Isaac and Ishmael is almost exactly mirrored in the relationship between Isaac's two sons, Jacob and Esau. Thus St. Philaret comments on the verse: "The Lord hath chosen Jacob unto Himself, Israel for His own possession" (Psalms 134.4), as follows: "This election refers in the first place to the person of Jacob, and then to his descendants, and finally and most of all to his spirit of faith: for 'not all [coming from Israel] are of Israel' (Romans 9.6). The two latter elections, that is, the election of the race of Israel, and the election of the spiritual Israel, are included in the first, that is, in the personal election of Jacob: the one prophetically, and the other figuratively.

"The reality of this prefigurement in Holy Scripture is revealed from the fact that the Apostle Paul, while reasoning about the rejection of the carnal, and the election of the spiritual Israel, produces in explanation the example of Jacob and Esau (Romans 9), and also from the fact that the same Apostle, in warning the believing Jews against the works of the flesh, threatens them with the rejection of Esau (Hebrews 12.16, 17).

³⁷⁸ St. Philaret, *Zapiski*, p. 100.

³⁷⁹ St. Ambrose of Milan, *On Isaac, or the Soul*.

“And so Jacob is an image, in the first place, of the spiritual Israel, or the Christian Church in general, and consequently Esau, on the contrary, is an image of the carnal Israel.

“Esau and Jacob are twins, of whom the smaller overcomes the larger: in the same day the spiritual Israel was born together with the carnal, but, growing up in secret, is finally revealed and acquires ascendancy over him.

“Isaac destines his blessing first of all to Esau, but then gives it to Jacob: in the same way the carnal Israel is given the promises from the Heavenly Father, but they are fulfilled in the spiritual [Israel].

“While Esau looks for a hunting catch in order to merit his father’s blessing, Jacob, on the instructions of his mother, to whom God has revealed his destinies, puts on the garments of the first-born and seizes it before him. While the carnal Israel supposes that by the external works of the law it will acquire the earthly blessing of God, the spiritual Israel, with Grace leading it, having put on the garments of the merits and righteousness of the First-Born of all creation, ‘is blessed with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ’ (Ephesians 1.3).

“The sword of battle and continuing slavery is given to the rejected Esau as his inheritance. And for the carnal Israel, from the time of its rejection, there remained only the sword of rebellion, inner enslavement and external humiliation.

“The rejected Esau seeks the death of Jacob; but he withdraws and is saved. The rejected old Israel rises up to destroy the new; but God hides it in the secret of His habitation, and then exalts it in strength and glory...”³⁸⁰

As for the wives of Jacob, they also, like Isaac and Ishmael, and Jacob and Esau, signify the spiritual Israel of the Church and the carnal Israel of the non-believing Jews. Thus Leah, whom Jacob married first, signifies with her weak eyes and fertile womb the weak faith of the carnal Israel and its abundant offspring. (It is precisely *blindness* that “shall befall Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles shall come in” (Romans 11.25)).

But Rachel, whom he married later but loved first and most strongly, signifies the New Testament Church, which the Lord loved first but married later. For the Church of the Gentiles, that of Enoch and Noah and Abraham before his circumcision, existed before that of Moses and David and the Old Testament Prophets. Moreover, Rachel brought forth her children in pain because the New Testament Church brought forth her first children in the blood of martyrdom, and is destined to inherit spiritual blessedness only through suffering - “we must through many tribulations enter the Kingdom of God” (Acts 14.22).

Christ recognized that the unbelieving Jews were the children of Abraham, saying: “I know that you are Abraham’s seed” (John 8.37). And yet only a few moments later

³⁸⁰ St. Philaret, *Zapiski*, part 3, pp. 27-28.

He denied them this honour, saying: "If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham. But now ye seek to kill Me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God. This did not Abraham. Ye do the deeds of your father... Ye are of your father, the devil" (John 8.39-41, 44). Ultimately, therefore, only Christians belong to the chosen people. As St. Justin the Martyr writes: "The seed is divided after Jacob and comes down through Judah and Phares and Jesse to David. Now this is surely a sign that some of you Jews are surely the children of Abraham, and that you will share in the inheritance of Christ; but... a greater part of your people... drink of bitter and godless doctrine while you spurn the word of God."³⁸¹

3. The Judaizing of Christianity

Since the two peoples of the covenant come from the same father, there is a family likeness between them, their destinies in history are intertwined, and the transition of individuals and groups from one people to the other is easier than to any third category or people outside the covenant (pagans or atheists). Thus the conversion of the Arabs, the original physical Ishmaelites, to Orthodox Christianity in the early Christian centuries (before Mohammed) is an example of transition from the spiritual category of unbelieving Ishmael to the spiritual category of believing Israel. Again, while the Jews have never converted en masse to Christianity, there have been individual conversions throughout the centuries.

More common, alas, has been the reverse movement, the falling away of Christians into various forms of Judaizing heresy. We see this already in the Early Church - St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians is essentially a tract against the Judaizing of Christianity. Judaizing movements in Christianity have appeared many times since then. Islam, for example, contains many Judaizing elements. In fact, when Christians fall away from the True Faith, if they do not become complete pagans or atheists, they usually acquire traits of Judaism. For, as an anonymous Russian Christian writes, "Christianity without Christ reverts to Judaism".³⁸²

We see this, for example, in Roman Catholicism: at the time of the falling away of the Roman Church in the eleventh century, the Romans adopted wafers - that is, unleavened bread (azymes) - in the liturgy instead of the leavened bread of the Orthodox - a relapse from the New Testament to the Old. Thus St. Nicetas Stethatos wrote to the Latins: "Those who still participate in the feast of unleavened bread are under the shadow of the law and consume the feast of the Jews, not the spiritual and living food of God... How can you enter into communion with Christ, the living God, while eating the dead unleavened dough of the shadow of the law and not the yeast of the new covenant...?"³⁸³

The same Judaizing process is still more evident in Protestantism. Thus the Protestants adopted as their Old Testament Bible, not the Septuagint until then in use

³⁸¹ St. Justin, *Dialogue with Trypho*, 34.

³⁸² "How to understand the Jews as being a chosen people", *Orthodox Life*, vol. 41, no. 4, July-August, 1991, pp. 38-41.

³⁸³ St. Nicetas, in Jean Comby, *How to Read Church History*, London: SCM Press, 1985, vol. 1, p. 132.

throughout the whole of Christendom, but the Massoretic text of the Jewish rabbis. Again, the Protestants' chapel worship is similar to the Jews' synagogue worship: in both we find the exaltation of Scripture reading and study above liturgical worship (although this is more principled in Protestantism – in Judaism it is necessitated by the destruction of the Temple in which alone, according to the Law, liturgical worship can take place). Again, the relationship between Church and State in many Calvinist communities was modelled on the Old Testament Israel in the period of Moses and the Judges. Thus A.P. Lopukhin writes: "On examining the structure of the Mosaic State, one is involuntarily struck by its similarity to the organisation of the state structure in the United States of Northern America." "The tribes in their administrative independence correspond exactly to the states, each of which is a democratic republic." The Senate and Congress "correspond exactly to the two higher groups of representatives in the Mosaic State - the 12 and 70 elders." "After settling in Palestine, the Israelites first (in the time of the Judges) established a union republic, in which the independence of the separate tribes was carried through to the extent of independent states."³⁸⁴

Indeed, for the Pilgrim Fathers, their colonisation of America was like Joshua's conquest of the Promised Land. Just as the Canaanites had to be driven out from the Promised Land, so did the Red Indians from America. And just as Church and State were organically one in Joshua's Israel, so it was in the Pilgrim Fathers' America.

Protestantism, especially in America, also acquired the distinctly Judaistic trait of the deification of materialism, the pursuit of material prosperity, not simply for its own sake, but as a proof that God is with you. "This Jewish materialistic approach," writes the anonymous Russian Christian, "openly or more subtly, under the appearance of various social theories and philosophical systems, encroaches upon the consciousness of Christians, breaking down the Christian nations. In particular the penetration into the Christian consciousness of this Judaistic idea explains many heresies, the rise of Islam, the substitution of Christianity with humanism, altruism, Marxism and separatist nationalism. Nationalism, which at times takes on an anti-Semitic character, at other times ends up in union with Judaism; in any event it is the reverse side of Jewish philosophy. A nation is truly attractive only in that part of it which is Christian. On the other hand, separatist nationalism, that is the extolling of a nation because it is a particular nation, refers back to the incorrect and prideful Jewish understanding of their chosenness, when they boast, 'We are the children of Abraham'.

"This activity of Judaistic philosophy is responsible for the striving towards the worldly in Christian societies, the wasting of spiritual talents for the worldly, that is, the burying of them, which explains the direction of present-day civilization towards 'progress', the ruining of our planet, modern pagan art, and so on.

³⁸⁴ Lopukhin, A.P. *Zakonodatel' stvo Moisea* (The Legislation of Moses). Saint Petersburg, 1888, p. 233; quoted in Alexeyev, N.N. "Khristianstvo i Idea Monarkhii" ("Christianity and the Idea of the Monarchy"), *Put' (The Way)*, № 6, January, 1927, p. 557.

“Thus the Jews may obtain supremacy as a result of the breakdown of the Christian peoples, that is, from an open or subtle falling away from Christianity, which can be seen as a direct product of Jewish philosophy. Finally they will bring forth from their midst the Antichrist, their messiah, upon whom they hope...”³⁸⁵

In still more recent times, Western Christianity as a whole has adopted another, still more fundamental trait of Judaism: its *adogmatic* character, making it, like Judaism, *a religion, not so much of faith, as of works*. Thus L.A. Tikhomirov writes: “It is now already for nineteen centuries that we have been hearing from Jewish thinkers that the religious essence of Israel consists not in a concept about God, but in the fulfilment of the Law. Above were cited such witnesses from Judas Galevy. The very authoritative Ilya del Medigo (15th century) in his notable *Test of Faith* says that ‘Judaism is founded not on religious dogma, but on religious acts’.

“But religious acts are, in essence, those prescribed by the Law. That means: if you want to be moral, carry out the Law. M. Mendelsohn formulates the idea of Jewry in the same way: ‘Judaism is not a revealed religion, but a revealed Law. It does not say ‘you must believe’, but ‘you must act’. In this constitution given by God the State and religion are one. The relationships of man to God and society are merged. It is not lack of faith or heresy that attracts punishment, but the violation of the civil order. Judaism gives not obligatory dogmas and recognizes the freedom of inner conviction.’

“Christianity says: you must believe in such-and-such a truth and on the basis of that you must do such-and-such. New [i.e. Talmudic] Judaism says: you can believe as you like, but you have to do such-and-such. But this is a point of view that annihilates man as a moral personality...”³⁸⁶

Of course, the works prescribed by Talmudic Judaism are very different from those prescribed by Christ: the one kind enslaves and debases while the other liberates and exalts. However, in the last resort works without faith, according the Gospel, are useless; for works are only valuable as the expression of faith, faith in *the truth* – it is *the truth* that sets man free (John 8.32). So contemporary Christians’ adoption of the Jewish ethic of works, and loss of zeal for dogmatic truth, is a kind of slow but steady spiritual suicide...

The logical conclusion of the apostasy of the Christian world and its reversion to Judaism will be the appearance of “the man of sin”, the Antichrist. He will become the king of the Jews, will rebuild the Temple and reintroduce the Mosaic Law and Temple worship, with the worship of himself as Messiah and God. And so Judaism will finally acquire a positive dogma, that the Antichrist is God, to supplement its negative dogma, that Jesus is not God; and the Church, the spiritual Israel, will finally dissolve into the carnal Israel – with the exception of a heroic remnant.

³⁸⁵ “How to understand the Jews as being a chosen people”, *op. cit.*

³⁸⁶ Tikhomirov, *Religiozno-filosofskie Osnovy Istorii* (The Religio-Historical Foundations of History), Moscow, 1997, pp. 379, 380.

4. The Christianizing of Judaism

Although the spiritual Israel is blessed, while the carnal Israel is accursed, still an important promise is given to the carnal Israel: that it will *live* in accordance with Abraham's petition: "Let this Ishmael *live* before Thee" (Genesis 17.18). This life cannot be spiritual, because that is promised only to the spiritual Israel. So it must be carnal - physical survival and worldly power. At the same time, St. Ambrose admits the possibility that Abraham's powerful petition could win spiritual life for some of the Jews - but only, of course, if they cease to belong to the carnal Israel and join the spiritual Israel through faith in Christ. For "it is the attribute of the righteous man [Abraham] to intercede even for sinners; therefore, let the Jews believe this too, because Abraham stands surety even for them, provided they will believe..."³⁸⁷

The promise of physical life and prosperity has certainly been fulfilled in the extraordinary tenacity of the Jewish race, its survival in the face of huge obstacles to the present day, and - since its gradual emancipation from the ghetto in the nineteenth century, - its domination of world politics and business in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. However, the successes of the Jews in worldly terms have been so great that many Evangelical Protestants have been tempted to ascribe it, not to God's promise to *Ishmael*, but to his promise to *Isaac*. Reversing the interpretation of the Apostle Paul, they have made of the carnal Israel "the chosen people", "the blessed seed" - and this in spite of the fact that this "chosen people" not only does not believe in Christ, but has been the foremost enemy of those who do believe in Christ for the last two thousand years!

In fact, "it may be," as the anonymous Russian writer has suggested, "that the very preservation up until now of the Jewish people is a result not of their being 'chosen', but as a result of their apostasy". For, having renounced their birth-right, the Kingdom of God, they have received a "mess of pottage" instead - the promise of physical survival and worldly power. "If the Jews, having repented of the crime committed on Golgotha, would have become Christian, then they would have made up the foundation of a new spiritual nation, the nation of Christians. Would they have begun to strive in this case to preserve their nationality and government? Would they not have dispersed among other nations as the missionaries of Christianity just as the Apostles? Would they not have been strangers in a foreign land, not having a fatherland, like unto Abraham, but in this case with a higher spiritual meaning? All this happened with the Jews, that is, they became wanderers, not in a positive spiritual sense, but due to a curse, that is, not of their own will, but due to the will of chastising Providence since they did not fulfil that which God intended for them. Would they not have been exterminated en masse during persecutions as the main preachers of Christianity? Would they not have been assimilated among other peoples, so that the very name 'Jew', 'Hebrew', as a national name, would have disappeared and would have only remained in the remembrance of grateful nations as the glorious name of their enlighteners? Yes, and the very Promised Land and Jerusalem were given to the Hebrews not as a worldly fatherland, for which they are now striving, but as a prefiguration of the Heavenly Kingdom and the Heavenly Jerusalem, as a token of

³⁸⁷ St. Ambrose, *On Abraham*, 88.

which Abraham and through him all the Hebrew nation coming out of Haran, renounced their earthly fatherland. For this reason the very significance of Jerusalem and the idea as a prefigurement would have passed away for the Jews, as soon as the Kingdom of God and the Heavenly Jerusalem would have become obtainable for them and would have become for them, as they are now for us, Christian holy places.”³⁸⁸

By elevating the carnal Israel into the spiritual Israel, the Protestants fill up a major spiritual and emotional gap in their world-view; for, having rejected both the *concept* of the Church, and the *reality* of it in Orthodoxy, they have to find a substitute for it somewhere else. And so we have the paradoxical sight of the State of Israel, one of the main persecutors of Christianity in the contemporary world, which forbids conversions of Jews to Christianity and has driven out the majority of the Orthodox Christian population, being ardently supported by the Evangelical Protestants of the Anglo-Saxon countries. There have even been several attempts by Evangelicals to blow up the mosque of the Dome of the Rock, in order to make it possible for the Jews to build their Temple again – the Temple of the Antichrist!

However, before dismissing this delusion out of hand, we need to study the arguments that the Evangelicals produce in favour of it. And one of the most important of these is that Israel’s success has been prophesied and blessed by God in the Abrahamic Covenant. In particular, they argue that God promised to the descendants of Abraham the whole land of Israel from the Nile to the Euphrates, which promise has been almost fulfilled since the foundation of the State of Israel in 1948, and that this would be their heritage *forever* (Genesis 13.15, 15.18).

In reply to this argument, we may note the following:-

1. God’s prophecies are never fulfilled *approximately*, but always *exactly*. The prophecy of the Jews’ winning control of the whole area from the Nile to the Euphrates was fulfilled *exactly* in the time of Kings David and Solomon (II Kings 8.3, II Chronicles 9.26). But the modern-day Jews have not emulated this feat: in 1967 they very briefly reached the Suez Canal, but not the Nile, and have never reached the Euphrates.
2. Even if the boundaries of the State of Israel were to extend this far at some point in the future, this would still be an achievement of the *carnal* Israel (unless the State Israel would have become officially Christian by that time), and therefore would not be something to rejoice in as if it were blessed by God, but rather to be bemoaned as an extension of the kingdom of the Antichrist.
3. According to St. Philaret of Moscow, the Hebrew word translated as *forever* (I will give it to thee and to thy seed *forever*” (13.15)) can mean no more than an indefinite period of time.³⁸⁹ Even if we accept St. John Chrysostom’s interpretation, that it means *in perpetuity*,³⁹⁰ this can only mean until the end of

³⁸⁸ “How to understand the Jews as being a chosen people”, op. cit.

³⁸⁹ St. Philaret, *Zapiski*, p. 69.

³⁹⁰ St. John Chrysostom, *Homily 34 on Genesis*, 9. The Greek phrase from the Septuagint is: eis ton aiona, literally: “to the age”.

the world. For it is only “the meek” – that is, the Christians - who “will inherit the earth” in the age to come...

However, this is not the only argument of the Evangelicals. They also point to the many Biblical prophecies that speak of the return of the Jews to the land of Israel and their conversion to Christ. Some Orthodox Christians reject the Evangelical interpretation of some of these passages on the grounds that all the as-yet-unfulfilled Old Testament prophecies concerning Israel in fact refer to the New Testament Israel, the Church. However, it is impossible to allegorize these prophecies to such an extent that *all* references to the race of the Jews and to the physical land of Israel are excluded. In any case, even if, as I shall argue, some of these prophecies *do* refer to the return of the Jews to the Holy Land and their conversion to Holy Orthodoxy, they do not justify the Evangelicals’ positive attitude to the carnal Israel that remains unrepentant and unbelieving. So let us now examine these prophecies:-

1. Malachi 4.5, 6: “I will send you Elijah the Tishbite, who will restore the heart of the father to the son, lest I come and utterly smite the earth”. That this passage indeed refers to the conversion of the Jews through the Prophet Elijah is confirmed by Christ Himself: “Elijah is indeed coming first and restores all things” (Mark 9.12) as one of the two witnesses against the Antichrist (Revelation 11). And St. John Chrysostom explains that the reason for Elijah’s coming is that “he may persuade the Jews to believe in Christ, so they may not all utterly perish at His coming... Hence the extreme accuracy of the expression: He did not say ‘He will restore the heart of the son to the father’, but ‘of the father to the son’. For the Jews being father to the apostles, His meaning is that He will restore to the doctrines of their sons, that is, of the apostles, the hearts of the fathers, that is, the Jewish people’s mind.”³⁹¹

2. Ezekiel 36-39. In chapter 36 the Prophet Ezekiel describes how the Jews will be gathered back into the land of Israel, and there converted and baptized: “For I will take you from the nations, and gather you from all the countries, and bring you into your own land. I will sprinkle clean water upon you [baptism], and you shall be clean from all your uncleanness... And you shall be My people, and I will be your God” (36.24-25, 28). Then comes the famous vision of the dry bones (ch. 37), which is an allegorical description of the resurrection of the Jews to true faith when they appeared to be completely devoid of it. Then comes the invasion of Israel by Gog and Magog (ch. 38), and the description of how the Jews will spend seven months clearing up after the destruction of the invaders (ch. 39). And then the Prophet says: “All the nations shall know that the house of Israel was led captive because of their sins, because they rebelled against Me, and I turned My face from them, and delivered them into the hands of their enemies, and they all fell by the sword. According to their uncleanness and according to their transgressions did I deal with them, and I turned My face from them. Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Now will I turn back captivity in Jacob, and will have mercy on the house of Israel, and will be jealous for the sake of My holy name” (39.23-25).

³⁹¹ St. John Chrysostom, *Homily 57 on Matthew*, 1.

3. Jeremiah 3.16-18: “It shall come to pass, when you are multiplied and increased in the land in those days, says the Lord, that they will say no more, ‘The ark of the covenant of the Lord’. It shall not come to mind, nor shall they remember it, nor shall they visit it, nor shall it be made anymore. At that time Jerusalem shall be called the Throne of the Lord, and all the nations shall be gathered to it, to the name of the Lord, to Jerusalem. Nor more shall they follow the dictates of their evil hearts. In those days the house of Judah shall walk with the house of Israel, and they shall come together out of the land of the north to the land that I have given as an inheritance to your fathers.”

4. Zephaniah 3.10-13, 18-20: “From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia My suppliants, the daughter of My dispersed ones, shall bring Me offering. On that day you shall not be put to shame because of the deeds by which you have rebelled against Me; for then I will remove from your midst your proudly exultant ones, and you shall no longer be haughty in My holy mountain. For I will leave in the midst of you a people humble and lowly. They shall seek refuge in the name of the Lord, those who are left in Israel... I will remove disaster from you, so that you will not bear reproach for it. Behold, at that time I will deal with all your oppressors, and I will save the lame and gather the outcast, and I will change their shame into praise and renown in all the earth. At that time I will bring you home, at the time when I gathered you together; yea, I will make you renowned and praised among all the peoples of the earth, when I restore your fortunes before your eyes, says the Lord.”

5. Zechariah 12-14. In chapters 12 and 13 the Prophet Zechariah appears to describe how the Jews come to a profound repentance for their apostasy from Christ: “I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and compassion; and they shall look on Me Whom they pierced” (i.e. the Crucified Christ), “and they shall mourn for Him, as one mourns over a first-born” (12.10). “In that day a fountain shall be opened for the house of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness [baptism]” (13.1). In chapter 14 a great disaster overtakes the people, and “half the city shall go into captivity” (14.2). But the Lord will fight for Israel, and finally, after a great war, “it shall come to pass that everyone who is left of all the nations that came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles” (14.16). Now the mention of the feast of Tabernacles may lead to the thought that this is a Judaic feast, and so the context is the whole world going up to Jerusalem to pray at the Judaic feast – perhaps even to worship the Antichrist! However, in the context it is much more natural to interpret this as being a true, Christian feast, probably the Christian fulfilment of the feast of Tabernacles.

6. Romans 11.15, 25-27: “For if their [the Jews’] being cast away is the reconciling of the world [the Gentiles’ conversion], what will their acceptance be but life from the dead?... For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. And so all Israel will be saved.”

Origen explains this passage well: “Now indeed, until all the Gentiles come to salvation, the riches of God are concentrated in the multitude of [Gentile] believers,

but as long as Israel remains in its unbelief it will not be possible to say that the fullness of the Lord's portion has been attained. The people of Israel are still missing from the complete picture. But when the fullness of the Gentiles has come in and Israel comes to salvation at the end of time, then it will be the people which, although it existed long ago, will come at the last and complete the fullness of the Lord's portion and inheritance."³⁹² For, as St. Cyril of Alexandria says, "Although it was rejected, Israel will also be saved eventually... Israel will be saved in its own time and will be called at the end, after the calling of the Gentiles."³⁹³

What does "all Israel" mean? Blessed Theodoret of Cyr writes: "'All Israel' means all those who believe, whether Jews... or Gentiles."³⁹⁴ So when "the fullness of the Gentiles" has been gathered into the granary of the Church, and then "the fullness of the Jews", we will be able to say that "all Israel" has been saved - that is, the whole of "the Israel of God" (Galatians 6.16), the Church of Christ.

7. Revelation 3.8: "Behold, says the Lord to the Angel of the Church of Philadelphia, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and make obeisance before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee."

Holy New Hieromartyr Mark (Novoselov) comments on this: "[St. John] with complete clarity speaks about the conversion of the God-fighting people to the Church of Christ, when she, few in numbers and powerless from an external point of view, but powerful with an inner strength and faithfulness to her Lord (Revelation 3.8) will draw to herself the 'remnant' of the God-fighting tribe.

"Gazing with the eye of faith at that which the Lord has done before our eyes, and applying the ear of our heart and mind to the events of our days, comparing that which is seen and heard with the declarations of the Word of God, I cannot but feel that a great, wonderful and joyous mystery of God's economy is coming towards us: the Judaizing haters and persecutors of the Church of God, who are striving to subdue and annihilate her, by the wise permission of Providence will draw her to purification and strengthening, so as 'to present her [to Christ] as a glorious Church, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but so that she should be holy and blameless' (Ephesians 6.27).

"And in His time, known only to the One Lord of time, this, according to the son of thunder's strict expression 'synagogue of Satan' will bow before the pure Bride of Christ, conquered by her holiness and blamelessness and, perhaps, frightened by the image of the Antichrist. And if the rejection of the Apostle Paul's fellow-countrymen

³⁹² Origen, *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*.

³⁹³ St. Cyril of Alexandria, *Explanation of the Letter to the Romans*, P.G. 74: 849.

³⁹⁴ Blessed Theodoret of Cyr, *Interpretation of the Letter to the Romans*, P.G. 82: 180. Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) interprets this passage to mean that all of the Jews will be saved: "Not of a single people - not of the Russians, or of the Greeks - has it been said that all of their descendants will be saved in due time, as this is said of the Jews" ("Sermon on the Sunday of the Myrrh-bearing women", 1903; *Living Orthodoxy*, N 83, vol. XIV, no. 5, September-October, 1992, p. 37). But this is surely a mistake. We know that the Antichrist, for one, will be a Jew and will *not* be saved.

was, in his words, 'the reconciliation of the world [with God], what will be their acceptance if not life from the dead' (Romans 11.15)."³⁹⁵

The famous monarchist writer Lev Tikhomirov agrees with this interpretation: "Is this conversion of the Jews that salvation of 'all Israel' which the Apostle Paul foretold? In the Apocalypse it is said that the saved will come 'of the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie'. But not the whole of the 'synagogue' will come, but only 'of the synagogue', that is, a part of it. But even here, where the Apostle Paul says that 'the whole of Israel will be saved', he means only a part: 'for they are not all Israel, which are of Israel... They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed' (Romans 9.6, 8).

"The opinion is widespread among us that the conversion of the Jews will take place at the very appearance of the Saviour, when they shall cry out: 'Blessed is He That cometh in the name of the Lord'. But this is not evident from the Apocalypse. But if the Philadelphian conversion will bring 'all Israel' that is to be saved to Christ, then this will, of course, be a great event, fully explaining the rejoicing of the Heavens. Israel is a chosen people with whom it will not be possible to find a comparison when he begins to do the work of God. The Jews will, of course, multiply the forces of Christianity for the resistance against the Antichrist. 'If the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world,' says the Apostle Paul, 'what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?' (Romans 11.15)."³⁹⁶

7. Revelation 7.4: "And I heard the number of those who were sealed; and there were sealed a hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel." "This sealing," writes Archbishop Averky of Syracuse and Jordanville, "will begin with the Israelites, who before the end of the world will be converted to Christ, as St. Paul predicts (Romans 9.27, 11.26). In each of the twelve tribes there will be twelve thousand sealed, and 144,000 in all. Of these tribes only the tribe of Dan is not mentioned, because from it, according to tradition, will come the Antichrist. In place of the tribe of Dan is mentioned the priestly tribe of Levi which previously had not entered into the twelve tribes. Such a limited number is mentioned, perhaps, in order to show how small is the number of the sons of Israel who are saved in comparison with the uncountable multitude of those who have loved the Lord Jesus Christ from among all the other formerly pagan people of the earth."³⁹⁷

So the carnal Israel can and will be saved. But only, it must be emphasized again, by ceasing to be the carnal Israel and becoming part of the spiritual. For the carnal and the spiritual Israels, though related through their common father, and constantly intertwined in history, are mutually incompatible...

³⁹⁵ Hieromartyr Mark, *Pisma k Druziam (Letters to Friends)*, Moscow, 1994, p. 125. See also pp. 103-104.

³⁹⁶ Tikhomirov, *Religioznie-Filosofskie Osnovy Istorii (The Religious-Philosophical Foundations of History)*, Moscow, 1997, p. 570.

³⁹⁷ Archbishop Averky, *Rukovodstvo k izucheniu Sviaschennago Pisania Novago Zaveta (Guide to the Study of the Sacred Scriptures of the New Testament)*, Jordanville, N.Y. Holy Trinity Monastery, 1987, pp. 406-407.

Conclusion

We are now in a better position to understand the relationship between the two “great nations” who come from Abraham and who are given promises in the Abrahamic Covenant.

For clarity’s sake we shall refer to *two* covenants, or promises, the one referring to the spiritual Israel and the other to the carnal Israel. The two covenants are both complementary and contrary to each other. The spiritual Israel is promised spiritual blessings: *salvation and the Kingdom of Heaven*, while the carnal Israel is promised carnal blessings: *survival and the kingdom of this world*; for this is what the Jews confessed that they belonged to when they declared to the ruler of this world: “We have no other king than Caesar” (John 19, 15). And so it has turned out in history: the children of the spiritual Israel, consisting of people from many nations, both Jews and Gentiles, have been given salvation in Christ, while the children of the carnal Israel, having lost salvation, have nevertheless survived many centuries of oppression and humiliation, and have achieved worldly power – and power over the spiritual Israel, too, in places like Israel and Soviet Russia. The worldly power of the carnal Israel is destined to reach its peak at the end of the world, in the time of the Jewish Antichrist. At the same time, however, - or perhaps before - the spiritual Israel will achieve *her* greatest victory – the conversion of many, perhaps most of the children of the carnal Israel to Christ.

Since the carnal Israel is promised physical life and power, it is no wonder that since the Balfour Declaration of 1917, and especially since the foundation of the State of Israel in 1948, it has regained power over the land of Israel, driving out most of the Christians in the process, and may well recapture all the land from the Nile to the Euphrates, as was promised in the Abrahamic Covenant. But it is important to understand that such a reconquest, if it takes place, will not be by virtue of the Jews being the *chosen* people, as they and their Evangelical allies believe, but by virtue of the exact opposite: of their being the *accursed* people. For of the two covenant peoples the people that is carnal is given physical gifts that are appropriate to its carnal desires.

As for the spiritual Israel, the meek and the righteous Israel, it is not in this age that it will inherit the earth, as was promised by God. It will be given to it only after this present world has perished in its present form, and has been renewed and transformed into the conditions of the original Paradise. For “we, according to the promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells” (II Peter 3.13). *That* is the Promised Land of the Saints. Moreover, since corruptible “flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom” (I Corinthians 15.50), they will receive it, not in their present corruptible bodies, but in that “earth”, the glorious body of the resurrection, which they will inherit at the Coming of Christ...

St. Seraphim of Sarov prophesied that at the end of the world there would be only two important nations: the Russians and the Jews, and that the Antichrist would be a Jew born in Russia. However, the Russians and the Jews will not be strictly racial but spiritual categories, corresponding to the categories of the two sons of Abraham, Isaac and Ishmael. The Russians will be the leading Christian nation, and any other Christian nation that does not want to be destroyed spiritually by being merged into

Judaism will have to follow the lead of Russia (Isaiah 60.12). And the Jews will be the leading antichristian nation, to which all those nations who have fallen away from Christianity will submit. But we have seen that it is precisely in the very last times that large numbers of Jews will be converted to Christ. How fitting, then, if the Russian nation which has suffered most from the antichristian Jews in the terrible Russian-Jewish revolution, should finally convert them to Christianity, so that the former bitter enemies, reconciled in the Body of Christ, should fight together against the Russian-Jewish Antichrist!

*June 2/15,2008.
Pentecost.*

16. MUST AN ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN BE A MONARCHIST?

No sooner had the communist regimes of Russia and Eastern Europe fallen and been replaced by democratic governments in 1989-91, than the populations of these countries began to discuss the question of monarchism. This was a surprise for many. In 1992 a Harvard political scientist, Francis Fukuyama, declared "the end of history" and the final triumph of the democratic idea throughout the world – and lo and behold! monarchical feelings were on the increase in Russia, Romania, Bulgaria, Serbia and Georgia. In fact, monarchism was quickly restored – albeit in a limited, constitutional form - in Romania, Bulgaria and Serbia, and at the time of writing (2009) there is strong expectation of its being restored in Georgia soon. To the horror of many westerners, history appears to be going backwards in Eastern Europe!

One explanation of this phenomenon consists in pointing out that democracy has not yet been perfected in the East, and that transitional periods are always difficult and tend to engender nostalgia for the past. Moreover, continues this argument, totalitarian-authoritarian patterns of thinking have not yet died out in the minds of post-communist society...

There is probably a grain of truth in these reflections – but not much more than a grain. The larger falsehood of it consists in the identification of communist-totalitarian modes of thought with monarchical-authoritarian ones, whereas in fact they are very different, especially when the monarchism in question is based on Orthodox Christianity. Moreover, this argument should lead us to infer that totalitarian-authoritarian patterns of thought will gradually die out as new generations grow up educated in democratic rather than totalitarian ways. And yet, if anything the opposite appears to be taking place: as the older generation dies out, monarchism (if not communism) appears to be becoming more, not less popular. Evidently a more profound analysis of the situation is required...

1. The Teaching of the Ancient Fathers

Now in the works of the Holy Fathers it is possible to find two, apparently contradictory approaches to the question of Church-State relations and the attitude of the Church to various forms of government. On the one hand, it is affirmed that all power is from God, that the Church can live and has lived in states of the most varied kinds, and that if an Orthodox Christian prefers one kind to another, this is a personal preference, and not a matter of the faith. On the other hand, it is affirmed that only monarchical power is from God, that the Church blessed only the monarchical order, and first of all the Orthodox autocracy, and that monarchism is an obligatory part of the truly Orthodox world-view.

In attempting to resolve this paradox, we may begin with the obvious but important point that the rule of God is that of a *King*. In holy baptism a Christian promises to worship Christ "as King and as God". And Christ told His disciples: "All power has been given to Me in heaven and on earth" (Matthew 28.18). Many of the Lord's parables describe God as a king. Since, therefore, we are all subjects of the Heavenly King, to whom absolute obedience is required, the idea of submission to an

earthly king should not be unnatural or repulsive to us – provided, of course, that submission to the earthly king that does not clash with submission to the Heavenly King. After all, did not the Lord Himself say that we should give to Caesar, a king, what is Caesar's (Matthew 22.21)? And did not the Apostle Peter say: "Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme, or to governors..." (I Peter 2.13-14)? And did not the Apostle Paul say: "Let every soul be subject to the higher authorities. For there is no power that is not of God: the powers that be are ordained by God... For he is the minister of God to thee for good" (Romans 13.1, 4)?

Although democracy was known to the ancient world from the example of the Classical Greeks, it was not common, and since the Nativity of Christ it had given way everywhere to monarchy. The Church saw this development as providential: "When Augustus reigned alone upon earth, the many kingdoms of men came to an end: and when Thou wast made man of the pure Virgin, the many gods of idolatry were destroyed. The cities of the world passed under one single rule; and the nations came to believe in one sovereign Godhead. The peoples were enrolled by the decree of Caesar; and we, the faithful, were enrolled in the Name of the Godhead, when Thou, our God, wast made man. Great is Thy mercy: glory to Thee."³⁹⁸

When the holy Apostle wrote that "there is no power that is not of God", and that the emperor was "the minister of God", he wrote as the subject of a monarchical State to co-subjects of the same State, in which all authority from the emperor to the local governors and magistrates (besides the Roman senate) was established on the principle of one-man-rule. This principle became still more firmly established when the Roman empire became Christian.

The Holy Fathers and Church writers of this period unanimously supported the monarchical order, and condemned democracy for religious reasons. Thus Bishop Eusebius of Caesarea wrote: "The example of monarchical rule there is a source of strength to him. This is something granted to man alone of the creatures of the earth by the universal King. The basic principle of kingly authority is the establishment of a single source of authority to which everything is subject. Monarchy is superior to every other constitution and form of government. For polyarchy, where everyone competes on equal terms, is really anarchy and discord. This is why there is one God, not two or three or even more. Polytheism is strictly atheism. There is one King, and His Word and royal law are one."³⁹⁹

The Holy Fathers agreed with Eusebius. Thus St. Gregory the Theologian wrote: "The three most ancient opinions about God are atheism (or anarchy), polytheism (or polyarchy), and monotheism (or monarchy). The children of Greece played with the first two; let us leave them to their games. For anarchy is disorder: and polyarchy implies factious division, and therefore anarchy and disorder. Both these lead in the

³⁹⁸ *Festal Menaion*, Great Vespers, the Nativity of Christ, "Lord, I have cried", Glory... Both now...

³⁹⁹ Eusebius, *Oration in Honour of Constantine*.

same direction – to disorder; and disorder leads to disintegration; for disorder is the prelude to disintegration. What we honour is monarchy...”⁴⁰⁰

“What we honour is monarchy...” That certainly appears to imply that monarchism is part of the Orthodox world-view, even if it does not figure in any of the Creeds.

We find the same in the Fathers of the fifth century. Thus Archbishop Theophan of Poltava writes: “St. Isidore of Pelusium, after pointing out that the God-established order of the submission of some to other is found everywhere in the life of rational and irrational creatures, concludes from this: ‘Therefore we are right to say that the matter itself – I mean power, that is, authority and royal power – are established by God.’”⁴⁰¹

Again, in the eighth century St. Theodore the Studite wrote: “There is one Lord and Giver of the Law, as it is written: one authority and one Divine principle over all. This single principle is the source of all wisdom, goodness and good order; it extends over every creature that has received its beginning from the goodness of God..., it is given to one man only... to construct rules of life in accordance with the likeness of God. For the divine Moses in his description of the origin of the world that comes from the mouth of God, cites the word: ‘Let us create man in accordance with Our image and likeness’ (Genesis 1.26). Hence the establishment among men of every dominion and every authority, especially in the Churches of God: one patriarch in a patriarchate, one metropolitan in a metropolia, one bishop in a bishopric, one abbot in a monastery, and in secular life, if you want to listen, one king, one regimental commander, one captain on a ship. And if one will did not rule in all this, there would be no law and order in anything, and it would not be for the best, for a multiplicity of wills destroys everything.”⁴⁰²

The Holy Fathers distinguished between real monarchy and tyranny. Thus St. Basil the Great wrote: “If the heart of the king is in the hands of God (Proverbs 21.1), then he is saved, not by force of arms, but by the guidance of God. But not every one is in the hands of God, but only he who is worthy of the name of king. Some have defined kingly power as lawful dominion or sovereignty over all, without being subject to sin.” A strict definition indeed! And again: “The difference between a tyrant and a King is that the tyrant strives in every way to carry out his own will. But the King does good to those whom he rules.”⁴⁰³

⁴⁰⁰ St. Gregory the Theologian, *Sermon* 29, 2. We find the same teaching in St. Ephraim the Syrian, who, as K.V. Glazkov writes, “noted that God’s unity of rule in the Heavenly Kingdom and Caesar’s unity of rule in the earthly kingdom destroy polytheism and polyarchy...” (“A Defence from Liberalism”, *Pravoslavnaia Rus’*, № 15 (1636), 1/14 August, 1999, p. 10)

⁴⁰¹ Quoted in Richard Betts and Vyacheslav Marchenko, *Dukhovnik Tsa’rskoj Sem’i* (Spiritual Father of the Royal Family), Moscow, 1994, p. 213.

⁴⁰² St. Theodore, *The Philokalia*, volume IV, p. 93.

⁴⁰³ Quoted in Sergius Fomin & Tamara Fomina, *Rossia pered Vtorym Prishestviem* (Russia before the Second Coming), Moscow, 1994, pp. 66, 102. The difference between king and tyrant is also implicit in the Church services. Thus: “Caught and held fast by love for the King of all, the Children despised the impious threats of the tyrant in his boundless fury” (*Festal Menaion*, The Nativity of Christ, Mattins,

The Christian must submit to a king if his laws do not contradict the Law of God. But it is wrong to submit to a tyrant because his authority is not from God. As St. Isidore of Pelusium wrote: "If some evildoer unlawfully seizes power, we do not say that he is established by God [the definition of a true king], but we say that he is *permitted*, either in order to spit out all his craftiness, or in order to chasten those for whom cruelty is necessary, as the king of Babylon chastened the Jews."⁴⁰⁴

And there were tyrants whom the leaders of the Church refused to submit to. Thus the Persian King Sapor started to kill the clergy, confiscate church property and raze the churches to the ground. He told St. Simeon, Bishop of Seleucia and Ctesiphon, that if he worshipped the sun, he would receive every possible honour and gift. But if he refused, Christianity in Persia would be utterly destroyed. In reply, St. Simeon not only refused to worship the sun but also refused to recognise the king by bowing to him. This omission of his previous respect for the king's authority was noticed and questioned by the King. St. Simeon replied: "Before I bowed down to you, giving you honour as a king, but now I come being brought to deny my God and Faith. It is not good for me to bow before an enemy of my God!"⁴⁰⁵

Another such tyrant was Julian the Apostate. The Holy Fathers not only did not obey him, but actively tried to have him removed. Thus St. Basil the Great prayed for the defeat of Julian in his wars against the Persians; and it was through his prayers that the apostate was in fact killed, as was revealed by God to the holy hermit Julian of Mesopotamia.⁴⁰⁶ Again, St. Basil's friend, St. Gregory the Theologian wrote: "I call to spiritual rejoicing all those who constantly remained in fasting, in mourning and prayer, and by day and by night besought deliverance from the sorrows that surrounded us and found a reliable healing from the evils in unshakeable hope... What hoards of weapons, what myriads of men could have produced what our prayers and the will of God produced?"⁴⁰⁷ Gregory called Julian not only an "apostate", but also "universal enemy" and "general murderer", a traitor to Romanity as well as to Christianity⁴⁰⁸, explicitly denying that his was a power from God and therefore requiring obedience: "What demon instilled this thought in you? If every authority were acknowledged as sacred by the very fact of its existence, Christ the Savior would not have called Herod 'that fox'. The Church would not hitherto have denounced ungodly rulers who defended heresies and persecuted Orthodoxy. Of course, if one judges an authority on the basis of its outward power, and not on its inner, moral worthiness, one may easily bow down to the beast, i.e. the Antichrist,

Canon, Canticle Seven, second irmos). Again the implication was that the pious worshippers of the true King will reject the threats of tyrants.

St. Ephraim, in the first of his *Hymns against Julian*, makes a similar distinction: "The royal sceptre governed men and cared for cities and chased away wild animals; the opposite was the sceptre of the King who turned to paganism. The wild animals saw it and were glad..." (*Hymns against Julian*, I, 1. Translated in Samuel N.C. Lieu, *The Emperor Julian: Panegyric and Polemic*, Liverpool University Press, 1986, p. 105)

⁴⁰⁴ St. Isidore, *Letter 6 to Dionysius*.

⁴⁰⁵ St. Demetrius of Rostov, *Lives of the Saints*, April 17.

⁴⁰⁶ Theodoret, *Ecclesiastical History*, III, 19.

⁴⁰⁷ St. Gregory, *First and Second Words against Julian*.

⁴⁰⁸ St. Gregory, *First Word against Julian*, 35; *Second Word against Julian*, 26.

‘whose coming will be with all power and lying wonders’ (II Thessalonians 2.9), to whom ‘power was given... over all kindred, and tongues, and nations. And all that dwelt upon the earth shall worship him, whose names were not written in the book of life of the Lamb’ (Revelation 13.7-8).”⁴⁰⁹

Another tyrant was the iconoclast Emperor Leo III, who was called “forerunner of the Antichrist” in the Byzantine service books, and was anathematised by the Church as “the tormentor and *not Emperor* Leo the Isaurian”.⁴¹⁰ In two hagiographical texts, Leo is even given the apocalyptic title of “beast”.⁴¹¹ The next iconoclast emperor, Constantine Copronymus, was also anathematized; he was called “tyrant, and not Emperor”.⁴¹² Even more emphatic was the anathematisation of Emperor Leo V the Armenian: “the evil first beast, the tormentor of the servants of Christ, *and not Emperor* Leo the Armenian”.⁴¹³

While carefully distinguishing true kings from tyrants, the Holy Fathers always upheld the institution of monarchy as such, and never called for anything resembling democracy. Thus in an epistle addressed to both the Patriarch and the Emperors, the Seventh Ecumenical Council wrote: “God gave the greatest gift to men: the Priesthood and the Imperial power; the first preserves and watches over the heavenly, while the second rules earthly things by means of just laws”.⁴¹⁴ The epistle also produced a concise and inspired definition of the Church-State relationship: “The priest is the sanctification and strengthening of the Imperial power, while the Imperial power is the strength and firmness of the priesthood”.⁴¹⁵

The first and last appearance of “democracy” (if not communism) in Orthodox history before the French revolution was probably the “zealot movement” in Thessalonica in the mid-fourteenth century, which did not last long. The ruling bishop of Thessalonica, St. Gregory Palamas, strictly condemned this movement, remaining loyal to the Byzantine Emperor: “God has counted the Emperors worthy to rule over His inheritance, over His earthly Church”.⁴¹⁶ And so in the ancient Christian world there were kings and there were tyrants: but there were no democracies. The Church did not bless non-monarchical forms of power, nor revolutionaries...

⁴⁰⁹ St. Gregory, quoted in the *Encyclical Letter of the Council of Russian Bishops Abroad to the Russian Orthodox Flock*, 23 March, 1933; translated in *Living Orthodoxy*, #131, vol. XXII, № 5, September-October, 2001, p. 13. V.A. Konovalov writes: “The Christians could not help Julian the Apostate by their prayers, since his return in good health would bring about the death of Christians. And the Christians, headed by such lights of the Church as Basil the Great and Gregory the Theologian, prayed to God for the defeat of Julian. God heard their prayer, and Julian was killed.” (*Otnoshenie Khristianina k sovietskoj vlasti* (The Relationship of Christianity to Soviet Power), Montreal, 1936, p. 35)

⁴¹⁰ *Menaion*, May 12, Service to St. Germanus of Constantinople, Vespers, “Lord, I have cried”; Fomin and Fomina, *op. cit.*, vol. I, p. 88.

⁴¹¹ D.E. Afinogenov, “*Povest’ o proschenii imperatora Feofila i Torzhestvo Pravoslavia* (The “Tale” of the Forgiveness of the Emperor Theophilus and the Triumph of Orthodoxy), Moscow: Ilarik, 2004, pp. 26, 28.

⁴¹² Fomin and Fomina, *op. cit.*, p. 89.

⁴¹³ Fomin and Fomina, *op. cit.*, p. 94.

⁴¹⁴ Fomin and Fomina, *op. cit.*, p. 91.

⁴¹⁵ Fomin and Fomina, *op. cit.*, p. 91.

⁴¹⁶ St. Gregory, quoted in Fomin and Fomina, *op. cit.*, vol. 1, p. 122.

2. The Church and Democracy

After the fall of Constantinople in 1453, the Byzantines fell under the yoke of the Turkish sultan. This yoke brought, of course, many woes to the Christian population. But by the Providence of God it also protected them from the Protestant and Democratic viruses that were raging in the West. If the Turkish sultan was sometimes called "the antichrist" or "the forerunner of the antichrist", this was because of his antichristian faith, not because he was a king. Kingship still remained the normal mode of political power.

In Russia also nobody disputed that lawful power was monarchical power. Nor that there was a tyrannical power that was not from God. Thus St. Joseph of Volotsk wrote: "The holy Apostles say about kings and hierarchs who do not worry or care for those placed in their charge: an impious king who does not care for those placed in his charge is not a king, but a tormentor; and an evil bishop who does not care for his flock is not a pastor, but a wolf."⁴¹⁷ As for the power of "the multi-mutinous mob", in the words of Tsar Ivan the Terrible, this was not recognized to be a true authority. Thus when the English executed King Charles I and declared their State to be a republic, Muscovite Russia in horror cut off all mercantile contacts with them.

In the epoch of the French revolution Orthodox theologians continued to defend the principle of one-man-rule. For example, towards the end of the 18th century Patriarch Gregory V of Constantinople, the future hieromartyr, even defended the far-from-ideal power of the Turkish sultan against revolutionary ideas from the West in his *Paternal Exhortation*. And Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow developed a whole "political theology" defending Orthodox autocratic power: "God has placed a king on earth in the image of His Heavenly single rule an autocratic king in the image of His almighty power, an autocratic king, and a hereditary king in the image of His Kingdom that does not pass away."⁴¹⁸

But non-Orthodox kings were recognized only to a lesser degree, and only if they did not fight against the Orthodox kings. Thus during the Crimean War between Turkey and Russia Hieroschemamonk Hilarion the Georgian, who was struggling on Mount Athos, condemned the commemoration of the Turkish sultan at the liturgy, saying that only the Orthodox Christian Emperor is "in the image of Christ the Anointed One, in nature like Him and worthy to called Tsar and Anointed of God, because he has in himself the Anointing Father, the Anointed Son and the Holy Spirit by Whom he is anointed. The other kings of the peoples make themselves out to be something with a lofty name, but God is not benevolent towards and them and does not rest in them. They reign only in part, according to the condescension of God. Therefore he who does not love his God-appointed tsar is not worthy to be called a Christian."⁴¹⁹

⁴¹⁷ St. Joseph, *The Enlightener*, Word 16.

⁴¹⁸ Metropolitan Philaret, "Sermon on the Birthday of Emperor Nicholas Pavlovich", *Works*, 1994, p. 274.

⁴¹⁹ Hieromonk Anthony of the Holy Mountain, *Sketches of the Life and Exploits of Elder Hilarion the Georgian*, Jordanville, 1985, p. 95.

Historically speaking, democracy appeared everywhere as a result of anti-monarchist and anti-hierarchical movements. As such its root was evil, just as its fruits in the socialist and communist revolutions were evil. But in the 20th century its essence was masked by the fact that the western democracies opposed the communist tyrannies and gave a refuge from the red dragon to millions of Orthodox Christians. However, it should be observed that the western democracies became real defenders against communist tyranny only after these tyrannies had become well established, and only when they began to pose a direct threat to themselves. This inner sympathy between democracy and communism was especially manifest in the tendency to ignore the atrocities of Lenin and Stalin in the western press, and the alliance between the western democracies and Stalin in the Second World War – an alliance that Roosevelt, if not Churchill, considered natural. It was considered natural because of the real inner spiritual kinship between democracy and communism, both being offshoots of the Enlightenment programme of the 18th century.

Moreover, in time even the obvious differences between the two systems have tended to disappear. Thus on the one hand the maintenance of strict communism is a psychological and economic impossibility: “war communism” is inevitably followed by longer and longer periods of semi-capitalist, semi-liberal “thaws”. On the other hand, democratic governments, unchecked by the Church or religious systems of morality, tend to impose their own secular morality with ever-increasing zeal. Hence the paradox that as the democratic system gives its citizens more and more secular “rights” and freedoms, the state apparatus required to enforce these rights becomes more and more oppressive – and more contemptuous of the rights of believers. Thus, as George Orwell noted at the end of *Animal Farm*, as democracy develops it tends inexorably towards the condition of its spiritual sister, communism – a phenomenon that is at the root of the widespread disillusionment with democratic governments, if not with the democratic system itself, in the contemporary West.

The democratic ideology is incompatible with the Christian Faith because ultimate sovereignty is ascribed, not to God, but to the people. Therefore the final judge of what is true or right belongs to the people – and if the people changes its mind, as it so often does, the convictions and standards of the State must change with it. So even if a democracy declares itself to be Christian in the beginning, there is absolutely no guarantee that it will remain Christian.

Of course, no political system can ensure permanent stability – the human race is fallen and mutable by nature. Nevertheless, logic suggests and history demonstrates that monarchies have been much more stable than democracies in their adherence to Christian faith and morality. The history of democracy since the French revolution shows an ever-accelerating decline in faith and morality, and an ever-expanding undermining of the natural hierarchical relations that God has placed in human society, whether these be between parents and children, husbands and wives, teachers and pupils, or political rulers and their subjects. And by undermining these natural hierarchical relations, it implicitly undermines the most important hierarchical relation of all, that between God and man. The Orthodox monarchy, on the other hand, strengthens all these relationships, and orients society as a whole to spiritual

goals rather than the exclusively secular and material goals of contemporary democracy.

We need look no further for confirmation of this thesis than the present global financial crisis. Fareed Zakaria writes: "What we are experiencing now is not a crisis of capitalism. It is a crisis of finance, of democracy, of globalization and ultimately of ethics..."

"Most of what happened over the past decade across the world was legal. Bankers did what they were allowed to do under the law. Politicians did what they thought the system asked of them. Bureaucrats were not exchanging cash for favors. But very few people acted responsibly, honourably or nobly (the very word sounds odd today). This might sound like a small point, but it is not. No system – capitalism, socialism, whatever – can work without a sense of ethics and values at its core. No matter what reforms we put in place, without common sense, judgement and an ethical standard, they will prove inadequate."⁴²⁰

A crisis of democracy, and a crisis of ethics: the two are closely linked. Democracy contains within itself the seeds of its own destruction – the warring wills of millions of people who can agree on no supreme authority, no objective criterion of truth and morality outside the will of the majority as expressed in the ballot box. As often as not it cannot even claim to represent the majority, but only the temporary and technical triumph of one faction...

From the Christian point of view, the most important thing is the attitude of the government to God, the Faith and the Church. Insofar as democracy declares that its power is not from God, but from the people, and therefore does not need the blessing of the Church, this attitude is bound to be more or less negative. We see this in, for example, the European Union, whose constitution does not contain the word "God" (in spite of the persistent requests of the Pope), and which has passed a whole series of antichristian laws, notably in respect of homosexuality and the obligation to "respect" other religions. In the early centuries of western democracy and until approximately the Second World War, this essential contradiction between democracy and Christianity was masked by the continuing power of Christian modes of thought and behaviour, even among the politicians. However, as Christian faith has declined, the essentially atheist and anti-theist essence of democracy has become more evident.

It follows that the attitude of Orthodox Christians towards democracy must be negative – not in the sense that democratic governments should be disobeyed (although in particular instances this may well be necessary), but in the sense that the anti-monarchical revolutions that brought democracy into power in England, France and Russia were evil, and that there is no moral value attached to democracy as such. Democracy may be valued as the lesser of two evils – less evil, for example, than communism or fascism. But it is in itself an evil insofar as it is based on a false, even blasphemous theory of the origin of legitimate political power, and insofar it tends in

⁴²⁰ Zakaria, "The Capitalist Manifesto", *Newsweek*, June 22, 2009, p. 40.

practice, as Alexei Khomyakov pointed out with regard to Athenian democracy, towards the secularization of society, the relativization of morality and the confinement of religion and faith to an ever-decreasing private sphere having no influence on public education or political life.

3. The Teaching of the Holy New Martyrs of Russia

After the democratic revolution of February, 1917 the traditional Orthodox teaching on authority collapsed in Russia. As is now well-known from the research of M. Babkin, even the Holy Synod did not support the monarchical principle, nor did it call on the people, as in 1612, to rise up against the rebels against the monarchy, but called the Masonic democratic government lawful and even “right-believing” – which it certainly was not. Church liberals even wanted the removal, not only of the Tsar, but also of the very idea of the sacred monarchy.

Thus at its sessions of March 11 and 12, the Council of the Petrograd religio-philosophical society decreed: "The acceptance by the Synod of the Tsar's act of abdication from the throne... in no way corresponds to the act's huge religious importance, whereby the Church recognized the Tsar as the anointed of God in the rite of coronation.

“It is necessary, in order to emancipate the people's conscience and avert the possibility of a restoration, to issue a corresponding act in the name of the Church hierarchy abolishing the power of the Church Sacrament of Anointing, by analogy with the church acts abolishing the power of the Sacraments of Marriage and the Priesthood.”⁴²¹

The comparison of the Sacrament of Royal Anointing with the Sacraments of Marriage and the Priesthood is illuminating. Every Orthodox Christian understands that to abolish the Sacraments of Marriage and the Priesthood, and introduce civil marriage or Protestant-style ministers instead, is blasphemy and a serious sin against the Faith. But if that is so, why should not the de facto abolition of the Sacrament of Royal Anointing through democratic revolution not be considered a similar blasphemy and sin against the Faith?

Although the February revolution was undoubtedly a very serious sin against the Faith, and although the Church hierarchy participated in that sin to some degree, it is an exaggeration to assert, as does the former MP Bishop Diomedes of Anadyr and Chukotka, that the whole Russian Church fell into apostasy at that time through confession of the heresy of “fighting against the tsar” (tsareborchestvo). According to Bishop Diomedes, the whole of Russian society, beginning with the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church, betrayed the Tsar in February, 1917. Strictly speaking, therefore, even Patriarch Tikhon was not a true patriarch, and even the martyrs and confessors of the Catacomb Church were tarred with the same brush of apostasy.

⁴²¹ Quoted in T. Groyan, *Tsariu Nebesnomu i zemnomu vernij* (Faithful to the Heavenly and Earthly King), Moscow: Palomnik, 1996, p. CXLII.

Now although Bishop Diomedes makes some valid points, his thesis as a whole is a gross distortion of the truth which, whether he means to do this or not, it provides sergianism with a subtle justification. There were still many monarchists in the Russian Church after 1917, and the schism between the Moscow Patriarchate, on the one hand, and the Russian Catacomb Church and the Russian Church Abroad, on the other in 1927 was largely based on whether the revolutions of 1917 could be accepted as legitimate or not. The MP in essence endorsed the revolution – both the democratic one of February, and the Bolshevik one of October – whereas the confessors of the Catacomb Church and the Church Abroad rejected both the one and the other.

In fact, the infatuation of (some, not all of) the Russian Church leadership with the “freedom” offered by the revolution lasted only for a very short time – as long as it took for democracy to surrender to Bolshevism. Thus as early as November 11, 1917 the Local Council of the Russian Orthodox Church declared: “No earthly kingdom can be based on atheism: it will perish from inner strife and party squabbles. Therefore the Russian State also will perish from this demonic atheism... For those who see the only foundation of their power in the violence of one estate over the whole people, the homeland and its sacred things does not exist. They have become traitors of the Homeland; they are carrying out an unheard of betrayal of Russia and our faithful allies. But, to our misfortune, there has not yet arisen a truly popular authority that would be worthy to receive the blessing of the Orthodox Church...”

There followed the anathematization of Soviet power in January, 1918, and the touching sermon of Patriarch Tikhon on the occasion of the murder of Tsar Nicholas in July. True, as Bishop Diomedes points out, there had been no call for the support of the Tsar when he was in prison, nor did any leading figure speak out in defence of the monarchy as such. But this was a sickness or sleep of the Russian Church – and a sickness that was not unto death. The millions of martyrs who defied Soviet power are the proof of that.

Nevertheless, the sickness persisted for some years yet. Thus in one of its last decrees, dated August 2/15, 1918, the Local Council emphasized the refusal of the Church to interfere in politics: every member of the Church was free to take part in political activity in accordance with the promptings of his Christian conscience, but nobody had the right to force another member of the Church by ecclesiastical means, whether direct or indirect, to join any particularly political tendency. As Nicholas Zernov put it, “the patriarch, bishops and laymen could have their own political opinions and sympathies, but none of them had the right to bind the Church as an organization to any political party or system.”⁴²²

It is understandable that the Church at that time did not want to arouse the wrath of the Bolsheviks by openly monarchist appeals or slogans. But this decree could give the impression that the Church did not care what political tendency came to power, that it was making a sign of equality between monarchism and communism. And even

⁴²² N. Zernov, “The 1917 Council of the Russian Orthodox Church”, *Religion in Communist Lands*, vol. 6, no. 1 (1978), p. 19.

that a Christian was free to become a communist if he wanted. Of course, the Council did not have this in mind. But reasons for such misunderstandings were there.

Clarity in this question was introduced, not by new explanatory speeches of Church leaders, but by events: the persecution against the Church, the murders of hundreds of thousands of Orthodox Christians, and especially – the renovationist movement, which welcomed communism in the name of the Church and accused the Orthodox of the “sin” of “counter-revolution”. It became clear to all the True Orthodox Christians it was simply impossible to be simultaneously a Christian and a supporter of the communist order, and that those who tried to do this were traitors and Judases. It was not that the hierarchs did not try to establish some kind of modus vivendi with the Bolsheviks, and show themselves to be loyal citizens of the Soviet Union in a certain limited and relative sense. But the logic of events, and the logic of the communist ideology, which was openly and inexorably atheist and anti-theist, gradually forced the leaders of the Church to recognize the bitter truth: that they could not serve two masters, and that there can be no concord between Christ and Beliar, the believer and the infidel (II Corinthians 6.15).

A step forward in the understanding of this question was provided by the epistle of a group of bishops imprisoned on Solovki in 1926: “The signatories of the present declaration are fully aware of how difficult the establishment of mutually reliable relations between the Church and the State in the conditions of present-day actuality are, and they do not consider it possible to be silent about it. It would not be right, it would not correspond to the dignity of the Church, and would therefore be pointless and unpersuasive, if they began to assert that between the Orthodox Church and the State power of the Soviet republics there were no discrepancies of any kind. But this discrepancy does not consist in what political suspicion wishes to see or the slander of the enemies of the Church points to. The Church is not concerned with the redistribution of wealth or in its collectivization, since She has always recognized that to be the right of the State, for whose actions She is not responsible. The Church is not concerned, either, with the political organization of power, for She is loyal with regard to the government of all the countries within whose frontiers She has members. She gets on with all forms of State structure from the eastern despotism of old Turkey to the republics of the North-American States. This discrepancy lies in the irreconcilability of the religious teaching of the Church with materialism, the official philosophy of the Communist Party and of the government of the Soviet republics which is led by it.

So there was a “discrepancy” between the world-views of the Church and Soviet power that made their cooperation problematic. But how problematic? Further clarification on this was provided in the wake of the notorious declaration of Metropolitan Sergius in 1927, which openly placed the Church he represented on the side of the revolution and forced the descent of the True Church, which rejected his declaration, into the catacombs.

Although many Catacomb hierarchs and clerics under interrogation expressed themselves with great caution (and no wonder!), there were those who did not hide their convictions. Among them was the chief organizer of the “Josephite” branch of

the Catacomb Church, Archbishop Demetrius of Gdov. He “not only did not speak about loyalty, but at one interrogation said openly: ‘We believe that the Church cannot be loyal to a power that persecutes it, and Soviet power, in our judgement, does persecute the Church.’ And at his interrogation on March 3, 1931 he declared: ‘We believe on religious grounds that Soviet power is not a State authority for us, it not the kind of authority that we can submit to. Acceptable for us is such an authority as is spoken about in one of our documents, that is, in the recorded conversation with Metropolitan Sergius: “Hierarchy is called authority when not only someone is subject to me, but I myself am subject to someone higher, that is, everything ascends to God as the source of all authority.” In other words, such an authority is the Anointed of God, the monarch.

“I accept that our recognition of Soviet power as an antichristian power must entail for the believers who orient themselves on us the impossibility of taking part in any of its enterprises, whatever they may be.”⁴²³

Let us also take note of the testimony given on this matter by another organizer of the Catacomb Church, Hieromartyr Bishop Mark (Novoselov): “I am an enemy of Soviet power - and what is more, by dint of my religious convictions, insofar as Soviet power is an atheist power and even anti-theist. I believe that as a true Christian I cannot strengthen this power by any means... [There is] a petition which the Church has commanded to be used every day in certain well-known conditions... The purpose of this formula is to request the overthrow of the infidel power by God... But this formula does not amount to a summons to believers to take active measures, but only calls them to pray for the overthrow of the power that has fallen away from God.”

So the True Orthodox Christian must pray for the overthrow of Soviet power. But this does not amount to a summons to physical war. For, as another Catacomb hierarch, Hieromartyr Archbishop Barlaam of Perm wrote: “The Church may not carry on external struggle, but the Church should devote herself to spiritual struggle with such a government.”

Conclusion

We come to the conclusion that to the question: “Must an Orthodox Christian be a Monarchist?”, the answer of the great majority both of the ancient Fathers of the Church and of the Holy New Martyrs and Confessors of Russia was: “Yes”. Monarchy is the natural, God-established mode of political government, the one most conducive to the practice of the Christian life, and the only one blessed by the Church in a sacramental rite - the rite of the anointing to the kingdom. It is a grave sin - and one subject to the Church’s anathema (see the eleventh anathema of the Order of the Sunday of Orthodoxy) - to rise up in rebellion against the Lord’s Anointed. Revolution against a monarch can be justified only in the case that the monarch has apostasized from Orthodoxy and persecutes the Orthodox Church - in which case he is no longer an “authority” in the Church’s language, but a “tyrant” or “anti-

⁴²³ L.E. Sikorskaia (compiler), *Sviaschennomuchenik Dmitrij Arkhiepiskop Gdovskij* (Hieromartyr Demetrius, Archbishop of Gdov), Moscow, 2008, pp. 187-188.

authority". Julian the Apostate and Soviet power are two examples of "monarchical" powers which the Church refused to submit to; for, as the Kherson protopriest, Hieromartyr John Skadovsky said in his interrogation on November 28, 1934, a true supporter of the truly Orthodox Church must be a supporter of the Russian monarchy and cannot be loyal to Soviet power or enter into any kind of compromise with it...⁴²⁴

However, it may be objected to this conclusion that it is applicable only to the inhabitants of Russia or other Orthodox countries with monarchist traditions. What about those who have been brought up in non-Orthodox countries under non-monarchist regimes all their lives? In what way can they be monarchists?

In answer to this objection, we may reply that between the extremes of an Orthodox monarchy such as Byzantium or Russia, on the one hand, and an antichristian power such as Julian the Apostate or Soviet power, on the other, there are many gradations of more or less legitimate political power, which have elicited correspondingly varied degrees of support or criticism from the Church. As the epistle of the imprisoned Solovki bishops says, the Orthodox Church has got on "with all forms of State structure from the eastern despotism of old Turkey to the republics of the North-American States". Sometimes it has actively prayed for a non-Orthodox government when it has been pursuing policies approved by the Church, as when the Synod of the Russian Church Abroad blessed the war of the United States against communist North Vietnam. In all these intermediate cases a pragmatic approach is required based on the principle: the Christian can support that which is good and cannot support that which is evil. Moreover, it should not be forgotten that even in Orthodox monarchies the Church and individual Christians have at times had to oppose – sometimes even at the cost of their lives – mistaken measures that have given to Caesar what is God's...

However, even Christians living in non-Orthodox or democratic States can and should be monarchists in this sense, that, even while obeying the laws of their non-Orthodox State to the extent that their conscience allows, they must believe with their hearts and confess with their lips that the political structure that God has blessed for His people is the Orthodox monarchy, and that where this monarchy has been overthrown it is the duty of Orthodox Christians to pray for its restoration. In this sense, therefore, the Orthodox Christian, regardless of where or when he lives or to what kind of Caesar he pays his taxes, must be a monarchist. Thus even non-Russians living under completely different political and social conditions can and should join themselves to the following words of Metropolitan Macarius (Nevsky) of Moscow, the only hierarch who refused to recognize the new democratic government of Russia in February, 1917: "He who does not pray for the Russian Orthodox Tsar is not Russian, nor Orthodox, nor a faithful subject, nor a son of the Fatherland. He is like a stranger who merely lives on the Russian land, but in fact has no moral right to be called Russian."⁴²⁵

July 4/17, 2009.

⁴²⁴ "Novosvyaschennomuchenik Tserkvi Katakombnoj Arkhiepiskop Prokopy (Titov) Odessky i Khersonsky", catacomb.org.ua.

⁴²⁵ Groyan, *op. cit.*, p. LV.

Tsar-Martyr Nicholas and his Family.

17. THE REBIRTH AND DEATH OF COMMUNISM

“For 70 years,” writes the Russian priest Daniel Sisoiev, “the servants of Satan took hold of Russia and destroyed millions of Christians in her. But the most terrible thing is that the disease of communism is indestructible until the Second Coming of Christ. After all, the root of this evil lies in satanic envy.”⁴²⁶

True Orthodox Christians are still, twenty years after the fall of the Berlin wall, suffering from persecution at the hands of Putin’s regime, so they can sympathize with these words. The seizure of fourteen of ROAC’s churches in Suzdal is a clear proof that communism is alive and well in Russia. Moreover, there are many other signs: the increased power of the KGB-FSB, which now controls 40% of government positions, the return of Soviet symbols such as the red flag and the melody of the Soviet national anthem, the openly pro-Soviet and pro-Stalinist sentiments of Prime Minister Putin, the continuing power and influence of the Sovietized Moscow Patriarchate, the continued nostalgia for the great years of the evil empire in the minds of many, the suppression of dissent, the gradual re-nationalization of the economy, the vast increase of corruption and injustice of all kinds.

Nevertheless, the closest historical parallels for contemporary Russia are not with Stalin’s Soviet Union, but with Hitler’s Germany. Just as Hitler came to power on the back of a deep resentment in the German people against the Versailles treaty and its defeat in the First World War, so Putin has played on the Soviet Russian people’s deep resentment at its defeat in the Cold War and its hatred of the victor in that war, America. This resentment and desire for revenge is clearly closely related to the “satanic envy” that Sisoiev sees as the root of communism. Thus contemporary Russia, like Nazi Germany, longs to return to her former great-power status, she is rearming as feverishly as did Germany in the 1930s, and like Nazi Germany sees her chief enemies in the Anglo-Saxons and the Jews. Putin’s support of Eurasianism, a nationalist Russian ideology originally thought up by the Bolsheviks in the 1920s as a “reserve” ideology to Bolshevism itself, is like a Slavic version of Hitler’s Aryan racism and fascism. And the modern Russian festival of the Day of National Unity (November 4), which was designed to take the place of the communist November festivities, has now been turned into a triumph of radical nationalism.⁴²⁷

But if contemporary Russia recalls Nazi Germany rather more than the Soviet Union, there are other modern states that successfully continue the Soviet traditions. The most obvious of these is China. Many have been deceived by China’s very rapid and impressive modernization and economic expansion into thinking that this is no longer really a communist state. This is a mistake: the Chinese government’s grip on its subjects is still very powerful. Chinese concentration camps are still full of dissidents; religious believers who criticize the government are persecuted; and control of the media, including the internet, is strong. China has diverged from the

⁴²⁶ “Aktivist ‘missionerskogo’ dvizhenia RPTs MP o. Daniil Sisoiev sovetuiet pravoslavnyim ne družhit’ s kommunistami i vkushat’ s nimi pischi”, November 9, 2009, www.portal-credo.ru/site/print?act=news&id=74151.

⁴²⁷ <http://www.portal-credo.ru/site/?act=topic&id=296>.

Soviet model only in allowing a large measure of state-sponsored capitalism to reinvigorate its economy. That economic policy, - whose corner-stone is trade on a very large scale with America, so large that the symbiotic relationship thus created has been called "Chimerica" by the historian Niall Ferguson⁴²⁸, - means that China is now less economically self-sufficient than she would like to be, or as the Soviet communist ideal of autarchy would demand. Moreover, the Chinese economy must expand rapidly every year in order to satisfy its burgeoning and increasingly restless population and keep its vast unemployment problem under control. And China's increasingly desperate search for sources of oil looks increasingly likely to bring it into conflict with its neighbours at some time in the future. Nevertheless, these stresses do not constitute an immediate threat to the regime itself, but rather give it excuses to increase its despotic control and increase the number and quality of its armed forces...

A third candidate for the title of "the Soviet Union reborn" is the United States. Now the processes of increasing state power and totalitarian control that we see around the world can undoubtedly be seen also in the United States. What makes these processes particularly threatening in America in the eyes of many is the American leadership in science and technology and the fact that America is now far more powerful than any other country in the military sphere. Nevertheless, the fact remains that America is still one of the freest countries in the world, which is demonstrated by the fact that many of the fiercest and most vociferous critics of America are Americans themselves. If all the evil forces of modern secularism and totalitarianism are present in America, the movements *against* these forces, - such as those against Darwinism, abortion, ecumenism, globalization and the UN - are also to be found there, and usually in stronger, better-financed and better-organized forms than elsewhere. This paradox is largely owing to the continuingly high levels of religiosity in America - far higher, according to the polls, than in Europe or Russia. Of course, this religiosity is mainly Protestant fundamentalist and evangelical, which is not to the taste of True Orthodox Christians. And some of the more sinister aspects of this religiosity, such as its fanatical support for Israel and Jewry, raise the spectre in Orthodox minds of American power enthroning the Antichrist himself. However, the personal opinion of the present writer is that it is more likely that the United States, undermined by its ever-increasing debt, will collapse into lawless anarchy before its final transformation into the Antichrist. This would be in accord with the prophecy of Elder Aristocles of Moscow in 1911: "America will feed the world, but will finally collapse".

A fourth candidate for the role of Soviet Union reborn is the European Union. Last week *Pravda* carried the headline: "Twenty years after the fall of the Berlin Wall, the EU is now a reincarnation of the Soviet Union". Highly ironical - and not far from the truth. The headline was referring to the fact that the Lisbon Treaty has now passed into law in every member-state of the European Union. That treaty destroys the last vestiges of real national sovereignty in the whole of the European space west of Belorussia and south of the Ukraine, leaving as the only sovereign powers in that space the European Union itself, Serbia and Albania...

⁴²⁸ Ferguson, *The Ascent of Money*, New York: The Penguin Press, 2008.

On December 1 the Lisbon Treaty will come into force, giving the EU, as Christopher Booker writes, “the supreme government it has wanted for so long – unelected, unaccountable and, as even its own polls show, less popular with those it rules over than ever before. But what do the politicians care? They have the power, and we now have a government we can never dismiss...”⁴²⁹ The government of the EU is not only undemocratic: it is totalitarian in the sense that it tries to exert control over every aspect of its citizens’ lives, not excluding religion. And if large-scale persecution of Christians has not yet begun, this is probably only because there are hardly any real Christians left in Europe outside Greece. (The Greeks themselves can be trusted to persecute their own religious dissenters, such as the monks of Esphigmenou.) After all, even the Soviet Union weakened its persecution of Christians towards the end of its existence, when the only real Christians were a very small minority that had been driven into the catacombs...

The EU is far more socialist than the United States, and far more intrusive into the private lives of its citizens. Thus the United Kingdom, the most eurosceptic state in the Union, has more surveillance cameras per head of population than any country in the world. Again, continental Europeans, especially the French, have tended to portray their State as far more cultured and civilized than the United States. And yet pornography, homosexuality and various forms of vice are more widespread in Europe and encounter far less opposition from either the State or the people. Again, Europe lauds itself on practising “soft power” as opposed to the crude militarism of the United States. In practice, this means that the Europeans (with the partial exception of the British) want the United States to pay for the Europeans’ defence while they themselves send only token forces to take part in NATO operations. In any case, the continued military weakness of the Europeans means that they will remain dependent on American arms for some time to come. It is this military weakness which disqualifies the EU from being a new Soviet Union – yet. But in every other way, it is just as threatening as the other totalitarian powers. Moreover, weak or not, it is the EU that is expanding its territory (by means of “soft power”) and approaching the borders of Russia...

So we return to Russia, the neo-communist and increasingly fascist State on which both the fears and the hopes of True Orthodox Christians rest. Our fears, because True Orthodoxy is persecuted in Russia, and the carefully cultivated image of an Orthodox “symphonic” partnership between Church and State is a sham – but a sham that has the power to deceive and seduce many Orthodox both within and beyond Russia’s frontiers. And our hopes, because both the prophecies of the saints and an analysis of the Orthodox world today make clear that a real revival of True Orthodoxy powerful enough to lead to a real Triumph of Orthodoxy could only begin in Russia. So while Orthodox Christians must long for the triumph of Russia on the world scene in the long term, *in the short term* they can only hope for the removal of the present regime, as the essential condition for the revival of True Orthodoxy and a True Orthodox Tsardom.

What, then, are the prospects for the death of this reborn Soviet Union?

⁴²⁹ Booker, “The End of the Great Deception”, *The Sunday Telegraph* (London), November 8, 2009.

Several Orthodox saints – St. John of Kronstadt, Elder Aristocles of Moscow and Elder Theodosius of Minvody - prophesied that the final fall of Bolshevik Russia would come about *through China*. Thus Elder Aristocles prophesied that Russia and China would destroy each other in a great world war, after which Russia would be freed and would send missionaries to convert the peoples to Orthodoxy throughout the world. There is a certain Divine justice in the idea that Bolshevism should be destroyed by its own greatest and most fearful offspring, Chinese communism. Of course, at the present time Russia and China are great friends. The two powers rail together against American power (Russia rather more loudly than China), while China flatters Russia that she is still a great power on a par with the other great powers, turns a blind eye to her heavy-handed approach to combating rebellion in Chechnya, and enters into meaningless security pacts with her. The reward of her flattery is that she receives valuable military hardware and software from Russia, together with Siberian oil at ridiculously discounted prices.⁴³⁰ Meanwhile, large numbers of Chinese are crossing the border into Siberia, buying land and setting up businesses.

Russia appears to have neither the will nor the capacity to stop this peaceful invasion through her back door. Putin even handed over a small chunk of Siberia to China on January 1 last year. Foolishly, the Russians seem to believe in the good intentions of the Chinese, as if good communists would never fall out with each other. Recent history (e.g. the incident on the Ussuri river in 1969), together with a study of the Chinese mentality, should have taught them otherwise. They should have realized that what the Chinese want from the Russians is not their kisses but their oil, and that if that supply should ever dry up they will discard the Russians like a used lemon.

In this connection the recent very bad economic figures of Gazprom are highly significant. If the flow of Siberian oil begins to dry up because of under-investment in new fields, or technical breakdowns in the old ones, there will be many nervous and angry customers in both East and West. China may then be tempted to supplement its “soft power” approach with some “hard power” – and the West will be unlikely to intervene, at any rate immediately...

Of course, all this is speculation – and highly simplified speculation at that. We have not even touched on the influence that that other totalitarian force, Islam, is likely to play in the coming years. But the prophecies of the saints are not speculation, and they foresee the overthrow of the present neo-Bolshevik, neo-fascist regime at the hands of the Chinese. So Soviet totalitarianism still lives, but it will not live for long. “He who takes up the sword,” as the Lord said, “shall perish by the sword...” (Matthew 26.52).

October 28 / November 10, 2009.

⁴³⁰ “The \$20-a-barrel price borders on the shocking” (Stephen Kotkin, “The Unbalanced Triangle”, *Foreign Affairs*, September-October, 2009, p. 133).

18. ORTHODOXY, UNIVERSALISM AND NATIONALISM

It is sometimes said that we are now living through a time similar to that of the first centuries in the history of the Church, before St. Constantine made Christianity the official religion of the civilized world. There are certainly many similarities between that time and ours. But in one respect at least there is a very sharp difference: whereas in the first centuries Christianity was seen as the most universal of all the existing religions, and the least tied to a specific people and place and national tradition, now Orthodox Christianity is perceived as among the most culture-specific of all religions, closely tied to the national traditions of certain specific peoples, such as the Greeks and the Russians...

Of course, in its origins Christianity *did* arise in a specific place and out of a specific national tradition: that of the Jews. And for some time the Church was seen as simply a Jewish sect. However, this perception began to change after the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D., when the Jews were expelled from their homeland, relations between the Church and the Synagogue became increasingly tenuous and hostile, and the flow of Jewish converts to Christianity began to dry up. Not that the Jewish roots of Christianity were ever forgotten. But the Church was now overwhelmingly a Gentile community composed of people of all nations and with a message aimed at the people of all nations. The Jews now looked on the Christians as completely alien to themselves, and on Jewish Christians as traitors to the national cause. At the same time, the Roman emperors were forced to reclassify the Christians, distinguish them from the Jews, and treat them in a different manner.

"The Roman government," writes Alexander Dvorkin, "in practice was tolerant to any cult if only it did not incite to rebellion and did not undermine morality. Moreover, the Romans thought that one of the reasons for their military successes was the fact that while other peoples worshipped only their own local gods, the Romans showed marks of honour to all the gods without exception and for that were rewarded for their special piety. All cults not established by the state were allowed, but theoretically did not have the right to propagandize in Rome, although their gods also entered into the Roman pantheon. In the first century after Christ religions already known to the contemporary Roman were not, as a rule, persecuted for propagandizing. However, the law retained its prior force, and theoretically the possibility of applying it remained. The permitted religions had to satisfy two criteria: place and time. Religion was always a local matter - that is, it was linked to a definite people living in a definite locality, - and also an ancient matter, linked to the history of this people. It was more complicated to assimilate the God of the Jews, Who had no representation and did not accept sacrifices in any place except Jerusalem, into their pantheon. The Jews themselves did not allow His representation to be placed anywhere and stubbornly declined to worship the Roman gods. The Jews were monotheists and theoretically understood that their faith in principle excluded all other forms of religion. Nevertheless, in spite of all the complications with the Jews and the strangeness of their religion, it was still tolerated: the religion of the Jews was a national one and, besides, ancient, and it was considered sacrilege to encroach on it. Moreover, the Jews occupied an important political niche that was for the Romans a stronghold of their eastern conquests. In view of all these considerations, the Romans

gritted their teeth and recognized the Jewish religion as licit. Privileges were given to the Jewish people also because their rites seemed strange and dirty. The Romans thought that the Jews simply could not have proselytes among other peoples and would rather repel the haughty Roman aristocrat. Therefore the Jews were given the right to confess their belief in one God. Until the rebellion of 66-70 the Roman authorities treated them with studied tolerance. Augustus gave the Jews significant privileges, which, after the crisis under Caligula, who wanted to put his statue in the Jerusalem Temple (cf. Mark 13.14 and II Thessalonians 2.3-4), were again renewed by Claudius.

“The circumstances changed when Christianity appeared. Having examined it, the Romans classified the Christians as apostates from the Jewish faith. It was precisely the traits that distinguished the Christians from the Jews that made them still lower in the eyes of the Romans even than the Judaism they had little sympathy for. Christianity did not have the right belonging to historical antiquity – it was the ‘new religion’ so displeasing to the Roman conservative. It was not the religion of one people, but on the contrary, lived only through proselytes from other religions. If the propagandizing of other cults by their servers was seen rather as a chance violation, for Christians missionary work was their only modus vivendi – a necessity of their very position in history. Christians were always reproached for a lack of historical and national character in their religion. Celsus, for example, saw in Christians a party that had separated from Judaism and inherited from it its inclination for disputes.

“The Christians could demand tolerance either in the name of the truth or in the name of freedom of conscience. But since for the Romans one of the criteria of truth was antiquity, Christianity, a new religion, automatically became a false religion. The right of freedom of conscience that is so important for contemporary man was not even mentioned at that time. Only the state, and not individuals, had the right to establish and legalize religious cults. In rising up against state religion, the Christians became guilty of a state crime – they became in principle enemies of the state. And with such a view of Christianity it was possible to interpret a series of features of their life in a particular way: their nocturnal gatherings, their waiting for a certain king that was to come, the declining of some of them from military service and above all their refusal to offer sacrifices to the emperor.”⁴³¹

So Christians were suspect because of the supposed “lack of historical and national character in their religion”, i.e. because of its *universalism*. Rome could tolerate and respect any number of historical and national religions, so long as they did not make claims to exclusive truth and universality. Of course, the Jews did claim that their God was the only true God, and there are definite hints of the universality of the Jewish religion in the Law and the Prophets. However, the Jews were still “historical and national” – and, especially after 70 A.D., they became more closed in on themselves and did not try to make proselytes from other religions. So the Jews could be tolerated – just. But it was a different case with Christianity: it was completely and explicitly universalist. And this constituted a threat to the Roman view of things; for the only

⁴³¹ Dvorkin, *Ocherki po Istorii Vselenskoj Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi* (Sketches on the History of the Universal Orthodox Church), Nizhni-Novgorod, 2006, pp. 79-80.

universal power that Rome recognized was *herself*, and the only universal religion – the cult of the Roman Emperor.

Roman universality meant that St. Paul, a “Hebrew of the Hebrews”, could also say, without sense of contradiction: “I am a Roman citizen”. Already from the beginning of the second century, we find non-Roman emperors of Rome; they came from as far afield as Spain and Arabia, Dacia and Africa. In 212 Rome offered citizenship to all free subjects of the empire, which meant that these subjects could both identify with the empire as their own country and rise to the highest positions within it. And so Rutilius Namatianus could say of Rome: “You have made out of diverse races one patria”. And the poet Claudian wrote: “we may drink of the Rhine or Orontes”, but “we are all one people”. For the nations had become one in Rome:

*She is the only one who has received
The conquered in her arms and cherished all
The human race under a common name,
Treating them as her children, not her slaves.
She called these subjects Roman citizens
And linked far worlds with ties of loyalty.⁴³²*

The clash between pagan Rome and the Church was ultimately a clash between two universalist visions – a political and constitutional one, and a spiritual and ecclesiastical one. They could not co-exist in their existing forms. But St. Constantine the Great showed that, with some adaptation on both sides – radical in the case of Rome (the abolition of emperor-worship), minor in the case of the Church (its administrative reorganization) – they could come together in a “symphonic” union – the Roman Christian Empire. Then for the first time the State could feel at home in the Church, and the Christians (up to a point) – in the State. “The breadth of the East,” wrote the Spanish priest Orosius, “the vastness of the North, the extensiveness of the South, and the very large and secure seats of the islands are of my name and law because I, as a Roman and Christian, approach Christians and Romans...”

The critical change came with the Edict of Milan in 313, which was signed by Constantine and his fellow-emperor Licinius: “Our purpose is to grant both to the Christians and to all others full authority to follow whatever worship each man has desired; whereby whatsoever divinity dwells in heaven may be benevolent and propitious to us, and to all who are placed under our authority”.⁴³³ So Christians were no longer compelled to worship the emperor.

But the significance of the Edict goes beyond this. Fr. Alexis Nikolin writes: “The Edict of Milan decisively rejected many traditions of antiquity. St. Constantine clearly proclaimed that Christianity is not the property of any particular people, but is a universal religion, the religion of the whole of humanity. If formerly it was thought that a given religion belongs to a given people and for that reason it is sacred and untouchable, now the lawgiver affirmed a new principle: that the sacred and

⁴³² Claudian, in Michael Grant, *The Fall of the Roman Empire*, London: Phoenix, 1996, p. 128.

⁴³³ Lactantius, *On the Deaths of the Persecutors*, 48. 2-12.

untouchable religion was that religion which belonged to all peoples – Christianity. It was obviously not an attempt to bring Christianity under the usual (pagan) juridical forms, but a principled change in those forms.”⁴³⁴

The modern world – or “the international community”, as it is often called by globalists – has a very similar approach to religion to that of the Roman pagan authorities. Any number of “historical and national” religions are permitted – indeed, encouraged for the sake of cultural variety – so long as none of them makes a claim to exclusive and universal truth. It is *politics* that is the only permissible universal religion, and the aims of politics – equality, prosperity, stability, “human rights” – the only truly legitimate aims of life... Only two religions defy this consensus: Islam and Christianity. Islam is treated now as Judaism was treated in the first century: with kid gloves. For now, as then, the powers that be would prefer not to use force against a religion having large numbers of adherents and wielding great political and economic power. Besides, any religion that encourages suicide bombers to establish its claims has to be treated with “respect”.

It is a different matter with Christianity. The universalism of Christianity is no longer a threat quite simply because most Christians no longer confess it. Ecumenism has blunted the sharp sword of Christian truth, with the result that each of the Christian “denominations”, and Christianity as a whole, is simply seen as a local tradition no better in principle than any other local tradition. Indeed, Christianity is now seen as so “historical and national” as to be completely *passé*. In the march of historical progress (a modern concept not shared by the ancient Romans) Christianity has simply been left behind...

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Of course, this is highly ironical, because the word “ecumenism” derives from the Greek word *oikoumene*, “the inhabited world”, from which we get the word *oikoumenikos*, “ecumenical”, which can also be translated as “universal”. So the ecumenical movement, although universal in its name and aims and emotional pathos, is in fact destroying the only truly universal religion – Christianity. Ecumenism, as the religious component of the globalization movement, is striving to localize Christianity, reduce it to a group of “national and historical” traditions that may have some cultural or aesthetic or psychological value for the nations that inherit them, but no relevance at all for the world as a whole, which can only be saved by what the globalists regard as the only truly universal religion – that of human rights.

But there is a still greater, and more tragic irony: that we the anti-ecumenists, the True Orthodox who maintain that Orthodoxy Christianity is the one and only true faith for all men, often inadvertently give the impression of supporting the ecumenists’ attitude to their faith. For we passionately defend our national religious traditions – whether they be Greek, Russian, Serbian, Romanian or whatever – while failing to unite in a single Church so as to proclaim the truth with one voice to the whole world. It is not that we do not believe that our faith is for all men. We do – or

⁴³⁴ Nikolin, *Tserkov’ i Gosudarstvo* (Church and State), Moscow, 1997, p. 27.

most of us, at any rate. The problem is our failure to present a universalist icon of our universal truth...

“Charity begins at home,” goes the English proverb. This can be understood in both a descriptive and a prescriptive sense. On the one hand, charity, or love, as a matter of psycho-social *fact* begins in the context of one’s family, friends and neighbours; we learn to love at home. And on the other hand, love *should* begin with those closest to you, genetically and geographically. For if you cannot love those who brought you into the world and gave you everything that you are, whom can you love? Similarly, at the level of the nation, we see that almost everyone involuntarily loves their own people. He who does not love his own people, we feel, is not fully a man.

This is the order of nature. But nature is fallen. And love of one’s country, like the love of women, is often blind. This fallen, blind love of one’s country we call chauvinism, nationalism or phyletism. But there is a true, spiritual love of one’s country, which we call *patriotism*.

The Russian religious philosopher I.A. Ilyin described the patriotism, the true love of one’s country, as follows: “To love one’s people and believe in her, to believe that she will overcome all historical trials and will arise from collapse purified and sobered – does not mean to close one’s eyes to her weaknesses and imperfections, perhaps even her vices. To accept one’s people as the incarnation of the fullest and highest perfection on earth would be pure vainglory, sick nationalist conceit. The real patriot sees not only the spiritual paths of his people, but also her temptations, weaknesses and imperfections. Spiritual love generally is not given to groundless idealization, but sees soberly and with extreme acuteness. To love one’s people does not mean to flatter her or hide from her her weak sides, but honourably and courageously criticize them and tirelessly struggle with them.”⁴³⁵

The Lord Jesus Christ gives us in this, as in everything else, the perfect example. He loved His earthly country more than any Israelite – but in an unfallen way. Like Paul, He was “a Hebrew of the Hebrews”. But, again like Paul, He recognized that it is precisely earthly kinship and love that often makes one blind to the sins of one’s own people – and the virtues of other nations. He both loved His country and exposed its sins, sometimes expressing both the profoundest love and the sharpest condemnation in the same breath: “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under wings, and ye would not!” (Matthew 23.37).

Again and again the Lord tried to quench the fallen national pride of His compatriots, foreseeing the spiritual and national catastrophe to which it would lead. In several parables He prophesied that the Kingdom of heaven would be taken away from the Jews and given to foreigners. The parable of the Good Samaritan could also be called the parable of the Good *Foreigner*. Of course, the Samaritan signified Christ

⁴³⁵ Ilyin, *Put' dukhovnogo obnovenia* (The Path of Spiritual Renovation); quoted by Fr. Victor Potapov in *Put' Dukhovnogo Obnovenia Rossii* (The Path of the Spiritual Regeneration of Russia), p. 5 (MS).

Himself. But that is just the point: Christ is symbolized in the Samaritan because He might just as well have been a complete foreigner to His people, so little did they appreciate Him. Thus He was rejected and nearly killed by the people of his native Nazareth, to whom He said: "Verily I say unto you, No prophet is accepted by his own country" (Luke 4.24). And he went on to give two examples of prophets who had to flee Israel, but who were believed in by foreigners: Elijah by the widow of Sarepta in Sidon, and Elisha by Naaman the Syrian (vv. 26-27). It is a striking fact that, if we except the case of St. John the Forerunner ("among them that are born of women there hath not rise a greater than John the Baptist" (Matthew 11.11)), Christ reserved His greatest praise for foreigners like the Canaanite woman. He even praised foreigners from among the occupying race. Thus of the Roman centurion whose servant He healed He said: "I have not found such great faith, no, not in Israel" (Matthew 8.10). And then He went on to prophesy that there would be many more like him: "Many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the Kingdom of heaven. But the children of the Kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (vv. 11-12).

The Jews fell away from God precisely because they placed the nation and its vain glory above God and His true glory. Their heresy consisted, not in the belief that "salvation is of the Jews" (John 4.22), - for the Lord Himself believed that, - but in the belief that salvation was exclusively *for* the Jews, and that no other nation was worthy to partake of that salvation. However, the religion of the Old Testament, though full of warnings against adopting the false religions of the Gentiles, nevertheless contained the seeds of true universalism. Thus God commanded Abraham to circumcise not only every member of his family, but also "him that is born in the house, or bought with the money of any stranger, which is *not* of thy seed" (Genesis 17.12). The Canaanite Rahab and the Moabite Ruth were admitted into the faith and nation of the Jews. King David believed that "all the ends of the earth shall remember and shall turn unto the Lord, and all the kindreds of the nation shall worship before Him" (Psalms 21.27). And King Solomon prayed that God would hear the prayer of non-Israelites who prayed in his temple, "that all people of the earth may know Thy name, and fear Thee, as doth Thy people Israel" (II Chronicles 6.33). And so by the time of Christ there was a large Greek-speaking diaspora which was spreading the faith of the Jews throughout the Mediterranean world.⁴³⁶

However, the Pharisees, who came to dominate Jewry, were interested only in converts to the cause of Jewish nationalism (cf. Matthew 23.15). It was the Pharisees who incited Christ's death because He preached a different kind of spiritual and universalist Kingdom that was opposed to their nationalist dreams. And after His death, and the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD and the scattering of the surviving Jews throughout the world, the Jews became possessed by an egoistical, chauvinist spirit that was expressed in such a way that, as Rabbi Solomon Goldman put it, "God is absorbed in the nationalism of Israel."⁴³⁷

⁴³⁶ According to Paul Johnson, there were about eight million Jews at the time of Christ - 10 per cent of the Roman Empire (*A History of the Jews*, London: Phoenix, 1987, 1995, p. 171). Dvorkin (*op. cit.*, p. 41) gives a figure of four million in the diaspora, one million in Palestine.

⁴³⁷ Quoted in Douglas Reed, *The Controversy of Zion*, Durban, South Africa, 1978, p. 48.

The path of Jewish chauvinism has been followed, alas, by some Gentile Christian nations. Perhaps the first was the Armenians, whose anti-Chalcedonian and anti-Byzantine nationalism made theirs to be the first national church in the negative sense of that phrase – that is, a church that is so identified with the nation as to lose its universalist claims. Again, the Welsh, the remnants of the ancient Romano-British Church, refused to join with the Roman St. Augustine of Canterbury in the conversion of the pagan Anglo-Saxons because of their continuing hatred of the race that had driven them out of Eastern Britain. And so, as prophesied by St. Augustine, they were both defeated in battle and found themselves outside the union of Celtic and Roman Christianity that was achieved at the Synod of Whitby (664). They went into schism, and were regarded as schismatics by the Anglo-Saxon and Irish Churches. As an Irish canon put it, “the Britons [of Wales] are... contrary to all men, separating themselves both from the Roman way of life and the unity of the Church”.⁴³⁸ The English bishop, St. Aldhelm of Sherborne, described the behaviour of the schismatic Welsh thus: “Glorifying in the private purity of their own way of life, they detest our communion to such a great extent that they disdain equally to celebrate the Divine offices in church with us and to take course of food at table for the sake of charity. Rather,.. they order the vessels and flagons [i.e. those used in common with clergy of the Roman Church] to be purified and purged with grains of sandy gravel, or with the dusky cinders of ash.. Should any of us, I mean Catholics, go to them for the purpose of habitation, they do not deign to admit us to the company of their brotherhood until we have been compelled to spend the space of forty days in penance... As Christ truly said: ‘Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees; because you make clean the outside of the cup and of the dish’.”⁴³⁹

As we enter the second millennium of Christian history, we see nationalist passions becoming more widespread in the Orthodox world. Thus as the Armenians, Syrians and Copts separated from the empire, and came under the power of the Arabs, and then the Slavs and Romanians of the Balkan peninsula came under the power of the Turks, the Christian Roman Empire, while not giving up its universalist claims, came more and more to resemble a (rather small) Greek nation-state whose emperors had to struggle for occupancy of the imperial throne with the leaders of other nation-states – Tsar Kalojan of Bulgaria and Tsar Dušan of Serbia. However, the tearing apart of the empire along national lines was prevented, paradoxically, by the Fall of Constantinople in 1453. For the Turkish conquerors imposed their own rule over the whole of what had been the Eastern Roman Empire, including the warring Greeks, Bulgarians and Serbs. Moreover, by treating all the Orthodox Christians of their empire as a single *millet*, or “nation”, over whom they placed the Ecumenical Patriarchate as “ethnarch”, or civil-cum-ecclesiastical head, they reversed the

⁴³⁸ Quoted in A.W. Haddan & W. Stubbs, *Councils and Ecclesiastical Documents relating to Great Britain and Ireland*, Oxford: Clarendon, 1869, 1964, volume I, p. 122.

⁴³⁹ Haddan & Stubbs, *op. cit.*, pp. 202-20; translated by Michael Lapidge and Michael Herren, *Aldhelm: The Prose Works*, Ipswich: Brewer, 1979, p. 158.

The Welsh Church remained in schism until Bishop Elbod of Bangor restored the northern Welsh to unity in 768 (the southerners followed in 777). Iona was brought into line early in the eighth century through the efforts of the holy Abbots Egbert and Adomnan.

fissiparous tendencies of the Balkan Orthodox, forcing them into an administrative unity that they had failed to achieve while free.

But it did not last. In 1766 Patriarch Samuel abolished the autonomous status of the Bulgarian Ochrid diocese as well as the Serbian patriarchate of Peč, and sent Greek bishops into the “reconquered” territories who served the liturgy only in Greek for their non-Greek-speaking flocks. Old wounds were reopened, and resentment against the Greeks among the Slavs became so strong that, for example, when the Serbs rebelled against the Turks under Karadjordje, and the Greek *klephts* offered their support, it was rejected. Again, when the Bulgarians rebelled against the Ecumenical Patriarchate to form their own autocephalous Church with dioceses even in Turkey, they were anathematized by a Council of the patriarchate in 1872 for adhering to the heresy of “phyletism”, i.e. nationalism. Finally, in the decades before the First World War, and especially in the Balkan Wars of 1912-1913, the Orthodox Christians of the Balkans fought against each other with great savagery for control of Macedonia.

In relation to phyletism the Council of 1872 that anathematized the Bulgarians made the following decision: “...We have concluded that when the principle of racial division is juxtaposed with the teaching of the Gospel and the constant practice of the Church, it is not only foreign to it, but also completely opposed, to it.’ ‘We decree the following in the Holy Spirit: 1. We reject and condemn racial division, that is, racial differences, national quarrels and disagreements in the Church of Christ, as being contrary to the teaching of the Gospel and the holy canons of our blessed fathers, on which the holy Church is established and which adorn human society and lead it to Divine piety. 2. In accordance with the holy canons, we proclaim that those who accept such division according to races and who dare to base on it hitherto unheard-of racial assemblies are foreign to the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church and are real schismatics.”⁴⁴⁰

Fine words! The problem was that the authors of these words were as guilty of phyletism as those whom they condemned! So who, in truth, was the schismatic?⁴⁴¹

⁴⁴⁰ Eugene Pavlenko, “The Heresy of Phyletism: History and the Present”, *Vertograd-Inform*, (English edition), September, 1999. The full report of the special commission can be found in Hildo Boas and Jim Forest, *For the Peace from Above: an Orthodox Resource Book*, Syndesmos, 1999; in “The Heresy of Racism”, *In Communion*, Fall, 2000, pp. 16-18.

⁴⁴¹ Konstantin Leontiev, a Grecophile, wrote: “In the ecclesiastical question the Bulgarians and the Greeks were equally cunning and wrong according to conscience. The difference lay in the fact that *canonically*, formally, in the sense precisely of *abstract principles of tradition*, the Greeks were more right” (“Khram i Tserkov” (Temple and Church), in *Vostok, Rossia i Slavianstvo (The East, Russia and Slavdom)*, Moscow, 1996, p. 165). And again: “Both you [Greeks] and the Bulgarians can equally be accused of *phyletism*, that is, in introducing ethnic interests into Church questions, and in the use of religion as a political weapon; but the difference lies in the fact that Bulgarian *phyletism* is defensive, while yours is offensive. Their phyletism seeks only to mark out the boundaries of their tribe; yours seeks to cross the boundaries of Hellenism.” (“Panslavism i Greki” (Pan-Slavism and the Greeks), *op. cit.*, p. 46). D.A. Khomiakov wrote: “Is not ‘pride in Orthodoxy’ nothing other than the cultural pride of the ancient Greek? And, of course, the true ‘phyletism’, formulated for the struggle against the Bulgarians, is precisely the characteristic of the Greeks themselves to a much greater extent than the Bulgarians, Serbs, Syrians and others. With them it is only a protest against the basic phyletism of the Greeks. The contemporary Greek considers himself the exclusive bearer of pure Orthodoxy...” (*Pravoslavie, Samoderzhavie, Narodnost’ (Orthodoxy, Autocracy and Nationality)*, Minsk, 1997, p. 19). N.N.

However, this is not the important question for us now. The important question is: to what extent is the present disunity in the ranks of the True Orthodox the result of phyletism? And the answer is probably: not much, because divisions *within* the Churches are as numerous as those *between* them. Moreover, the blame for the lack of communion between different national Churches for most of the last century should with more justice be laid at the door of external factors – wars, revolutions, linguistic problems, persecutions – than of phyletism. Nor should we forget that there have been noble, if not very successful attempts to unite the national Churches – notably the Russian Church Abroad and the Greek Old Calendarists in 1969-71. Nevertheless, it would be rash to deny the strong influence of phyletism in some, if not all, True Orthodox jurisdictions. The *most* important question, therefore, is: how can the True Orthodox overcome the temptation of phyletism and translate words into deeds, their confession of Universal Orthodoxy into its practical manifestation?

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Glubokovsky wrote: "Greek nationalism historically merged with Orthodoxy and protected it by its own self-preservation, while it in its turn found a spiritual basis for its own distinctiveness. Orthodoxy and Hellenism were united in a close mutuality, which is why the first began to be qualified by the second. And Christian Hellenism realized and developed this union precisely in a nationalist spirit. The religious aspect was a factor in national strivings and was subjected to it, and it was not only the Phanariots [the inhabitants of Greek Constantinople] who made it serve pan-hellenic dreams. These dreams were entwined into the religious, Orthodox element and gave it its colouring, enduing the Byzantine patriarch with the status and rights of "ethnarch" for all the Christian peoples of the East, and revering him as the living and animated image of Christ (Matthew Blastaris, in his 14th century Syntagma, 8). As a result, the whole superiority of the spiritual-Christian element belonged to Hellenism, and could be apprehended by others only through Hellenism. In this respect the enlightened Grigorios Byzantios (or Byzantijsky, born in Constantinople, metropolitan of Chios from 1860, of Heraklion in 1888) categorically declared that 'the mission of Hellenism is divine and universal'. From this source come the age-old and unceasing claims of Hellenism to exclusive leadership in Orthodoxy, as its possessor and distributor. According to the words of the first reply (in May, 1576) to the Tübingen theologians of the Constantinopolitan patriarch Jeremiah II (+1595), who spoke in the capacity of a 'successor of Christ' (introduction), the Greek 'holy Church of God is the mother of the Churches, and, by the grace of God, she holds the first place in knowledge. She boasts without reproach in the purity of her apostolic and patristic decrees, and, while being new, is old in Orthodoxy, and is placed at the head', which is why 'every Christian church must celebrate the Liturgy exactly as she [the Greco-Constantinopolitan Church] does (chapter 13). Constantinople always displayed tendencies towards Church absolutism in Orthodoxy and was by no means well-disposed towards the development of autonomous national Churches, having difficulty in recognising them even in their hierarchical equality. Byzantine-Constantinopolitan Hellenism has done nothing to strengthen national Christian distinctiveness in the Eastern patriarchates and has defended its own governmental-hierarchical hegemony by all means, fighting against the national independence of Damascus (Antioch) and Jerusalem. At the end of the 16th century Constantinople by no means fully accepted the independence of the Russian Church and was not completely reconciled to Greek autocephaly (from the middle of the 19th century), while in relation to the Bulgarian Church they extended their nationalist intolerance to the extent of an ecclesiastical schism, declaring her (in 1872) in all her parts to be 'in schism'. It is a matter of great wonder that the champions of extreme nationalism in the ecclesiastical sphere should then (in 1872) have recognized national-ecclesiastical strivings to be impermissible in others and even labelled them 'phyletism', a new-fangled heresy." ("Pravoslavie po ego sushchestvu" (Orthodoxy in its essence), in *Tserkov' i Vremia (The Church and Time)*, 1991, pp. 5-6).

One fact should be recognized immediately: that it is neither possible nor desirable to turn the clock back to the time when the Church, after the falling away of the Judeo-Christians in the second century, was a community without national and historical traditions in the ordinary sense. It is not possible, because the Local Churches of Greece, Russia, Romania, Serbia, etc. are not going to disappear. And it is not desirable because it would be a catastrophe if they did disappear; for the national and historical traditions of these Local Churches are a priceless treasure which should be preserved at all cost, both for the sake of new generations born on the territories of these Local Churches who would most naturally become Christians by absorbing the local national tradition of Orthodoxy, and for the sake of converts from non-Orthodox lands. Moreover, experience has shown that those converts and their supporters among the "cradle Orthodox" who believe in escaping the phyletism of the old national Churches by creating new ones, such as the Orthodox Church of America, have in general been found prone to fall into heresy, especially ecumenism. And this is not surprising; for the Orthodox Church grows and develops in time, not through *revolution*, but through *evolution*, not through casting aside the experience and structures of earlier generations, but through accepting and renewing them.

At the same time, it is precisely on the mission-field, in such places as North America or Western Europe or Central Africa, that the dividedness of True Orthodoxy (as of World Orthodoxy) into a number of jurisdictions produces the most bitter fruits. "Cradle Orthodox", who in general are not tempted to join any other faith than Orthodoxy, simply put up with the divisions in their homeland (although their children might not): potential converts in the mission-field are more likely to abandon Orthodoxy altogether. Somehow a way must be found of preserving *both* rootedness in the old national traditions *and* an unhindered entry for converts into the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church...

In this connection it will be worth briefly examining the experience of the Russian Church Outside Russia (ROCOR). Not planned by men, but brought into being through the Providence of God as a result of the Russian revolution and the huge emigration it created, ROCOR represented a new phenomenon in Church history: a truly global jurisdiction having its headquarters in the mission-field, and yet rooted firmly in the traditions of one national Church. Wherever the Russian émigrés went, - and they went to almost every corner of the globe, - they built churches that reflected with great faithfulness the traditions of their Russian homeland. And yet, since their homeland had fallen into the hands of the God-hating atheists, who had in turn enslaved the official hierarchy of the Russian Church, the émigrés were forced to become administratively independent.

In this they probably reflected the situation of the Apostles more closely than any ecclesiastical group since the Apostolic era. For the Apostles, too, were rooted in the traditions of a national Church, that of the Jews. And they, too, were both expelled from the homeland by persecution and found themselves compelled, both by their own lofty (i.e. super-territorial) status as Apostles and by the apostasy of their fellow-countrymen, to separate themselves completely from them and devote themselves exclusively to the Gentile mission-field. Moreover, in such a figure as the ROCOR Archbishop John (Maximovich) of Shanghai, Western Europe and San Francisco we

see a truly apostolic – as well as thoroughly Russian – man who preached to people of all nations and faiths, and saw in his apostolic work, not an accidental by-product of his forced exile from Russia, but *the very purpose* of that exile. For, as he wrote: “God allowed the Russian revolution to take place in order that the Russian Church might become purged and purified, *and that the Orthodox Faith might be disseminated across the whole world.*”

No less instructive is the fall of ROCOR. It would be correct, but superficial, to call this a fall into the heresy of ecumenism – ROCOR is now part of the Moscow Patriarchate, which is part of the World Council of Churches. A deeper analysis, however, would conclude that ROCOR fell into *ecumenism* because of its almost simultaneous fall into *phyletism*.

What is the meaning of this paradox?

Commentators have noted that, after the death of St. John Maximovich in 1966, and especially after the Third All-Diaspora Council in Jordanville in 1974, the ROCOR hierarchs began to be concerned more with the preservation of “Russianness” (*russkost’*) than with the confession of the True Faith against the heresies of sergianism and ecumenism. Missionary work among non-Russians was not a priority for most of them, although St. Philaret of New York, who became first-hierarch in 1964, managed to keep the door open both for converts and for “cradle Orthodox” of other races who were fleeing ecumenism until his death in 1985. True, ecumenism was anathematized in 1983; but the true consequences of the anathema were denied, because these included a continuation and deepening of the break with the apostate “Mother Church” of the Moscow Patriarchate in the homeland – and union with the Russians in the homeland, whether they were truly Orthodox or not, was more important for many in ROCOR than union with the True Orthodox of other races... With the fall of the Soviet Union in 1989-91, and the return of ROCOR to Russia, the crisis deepened. It was not that so much that a return was wrong in principle – the Apostles would undoubtedly have returned to their homeland if they had been able to – but to *convert* them, not *submit* to them. However, weakened by sentimental phyletism, the Russian “apostles” did not have the heart consistently to tell their countrymen the harsh truth they needed to hear, and ended up by joining them in their apostasy in 2007.

This tragedy is a clear historical illustration of the truth first propounded by Konstantin Leontiev in the nineteenth century, that *liberalism or cosmopolitanism (ecumenism) and nationalism (phyletism) are two sides of the same coin*. Nationalism, he argued, is closely related to liberalism, which is simply the political version of ecumenism. Both nationalism and liberalism are rooted in the French revolution – liberalism in its early, Masonic phase (1789-91), and nationalism in its later, Napoleonic phase, when the idea enshrined in the Declaration of Human Rights that the nation is the source of all authority was translated into the idea of France as the nation par excellence. Both liberalism and nationalism insist on the essential equality of men (in the case of liberalism) or nations (in the case of nationalism); both erase individual differences, undermining *individuality* in the name of *individualism*, *hierarchy* in the name of *egalitarianism*. But this levelling down is only the flip side of a creeping up, as each nation strives to keep up with the others, fearing that while all

nations are theoretically equal some are in fact more equal than others... According to Leontiev, the nations' striving to be independent of each other was based precisely on their desire to be *like* every other nation: "Having become politically liberated, they are very glad, whether in everyday life or in ideas, to be like everyone else... So much for the national development, which makes them all similar to contemporary Europeans, which spreads... petty rationalism, egalitarianism, religious indifference, European bourgeois uniformity in tastes and manners: machines, pantaloons, frock-coats, top hats and demagogu!"⁴⁴²

As Metropolitan Anastasy (Gribanovsky), second first-hierarch of ROCOR, said: "The nation, this collective organism, is just as inclined to deify itself as the individual man. The madness of pride grows in this case in the same progression, as every passion becomes inflamed in society, being refracted in thousands and millions of souls."⁴⁴³ Thus there is a similarity in motivation in all three of the great evils: individualism, nationalism and ecumenism. The origin of all of them is prideful self-assertion: "I am as good as you", or "my nation is as good as your nation", or "my religion is as good as your religion". When self-assertion fails to achieve its aim, it is followed by a (temporary) compromise which preserves everyone's pride intact: "We are equally good", "our nations are equally good", and "our religions are equally good"...

So everyone is happy, and the only thing lost is - the truth. We believe, however, that there is a real difference between individuals and nations - not by nature, but because each individual or nation uses or abuses his or its freewill in relation to the truth. As for the truth itself, that is one and immutable, and the religion that expresses it is intrinsically and forever superior to all others...

*

So ROCOR, the first experiment in truly global True Orthodoxy, failed. But did it have to fail? And does not its at any rate temporary success in preserving True Orthodoxy as a global missionary religion free from the extremes both of ecumenism and of phyletism indicate the need for another experiment on similar lines?

In order to answer this question we need to look briefly at other historical experiments in ecclesiastical globalism. One, the most famous, is that of the Roman papacy. A second is that of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. A third is the American Church before the revolution.

We have to admit that for many centuries, - essentially until the Second Vatican Council in the early 1960s, when traditional Roman Catholicism, as many Roman Catholics ruefully admitted, surrendered to the New World Order, - the papacy was able to maintain its status as a truly global religion without falling into either of the twin evils of ecumenism and phyletism. But it was able to do that, while retaining its

⁴⁴² Leontiev, "Plody natsional'nykh dvizhenij" (The Fruits of the National Movements, *op. cit.*, p. 560.

⁴⁴³ Gribanovsky, *Besedy s sobstvennym serdtsem* (Conversations with my own heart), Jordanville, 1998, p. 33.

administrative unity, only by falling into a still deeper heresy that is truly satanic in its pride: the heresy of papal infallibility.

There are two aspects, or stages, to this heresy. The first is the idea that Rome is the ultimate court of appeal in ecclesiastical disputes, so that the Pope is in fact the single head of the Church on earth, having jurisdiction over all the Local Churches. We find this idea as early as the fifth century, in the writings of Pope St. Leo the Great, for whom the universality and one-man-rule of the Roman Empire naturally required a parallel universality and one-man-rule in the Orthodox Church – that is, the Church of the Roman Empire – that is, the Church of Rome. Although in error in this, St. Leo was too tactful, too Orthodox in other ways, and too genuinely concerned for the welfare of the Church to put his ideas into practice, or to lead them to their logical conclusion – infallibility.⁴⁴⁴ It was a later Pope, Gregory the Great, who pointed out that if there is in essence only one jurisdiction in the Orthodox Church headed by an Ecumenical Pope or Patriarch, then if that Pope or Patriarch falls, the whole of the Church falls with him. So either the Church can fall away, which is contrary to the Saviour's promise that it will prevail over the gates of hell until the end of time, or the head of the Church must be endowed with infallibility. But this was denied by St. Gregory.

However, later Popes – notably Nicholas I and Gregory VII – embraced this second aspect or stage of the heresy, and thereby fell away from the unity of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. Moreover, Gregory VII adopted what we may call the third and final stage of the papist heresy by proclaiming himself head both of the Church *and of the State*. And this, too, is a logical consequence of the original error. For “symphony” between Church and State, Roman Pope and Roman Emperor, is fine as long as it lasts, but what is to be done if the empire falls or the emperor ceases to be Orthodox? The only answer, according to the heretical popes, if their global mission was to be assured, was for the Pope to assume authority over the State as well as the Church, proclaiming himself, in effect, the absolute ruler of all things on earth...

The Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople is unlikely to fall into the papist heresy in this extreme form, if only because, for the last 45 years, she has acknowledged the heretical papacy as her elder sister and the first of the Churches of Christ throughout the world. So the most that the Ecumenical Patriarch can hope for is to be a highly honoured deputy to the supreme ruler.⁴⁴⁵ However, the Ecumenical Patriarchate's globalism is significant in two ways.

⁴⁴⁴ However, we should not forget his harsh treatment of St. Hilary, Archbishop of Arles, who disputed his ideas in the West and was thrown into prison for his protest, nor the instructions that he gave to his legates at the Fourth Ecumenical Council: that they should preside over the Council, and present St. Leo's Tome at the beginning as the absolute truth which could not be disputed or even discussed. Moreover, the legates declared to the Council that the Pope had jurisdiction “over all the Churches”. The Eastern bishops decided to ignore all this...

⁴⁴⁵ Or perhaps he can follow the example of Patriarch John the Cappadocian in 518, who, after signing an extraordinarily papist libellus of Pope Hormisdas, added the phrase: “I proclaim that the see of the Apostle Peter [Rome] and the see of this imperial city [Constantinople] are one” (Dvorkin, op. cit., p. 399). In that way he could become co-ruler of the universe!

First, he is quite clearly attempting to subdue all the *Orthodox* Churches to his sole rule. This trend became clear in July, 1993, when Patriarch Bartholomew convened a “great and super-perfect (παντελης) Synod” to judge Patriarch Diodorus of Jerusalem and certain of his collaborators for their supposed interference in the Australian Archdiocese of the Ecumenical Patriarchate and certain other questions. It was assumed, completely contrary to the canons, that Jerusalem was “interfering” in Australia on the grounds that the Ecumenical Patriarchate had sole jurisdiction in all lands not directly within the boundaries of any other patriarchate, and therefore in Australia also, in spite of the fact that the Jerusalem Patriarchate had had a mission in Australia since 1892, and the Ecumenical Patriarchate – only since 1924.

The clear implication of this action is that *only* the Ecumenical Patriarchate has jurisdiction in Australia, Western Europe, North and South America, Asia and Antarctica. This is not quite the whole *oikoumene* – but not far off it! Moreover, if we remember that Bartholomew is also contesting the Russian Church’s jurisdiction in the Ukraine and Estonia, and that he has divided the Russian diocese in London, it will become clear that even the territories of the other established patriarchates are not safe from his rapacity!

Since Jerusalem’s capitulation to Bartholomew at the “super-perfect” Synod, the Eastern patriarchates are effectively in his pocket. As A.D. Delimbasis writes, Bartholomew is “trying to put Jerusalem [under] Antioch, Antioch under Alexandria, Alexandria under Constantinople and Constantinople under the heresiarch Pope...”⁴⁴⁶ As for the territories of Russia, Romania, Bulgaria and Serbia, they were they all under the jurisdiction of Constantinople at one time or another in the past, so why, he could argue (but does not feel powerful enough to say yet), should they not be so now?

But the most original aspect of Bartholomew’s globalist ecclesiology is his concept of the supposedly “symphonic” relationship between the Church that is built on the Rock, which is Christ, and the world that is built on sand, which “lieth in evil”. The Emperor Justinian understood “symphony” as existing between the Orthodox Church and the Orthodox Empire, and the Popes followed him in this: they did not pretend that there could be any “symphony” between the Church and the world in any other form. But in a lecture given at the London School of Economics in 2005 Patriarch Bartholomew introduced a new, unheard-of understanding of Justinian’s famous concept in the context of a comparison between two models of Church-State relations in contemporary Europe.

According to Marcus Plested, the patriarch argued that “either model... is perfectly acceptable from a religious perspective. What is more important is that governments and faith communities should work together in the common cause of toleration, respect and mutual understanding. We need, in other words, to find a model of positive co-operation and not mere separation or indeed exclusive patronage of a particular religious tradition.

⁴⁴⁶ Delimbasis, *Rebuttal of an Anticanonical “Verdict”*, Athens, 1993, p. 21.

“He called this new model one of ‘symphonia’ – working together in unison. Symphonia is an old notion deriving from the Byzantine model of harmony between Church and empire – both instituted by God to provide, respectively, for the spiritual and temporal needs of the people.

“The Patriarch has given this ancient notion a new interpretation, turning it into a startlingly prophetic call for a re-imagining of the relation between religion and politics free from the tired dichotomies of the 19th and 20th centuries.

“Recent world events, from September 11, 2001, and July 7 this year, to the riots on the streets of Paris, have reminded us that religion is not simply going to disappear as a major social and political issue. It remains a deep-seated force. The great virtue of the Patriarch’s lecture was to provide a vision for the channelling of all this religious energy to the service of the greater social good, for the welfare of those of all faiths and those of none.”⁴⁴⁷

So what is the State with which Bartholomew, as Ecumenical Patriarch of the East in subjection to the Ecumenical Pope of the West, wishes to be in symphony? There is no State in the ordinary sense of the word that could be the partner to such a Global Patriarch. It could only be a *Global State*, or World Government – the government of that “international community” of western nations that likes to speak as if it were the whole world. However, this World Government or “New World Order” is not wedded to any particular faith, unless that faith is the purely secular one of democracy and human rights. Hence the need for the patriarch to emphasise in his lecture (according to the newspaper report) that his symphonic model does not involve the “exclusive patronage of a particular religious tradition”, but is aimed at “the welfare of those of all faiths and those of none”.

But what concord or symphony can there be between Orthodoxy and heresy, between faith and unbelief, between the Church and the world?

In his *Novella 131* the Emperor Justinian decreed: “The Church canons have the same force in the State as the State laws: what is permitted or forbidden by the former is permitted or forbidden by the latter. Therefore crimes against the former cannot be tolerated in the State according to State legislation.” This is true symphony: the State recognises that it is pursuing the same aim as the Church, and therefore legislates in all things in accordance with the legislation of the Church. For, as Fr. Alexis Nikolin writes, “in their single service to the work of God both the Church and the State constitute as it were one whole, one organism – ‘unconfused’, but also ‘undivided’. In this lay the fundamental difference between Orthodox ‘symphony’ and Latin ‘papocaesarism’ and Protestant ‘caesaropapism’...”⁴⁴⁸ Bartholomew, however, is both a Latin papocaesarist through his submission to the Pope and a Protestant caesaropapist through his submission to the Protestant-dominated New World Order.

⁴⁴⁷ *The Times* of London, November 26, 2005, p. 82.

⁴⁴⁸ Nikolin, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

Perhaps he is something even worse... In Russia, the main accusation against the founder of the present-day Moscow Patriarchate, Metropolitan Sergius, was that he proclaimed the joys and sorrows of the God-fighting Communist State to be the joys and sorrows of the Church. In other words, he identified the interests of the Orthodox Church with those of the Communists. His successors even called Stalin "the new Constantine"... This heresy has been called "Sergianism", and has been anathematised by the True Orthodox Church of Russia. Has not Patriarch Bartholomew become a sergianist in that, under the guise of the Orthodox doctrine of the symphony of powers, he has in fact identified the interests of the Church with the interests of the antichristian world, thereby bringing closer the rule of the Antichrist himself, for whom "symphony" will undoubtedly mean "identity" under his sole rule?

Let us now turn to our third historical example, that of the American Church just before the revolution of 1917... The Orthodox Church in North America was composed of a number of dioceses each with a bishop representing a single national Orthodox tradition - Russian, Greek, Syrian, etc. However, these dioceses were not only in full communion with each other (unlike the different dioceses of True Orthodoxy in North America today), but also recognized the head of one of the dioceses - Archbishop Tikhon (Bellavin), the future Russian patriarch and hieromartyr - to be their head (which is not the case in the American dioceses of World Orthodoxy today). In this way the whole group of dioceses across the whole vast expanse of North America presented the image of a single metropolitan area, in which the spirit, if not the exact letter of the holy canons on church administration was preserved, and in which neither the possibility of vigorous missionary activity to the "native Americans", nor the links of the émigrés to their native lands and traditions, was lost. Unfortunately, this very promising experiment was destroyed as a result of the Russian revolution, and the conflicting political and national demands this produced. It was replaced, on the one hand by a break-down in the unity of the American Church into independent national jurisdictions, and on the other by half-baked and premature attempts at an American Autocephalous Church having no dependence on any "old" national Church in Europe, in the form of the OCA and HOCNA.

Of course, the American example was not truly global. However, it could be the pattern for a truly global solution if replicated elsewhere. Thus we could see a whole series of inter-locking metropolias on the American model, each with a first hierarch belonging to one or another national Church (for example: Russian in North America, Serbian in Western Europe, Greek in Central Africa). Eventually some of these might become new, truly autocephalous patriarchates. And globalism might be turned to the advantage of the Orthodox: in a world united as never before by a single culture and great ease of communication, the structure of the Church might come to resemble again the collegial net of metropolias (or patriarchates) that St. Cyprian of Carthage spoke about in *The Unity of the Church*.

What are the prospects of some such solution ever being realized in practice?

Everything depends on two factors, one internal and the other external. The internal factor is the *real*, and not merely formal freedom of the True Orthodox from the equal and opposite heresies of ecumenism and phyletism, their *real*, and not merely formal faith that there is only “one Lord, one Faith, on Baptism” (Ephesians 4.4), and that all men, of all races, can enter this unity. If they are free from these heresies, both of which in their different ways destroy the possibility of real missionary work, then they will have a true thirst for the conversion of the heterodox, and will work together for the creation of structures that support and facilitate the missionary drive.

The external factor is the political situation. History shows that the best conditions, both for the unity of existing Orthodox Christians of different races, and for the spread of Orthodox Christianity to other races, are provided by the Orthodox multi-national empires, such as Byzantium and Russia. Although the increasing power of the antichristian New World Order does not bode well for the resurrection of the Orthodox Empire in the short term, we must not write off the possibility of such a resurrection in the longer term, especially when several prophecies assert that it will happen. With God all things are possible, and God can make even the remotest possibility reality if He sees that there are men willing to work together with Him to make it reality. And so here, as always, the external depends on the internal... After all, while the terrible Diocletian persecution of the years 305 to 308 was reaching its climax, in a remote province of the Roman Empire the Roman legions were raising St. Constantine onto their shields. And who is to say that the Church today, having survived a persecution far longer and still more cruel than that of Diocletian, may not be on the verge of a new Constantinian era, when the prophecy of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the Church, will be fulfilled: “This Gospel of the Kingdom will be preached to all the world, *and then* the end will come...” (Matthew 24.14).

*December 26 / January 8, 2009/2010.
The Synaxis of the Most Holy Theotokos.*

19. MONARCHISM Á LA CARTE

It is not often that one reads a sermon in praise of the Russian Royal Martyrs that is at the same time a fierce attack on monarchism! But then we have come to expect violent contrasts from Fr. Gregory Lourié...

Let us examine his latest piquant offering of sweet and sour, virtue and vice.⁴⁴⁹

He begins in a relatively uncontroversial way: "Today we celebrate a special feast for the Russian [Rossijskoj] Church – the feast of the holy Royal Martyrs. Why is this feast special? Because for the state in which our Russian Church lives and has lived, this event is more than significant..."

Yes: but not, we may add, in a way that reflects any credit on this state. For the martyrdom of Tsar Nicholas at the hands of the Bolsheviks is significant as condemning everything that this state – Putin's neo-Soviet state – is attempting to do to resurrect Bolshevism and Stalinism. In essence, this feast, properly understood, is call to this state to repent and abolish itself in favour of a truly Orthodox monarchy... However, there has been no repentance, but only a frenetic and blasphemous exaltation of the pagan feasts of the revolution, especially May 9. And that is significant...

"Above all, of course, it is significant not for this reason, but because the Royal Martyrs head the whole array, the great array of the New Martyrs and Confessors of Russia. It is great also because in it were great saints and great martyrs, great even in a simply quantitative sense, because, as is well known, the quantity of New Martyrs that our Russian Church has offered, even if we take only the first half of the 20th century, has been offered by no other [Church]. Nor has the Christian world offered such a quantity of saints in the whole period of its existence. Because never have there been persecutions on the scale that turned out to be possible in Russia after the victory of the Bolsheviks.

"And although we know that the first martyr, who was killed already in the summer of 1917, was Alexander Khotovitsky, that is, there were martyrs who were killed before the Royal Family, and Metropolitan Vladimir was killed before the Royal Family, although they were already in prison at that time: nevertheless it is justly thought that it is the Royal Family that heads the array of the Russian New Martyrs. What does this mean for us now?"

So far, so good. But now begins the controversial part...

"This can, of course, be understood in different ways, and, crudely speaking, two extreme understandings are possible: one correct, and the other incorrect. The

⁴⁴⁹ Lourié, "Muchenichestvo tsarskoj sem'i kak sledstvie mnogovekovogo padenia Russkoj Tserkvi. Slovo na den' pamiati tsarstvennykh muchenikov (04.7 / 17.07.2005) (The martyrdom of the Royal Family as a consequence of the fall of the Russian Church. Sermon on the day of the memorial of the Royal Martyrs) (July 4/17, 2005), http://portal-credo.ru/site/print.php?act=riskzone_texts&id=353.

incorrect, but very widespread understanding (widespread, it goes without saying, among those who consider themselves Orthodox Christians) consists in the opinion that we must now strive to re-establish the monarchy, and then the Church will be re-established through the monarchy. If these people belong to the True Church, and not to the Moscow Patriarchate, they say that at that time the Tsar will abolish the Moscow Patriarchate and make it Orthodox, and through this the Russian people will be regenerated. And they refer to all kinds of prophecies, of which, it goes without saying, there is no lack, because any idea demanded by the religiously-minded masses will unfailingly be strengthened by corresponding prophecies. It has never been otherwise in history, but it is another matter whether these prophecies are from God, and to what extent from the empty heads of those who pass them on, or even directly from the demons.”

There are two issues here: one about the prophecies of the restoration of the monarchy in Russia, and the other about which comes first: the restoration of the Church or the restoration of the monarchy.

With regard to the prophecies, I know at least twenty-five attributed to various saints and martyrs. Lourié dismisses them all, without the slightest attempt to prove either that they are forgeries, or misattributed, or demonic delusions, or whatever. Even if he were to show that one or two – or even three – such prophecies were false, there would still be many left. Surely such a wholesale condemnation merits the rebuke of the Apostle: “Despise not prophecies” (I Thessalonians 5.19). Would it not be more honest for him simply to say: “I don’t believe in prophecies, even by undoubted saints, of events that do not fit in with my personal wishes?”

In July, 2003 Lourié succeeded in imposing his unbelief in the resurrection of Russia even on the ROAC Synod, which declared in an epistle: “The old ‘Christian world’ has gone, never to return, and that which is frenziedly desired by some, the regeneration of the ‘Orthodox monarchy’ in some country, in which the true faith will reign, must be considered a senseless utopia.”⁴⁵⁰

So the faith and hope of many, many saints and martyrs is a "senseless utopia", an object of "frenzied" desire that cannot possibly be fulfilled and so must be renounced!!!⁴⁵¹ Such faith and hope motivated almost every leading figure in the Catacomb Church and ROCOR, and was the main subject of the resolutions of the First All-Emigration Council in 1921. But Lourié knows better! St. John of Kronstadt said that Russia without an Orthodox tsar is merely a “stinking corpse”, and expressed a firm belief in the resurrection of Russia after the revolution. But Lourié not only thinks that Russia will remain a stinking corpse, but prefers it like that!

Coming to the second point, it is not quite true to say that people like the present writer who believe in the prophecies think “that we must now strive to re-establish

⁴⁵⁰ *Vertograd*, July 30, 2003;

⁴⁵¹ A. Ter-Grigorian, “Vladimir Moss ob uprazhnenii v RPATs Very Sviatykh Novomuchenikov otnositel’no vosstanovleniia Rossii”,
<http://www.romanitas.ru/Actual/V1%20Moss%20O%20poslanii.htm>.

the monarchy, and then the Church will be re-established through the monarchy". How is one to re-establish the monarchy if the Church is not there to receive and sanctify it?

Let us look at just one of these prophecies – that of the Valaam elders as passed on by Archbishop Theophan of Poltava: "I do not speak from myself. But that which I have heard from the God-inspired elders, that I have passed on... The Lord will have mercy on Russia for the sake of the small remnant of true believers. In Russia, the elders said, in accordance with the will of the people, the Monarchy, Autocratic power, will be re-established. The Lord has forechosen the future Tsar. He will be a man of fiery faith, having the mind of a genius and a will of iron. First of all he will introduce order in the Orthodox Church, removing all the untrue, heretical and lukewarm hierarchs. And many, very many - with few exceptions, all - will be deposed, and new, true, unshakeable hierarchs will take their place."

It follows from this that we must not be concerned only with politics, and not with the spiritual life. On the contrary: the political changes that will resurrect Russia will be dependent on the continuance of true faith in at least a proportion of the people; they will take place, as the prophecy says, "for the sake of the small remnant of true believers". We must work on ourselves, and then, if we are worthy, the Lord will send us a Tsar who will do the work of removing the false hierarchs.

Lourié continues: "In fact, of course, Orthodox people are not obliged to believe that with the re-establishment of the monarchy the Russian Church, too, must be re-established, nor that the re-establishment of the Russian Church in itself will lead to the re-establishment of the monarchy."

Of course, we are not *obliged* to believe this – it is not an article of faith. At the same time, it was believed by almost all the most holy Russian Christians of the last century, so we must have good reasons for rejecting this faith of the saints – reasons which Lourié has not provided. And we are most certainly not obliged to believe that the faith and hope of these saints was "a senseless utopia"!

"There is absolutely no reason for believing that the monarchy is for our state some kind of optimal means of government."

Is Lourié talking about the present or the future here? If about the present, then of course a monarchy is not desirable – because with the Russian people in its present, very low spiritual state, a monarchy will almost certainly turn out to be pseudo-Orthodox and heretical, probably constitutional and probably ruled by anti-Christian powers behind the scenes. Because of its Orthodox exterior, such a government might seduce "if it were possible, even the elect". In fact, such an "Orthodox" tsar could be the Antichrist himself...

But it is not of such a tsar that the prophecies speak. They speak about a True Orthodox tsar at a future time when the people will be ready to receive such a tsar, and ready to cooperate with him in overthrowing the false hierarchs of the Moscow Patriarchate. That time has not yet come...

What is “optimal” depends on the state of the people at a given time. There is no doubt – many saints confirm this – that for a truly Orthodox people a truly Orthodox tsar or emperor is the optimal political solution. For then tsar and people are in harmony, sharing the same faith and the same goal – the Kingdom of Heaven. As the father of this people, he both serves as the focus and crown, as it were, of their common faith, and protects them from antichristian influences.

But if the vast majority of the people have a different faith and serve other ideals, then a truly Orthodox tsar would be useless, like a jewel in a pig’s snout. Sooner or later, he would have to abdicate, like Tsar Nicholas, or be killed. Better, in such a situation, is the kind of liberal democracy which preserves at least some freedom of worship for the tiny remnant of True Orthodox.

“Moreover, there is no promise that Russia in the future will be an Orthodox state, and if it is not, then still more is it the case that it can be governed in different ways.”

And yet, as we have seen, St. John of Kronstadt said that Russia without a tsar would be a “stinking corpse”! Evidently he believed that Russia could be governed only in one way – by an Orthodox tsar.

No, we cannot have a monarchism á la carte – that is, venerate the Royal Martyrs while rejecting the institution they incarnated. The Royal Martyrs died for Christ and the Orthodox Faith. But they also died because they refused to exchange the ideal of Orthodox Russia headed by an Orthodox Tsar for that of a constitutional monarchy on the western, Masonic level, still less for the bloodthirsty tyranny that came after their death.

*Revised July 24 / August 6, 2011.
Holy Passion-Bearers Boris and Gleb.*

20. ORTHODOXY, TOTALITARIANISM AND AMERICA

1. The Enigma

On December 25, 1991 the red flag was lowered over the Kremlin. Immediately Francis Fukuyama proclaimed “the end of history” – democracy and free markets had triumphed over all their ideological competitors.⁴⁵² Only a few insignificant dinosaurs, such as North Korea, remained – and they would surely go soon. Utopia had opened its gates. A radiant future for all humanity beckoned...

There was indeed cause for rejoicing: the greatest totalitarian monster in history, which had devoured the souls and bodies of tens of millions of men, had departed from the scene, liberating other slave states in Eastern Europe. Moreover, for the next ten years the anti-totalitarian wave continued. Yeltsin’s Russia was corrupt and chaotic, but at any rate it seemed to have cut off the possibility of an old-style communist revanche. The last communist regimes of Eastern Europe, in Serbia and Albania, were overthrown. China was liberalizing economically, if not politically...

However, at the beginning of the new millennium “history” appeared to revive. KGB Colonel Putin, an admirer of Stalin and the old Soviet Union, came to power in Russia determined to avenge the defeat in the Cold War: he poured vast sums into the army, returned the Red Flag to the armed forces and the Soviet anthem to the country, persecuted and often killed dissident journalists and tycoons, abolished free elections and subverted the courts, invaded Chechnya and Georgia and threatened the Ukraine and Poland, insisted on his right to strike first in a nuclear war and in general continued to berate the West as if nothing had essentially changed in 1991. On the other hand, he was friendly with China, which, while becoming ever more powerful economically, still stubbornly refused to liberalize politically and was also rearming. The two “old buddies” appeared again on the same side against the West and supporting illiberal regimes around the globe. Early in 2012 they vetoed a United Nations security resolution condemning President Assad of Syria.

The West is apoplectic... And yet the West, in spite of having what is now supposed to be the only contemporary superpower in the form of the United States, seems powerless to impose its will beyond its old, pre-1991 sphere of influence. The Twin Towers disaster was a wake-up call and a call to repentance - it took place on the Orthodox feast of the Beheading of St. John the Baptist - that elicited a military, but not a spiritual response. Now the West is in deep debt to China and in the throes of an economic and banking crisis more serious than any since the Great Depression. But, most serious of all, it has ceased to believe in itself...

At the heart of this loss of self-confidence lies a loss of confidence in the country that by its huge power, dynamism and optimism has almost singlehandedly saved the West from its totalitarian enemies in the last century – America. Of course, America-bashing has been a favourite sport of left-leaning intellectuals - that is, the majority of intellectuals – throughout the Cold War period, in all countries from revolutionary

⁴⁵² Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man*, Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1992.

France to (supposedly) Orthodox Greece to Buddhist Asia, and even in America itself. This paradoxical phenomenon – for the Soviet Union stood against everything that supported true intellectual or any other kind of life – can be explained and partially excused by naivety and ignorance of the true facts in some. But after 1991, when all the horrors of Sovietism and communism became common knowledge, ignorance was neither an excuse nor an explanation. We should have expected that the events of 1989-91 would have been celebrated and analysed in depth as proving the superiority of the western system over its defeated rival. But what has in fact happened is the exact opposite: the lessons of 1989-91 have been neither learned nor taught⁴⁵³; capitalism is under fire as never before; socialism makes huge strides in both America and (especially) the European Union; and “the new world order” proclaimed by President George H.W. Bush in 1991 has been declared to be worse than the old order, nothing less than a new, more subtle, more evil and more powerful totalitarianism. America, says the multitude – and Orthodox Christians are prominent in their number – is the Antichrist...

This article attempts to understand this enigma, the self-hatred of the West at the moment of its greatest triumph, and to evaluate it. Is it true that America is a new and worse totalitarianism than the Soviet Union or China? Could it – or its present or future president – be the Antichrist? What *is* totalitarianism in any case? And finally: even if we admit many or most of the charges against America, does this entitle us to hate it in the way that all True Christians must hate the Soviet regime?

2. What is Totalitarianism?

Wikipedia provides us with a good definition: “Totalitarianism (or totalitarian rule) is a political system where the state recognizes no limits to its authority and strives to regulate every aspect of public and private life wherever feasible. Totalitarian regimes stay in political power through an all-encompassing propaganda campaign, which is disseminated through the state-controlled mass media, a single party that is often marked by personality cultism, control over the economy, regulation and restriction of speech, mass surveillance, and widespread use of terror.

“The concept of totalitarianism was first developed in a positive sense in the 1920s by the Italian fascists. The concept became prominent in Western anti-communist political discourse during the Cold War era in order to highlight perceived similarities between Nazi Germany and other fascist regimes on the one hand, and Soviet communism on the other...”

Only two qualifications need to be made to this definition. The first is that totalitarian rule need not be exerted by the widespread use of terror. In his famous Parable of the Grand Inquisitor in *The Brothers Karamazov*, Dostoyevsky indicated that most people cannot really cope with freedom, and would be quite happy to exchange it for security. It is not only the old Roman proletariat that wanted “bread and

⁴⁵³ Janet Daley, “The Lessons of 1989 have still not been learnt”, *The Sunday Telegraph* (London), February 5, 2012, p. 24.

circuses" above all: more or less sophisticated versions of these basic materialist pleasures have been provided by totalitarian rulers all down the ages. And if the people are happy with that, then there is no need to apply terror – although a subtle hint of terror, whether coming from inside or outside the State ("the terrorist threat"), can be useful. All that is needed is some physical or non-physical soporific drug, some "opium of the people" that prevents people from thinking outside the assumptions of the state ideology. So long as the main disseminator of this ideology and this opium is the State or State-controlled organizations, and rival ideologies are weak and generally despised, then a totalitarian system exists without the need for any use of terror.

Secondly, totalitarian rule can be exerted not only by a single dictator, but also by an oligarchical clique, or a mass party, or even by alternating parties so long as both parties represent no more than variations on the dominant ideology that do not differ in essentials. Democracy, contrary to popular assumptions, is not the opposite of totalitarianism. This is proved by the fact that since the French revolution democracy and totalitarianism have grown in tandem, as it were. Democracies come to power by overthrowing real or imagined totalitarian systems. Then new despotisms arise through the perceived need to save the nation from anarchy or foreign enslavement or simply "to save the world for democracy".

As is well known, all the twentieth-century communist dictatorships called themselves "democracies". And this was not as absurd as it might seem. For all of them grew out of democratic revolutions, did indeed express the will of the majority, at any rate in their early stages, and genuinely placed the demos, the people, as their ultimate god...

The last point needs some explication... Deacon Alcuin of York said to the Emperor Charlemagne: "The people should be led, not followed, as God has ordained... Those who say, 'The voice of the people is the voice of God,' are not to be listened to, for the unruliness of the mob is always close to madness."⁴⁵⁴ And so absolutism is characteristic of democracy insofar as the demos is an absolute power, free from the restraint of any power, in heaven or on earth. In a democracy the will of the people is the final arbiter: before it neither the will of the (constitutional) monarch, nor the decrees of the Church, neither the age-old traditions of men, nor the eternal and unchanging law of God, can prevail. This arbiter is in the highest degree arbitrary: what is right in the eyes of the people on one day, or in one election, will be wrong in the next. But consistency is not required of the infallible people, just as it is not required of infallible popes. For democracy is based on the Heraclitan principle that everything changes, even the demos itself. As such, it does not have to believe in, let alone justify itself on the basis of, any unchanging criteria of truth or falsehood, right or wrong. Its will is truth and justice, and if its will changes, then truth and justice must change with it...

The famed tolerance or freedom of religion in democratic states is only apparent. Or rather, it can be real only for a time, until the State works out its own ruling

⁴⁵⁴ Alcuin of York, *Letter to Charlemagne*, M.G.H., 4, letter 132.

ideology and applies it consistently. For, as Tikhomirov writes, “if a state, as law and power, removes itself from being linked with a determinate confession, that is, from the influence of a religious confession on its own religious politics, it becomes the common judge of all confessions and subjects religion to itself. All relations between the various confessions and the rights of them all must, evidently, be decided by the state that is set outside them, which is governed exclusively by its own ideas on justice and the good of the state and society. In this situation it evidently has the complete right and opportunity to carry out repressions whenever, in its opinion, the interests of a confession contradict civil and political interests.”⁴⁵⁵

In many ways the collective absolutism of democracy is a more absolute and destructive absolutism than the personal absolutisms of popes and emperors. In most of history since Christ, although many absolutist rulers appeared in both East and West, fundamental changes in society were slow to appear (in the East they did not appear at all). Whatever absolutist rulers may have thought or said about their own unfettered power, in practice they conformed to tradition in most spheres.

For they knew that the masses of the people believed in a higher truth in defence of which they were prepared to die – or at least, rise up in rebellion. Hence the failure of most absolutist rulers to establish a firm tradition of absolutism: Julian the Apostate was replaced by Jovian the Pious, Pope Nicolas I by Pope John VIII, Michael Palaeologus by Andronicus II, the false Dmitri by Tsar Michael Romanov. Even the more enduring absolutism of the post-schism popes was bitterly contested for centuries, and became weaker over time.

But the triumph of democracy in the modern period has been accompanied by the most radical and ever-accelerating change: the demos that overthrew the monarchy in the English revolution, even the demos that obtained universal suffrage in the early twentieth century, would not recognise, and most certainly would not approve of, what the demos has created in twenty-first-century England...

Democracy considers itself to be at the opposite pole from absolutism, and justifies itself on the grounds that its system of checks and balances, and the frequent opportunity to remove the ruler at the ballot-box, preclude the possibility of absolutism. However, the close kinship between democracy and absolutism reveals itself in the persistent tendency of democracy, as Plato noted, to pave the way for absolutism. Thus the democracy of the English Long Parliament paved the way for Cromwell; the democracy of the French Estates General - for Robespierre and Napoleon; the democracy of the Russian Provisional Government - for Lenin and Stalin; and the democracy of the German Weimar Government - for Hitler.

Thus Tikhomirov writes: “Absolutism... signifies a power that is not created by anything, that depends on nothing except itself and that is qualified by nothing except itself. As a tendency, absolutism can in fact appear under any principle of power, but only through a misunderstanding or abuse. But according to its spirit, its nature,

⁴⁵⁵ Tikhomirov, *Religiozno-philosophskie osnovy istorii* (The Religio-Philosophical Foundations of History), Moscow, 1997, p. 269.

absolutism is characteristic only of democracy, for the will of the people, qualified by nothing but itself, creates an absolute power, so that if the people merges with the State, the power of the latter becomes absolute."⁴⁵⁶

So the critical criterion for whether a totalitarian system exists or not is not whether the State is monarchical or democratic, dictatorial or oligarchical, but whether it recognizes the people, rather than God, as the source of its power, that is, "recognizes no limits to its authority and strives to regulate every aspect of public and private life wherever feasible" ...

3. The Symphony of Powers

The question then arises: what is the real opposite of totalitarianism? When can we say definitely that a nation is *not* ruled by a totalitarian State? The answer is: when the State *does* recognize limits to its authority, and in particular recognizes that *its power does not come from the people or itself, but from God or the Church*, accepting that *it is not the primary guardian, still less the source, of the dominant ideology*.

We are assuming here, of course, that every State has an ideology, whether theist or atheist, secular or religious: a completely non-ideological State does not and cannot exist. What is euphemistically and very misleadingly called "the international community" today considers itself to be highly pragmatic and tolerant of diverse ideologies. But in fact it has a distinct and exclusivist ideology which it is constantly trying to spread, if necessary by force, throughout the world. This is the ideology of *human rights*, which was first formally enunciated during the French revolution, and has been constantly modified and expanded since, to the point that now almost any minority group or taste or life-style, however perverse, can claim the right to express itself as a human right. The only group that is not tolerated is the group that claims to express *the one and only truth*; for such "extremism" and "exclusivism" runs counter to the dominant egalitarian ideology. Closely allied to this religio-moral ideology is the quasi-scientific ideology of *universal evolutionism* and the racist ideology of *the unimpeachability and quasi-infallibility of the Jewish race and religion*. Actually, it is easy to demonstrate that these three elements of the dominant ideology of that small minority of the world's population that calls itself "the international community" are self-contradictory. However, no fundamental examination of the basic assumptions of the ideology is allowed by the system. Thus questioning the moral equivalence of heterosexual and homosexual relations is considered a crime in Britain, while questioning whether six million Jews were actually killed in the holocaust will earn you a prison sentence in Germany...

Of course, we are not suggesting here that there are not very large and very important differences between "classical" totalitarian systems such as the Soviet Union and the western democracies. Apart from the fact that western democracies are far more pleasant to live in, they have the vital advantage from the Orthodox Christian point of view of providing freedom of religion and worship – although this right is

⁴⁵⁶ Tikhomirov, *Monarkhicheskaia Gosudarstvennost'* (Monarchical Statehood), St. Petersburg, 1992, p. 92.

constantly being eroded in the case of Christianity... Nevertheless, as regards the definition of totalitarianism that we have been examining, *both* the Soviet Union *and* the Western democracies must be considered to be totalitarian insofar as all power, including the guardianship of the dominant ideology, is concentrated in the State. The differences between them relate to how liberally or otherwise this total power is exercised. In other words, there can be “hard” totalitarian systems (the Soviet Union, Nazi Germany) and “soft” ones (the western democracies).

Historically speaking, there is only one political system in world history that can be considered to be genuinely, truly non-totalitarian and anti-totalitarian: *Orthodox Christian Autocracy*. This statement may seem wildly paradoxical to those brought up on the myth that the only true opposite of, and opponent to, totalitarianism is democracy. But its truth is easily demonstrated.

First we must understand that totalitarianism is by no means the same as *authoritarianism*. Orthodox autocracies are, of course, authoritarian: all power in the secular, political sphere is wielded by one man who is not elected to his post. But in the spiritual sphere he must give way to *the Orthodox Church* “the pillar and ground of the truth” (I Timothy 3.15). In fact, even in his own, political sphere he is obliged by his oath to obey God, the Law of God and the Church - of which fact the bishops, as being the interpreters and guardians of the Law of God, are obliged to remind him. This system is called the Symphony of Powers, according to which Church and State work together in “symphony” (symphonia in Greek, consonantia in the Emperor Justinian’s original Latin) for a common end, the salvation of souls in Christ. The two powers are autonomous but undivided, both owing their origin to God, not the people.

Of course, many, perhaps most rulers in world history have claimed to be subject to God, the King of kings and Lord of lords. But most of them outside the Christian tradition, and many within it, have arrogated to themselves the functions of the Priesthood, effectively making the Priesthood a department of their own rule. In other words, they have abolished the distinction between religion and politics, the Church and the State, thereby destroying the Symphony of Powers and transforming its consonance into dissonance...

Critics of Orthodoxy have pointed to the fact that some Orthodox kings also tried to abolish this distinction, if not de jure, then de facto; they introduced what western scholars call “caesaropapism”, the submission of the Pope or Patriarch to the Caesar or Emperor, as in the time of the Arian and Iconoclast emperors and Peter the Great. However, these have been exceptions to the rule, deviations from the norm, to which the Orthodox people have always striven to return their rulers, and to which the last Orthodox Autocrat, Tsar-Martyr Nicholas, returned Russia when he abolished the phrase “Supreme Judge” from the Basic Laws in 1901... But in all other cultures, either it is the Priesthood that has taken over the State (as in Roman Catholicism) or, more commonly, the State that has taken over the Priesthood. Even in Islam, which so prides itself on its supposed obedience to God, not man, there is no real distinction between Church and State. In fact, only in Orthodoxy does the concept of the “Church”, as a Divine institution not beholden to any man, truly exist.

That the Church is truly independent of the State in the Orthodox Autocracy can be seen most clearly in the example of the first Orthodox Autocrat, St. Constantine the Great. One of the most powerful rulers in history, who exercised absolute political control over the whole of the ancient Roman empire, and did not shrink from waging war against, and executing, his political opponents, Constantine nevertheless deferred to the Church in all things spiritual, and was very “liberal” in his dealings with ecclesiastical malefactors, such as the Donatists, being always conscious that final judgement in spiritual matters did not belong to him. As Edward Cutts writes: “The merit of Constantine’s relations with the Church lies in what he abstained from doing, as much as in what he did. It was a proof of the highest genius in the Emperor... to realize as he did the position of the Church as an imperium in imperio; to appreciate as he did the true relations of the Emperor to the Church; and to take his line as he did, not shrinking from initiative and intervention, yet so rarely overstepping the due limits of his prerogative. It is not pretended, indeed, that Constantine’s history is free from infringements of these right relations, but such exceptions are very few; and it is, on the whole, very remarkable that the true relations which ought to regulate the co-ordinate action of Church and State were so immediately and fully established, and on the whole so scrupulously observed, as they were by the first Christian Emperor.”⁴⁵⁷

The only real defence against totalitarianism is the presence of the Church in the State as an imperium in imperio – that is, as the conscience of the ruler and the salt preserving the whole nation from final corruption. Without this, the ruler will inevitably succumb to illusions of grandeur (for, as Lord Acton said, “absolute power corrupts absolutely”), and the people themselves will accept him as their only and ultimate authority – an authority which is not now of God because, even if it formally recognizes God, it does not recognize or follow His regent on earth, the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. The Church, as testifying to the eternal, unchanging truth, provides not only defence against tyranny, but also the preservation of the spirit and faith of the national organism from generation to generation. Thus the Christian Empire founded by St. Constantine lasted eleven hundred years until the Fall of Constantinople in 1453. And in its reincarnation in Russia it lasted another almost five centuries until the beginning of the Age of the Antichrist in 1917...

4. World Government

Now the dominant ideology of the States of the international community is regulated by the States themselves. This fact is sometimes contested on the grounds that the supreme *judicial* institutions of the State, such as the American Supreme Court or the European Court of Human Rights, are independent bodies that regulate the State by checking its ideological transgressions. But this is not the case, for the simple reason that the judges are appointed by the executive branch of government, while the laws it interprets are passed by the legislative branch of government. So we are talking only about different sections of the State that, for reasons of greater efficiency or conformity with Montaigne’s Enlightenment ideal of “checks and balances”, are

⁴⁵⁷ Cutts, *Constantine the Great*, London: SPCA, 1881, pp. 160-161.

given a certain, strictly limited independence of each other. But if the State as a whole wishes to modify an element of its own ideology for any reason, it can easily do so – and there will be no independent body to censure or stop it.

Some would say, naively, that where the separation of Church and State is enshrined in law, as in the United States, there, in theory at any rate, the State is not totalitarian. In theory, yes.

Of course, there are some bodies independent of the State – *other States*. However, the fact of the multiplicity of sovereign States represents a threat to the dominant ideology and its internationalist guardians; for it poses the possibility that there might be *another truth* than that of the dominant ideology, or at any rate another way of looking at things. But such a possibility, insofar as it encourages thinking “outside the box” of the dominant ideology, is dangerous and must be suppressed – in spite of the fact that creative, independent thought is supposedly a virtue according to the ideology. Hence the enormous drive to suppress national sovereignties, to promote the authority of international organizations such as the United Nations and to “convert” dissenting States to the dominant ideology. Only when there is only *one* universal State and *one* dominant ideology – their own State and their own ideology – will the “international community” breathe more easily...

But how is this international brotherhood of sovereign rulers going to persuade the rest of the world to unite with, and submit to, one of themselves as the supreme ruler, the ruler of the world? They have two main arguments: the first, that without a single universal State, there will always be *war*, and the second, that, even in the absence of war, there will be *poverty*.

It was above all the threat of war that gave the victors of World War I the excuse to set up the League of Nations as a fledgling world government with the power to arbitrate disputes between nations. (The very first such international tribunal, the International Court at the Hague, had been set up at the initiative of Tsar Nicholas II in 1899.) The League of Nations was reborn as the United Nations after World War II, strengthened by a greater influx of members and an explicitly formulated ideology – the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights.

However, the United Nations was not and is not a world government, but only a loose association of the world’s sovereign States. This fact has doomed it to failure in preventing war: the beginning of the Cold War and the outbreak of the “hot” war in Korea quickly showed up its weakness. The spread of communism was eventually checked, not by any United Nations, but by a conventional military alliance, NATO, set up by a small group of sovereign States in 1949.

This had already been implicitly predicted by the English philosopher Thomas Hobbes in his *Leviathan* (1651), who argued that there could be no end to war without a fully-fledged world government. Hobbes began from what he called the State of Nature, which, he believed, was WAR, a state devoid of civilization in which every man’s hand was raised against his neighbour, and in which the life of man was “solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short.” Some kinds of animals, such as bees and

ants, live sociably with each other. But this is not the case of men, because of their various destructive passions.

And so “the agreement of these creatures is natural; that of men, is by covenant only, which is artificial: and therefore it is no wonder if there be somewhat else required, besides covenant, to make their agreement constant and lasting which is a common power, to keep them in awe, and to direct their actions to the common benefit.

“The only way to erect such a common power, as may be able to defend them from the invasion of foreigners, and the injuries of one another, and thereby to secure them in such sort, as that by their own industry, and by the fruits of the earth, they may nourish themselves and live contentedly; that is, to confer all their power and strength upon one man, or upon one assembly of men, that may reduce all their wills, by plurality of voices, unto one will: which is as much as to say, to appoint one man, or assembly of men, to bear their person; ... and therein to submit their wills... to his judgement... This done, the multitude so united in one person, is called a COMMONWEALTH, in Latin CIVITAS. This is the generation of that LEVIATHAN, or rather, to speak more reverently, of that mortal god, to which we owe under the immortal God, our peace and defence.”

The State was a Leviathan, “a monster composed of men” headed by a sovereign, personal or collective, whose power was created by a social contract. His power was unlimited; for, as Roger Scruton explains, “since the sovereign would be the creation of the contract, he could not also be party to it: he stands above the social contract, and can therefore disregard its terms, provided he enforces them against all others. That is why, Hobbes thought, it was so difficult to specify the obligations of the sovereign, and comparatively easy to specify the obligations of the citizen.”⁴⁵⁸

And yet were not men free and equal in the beginning? Yes, but the burden of that liberty was too great for men to bear (Dostoyevsky’s Grand Inquisitor was to say something similar). For, as Ian McClelland explains, interpreting Hobbes: “if everyone has that same equal and unlimited liberty to do as he pleases in pursuit of the literally selfish end of self-preservation, then without law every man is a menace to every other man. Far from being an original endowment for which men should be grateful, the unlimited liberty of the Right of Nature is a millstone round men’s necks, of which they would be wise to unburden themselves at the first opportunity.”⁴⁵⁹ And they did, by giving up their rights to the sovereign.

The lack of accountability of the sovereign is regrettable, but a necessity (and “necessity”, as Cromwell had said, “hath no law”). In any case, since the sovereign’s will *is* the law, it makes no sense to accuse him of acting unlawfully. “It follows from this that a Sovereign may never justly be put to death by his subjects because they would be punishing the Sovereign for their own act, and no principle of jurisprudence

⁴⁵⁸ Scruton, *Modern Philosophy*, London: Arrow Books, 1997, p. 415.

⁴⁵⁹ McClelland, *A History of Western Political Thought*, London and New York: Routledge, 1996, p. 199.

could ever conceivably justify punishing another for what one did oneself."⁴⁶⁰ A fine justification of absolute tyranny!

Hobbes's *Leviathan* is particularly interesting in the context of this article for its argument that without a worldwide, fully-fledged super-state, as opposed to an alliance or association of states, there is no way to prevent war. As McClelland writes, "*Leviathan* contains a very clear explanation of why supra-national organisations like the League of Nations or the UN are bound to fail in their avowed purpose of keeping the international peace, or even in their intention to provide some measure of international co-operation which is different from traditional alliances between states for traditional foreign policy ends. For Hobbes, there is no peace without law, and there can be no law without a Sovereign whose command law is. Hobbes is absolutely insistent that individuals in the State of Nature cannot make law by agreement; all they can do by contract is to choose a Sovereign. What applies to individuals in the State of Nature also applies to sovereigns in their State of Nature in relation to each other. The only way there could be a guarantee of international peace would be if all the sovereigns of the earth, or an overwhelming majority of them, were voluntarily to give up the right of national self-defence to some kind of super-sovereign whose word would be law to all the nations of the earth. This the various nations of the earth have been notoriously reluctant to do. They have tried to make international law by agreement, but that has never stopped war. They have tried to make international law by agreement, but that has never stopped war. Hobbes could have told them why: covenants without the sword are but breath, without any power to bind a man at all. No all-powerful international Sovereign, then no international peace."⁴⁶¹

This argument holds, whether the international Sovereign is monarchical, aristocratic or democratic. For Hobbes thinks "that the sovereignty which is exercised by a Sovereign is the same sovereignty, no matter how that sovereignty is in fact constituted. The sovereignty which is exercised by a Sovereign people, as at ancient Athens or republican Rome, does not change its nature as sovereignty just because it is democratic. Democratic sovereignty properly understood would have the same attributes as the sovereignty of an absolute monarch."⁴⁶²

It may be argued, against Hobbes, that even a worldwide superstate may not prevent war for the simple reason that it could fall apart, leading to civil war. Recently, the German Chancellor Angela Merkel confirmed this fatal flaw in Hobbes' argument by saying that if the present-day European Union - clearly the blueprint for the future world state of the Antichrist - were to fall apart because of the economic crisis in the Eurozone, it might lead to war between the constituent countries. And since the main justification for the creation of the European Union in the 1950s, according to the Eurocrats, was to prevent another war between France and Germany, this could not be allowed to happen...

⁴⁶⁰ McClelland, *op. cit.*, p. 207.

⁴⁶¹ McClelland, *op. cit.*, p. 203.

⁴⁶² McClelland, *op. cit.*, p. 201.

Nevertheless, there is a permanent truth in Hobbes' theory of international relations that has particular relevance to the modern arguments about the sovereignty of, for example, member-states of the European Union or the United Nations. This is that sovereignty is an absolute, not a relative concept.

This truth can be clearly seen if we compare the political sovereignty of states to the free will of individual human beings. A person either has free will or he does not. His will may be weak, it may be constrained by external circumstances or illness; but as long as the person is a person in his sound mind he must be acknowledged to have free will. In the same way, a state – be it monarchical, aristocratic or democratic – either has sovereignty or it does not. Its sovereignty can be constrained or weakened by political infighting or external enemies or other circumstances beyond its control; but it cannot be “pooled” or diluted as long as it remains a state worthy of the name. The proof that a state is sovereign is its ability to wage wars; for the act of waging war is the act of enforcing a command upon another state or of saying “no” to another's state's command.

Since sovereignty, according to Hobbes, is absolute, there cannot be two sovereign powers within a single society. In particular, there cannot be a truly independent Church. And so the Church must submit to Leviathan, “our mortal god”. For a nation cannot serve two masters, says Hobbes (using, ironically, the words of the Head of the Church asserting the absolute sovereignty of the Kingdom of God): either it will cleave to the one and despise the other, or vice-versa. One cannot serve God and Mammon, and Hobbes plumped for Mammon...⁴⁶³

However, Hobbes' argument can be turned on its head. We may agree with him that the initial State of Fallen Nature is WAR – war between God and man, between man and man, and within each individual man, as the fallen passions of pride, envy, anger, greed and lust tear him apart. Again we agree that the State exists in order to provide some protection for citizens against each other, against citizens of other states, and against their own passions, although the State's power is only a restraining power that does not and cannot cure the fundamental causes of war among men. And again we agree that within a given nation there can be only one truly sovereign power... But that power must be the Church, not the State; for only the Church can introduce true and lasting peace, since it is the Kingdom of Christ, Who is our Peace (Ephesians 2.14). This is not to say that the State must become a Hierocracy, or that priests must become politicians – that is strictly forbidden by the Law of God (Apostolic Canon 81). Rather, God has decreed that the State should be independent of the Priesthood in its everyday decision-making, but subject to God in its spirit and fundamental aims and principles. In giving the state taxes and military service and obeying the laws, we give to Caesar what is Caesar's. But we do so only in obedience to God and the Church. And if the two obediences contradict each other, our obedience goes to the one and only true sovereign, God...

⁴⁶³ A.L. Smith, “English Political Philosophy in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries”, *The Cambridge Modern History*, vol. VI: The Eighteenth Century, 1909, pp. 786-787.

Hobbes' *Leviathan* is, in effect, a justification, not only of caesaropapism on the model of Henry VIII, but even of twentieth-century-style totalitarianism.⁴⁶⁴ Because of this, and because of Hobbes' personal impiety, it was burned at Oxford in 1683. But it was admired on the continent, where Louis XIV of France ("L'état, c'est moi") was creating the most totalitarian state in European history thus far... No doubt today's atheist internationalists will one day pick its ashes out of the fire as a useful argument that furthers their ultimate aim of the creation of a worldwide totalitarian state...

But this should not trouble the Orthodox. For, on the one hand, peace of the superficial, political kind has never been our primary ideal – better an honourable war than a shameful peace, said St. Gregory the Theologian. And on the other, we do not believe that there will be an end to war before the Second Coming of Christ. After all, the Lord indicated “wars and rumours of wars” as one of the signs of the coming of the end. And if the short, seven-year worldwide rule of the Antichrist⁴⁶⁵ will be peaceful to begin with, the price of this “peace” will be a war against our souls' salvation more terrible than any that preceded it, a war that will be brought to an end only with the Second Coming of Christ...

Revised: June 13/26, 2012.

⁴⁶⁴ Indeed, “even Henry VIII is a pale shadow beside the spiritual supremacy in which the Leviathan is enthroned. There are only two positions in history which rise to this height; the position of a Caliph, the viceregent of Allah, with the book on his knees that contains all law as well as all religion and all morals; and the position of the Greek πολίς where heresy was treason, where the State gods and no other gods were the citizens' gods, and the citizen must accept the State's standard of virtue.” (Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 789).

⁴⁶⁵ However, some prophecies assert that Tsarist Russia will survive simultaneously with the rule of the Antichrist.

21. GREECE, RUSSIA AND AMERICA

The news, both political and ecclesiastical, is full of stories of Greco-Russian contacts and conflicts. In the political sphere, relations are good: while Greece implodes politically, socially and financially, the Russians appear to be preparing to rush into the breach with significant economic and military help and investment. Greek politicians, for their part, appear to have taken Putin with his cold, chekist smile to their hearts. Thus "Panos Kammenos, a former ND deputy who opposes austerity and admires Mr. Putin, says Greece should turn to Russia if, as expected, it needs yet another bail-out. (Russia has already lent Cyprus €2.5 billion, or \$3.3 billion, to avert the island's default.) Mr. Kammenos's new party, Independent Greeks, is predicted to sweep into parliament with around 10% of the vote..."⁴⁶⁶

In the ecclesiastical sphere, however, the relationship is much more competitive. The patriarchs of Constantinople and Moscow continue in their unholy rivalry over who should have the dubious honour of leading the Local Churches of "World Orthodoxy" into submission to the Pope. Constantinople's gains in London, Paris and, most importantly, Ukraine have recently been checked by Russian gains on Mount Athos. Thus Abbot Ephraim of the modernist and corrupt Athonite monastery of Vatopedi has developed close links with the Moscow Patriarchate, while his True Orthodox neighbour, Abbot Methodius of Esphigmenou, is supported by Moscow in his rebellion against the Ecumenical Patriarchate. Since the two patriarchates are clients of Russia and America respectively, this is the old Cold War being waged within the citadel of Orthodoxy.⁴⁶⁷ In True Orthodoxy, meanwhile, Archbishop Kallinikos of Athens has rejected union with the Russian True Orthodox Church because the Serbian True Orthodox have chosen to receive a bishop from the Russians rather than remain without a bishop under him...

The famous phrase, "Beware of Greeks bearing gifts", should perhaps be rephrased today to read: "Beware of Russians bearing gifts". For the Greeks, like the Trojans in the *Iliad*, are chronically naïve when it comes to Slavic leaders coming to Greece with offers of friendship and gifts. Thus Kammenos is foolish if he does not know that Putin – a former head of the KGB, a freemason and the richest man in Europe⁴⁶⁸ – is not at all interested in Orthodox brotherhood, but only in vengeance on the West for its defeat in the Cold War (which he calls "a geopolitical tragedy") and the re-establishment of the Soviet empire. To this end, control of Greece and the Eastern

⁴⁶⁶ "An Orthodox Friendship", *The Economist*, April 7-13, 2012, p. 38.

⁴⁶⁷ David Keys, "An Orthodox Flashpoint", *BBC History Magazine*, vol. 13, no. 4, April, 2012, pp. 18-20. Another example of Muscovite clandestine penetration of the Holy Mountain is a DVD distributed by Esphigmenou monastery's journal, *Boanerges*, but made by the Moscow Patriarchate and presented by Fr. Tikhon Shevkunov, Putin's reputed spiritual father. The subject is an analysis of the Fall of Constantinople in which much emphasis is laid on the roles of evil aristocrats within and western barbarism without. However, the real purpose of the DVD is not historical analysis, but contemporary political allegory: for "the Fall of Constantinople, the Second Rome", read "the possible Fall of Moscow, the Third Rome"; for evil Greek aristocrats then, read evil Jewish oligarchs then; for western barbarism then, read NATO expansion now; for the absolute need for a powerful and independent autocrat then, read the same need in Russia now...

⁴⁶⁸ See Luke Harding, "Putin, the Kremlin power struggle and the \$40bn fortune", *The Guardian*, December 21, 2007, pp. 1-2. Recently, Putin prayed with the rabbis at the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem...

Mediterranean would be a very important strategic means. Hence the need to send Trojan horses full of diplomatic and financial gifts to turn the Greek elites away from their traditionally pro-western orientation...

As for Mount Athos, it, too, has been deceived by visiting Slavic dignitaries. Thus in the 1970s the secret KGB general and Catholic bishop Metropolitan Nikodim of Leningrad came to the Holy Mountain. At that time, there were still pious monks on Athos who understood what communism was, and God helped them to understand further by turning the water black while the KGB bishop was on the Holy Mountain. But after the supposed fall of communism in 1991, the monks of a monastery visited by Slobodan Milošević were naively surprised to learn that he was an atheist – as if the leader of the Serbian communist party could be anything else! And now the neo-Soviet leaders Putin and Medvedev have taken to visiting Athos – with purely spiritual motives, of course!

Unfortunately, the Greeks have always had a tendency to ignore the reality of Soviet and neo-Soviet Russia and side emotionally with the Russians against the West, while taking from the West both military protection (NATO) and a great deal of money (the European Union). Blaming their present ills, not on themselves, but on “the new world order” (as if not paying their taxes and fiddling their books was something they were forced to do by the Bildebergers!), they share the general illusion that communism has disappeared forever, and believe that the Russians are now the “good guys” against the ever-evil Americans and Brits (and, more recently, the Germans). This is in sharp contrast to the pre-revolutionary period, when, in spite of the fact that the Russians – truly the “good guys” then – were the main benefactors and protectors of the whole Orthodox *oikoumene*, the Greeks treated them with suspicion and ingratitude, calling them “Pan-Slavists” simply because they did not support their “Pan-Hellenist” and totally unrealistic dreams of resurrecting the Byzantine empire and exerting dominion over the Balkans...

In the First World War, the Greeks (like the Bulgarians) did not rally to the side of the Russian Tsar until the Tsar had already fallen. The failure of the Balkan Orthodox (except the Serbs) to unite behind the Tsar was a great tragedy; for in early 1917 the Russian armies were on the point of crushing the Turks and taking Constantinople. Instead, the Greeks launched their own madcap invasion of Turkey in 1922 which was crushed by the reascent Turks supported by – the Bolsheviks...

Thereafter, by the mercy of God, the Greeks were the only important Orthodox nation that did not experience the horrors of communism at first-hand for any extended period. They remained free from communist invasion largely because of American aid and membership of NATO. But freedom from invasion did not mean freedom from communist influence: within the country the communist party remained strong and active – it has been particularly prominent in the recent demonstrations on the streets of Athens, – while the socialist party Pasok and even their rivals, the New Democrats, ignoring the lessons of 1989-91, have made Greece into the biggest “nanny state” in Europe.

It is sometimes pointed out that the Greek socialists have traditionally been kinder to the True Orthodox Church than New Democracy, which favours the new calendarist state church. This is true, but should not blind the True Orthodox to the reality of socialism, still less to the more extreme socialists that have been making rapid advances recently - in the recent elections, the far-left party Syriza received almost as many votes as New Democracy, and more than Pasok. But ignorance of the true nature of socialism and its sister, communism, unfortunately remains widespread.

Thus the Greek Orthodox population have remained largely oblivious of the terrible sufferings of their co-religionists in the rest of Eastern Europe. The incongruity of this can be understood if we imagine that a Christian nation in the fourth century had remained oblivious to the Diocletian persecution raging around it. To this day, Tsar-Martyr Nicholas and the Russian new martyrs are neither venerated nor, to a large extent, even known about in Greece. It is as if the main events of twentieth-century history have completely passed them by... And yet the communist persecution - which may not have ended yet - was the most intense and devastating in Christian history, far exceeding that under Diocletian.

This ignorance by the Greeks of the most important political and ecclesiastical fact of the last one hundred years, together with the vital lessons to be drawn from it, constitutes a kind of "psychological iron curtain" between Greek and Slavic, especially Russian Orthodoxy - but one that may well have serious dogmatic and political consequences one day. For example, the experience of the Russian revolution, which was brought about by anti-monarchist liberal and socialist sentiment, has engendered a deep-rooted suspicion of "demonocratic" politics in Russia, and a fervent hope in the return of the Orthodox autocracy, that is completely lacking in Greece. In fact, monarchist feeling has been on the rise throughout Orthodox Eastern Europe for several years - except in Greece, which still adheres to the old pagan heresy of democratism that was condemned by the Holy Fathers such as St. Gregory the Theologian.

The Greeks like to talk about the new world order and see themselves as great defenders of the world against it. And undoubtedly - in journals such *Boanerges*, published by Esphigmenou - they have identified important phenomena in the western world that are preparing the way for the Antichrist. But in their failure to understand that democratism and welfarism are essential building blocks in the philosophical structure of the "old world order" of socialism and communism, and that they are equally important building blocks of its more sophisticated successor, the new world order, they show a lamentable failure to learn the lessons of the last one hundred years.

This leads them to the absurdity of thinking that the old world order of militant atheism is dead, and that Russia and China, now "reformed" and "cleansed", can act as a kind of counter-weight to the new world order state of America.⁴⁶⁹ It is true, of

⁴⁶⁹ See, for example, the caption to the photo of Russian and Chinese soldiers and politicians in *Boanerges*, no. 57, September-October, 2011, p. 74.

course, that, while adopting most of the vices, and buying (or, more often, stealing) many of the technological innovations of the West, Russia and China are aiming to destroy its leader, America. Both states are now building up their military at such a rapid rate as to constitute a real threat to American hegemony in the not-so-distant future.⁴⁷⁰ China, in particular, is growing faster than any nation in human history, with extremely threatening consequences for the economic prosperity and financial independence of the West.⁴⁷¹ Moreover, while the new world powers grow ever more unstable as the corrosive ideologies of democracy and “human rights” eat into what little unity they still have, the old world powers, and especially China, have retained at least a superficial unity and stability by refusing to allow some of the craziest ideas of these ideologies to penetrate their societies.

But is this to be welcomed?! Are we supposed to applaud the resurgence of the former militant atheist states of Russia and China, which in the not-so-distant past murdered, physically and spiritually, more people, including more Orthodox Christians, than any power in history, and remain largely unreformed and unexorcised of their murderous demons to this day?! As if the unrepentant successors of Stalin and Mao could save the world for Holy Orthodoxy!

In fact, the idea, so beloved by the Greeks, that America is about to found the world empire of the Antichrist looks extremely unlikely. Much more likely is that America and the West will collapse soon – and that the collapse will be rapid and catastrophic. As many demographers, sociologists, political scientists, economists and historians have argued, the western world led by America is descending into powerless anarchy rather than ascending to universal hegemony.⁴⁷² America is now massively in debt (70% of it owing to China!), and its main ally, the European Union, is teetering on the edge of financial and social collapse (especially in Greece!) The recent failures of supposedly the world’s only super-power and its allies in poverty-stricken Somalia and Afghanistan hardly suggest that it is about to take over the whole world, but rather that it is going the way of all the debt-ridden empires in history – to ruin!⁴⁷³

Such a scenario is in accordance with the prophecies of the Orthodox elders, such as Elder Aristocles of Moscow and Mount Athos (+1918), who said: “America will feed the world, but will finally collapse”. This collapse will enable the old evil empires to fight back and destroy America before being themselves destroyed. Indeed, several of the Russian prophets and elders, such as St. John of Kronstadt and St. Theodosius of Minvody, prophesy that at the climax of the Third World War Russia and China will destroy each other, proving that the kingdom of Satan, being divided against itself, must fall...

The Greeks’ Achilles heel is their national pride; Greek nationalism, including ecclesiastical nationalism, is a centuries-old phenomenon that has already led to more than one church schism, as well as to national disasters such as the war with Turkey

⁴⁷⁰ “China’s Military Rise”, *The Economist*, April 7-April 13, 2012, pp. 25-30.

⁴⁷¹ Niall Ferguson, *The Ascent of Money*, New York: The Penguin Press, 2008, chapter 6.

⁴⁷² See, for example, Francis Fukuyama, *The Great Disruption*, London: Profile Books, 1999.

⁴⁷³ Niall Ferguson, “Complexity and Collapse”, *Foreign Affairs*, March-April, 2011, pp. 18-32.

in 1922-23.⁴⁷⁴ In modern times, as we have noted, this has led to a profound ignorance of the history of modern Russia since the revolution, which in turn has led to a failure to understand, not only the full depth of the revolution's evil (for no socialist can fully understand the revolution, and Greece is profoundly socialist), but also that the revolution has *not* been decisively defeated, but continues in a relatively softer, but more subtle and no less dangerous form in today's Russian Federation. For like the head of the apocalyptic beast that was "as if mortally wounded" (Revelation 13.13), but recovered, and was then "granted to make war with the saints and to overcome them" (Revelation 13.7), Soviet Russia has recovered from its defeat in 1991 and is now almost ready to throw off its peace-loving, democratic mask. Perhaps its present or future leader will even claim to be "the new Constantine" so as to deceive, if possible, even the elect (Matthew 24.24) - the Orthodox Christian commonwealth. This the Greeks, both religious and a-religious, both World Orthodox and True Orthodox, seem, with few exceptions, unable to understand; for, on the one hand, True Orthodox Russians are rejected by True Orthodox Greeks as "unbaptized", while on the other hand neo-Soviet Russians bearing the most deceptive of gifts are warmly received...

If Orthodoxy is to survive in the modern world, it must be, in accordance with the ancient Serbian slogan, "above East and West" - that is, independent of both East and West, both the old and the new world orders. We must reject both the sergianism and neo-sovietism of the East and the ecumenism, democratism and "humanrightism" of the West. And we must renew our hope in the coming of "the new David" of St. Seraphim's prophecy, the True Orthodox Tsar who will first cleanse the East of her traitor politicians and churchmen, and then bring her life-bearing waters to the parched and starving West...

To that end, we must cast off our parochial nationalisms that only divide us against each other, venerate with fervour the true saints of all nations, and repeat the words of the "old" David: "Turn us back, O God of our salvation, and turn away Thine anger from us. Wilt Thou be wroth with us unto the ages? Or wilt Thou draw out Thy wrath from generation to generation? O God, Thou wilt turn and quicken us, and Thy people shall be glad in Thee..." (Psalms 84.4-6)

March 24 / April 6, 2012; revised June 13/26, 2012.

⁴⁷⁴ See V. Moss, "Neither Greek nor Russian", <http://www.orthodoxchristianbooks.com/articles/406/neither-greek-nor-russian/>.

22. RUSSIAN AUTOCRACY AND ENGLISH MONARCHY: A COMPARISON

Appearances can be deceptive. There is a famous photograph of the Russian Tsar Nicholas II and the English King George V standing together, looking as if they were twins (people often confused them) and wearing almost identical uniforms. Surely, one would think, these were kings of a similar type, even brothers in royalty? After all, they called each other “Nicky” and “Georgie”, had very similar tastes, had ecumenical links (Nicky was godfather of Georgie’s son, the future Edward VIII, and their common grandmother, Queen Victoria, was invited to be godmother of Grand Duchess Olga⁴⁷⁵), and their empires were similar in their vastness and diversity (Nicholas was ruler of the greatest land empire in history, George – of the greatest sea power in history). Moreover, the two cousins never went to war with each other, but were allies in the First World War. They seem to have been genuinely fond of each other, and shared a mutual antipathy for their bombastic and warmongering “Cousin Willy” – Kaiser Wilhelm of Germany. To crown it all, when Tsar Nicholas abdicated in 1917, Kerensky suggested that he take refuge with Cousin Georgie in England, a suggestion that the Royal Family did not reject...

But Cousin Georgie betrayed Cousin Nicky, withdrawing his invitation for fear of a revolution in England, with the result that the Tsar and his family were murdered by the Bolsheviks in 1918.⁴⁷⁶ Nor was this the only betrayal: in a deeper sense English constitutionalism betrayed Russian autocracy. For it was a band of constitutionalist Masons headed by Guchkov, and supported by the Grand Orient of France and the Great Lodge of England, that plotted the overthrow of the Tsar in the safe haven of the English embassy in St. Petersburg. Thus it was not Jewish Bolsheviks or German militarists who overthrew the Russian autocracy, but monarchists – but monarchists who admired the English constitutionalist model. The false kingship that was all show and no substance betrayed the true kingship that died in defence of the truth in poverty and humiliation - but in true imitation of Christ the King, Who said: “You say rightly that I am a king: for this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth!” (John 18.37).

The main difference between true and false kinship is that a true king rules in consultation with his subjects, but not in thrall to them, whereas the false kind “*reigns*

⁴⁷⁵ Miranda Carter, *The Three Emperors*, London: Penguin, 2011, p. 177.

⁴⁷⁶ In view of the failure of rescue attempts from within Russia, “the future of the Tsar and his family grew ever more precarious. It was the [British] Prime Minister who initiated the meeting with George V’s private secretary at which, for a second time, ‘it was generally agreed that the proposal we should receive the Emperor in this country... could not be refused’. When Lloyd George proposed that the King should place a house at the Romanovs’ disposal he was told that only Balmoral was available and that it was ‘not a suitable residence at this time of year’. But it transpired that the King had more substantial objections to the offer of asylum. He ‘begged’ (a remarkably unregal verb) the Foreign Secretary ‘to represent to the Prime Minister that, from all he hears and reads in the press, the residence in this country of the ex-Emperor and Empress would be strongly resented by the public and would undoubtedly compromise the position of the King and Queen’. It was the hereditary monarch, not the radical politician, who left the Russian royal family to the mercy of the Bolsheviks and execution in Ekaterinburg” (Roy Hattersley, *The Great Outsider: David Lloyd George*, London: Abacus, 2010,, p. 472).

but does not govern”, as Adolphe Thiers put it in 1830. Not that the false kingship has no power of any kind: the recent 60th jubilee celebrations of Queen Elizabeth II of England, which were watched by hundreds of millions around the world on television, witnessed in a remarkable way to the emotional power even of the false, constitutional monarchism. But this is the power of a religious symbol, not of a major political reality. Queen Elizabeth reigns, but she does not govern – in fact, unlike the humblest of her citizens, she is not allowed to express any political opinion. Therefore, she is both the most privileged and most enslaved person in the realm, a paradox that only the English, it appears, think is normal...

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Let us look briefly at the origins of English constitutionalism... England was ruled by Orthodox autocrats for approximately four-and-a half centuries until 1066. In that year, however, the last Orthodox king, Harold II, was killed in battle against the Catholic Duke William of Normandy, while his only child, Gytha, fled to Kiev, where she married the Russian Great Prince Vladimir Monomakh. In this way the English autocracy was merged into the Russian autocracy, just as, in 1472, the Byzantine autocracy was merged into the Russian autocracy through the marriage of the niece of the last Byzantine autocrat, Sophia Palaeologus, to Great Prince Ivan III of Moscow.

Under the Normans and during the time of the heretical popes, the English monarchy was transformed into a totalitarian despotism. Thus William the Conqueror seized control of the Church and most of the land and wealth of the kingdom, reducing the consultative, judicial and legislative organs of the English state to mere reflections of his personal will. But then, slowly, attempts to claw back power from the despotic Norman kings began. The first, famously, was *Magna Carta* (1215), a contract between the English barons and King John, which succeeded to some degree in limiting the power of the king. But this benefited only the barons, not the people, who rebelled in 1381, were crushed by King Richard II, and continued in subjection to their aristocratic landlords.

A more determined and successful attempt to limit the power of the monarchy was made during the English revolution. The fledgling parliament of medieval times had now been transformed into a more powerful organ controlled by the leading landowners, who in turn controlled the king’s purse-strings. When parliament refused to give money to King Charles I for a war against Scotland, civil war broke out. In 1649 Cromwell tried and executed King Charles, the first ideologically motivated and judicially executed regicide in history. Before then, kings had been killed in abundance, and many Popes had presumed to depose them by ecclesiastical decrees. But Charles I was not deposed by any Pope; nor was he the victim of a simple coup. He was charged with treason against the State by his own subjects...

Treason *by* a king rather than *against* him?! This was a contradiction in terms which implied that the real sovereign ruler was not the king, but the people – or rather, those rebels against the king who chose to speak in the name of the people. As Christopher Hill writes: “high treason was a personal offence, a breach of personal loyalty to the

King: the idea that the King himself might be a traitor to the realm was novel⁴⁷⁷, to say the least. The king himself articulated the paradoxicality of the revolution during his trial, declaring: "A King cannot be tried by any superior jurisdiction on earth."

At his trial Charles had said that the king was the guarantor of his people's liberties: "Do you pretend what you will, I will stand for their liberties – for if a power without law may make laws, may alter the fundamental laws of the kingdom, I do not know what subject can be sure of his life, or of anything that he calls his own." As for the people, "truly I desire their liberty and freedom, as much as anybody whomsoever; but I must tell you that their liberty and their freedom consists in having of government those laws by which their life and their goods may be most their own. It is not for having share in government, sir, that is nothing pertaining to them. A subject and a sovereign are clean different things..."

Charles presented his case well; he went, as he put it, "from a corruptible to an incorruptible crown" with great courage and dignity. Thereby he acquired more genuine monarchist followers in his death than he had possessed during his life. Very soon, moreover, the leader of the Revolution, Oliver Cromwell, came to realize that if you kill the king, then any Tom, Dick or Harry will think he has the right to kill *you*. In particular, he realized that he could not possibly give in to the demands of the Levellers, proto-communists who wanted to "level" society to its lowest common denominator. And so in May, 1649, only four months after executing the king, he executed some mutinous soldiers who sympathised with the Levellers. And four years later he was forced to dissolve the fractious Parliament and seize supreme power himself (although he refused the title of King, preferring that of "Protector"). So England went from monarchy to dictatorship in the shortest possible time...

Earlier, just after his victory over the King at Naseby in 1645, he had declared: "God hath put the sword in the Parliament's hands, - for the terror of evil-doers, and the praise of them that do well. If any plead exemption from that, - he knows not the Gospel". But when anarchy threatened, he found an exemption to the law of the Gospel: "Necessity hath no law," he said to the dismissed representatives of the people. Napoleon had a similar rationale when he dismissed the Directory and the elected deputies in 1799.⁴⁷⁸ As did Lenin when he dismissed the Constituent Assembly in 1918... "Necessity" in one age becomes the "revolutionary morality" of the next – in other words, the suspension of all morality. This is the first law of the revolution which was demonstrated for the first time in the English revolution.

The English revolution, writes Metropolitan Anastasy (Gribanovsky), "bore within itself as an embryo all the typically destructive traits of subsequent revolutions". Nevertheless, "the religious sources of this movement, the iron hand of Oliver Cromwell, and the immemorial good sense of the English people, restrained this

⁴⁷⁷ Hill, *Milton and the English Revolution*, London: Faber & Faber, 1997, p. 172.

⁴⁷⁸ As Guizot wrote, Cromwell "was successively a Danton and a Buonaparte" (*The History of Civilization in Europe*, London: Penguin Books, 1847, 1997, p. 221).

stormy element, preventing it from achieving its full growth. Thenceforth, however, the social spirit of Europe has been infected with the bacterium of revolution..."⁴⁷⁹

Another revolutionary leader from the gentry was the poet John Milton. He set himself the task of justifying the revolution (Engels called him "the first defender of regicide") in theological terms. For unlike the later revolutions, the English revolution was still seen as needing justification in terms of Holy Scripture.⁴⁸⁰ Milton began, in his *Tenure of Kings and Magistrates*, with a firm rejection of the Divine Right of Kings. "It is lawful and hath been held so through all ages for anyone who has the power to call to account a Tyrant or wicked King, and after due conviction to depose and put him to death." Charles I was to be identified with the Antichrist, and in overthrowing him the English people had chosen God as their King. Moreover, it was now the duty of the English to spread their revolution overseas (Cromwell had begun the process in Scotland and Ireland in 1649-51), for the saints in England had been "the first to overcome those European kings which receive their power not from God but from the Beast".⁴⁸¹

"No man who knows aught," wrote Milton, "can be so stupid as to deny that all men naturally were born free". Kings and magistrates are but "deputies and commissioners of the people". "To take away from the people the right of choosing government takes away all liberty".⁴⁸² Of course, the bourgeois Milton agreed, "the people" did not mean *all* the people, or even the majority: the "inconstant, irrational and image-doting rabble", could not have the rule; the better part - i.e. the gentry, people like Milton himself - must act on their behalf. This raised the problem, as Filmer argued against Milton, that even if we accept that "the sounder, the better and the uprighter part have the power of the people... how shall we know, or who shall judge, who they can be?" But Milton brushed this problem aside...⁴⁸³

Another problem that Milton had to face was the popular (and Orthodox) conception that the king was "the image of God" - within a week of the king's execution, *Eikon Basilike* (Royal Icon) was published by the royalists, being supposedly the work of Charles himself. This enormously popular defence of the monarchy was countered by Milton's *Eikonoklastes*, in which the destruction of the icon of the king was seen as the logical consequence of the earlier iconoclasm of the English Reformation. For, as Hill explains: "An ikon was an image. Images of saints and martyrs had been cleared out of English churches at the Reformation, on the ground

⁴⁷⁹ Metropolitan Anastasy, "The Dark Visage of Revolution", *Living Orthodoxy*, vol. XVII, no. 5, September-October, 1996, p. 10.

⁴⁸⁰ For, as Sir Edmund Leach writes, "at different times, in different places, Emperor and Anarchist alike may find it convenient to appeal to Holy Writ" ("Melchisedech and the Emperor: Icons of Subversion and Orthodoxy", *Proceedings of the Royal Anthropological Society*, 1972, p. 6).

⁴⁸¹ Quoted in Hill, *op. cit.*, p. 167.

⁴⁸² Quoted in Hill, *op. cit.*, pp. 100, 101. Milton attributed the dominance of bishops and kings to the Norman Conquest, and he bewailed men's readiness "with the fair words and promises of an old exasperated foe... to be stroked and tamed again into the wonted and well-pleasing state of their true Norman villeinage" (Hill, *op. cit.*, 169). This was wildly unhistorical, for the Norman Conquest actually destroyed both the Orthodox monarchy and episcopate of Anglo-Saxon England, replacing it with a Catholic king and episcopate.

⁴⁸³ Quoted in Hill, *op. cit.*, p. 169.

that the common people had worshipped them. Protestantism, and especially Calvinism... encouraged lay believers to reject any form of idolatry."⁴⁸⁴ Thus did the anti-papist iconoclasm of the English Reformation reap its fruits in the anti-monarchist iconoclasm of the English Revolution... The transition from rebellion against the Church to rebellion against the king was inevitable. Luther had tried to resist it, but the Calvinists were less afraid to cross the Rubicon by ascribing *all* authority, both ecclesiastical and secular, to the people. For "if a purer religion, close to the one depicted in the gospel, was attainable by getting rid of superiors in the church, a better social and economic life, close to the life depicted in the gospels, would follow from getting rid of social and political superiors."⁴⁸⁵

As time passed, however, the English tired of their revolution. It was not only that so traditionalist a nation as the English could not live forever without Christmas and the "smells and bells" of traditional religion (not to speak of drinking and dancing), which Cromwell banned. "As the millenium failed to arrive," writes Christopher Hill, "and taxation was not reduced, as division and feuds rent the revolutionaries, so the image of his sacred majesty loomed larger over the quarrelsome, unsatisfactory scene... The mass of ordinary people came to long for a return to 'normality', to the known, the familiar, the traditional. Victims of scrofula who could afford it went abroad to be touched by the king [Charles II] over the water: after 1660 he was back, sacred and symbolic. *Eikonoklastes* was burnt by the common hangman together with *The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates*... The men of property in 1659-60 longed for 'a king with plenty of holy oil about him'..."⁴⁸⁶

And yet the king's holy oil was not the main thing about him from their point of view. Far more important was that he should suppress the revolutionaries, preserve order and let them make money in peace. A Divine Right ruler was not suitable because he might choose to touch their financial interests, as Charles I had done. For, as Ian Buruma writes, "there is a link between business interests - or at least the freedom to trade - and liberal, even democratic, politics. Money tends to even things out, is egalitarian and blind to race or creed. As Voltaire said about the London stock exchange: Muslims, Christians and Jews trade as equals, and bankrupts are the only infidels. Trade can flourish if property is protected by laws. That means protection from the state, as well as from other individuals."⁴⁸⁷

A constitutional ruler was the answer, that is, a ruler who would rule within strict limitations imposed by the men of property (who packed the Houses of Parliament) and drawn up in a constitution that was never written down, but was enforced by the power of tradition and precedent and the occasional mini-mutiny. And so even when, in 1660, after the failure of Cromwell's republican experiment, King Charles' son, Charles II, was allowed to occupy the throne, it was only on certain conditions, conditions imposed by the men of property. And after the "Glorious Revolution" in

⁴⁸⁴ Quoted in Hill, *op. cit.*, pp. 173-174.

⁴⁸⁵ Jacques Barzun, *From Dawn to Decadence, 1500 to the Present*, New York: Perennial, 2000, p. 265.

⁴⁸⁶ Hill, *op. cit.*, p. 181.

⁴⁸⁷ Buruma, "China and Liberty", *Prospect*, May, 2000, p. 37.

1688, the English monarchy became officially constitutional – that is, subject in the last resort to the will of parliament.

The paradoxical result is that, in England today, while everyone is a subject of the Queen, and the Queen is far more popular than any elected politician, she is also bound as none of her subjects is bound, being strictly forbidden from expressing any political opinions in public and being forced to sign all the laws that parliament sets before her... And not only in England. For if, before 1914, the family of European constitutional monarchs still had some power to influence the politicians' decisions – although not their decision to go to war⁴⁸⁸ – since then their power has dwindled to almost nil, with the very rare exception only proving the point more clearly. Thus “in 1990, when a law submitted by Roger Lallemand and Lucienne Herman-Michielsens, liberalising Belgium's abortion laws, was approved by Parliament, [King Baudouin of Belgium] refused to give Royal Assent to the bill. This was unprecedented; although Baudouin was nominally Belgium's chief executive, Royal Assent has long been a formality (as is the case in most constitutional and popular monarchies). However, due to his religious convictions, Baudouin asked the Government to declare him temporarily unable to reign so that he could avoid signing the measure into law. The Government under Wilfried Martens complied with his request on 4 April 1990. According to the provisions of the Belgian Constitution, in the event the King is temporarily unable to reign, the Government as a whole fulfils the role of Head of State. All members of the Government signed the bill, and the next day (5 April 1990) the Government declared that Baudouin was capable of reigning again.”⁴⁸⁹ So King Baudouin, a pious Catholic, became a true king for one day (April 4, 1990), when he spoke in defence of God's truth in defiance of the godless Belgian government. But precisely on that day and for that reason the godless declared him to be no king at all. Such is the absurdity entailed by the self-contradictory concept of constitutional monarchy...

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And so the English constitutional monarchy is not monarchical in its origins at all, but actually arises from the first successful European revolution *against* the monarchy (if we except Pope Gregory VII's revolution against monarchism in general in the late eleventh century). Very different was the Russian autocracy. Founded in its Christian form by St. Olga of Kiev and her grandson St. Vladimir in the late tenth century, its origins were in the Byzantine autocracy, to which it was bound by faith, baptism and marriage (St. Olga was baptized by the Byzantine emperor, and St. Vladimir was

⁴⁸⁸ As Niall Ferguson writes: “The monarchs, who still dreamed that international relations were a family affair, were suddenly as powerless as if revolutions had already broken out” (*The War of the World*, London: Penguin, 2007, p. 107). The only monarch who made the decision to enter the war on his own authority and regardless of the (very real) threat of revolution was Tsar Nicholas; although weakened by the constitution forced on him in the abortive revolution of 1905, he could still declare war by himself (in 1914), take over the command of the armed forces by himself (in 1915) and reject overtures for a separate peace by himself (in 1916). But his cousin, the English King George V, had absolutely nothing to do with the conduct of his country in the war, while his other cousin, the German Kaiser Wilhelm, while theoretically entitled to order his generals to stop, in practice was simply ignored by them...

⁴⁸⁹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Baudouin_of_Belgium

married to the sister of the Byzantine emperor). Indeed, from a juridical-symbolical point of view, the Russian Great Princes were subjects of the Byzantine emperor until the very fall of Constantinople in 1453. *De facto*, however, they were true autocrats (“autocratic” means “self-governing”) who both ruled and governed the Russian people from the beginning.

The Russian autocrats were supreme in their own, political sphere: the only limitation on their power was *the Orthodox Church*, which could excommunicate them if they defied Church law (as it excommunicated Tsar Ivan the Terrible for his seven marriages) or even call for a war of national liberation if they betrayed the Orthodox Faith (as St. Hermogen did when the false Dmitri proclaimed his status as a Catholic). This “symphony of powers” was another feature of the Russian autocracy inherited from Byzantium... Only the Russians embodied the symphony much more successfully than the Byzantines. For, on the one hand, the Byzantines far more often committed the most serious sin of regicide (“in Byzantium out of 109 reigning emperors 74 ascended onto the throne by means of regicide”⁴⁹⁰). On the other hand, many Byzantine emperors were heretics who were permitted to occupy the throne without hindrance (all the last Byzantine emperors from John V to Constantine XI were Catholics).

The first tsar who showed weakness in relation to the idea of democracy was Boris Godunov. He had been a member of the dreaded *oprichnina* from his youth, and had married the daughter of the murderer of St. Philip of Moscow, Maliuta Skouratov.⁴⁹¹ He therefore represented that part of Russian society that had profited from the cruelty and lawlessness of Ivan the Terrible. Moreover, although he was the first Russian tsar to be crowned and anointed by a full patriarch (on September 1, 1598), and there was no serious resistance to his ascending the throne, he acted from the beginning as if not quite sure of his position, or as if seeking some confirmation of his position from the lower ranks of society. This was perhaps because he was not a direct descendant of the Rurik dynasty (he was brother-in-law of Tsar Theodore), perhaps because (according to the *Chronograph* of 1617) the dying Tsar Theodore had pointed to his mother’s nephew, Theodore Nikitich Romanov, the future patriarch, as his successor, perhaps because he had some dark crime on his conscience...

In any case, Boris decided upon an unprecedented act. He interrupted the liturgy of the coronation, as Stephen Graham writes, “to proclaim *the equality of man*. It was a striking interruption of the ceremony. The Cathedral of the Assumption was packed with a mixed assembly such as never could have found place at the coronation of a tsar of the blood royal. There were many nobles there, but cheek by jowl with them were merchants, shopkeepers, even beggars. Boris suddenly took the arm of the holy Patriarch in his and declaimed in a loud voice: ‘Oh, holy father Patriarch Job, I call God to witness that during my reign there shall be neither poor man nor beggar in my realm, but I will share all with my fellows, even to the last rag that I wear.’ And in sign he ran his fingers over the jewelled vestments that he wore. There was an unprecedented scene in the cathedral, almost a revolutionary tableau when the

⁴⁹⁰ Ivan Solonevich, *Narodnaia Monarkhia* (The People’s Monarchy), Minsk, 1998, p. 81.

⁴⁹¹ Archpriest Lev Lebedev, *Velikaia Rossia* (Great Russia), St. Petersburg, 1997, p. 105.

common people massed within the precincts broke the disciplined majesty of the scene to applaud the speaker."⁴⁹²

How different was this democratism from the self-confidence of Ivan the Terrible: "I perform my kingly task and consider no man higher than myself." And again he said: "The Russian autocrats have from the beginning had possession of all the kingdoms, and not the boyars and grandees."⁴⁹³ And again, this time to the (elected) king of Poland: "We, humble Ivan, tsar and great prince of all Rus', by the will of God, and not by the stormy will of man..."⁴⁹⁴ In fact, Ivan the Terrible's attitude to his own power, at any rate in the first part of his reign, was much closer to the attitude of the Russian people as a whole than was Boris Godunov's. For, as St. John Maximovich writes, "the Russian sovereigns were never tsars by the will of the people, but always remained Autocrats by the Mercy of God. They were sovereigns in accordance with the dispensation of God, and not according to the 'multimutinous' will of man."⁴⁹⁵

Monarchy by the Grace of God and monarchy by the will of the people are incompatible principles. The very first king appointed by God in the Old Testament, Saul, fell because he tried to combine them; he listened to the people, not God. Thus he spared Agag, the king of the Amalekites, together with the best of his livestock, instead of killing them all, as God had commanded. His excuse was: "because I listened to the voice of the people" (I Kings 15.20). In other words, he abdicated his God-given authority and *became, spiritually speaking, a democrat*, listening to the people rather than to God.

Sensing this weakness in Tsar Boris, the people paid more heed to the rumours that he had murdered the Tsarevich Demetrius, the Terrible one's youngest son, in 1591. But then came news that a young man claiming to be Demetrius Ivanovich was marching at the head of a Polish army into Russia. If this man was truly Demetrius, then Boris was, of course, innocent of his murder. But paradoxically this only made his position more insecure; for in the eyes of the people the hereditary principle was higher than any other – an illegitimate but living son of Ivan the Terrible was more legitimate for them than Boris, even though he was an intelligent and experienced ruler, the right-hand man of two previous tsars, and fully supported by the Patriarch, who anathematized the false Demetrius and all those who followed him. Support for Boris collapsed, and in 1605 he died, after which Demetrius, who had promised the Pope to convert Russia to Catholicism, swept to power in Moscow.

"As regards who had to be tsar," writes St. John Maximovich, "a tsar could hold his own on the throne only if the principle of legitimacy was observed, that is, the elected person was the nearest heir of his predecessor. The legitimate Sovereign was the basis of the state's prosperity and was demanded by the spirit of the Russian

⁴⁹² Graham, *Boris Godunof*, London: Ernest Benn, 1933, p. 116.

⁴⁹³ Quoted in Archbishop Seraphim, *Ruskaia Ideologia*, op. cit., p. 64.

⁴⁹⁴ Quoted in Archbishop Seraphim, op. cit., p. 65.

⁴⁹⁵ St. John Maximovich, *Proiskhozhdenie Zakona o Prestolonasledii v Rossii* (The Origin of the Law of Succession in Russia), Shanghai, 1936; quoted in "Nasledstvennost' ili Vybory?" ("Hereditary or Elections?"), *Svecha Pokaiania* (Candle of Repentance), № 4, February, 2000, p. 12.

people.”⁴⁹⁶ The people were never sure of the legitimacy of Boris Godunov, so they rebelled against him. However, even if these doubts could excuse their rebellion against Boris (which is doubtful, since he was an anointed Tsar recognized by the Church), it did not excuse the cruel murder of his son, Tsar Theodore Borisovich, still less their recognition of a series of usurpers in the next decade. Moreover, the lawless character of these rebellions has been compared, not without justice, to the Bolshevik revolution of 1917.⁴⁹⁷ First they accepted a real imposter, the false Demetrius - in reality a defrocked monk called Grishka Otrepev. Then, in May, 1606, Prince Basil Shuisky led a successful rebellion against Demetrius, executed him and expelled the false patriarch Ignatius. He then called on Patriarch Job to come out of his enforced retirement, but he refused by reason of his blindness and old age.⁴⁹⁸ Another Patriarch was required; the choice fell of Metropolitan Hermogen of Kazan, who anointed Tsar Basil to the kingdom...But the people also rejected Tsar Basil... Finally, in 1612, coming to their senses, they besought Michael Romanov, who was both legitimate and Orthodox, to be their tsar, promising to obey him and his descendants forever, under pain of anathema. The appointment of Tsar Michael’s father as patriarch underlined the filial relationship between Church and State in the restored Russian autocracy.

The Russian autocracy of the seventeenth century presents one of the most balanced examples of Church-State symphony in history. While the autocrats were supreme in the secular sphere, any attempt they might make to dictate to the Church, or corrupt her role as the conscience of the nation, was firmly rebuffed, as we see in the life of Patriarch Nikon of Moscow. The people did not strive to limit the tsar’s authority; but their voice was respectfully listened to in the Zemskie Sobory, or “Councils of the Land”; and there was a degree of local popular representation at the lower levels of administration.

Early in the eighteenth century, however, Peter the Great disturbed the balance by trying to subject the Church to his own will, introducing the western theory of Divine Right absolutism into the government of the country, together with many other Protestant innovations. But gradually, in the nineteenth century from the time of Paul I to Nicholas II, the balance began to be restored. In 1901 Tsar Nicholas removed from the Basic Laws the phrase designating the Tsar as “Supreme Judge” of the Church, and then prepared the way for the convening of the first genuine Church Council since the middle of the seventeenth century. The Local Russian Council of 1917-18 may be counted as a fruit of the Tsar’s reign, even if was convened after he had abdicated. And after he was murdered in July, 1918, the Red Terror began, showing that the freedom of Orthodoxy and the Church was guaranteed by the autocracy and disappeared with its fall.

⁴⁹⁶ St. John Maximovich, op. cit., p. 13.

⁴⁹⁷ Bishop Dionysius (Alferov), “Smuta” (Troubles), http://catacomb.org.ua/modlues.php?=&Pages&go=print_page&pid=642.

⁴⁹⁸ According to Lebedev, Patriarch Job’s blindness and expulsion from his see were his punishment for lying during the Council of 1598 that Ivan the Terrible had “ordered” that Boris Godunov be crowned in the case of the death of his son Theodore, and for lying again in covering up Boris’ guilt in the murder of the Tsarevich Demetrius (*Velikorossia*, p. 112).

It is striking how, with the fall of true autocracy, the structure of European monarchy, being built, not on the rock of true faith and the Grace of God, but on the porous sand of the "multimutinous will" of the people (Tsar Ivan IV), began to collapse completely. For in 1917-18 the dynasties of all the defeated nations: Russia, Germany, Austria-Hungary and Bulgaria (temporarily) collapsed. And within a decade monarchy had more or less disappeared in several other nations, such as Turkey, Italy and Greece.

The first to go was Russia; for the one true monarchy had to be destroyed violently before the pseudo-monarchies could be peacefully put out to grass. The abortive revolution of 1905 had imposed a kind of constitution on the Tsar. But then he, summoning the last of his political strength, effectively defied the will of the Masons (but not that of the people) until 1917 - and even then he did not give them their "responsible government", but abdicated in favour of other members of the dynasty. Thus the Russian autocracy went out with a bang, undefeated in war and defiantly the traitors and oath-breakers who opposed it. The latter, however, went out with a whimper, losing the war and after only nine months' rule fleeing in all directions (Kerensky fled in women's clothes to Paris).

The only major monarchies to survive were those of England and Serbia. But the Serbian King Alexander, for his over-zealous defence of Orthodoxy and traditional monarchism (he had reigned together with a parliament until 1929, but then took over the reins of government himself), was assassinated in 1934, and the dynasty was forced into exile in 1941. (The monarchy has now returned to Serbia in a meekly constitutional form.) As for England, King George V, as we have seen, bought time by casting "Cousin Nicky" to the Bolshevik wolves, while his granddaughter has bought still more time by opening Hindu temples and honouring anti-monarchist rulers such as Ceauşescu and Putin... Prince Charles, meanwhile, has said that when he ascends the throne he will no longer be "the Defender of the Faith", i.e. Christianity, like all English monarchs before him, but "the defender of *all* faiths..."

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Democracy, of course, claims to guarantee the freedom and equality of its citizens. But even if we accept that "freedom" and "equality" are too often equated by liberals with licence and an unnatural levelling of human diversity, and that they had little to do with *spiritual* freedom or *moral* equality, England in 1914 was probably a less free and less equal society than Russia. As the call-up for the Boer war in 1899-1902 revealed, a good half of British conscripts were too weak and unhealthy to be admitted to active service. And things were no better in 1918, when the tall, well-fed American troops seemed giants compared with the scrawny, emaciated Tommies - the monstrously rich English factory-owners and aristocratic landlords had seen to it that the workers' lot remained as harsh as it had been when Marx and Engels first wrote about it. But in Russia in 1914 greatly increased prosperity, rapidly spreading education among all classes, liberal labour laws and a vast increase in a free, independent peasantry (especially in Siberia) were transforming the country.

The idea that autocracy is necessarily inimical to freedom and equality was refuted by the monarchist Andozerskaya in Alexander Solzhenitsyn's novel, "October, 1916": "Under a monarchy it is perfectly possible for both the freedom and the equality of citizens to flourish. First, a firm hereditary system delivers the country from destructive disturbances. Secondly, under a hereditary monarchy there is no periodic upheaval of elections, and political disputes in the country are weakened. Thirdly, republican elections lower the authority of the power, we are not obliged to respect it, but the power is forced to please us before the elections and serve us after them. But the monarch promised nothing in order to be elected. Fourthly, the monarch has the opportunity to weigh up things in an unbiased way. The monarchy is the spirit of national unity, but under a republic divisive competition is inevitable. Fifthly, the good and the strength of the monarch coincide with the good and the strength of the whole country, he is simply forced to defend the interests of the whole country if only in order to survive. Sixthly, for multi-national, variegated countries the monarch is the only tie and the personification of unity..."⁴⁹⁹

For these reasons Nicholas II was completely justified in his firm attachment to the autocratic principle.⁵⁰⁰ And his choice was vindicated by his own conduct: no autocrat conducted himself with more genuine humility and love for his subjects, and a more profound feeling of responsibility before God. He was truly an autocrat, and not a tyrant. He did not sacrifice the people for himself, but himself for the people. The tragedy of Russia was that she was about to exchange the most truly Christian of monarchs for the most horrific of all tyrannies – all in the name of freedom!

The constitutionalists criticize the Orthodox autocracy mainly on the grounds that it presents a system of absolute, uncontrolled power, and therefore of tyranny. They quote the saying of the historian Lord Acton: "Power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely". But this is and was a serious misunderstanding. The Russian autocracy was based on the anointing of the Church and on the faith of the people; and if it betrayed either – by disobeying the Church, or by trampling on the people's faith, - it lost its legitimacy, as we see in the Time of Troubles, when the people rejected the false Dmitri. It was therefore limited, not absolute, being limited, not by parliament or any secular power, but by the teachings of the Orthodox Faith and Church, and must not be confused with the system of absolutist monarchy that we see in, for example, the French King Louis XIV, or the English King Henry VIII, who felt limited by nothing and nobody on earth. Just as the Tsar had earlier rejected the temptation of becoming an English-style constitutionalist monarch, so now he resisted the opposite temptation of becoming a western-style absolutist ruler, thereby refuting the constitutionalists who looked on his rule as just that – a form of absolutism. Like Christ in Gethsemane, he told his friends to put up their swords, and surrendered himself into the hands of his enemies; "for this is your hour, and the power of darkness" (Luke 22.53). He showed that the Orthodox Autocracy was not a form of western-style absolutism, whose right is in its might, but something completely sui

⁴⁹⁹ Solzhenitsyn, *The Red Wheel*, "October, 1916", uzel 2, Paris: YMCA Press, pp. 401-408.

⁵⁰⁰ As he said to Count Witte in 1904: "I will never, in any circumstances, agree to a representative form of government, for I consider it harmful for the people entrusted to me by God." (Fomin & Fomina, *Rossia pered Vtorym Prishestviem*, Moscow, 1994, vol. 1, p. 376).

generis, whose right is in its faithfulness to the truth of Christ. He refused to treat his power as if it were *independent of* or *over* the Church and people, but showed that it was a form of *service to* the Church and the people *from within* the Church and the people. So if the people and the Church did not want him, he would not impose himself on them. He would not fight a ruinous civil war in order to preserve his power. Instead he chose to *die*, because in dying he proclaimed the truth of Christ, thereby imitating again the King of kings, Who said: "You say rightly that I am a king. For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth." (John 18.37). Moreover, he imitated the example of the first canonized saints of Russia, the Princes Boris and Gleb, and followed the advice of the Prophet Shemaiah to King Rehoboam and the house of Judah: "Thus saith the Lord, Ye shall not go up, nor fight against your brethren, the children of Israel. Return every man to his house..." (I Kings 12.24).

If we compare the abdication of Tsar Nicholas II in 1917 with that of his godson, the British King Edward VIII in 1936, we immediately see the superiority, not only of the Tsar over the King personally, but also of Orthodox autocracy over constitutional monarchy generally. Edward VIII lived a life of debauchery, flirted with the German Nazis, and then abdicated, not voluntarily, for the sake of the nation, but because he could not have both the throne and a continued life of debauchery at the same time. He showed no respect for Church or faith, and perished saying: "What a wasted life!" While the abdication of Edward VIII placed the monarchy in grave danger, the abdication of Tsar Nicholas, by contrast, saved the monarchy for the future. For by his example of selfless sacrifice for the faith and the people, he showed what a true king is, preserving the shining image of true monarchy shining and unsullied for future generations of Orthodox Christians...

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One of the greatest threats to Russia and Orthodoxy in the world today are the plans to introduce a constitutional monarchy into Russia. The best-known candidate is George Romanov, a great-grandson of Great Prince Kyril Vladimirovich, who betrayed the autocracy in 1917 and whose son, Vladimir Kyrillovich, apostasized from the True Church in 1992 in order to join the Sovietized Moscow Patriarchate. If the present neo-Soviet regime of Putin begins to feel insecure at some time in the future, it may well "restore the monarchy" in the person of George Romanov in order to gain the support of traditionalists - while keeping the real power in their own hands.

Either candidate would be a disaster for Russia. Archimandrite Kyril Zaitsev of Jordanville once said that the greatest "achievement" of the Russian revolution was its creation of a fake Orthodox Church, which looks like the real thing, but destroys souls rather than saving them. However, perhaps the real "crown" of the revolution that destroyed the Russian autocracy would be its fake restoration of the Romanov dynasty, the creation of a "constitutional autocracy" with all the external trappings of Russianness and Orthodoxy, and even genuinely Romanov genes, but none of the real autocracy's internal, spiritual essence...

“Do not judge according to appearance,” said the Lord, “but judge with righteous judgement” (John 7.24).

June 12/25, 2012.

23. DID THE CHURCH BETRAY THE TSAR IN 1917?

In recent years, historical research by M.A. Babkin⁵⁰¹ has revealed unexpected facts about the degree of the Russian Church's acquiescence in the Russian revolution. Some, such as Bishop Diomedes of Aladyr and Chukotka, have seen in this acquiescence a betrayal so serious that the Church lost grace already in 1917. Let us look at the facts...

In the abortive revolution of 1905, hierarchs such as Metropolitan Vladimir of Moscow, the future hieromartyr, had spoken openly in defence of the Tsar and Tsarism. And as late as the eve of the February revolution, such voices were still to be heard. One was that of Bishop Agapetus of Yekaterinoslav, who on February 21, together with members of the Union of the Russian People, wrote to the chancellery of the Over-Procurator: "The gates of hell will not prevail over the Church of Christ, but the destiny of Orthodoxy in our fatherland is indissolubly bound up with the destiny of the Tsarist Autocracy. Remembering on the Sunday of Orthodoxy the merits of the Russian Hierarchs before the Church and the State, we in a filial spirit dare to turn to your Eminence and other first-hierarchs of the Russian Church: by your unanimous blessings and counsels in the spirit of peace and love, strengthen his Most Autocratic Majesty to defend the Sacred rights of the Autocracy, entrusted to him by God through the voice of the people and the blessing of the Church, against which those same rebels who are encroaching against our Holy Orthodox Church are now encroaching."⁵⁰²

Tragically, however, the hierarchy as a whole did not respond to this call: at its session of February 26, near the beginning of the February revolution, the Holy Synod refused the request of the assistant over-procurator, Prince N.D. Zhevakhov, to threaten the creators of disturbances with ecclesiastical punishments.⁵⁰³ Then, on February 27, it refused the request of the over-procurator himself, N.P. Rayev, that it publicly support the monarchy. Ironically, therefore, that much-criticised creation of Peter the Great, the office of Over-Procurator of the Holy Synod, proved more faithful to the Anointed of God at this critical moment than the Holy Synod itself...

"On March 2," writes Babkin, "the Synodal hierarchs gathered in the residence of the Metropolitan of Moscow. They listened to a report given by Metropolitan Pitirim of St. Petersburg asking that he be retired (this request was agreed to on March 6 - M.B.). The administration of the capital's diocese was temporarily laid upon Bishop Benjamin of Gdov. But then the members of the Synod recognized that it was necessary immediately to enter into relations with the Executive committee of the State Duma. On the basis of which we can assert that the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church recognized the Provisional Government even before the abdication of Nicholas II from the throne. (The next meeting of the members of the Synod took

⁵⁰¹ See especially *Dukhovenstvo Russkoj Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi i Sverzhenie Monarkhii* (The Clergy of the Russian Orthodox Church and the Overthrow of the Monarchy), Moscow, 2007.

⁵⁰² Tatyana Groyan, *Tsariu Nebesnomu i Zemnomu Vernij* (Faithful to the Heavenly and Earthly King), Moscow, 1996, pp. CXX-CXXI.

⁵⁰³ A.D. Stepanov, "Mezhdu mirom i monastyrem" ("Between the World and the Monastery"), in *Tajna Bezzakonia* (The Mystery of Iniquity), St. Petersburg, 2002, p. 491.

place on March 3 in the residence of the Metropolitan of Kiev. On that same day the new government was told of the resolutions of the Synod.)

“The first triumphantly official session of the Holy Synod after the coup d’état took place on March 4. Metropolitan Vladimir of Kiev presided and the new Synodal over-procurator, V.N. Lvov, who had been appointed by the Provisional government the previous day, was present. Metropolitan Vladimir and the members of the Synod (with the exception of Metropolitan Pitirim, who was absent – M.B.) expressed their sincere joy at the coming of a new era in the life of the Orthodox Church. And then at the initiative of the over-procurator the royal chair... was removed into the archives... One of the Church hierarchs helped him. It was decided to put the chair into a museum.

“The next day, March 5, the Synod ordered that in all the churches of the Petrograd diocese the Many Years to the Royal House ‘should no longer be proclaimed’. In our opinion, these actions of the Synod had a symbolical character and witnessed to the desire of its members ‘to put into a museum’ not only the chair of the Tsar, but also ‘to despatch to the archives’ of history royal power itself.

“The Synod reacted neutrally to the ‘Act on the abdication of Nicholas II from the Throne of the State of Russia for himself and his son in favour of Great Prince Michael Alexandrovich’ of March 2, 1917 and to the ‘Act on the refusal of Great Prince Michael Alexandrovich to accept supreme power’ of March 3. On March 6 it decreed that the words ‘by order of His Imperial Majesty’ should be removed from all synodal documents, and that in all the churches of the empire molebens should be served with a Many Years ‘to the God-preserved Russian Realm and the Right-believing Provisional Government’.”⁵⁰⁴

But was the new government, whose leading members were Masons⁵⁰⁵, really “right-believing”? Even leaving aside the fact of their membership of Masonic lodges, which is strictly forbidden by the Church, the answer to this question has to be: no. When the Tsar opened the First State Duma in 1906 with a moleben, the Masonic deputies sniggered and turned away, openly showing their disrespect both for him and for the Church. And now the new government, while still pretending to be Christian, openly declared that it derived its legitimacy, not from God, but from the revolution. But the revolution cannot be lawful, being the incarnation of lawlessness. How, then, could the Church allow her members to vote for Masonic or social-democratic delegates to the Constituent Assembly?

⁵⁰⁴ Babkin, “Sviatejsnij Sinod Pravoslavnoj Rossijskoj Tserkvi i Revoliutsionnie Sobytia Fevralia-Marta 1917 g.” (“The Most Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church and the Revolutionary Events of February-March, 1917”), <http://www.monarhist-spb.narod.ru/D-ST/Babkin-1>, pp. 2, 3. Archbishop Nathanael of Vienna (+1985), the son of over-procurator Vladimir Lvov, said that his family used to laugh at the incongruity of wishing “Many Years” to a merely “Provisional” Government (“Neobychnij Ierarkh” (An Unusual Hierarch), *Nasha Strana*, N 2909, February 5, 2011, p. 3).

⁵⁰⁵ This is also now generally accepted even by western historians. Thus Tsuyoshi Hasegawa writes: “Five members, Kerensky, N.V. Nekrasov, A.I. Konovalov, M.I. Tereshchenko and I.N. Efremov are known to have belonged to the secret political Masonic organization” (“The February Revolution”, in Edward Acton, Vladimir Cherniaev, William Rosenberg (eds.), *Critical Companion to the Russian Revolution 1914-1921*, Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1997, p. 59).

On March 7, with the support of Archbishop Sergius (Stragorodsky) of Finland, the newly appointed Over-Procurator, Prince V.E. Lvov⁵⁰⁶, transferred the Synod's official organ, *Tserkovno-Obshchestvennij Vestnik (Church and Society Messenger)*, into the hands of the "All-Russian Union of Democratic Orthodox Clergy and Laity", a left-wing grouping founded in Petrograd on the same day and led by Titlinov, a professor at the Petrograd Academy of which Sergius was the rector.⁵⁰⁷ Archbishop (later Patriarch) Tikhon protested against this transfer, and the small number of signatures for the transfer made it illegal. However, in his zeal to hand this important Church organ into the hands of the liberals, Lvov completely ignored the illegality of the act and handed the press over to Titlinov, who promptly began to use it to preach his Gospel of "Socialist Christianity", declaring that "Christianity is on the side of labour, not on the side of violence and exploitation".⁵⁰⁸

Also on March 7, the Synod passed a resolution "On the Correction of Service Ranks in view of the Change in State Administration". In accordance with this, a commission headed by Archbishop Sergius (Stragorodsky) was formed that removed all references to the Tsar in the Divine services. This involved changes to, for example, the troparion for the Church New Year, where the word "Emperor" was replaced by "people", and a similar change to the troparion for the feast of the Exaltation of the Cross. Again, on March 7-8 the Synod passed a resolution, "On Changes in Divine Services in Connection with the Cessation of the Commemoration of the Former Ruling House". The phrase "*formerly* ruling" (*tsarstvovavshego*) implied that there was no hope of a restoration of any Romanov to the throne.

Then, on March 9, the Synod addressed all the children of the Church: "The will of God has been accomplished. Russia has entered on the path of a new State life. May God bless our great Homeland with happiness and glory on its new path... For the sake of the many sacrifices offered to win civil freedom, for the sake of the salvation of your own families, for the sake of the happiness of the Homeland, abandon at this great historical moment all quarrels and disagreements. Unite in brotherly love for the good of Russia. Trust the Provisional Government. All together and everyone individually, apply all your efforts to this end that by your labours, exploits, prayer and obedience you may help it in its great work of introducing new principles of State life..."

⁵⁰⁶ Lvov was, in the words of Bishop Gregory (Grabbe), "a not completely normal fantasist" (*Russkaia Tserkov' pered litsom gosподstvuiushchego zla (The Russian Church in the Face of Dominant Evil)*, Jordanville, 1991, p. 4). Grabbe's estimate of Lvov is supported by Oliver Figes, who writes: "a nobleman of no particular talent or profession, he was convinced of his calling to greatness, yet ended up in the 1920s as a pauper and a madman living on the streets of Paris" (*A People's Tragedy*, London: Pimlico, 1997, p. 449).

⁵⁰⁷ As Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) testified, "already in 1917 he [Sergius] was dreaming of combining Orthodox Church life with the subjection of the Russian land to Soviet power..." (*"Preemstvennost' Grekha" (The Heritage of Sin)*, Tsaritsyn, p. 7).

⁵⁰⁸ See Mikhail V. Shkarovskii, "The Russian Orthodox Church", in Acton, Cherniaev and Rosenberg, *op. cit.*, p. 417; "K 80-letiu Izbrania Sv. Patriarkha Tikhona na Sviashchennom Sobore Rossijskoj Tserkvi 1917-18gg." (Towards the Election of his Holiness Patriarch Tikhon at the Sacred Council of the Russian Church, 1917-18), *Suzdal'skie Eparkhial'nie Vedomosti (Suzdal Diocesan News)*, № 2, November, 1997, p. 19.

Now it is understandable that the Synod would not want to risk a civil war by displaying opposition to the new government. But was it true that “the will of God has been accomplished”? Was it not rather that God had allowed the will of *Satan* to be accomplished, as a punishment for the sins of the Russian people? And if so, how could the path be called a “great work”? As for the “new principles of State life”, everyone knew that these were revolutionary in essence...

Indeed, it could be argued that, instead of blessing the Masonic Provisional Government in its epistle of March 9, the Synod should have applied to it the curse pronounced in 1613 against those who would not obey the Romanov dynasty: “It is hereby decreed and commanded that God's Chosen One, Tsar Michael Feodorovich Romanov, be the progenitor of the Rulers of Rus' from generation to generation, being answerable in his actions before the Tsar of Heaven alone; and should any dare to go against this decree of the Sobor - whether it be Tsar, or Patriarch, or any other man, - may he be damned in this age and in the age to come, having been sundered from the Holy Trinity...”

Babkin writes that the epistle of March 9 “was characterised by B.V. Titlinov, professor of the Petrograd Theological Academy, as ‘an epistle blessing a new and free Russia’, and by General A.I. Denikin as ‘sanctioning the coup d’état that has taken place’. To the epistle were affixed the signatures of the bishops of the ‘tsarist’ composition of the Synod, even those who had the reputation of being monarchists and ‘black hundredists’, for example, Metropolitan Vladimir of Kiev and Metropolitan Macarius of Moscow. This witnessed to the ‘loyal’ feelings of the Synodal hierarchs...”⁵⁰⁹

Why did the hierarchs sanction the coup so quickly? Probably in the hope of receiving internal freedom for the Church. This is hinted at in a declaration of six archbishops to the Holy Synod and Lvov on March 8: “The Provisional Government in the person of its over-procurator V.N. Lvov, on March 4 in the triumphant opening session of the Holy Synod, told us that it was offering to the Holy Orthodox Russian Church full freedom in Her administration, while preserving for itself only the right to halt any decisions of the Holy Synod that did not agree with the law and were undesirable from a political point of view. The Holy Synod did everything to meet these promises, issued a pacific epistle to the Orthodox people and carried out other acts that were necessary, in the opinion of the Government, to calm people’s minds...”⁵¹⁰

Lvov broke his promises and proceeded to act like a tyrant, which included expelling Metropolitan Macarius from his see. It was then that the Metropolitan repented of having signed the March 9 epistle. And later, after the fall of the Provisional Government, he said: “They [the Provisional Government] corrupted the army with their speeches. They opened the prisons. They released onto the peaceful population convicts, thieves and robbers. They abolished the police and

⁵⁰⁹ Babkin, *op. cit.*, pp. 3-4.

⁵¹⁰ Babkin, *Dukhovenstvo*, pp. 195-198.

administration, placing the life and property of citizens at the disposal of every armed rogue... They destroyed trade and industry, imposing taxes that swallowed up the profits of enterprises... They squandered the resources of the exchequer in a crazy manner. They radically undermined all the sources of life in the country. They established elections to the Constituent Assembly on bases that were incomprehensible to Russia. They defiled the Russian language, distorting it for the amusement of half-illiterates and sluggards. They did not even guard their own honour, violating the promise they had given to the abdicated Tsar to allow him and his family free departure, by which they prepared for him inevitable death...

“Who started the persecution on the Orthodox Church and handed her head over to crucifixion? Who demanded the execution of the Patriarch? Was it those whom the Duma decried as ‘servants of the dark forces’, labelled as enemies of the freedom of the Church?... No, it was not those, but he whom the Duma opposed to them as a true defender of the Church, whom it intended for, and promoted to the rank of, over-procurator of the Most Holy Synod – the member of the Provisional Government, now servant of the Sovnarkom – Vladimir Lvov.”⁵¹¹

Lvov was indeed thoroughly unsuited for the post of over-procurator – he ended his days as a renovationist and enemy of Orthodoxy. In appointing him the Provisional Government showed its true, hostile attitude towards the Church. It also showed its inconsistency: having overthrown the Autocracy and proclaimed freedom for all people and all religions, it should have abolished the office of over-procurator as being an outdated relic of the State’s dominion over the Church. But it wanted to make the Church tow the new State’s line, and Lvov was to be its instrument in doing this. Hence his removal of all the older, more traditional hierarchs, his introduction of three protopriests of a Lutheran orientation into the Synod and his proclamation of the convening of an All-Russian Church Council – a measure which he hoped would seal the Church’s descent into Protestant-style renovationism, but which in fact, through God’s Providence, turned out to be the beginning of the Church’s true regeneration and fight back against the revolution...

Meanwhile, the Council of the Petrograd Religio-Philosophical Society went still further, denying the very concept of Sacred Monarchy. Thus on March 11 and 12, it resolved that the Synod’s acceptance of the Tsar’s abdication “does not correspond to the enormous religious importance of the act, by which the Church recognized the Tsar in the rite of the coronation of the anointed of God. It is necessary, for the liberation of the people’s conscience and to avoid the possibility of a restoration, that a corresponding act be issued in the name of the Church hierarchy *abolishing the power of the Sacrament of Royal Anointing, by analogy with the church acts abolishing the power of the Sacraments of Marriage and the Priesthood.*”⁵¹²

Fortunately, the Church hierarchy rejected this demand. However, the democratic wave continued, and the Church was carried along by it. The hierarchy made some protests, but these did not amount to a real “counter-revolution”. Thus on April 14, a

⁵¹¹ Quoted in Groyan, *op. cit.*, pp. 183-184.

⁵¹² Groyan, *op. cit.*, p. 142. Italics mine (V.M.).

stormy meeting took place between Lvov and the Synod during which Lvov's actions were recognised to be "uncanonical and illegal". At this session Archbishop Sergius apparently changed course and agreed with the other bishops in condemning the unlawful transfer of *Tserkovno-Obshchestvennij Vestnik*. However, Lvov understood that this was only a tactical protest. So he did not include Sergius among the bishops whom he planned to purge from the Synod; he thought – rightly – that Sergius would continue to be his tool in the revolution that he was introducing in the Church. The next day Lvov marched into the Synod at the head of a detachment of soldiers and read an order for the cessation of the winter session of the Synod and the retirement of all its members *with the single exception of Archbishop Sergius (Stragorodsky) of Finland*.⁵¹³

Thus in little more than a month since the coup, the Church had been effectively placed in the hands of a lay dictator, who had single-handedly dismissed her most senior bishops in the name of the "freedom of the Church". Here we see a striking difference in the way in which the Provisional Government treated secular or political society, on the one hand, and the Church, on the other. While Prince G.E. Lvov, the head of the government, refused to impose his authority on anyone, whether rioting peasants or rampaging soldiers, granting "freedom" – that is, more or less complete licence – to any self-called political or social "authority", Prince V.E. Lvov, the over-procurator, granted quite another kind of "freedom" to the Church – complete subjection to lay control...

On April 29, the new Synod headed by Archbishop Sergius accepted an Address to the Church concerning the establishment of the principle of the election of the episcopate, and the preparation for a Council and the establishment of a Preconciliar Council. This Address triggered a revolution in the Church. The revolution consisted in the fact that all over the country the elective principle with the participation of laymen replaced the system of "episcopal autocracy" which had prevailed thereto. In almost all dioceses Diocesan Congresses elected special "diocesan councils" or committees composed of clergy and laity that restricted the power of the bishops. The application of the elective principle to almost all ecclesiastical posts, from parish offices to episcopal sees, resulted in the removal of several bishops from their sees and the election of new ones in their stead. Thus Archbishops Basil (Bogoyavlensky) of Chernigov, Tikhon (Nikanorov) of Kaluga and Anthony (Khrapovitsky) of Kharkov were removed. Archbishop Joachim (Levitsky) of Nizhni-Novgorod was even arrested and imprisoned for a time before being shot. The retirement of Archbishop

⁵¹³ According to I.M. Andreyev, "the whole of the Synod had decided to go into retirement. Archbishop Sergius had taken part in this resolution. But when all the members of the Synod, together with Archbishop Sergius, actually came to give in their retirement, the Over-Procurator, who had set about organizing a new Synod, drew Archbishop Sergius to this. And he took an active part in the new Synod" (*Kratkij Obzor Istorii Russkoj Tserkvi ot revoliutsii do nashikh dnei* (A Short Review of the History of the Russian Church from the Revolution to our Days), Jordanville, 1952, p. 74. Bishop Gregory (Grabbe) wrote: "I can remember the opinions of those who knew him and who considered him to be a careerist and the complaints of hierarchs that he promised to retire with other members of the Synod in protest against Lvov, then he changed his mind and became head of the Synod" (Letter of April 23 / May 6, 1992 to Nicholas Churilov, *Church News*, April, 2003, p. 9).

Alexis (Dorodnitsyn) of Vladimir was justified by his earlier closeness to Rasputin. The others were accused of being devoted to the Autocracy.⁵¹⁴

Although the spirit behind this revolutionary wave was undoubtedly anti-ecclesiastical in essence, by the Providence of God it resulted in some changes that were beneficial for the Church. Thus the staunchly monarchist Archbishop Anthony, after being forced to retire, was later reinstated at the demand of the people. Again, Archbishop Tikhon (Bellavin) of Lithuania was elected metropolitan of Moscow (the lawful occupant of that see, Metropolitan Macarius, was later reconciled with him), and Archbishop Benjamin (Kazansky) was made metropolitan of Petrograd. However, there were also harmful changes, such as the election of Sergius Stragorodsky as Archbishop of Vladimir.

In the countryside, meanwhile, "there was a strong anti-clerical movement: village communities took away the church lands, removed priests from the parishes and refused to pay for religious services. Many of the local priests managed to escape this fate by throwing in their lot with the revolution."⁵¹⁵ However, several priests were savagely killed – the martyrdom of the Church began, not with the Bolshevik coup, but with the liberal democratic revolution.

From June 1 to 10 the All-Russian Congress of clergy and laity took place in Moscow with 800 delegates from all the dioceses. As Shkarovskii writes, it "welcomed the revolution, but expressed the wish that the Church continue to receive the legal and material support of the state, that divinity continue to be an obligatory subject in school, and that the Orthodox Church retain its schools. Consequently, a conflict soon broke out with the government. The Synod protested against the law of 20 June which transferred the [37,000] parish church schools to the Ministry of Education. A similar clash occurred over the intention to exclude divinity from the list of compulsory subjects."⁵¹⁶ The transfer of the church schools to the state system was disastrous for the Church because the state's schools were infected with atheism. It would be one of the first decrees that the coming Council of the Russian Orthodox Church would seek (unsuccessfully) to have repealed...

In general, the June Congress carried forward the renovationist wave; and although the June 14 decree "On Freedom of Conscience" was welcome, the government still retained de jure control over the Church. Even when the government allowed the Church to convene its own All-Russian Local Council of the Russian Orthodox Church in August, it retained the right of veto over any new form of self-administration that Council might come up with. Moreover, the Preconciliar Council convened to prepare for the forthcoming Council was to be chaired by the Church's leading liberal, Archbishop Sergius...

With the Tsar gone, and the Church led by liberals and treated with contempt by the State, it is not surprising that the conservative peasant masses were confused. Thus

⁵¹⁴ Monk Benjamin, op. cit., p. 8.

⁵¹⁵ Figes, op. cit., p. 350.

⁵¹⁶ Shkarovskii, op. cit., p. 418.

a telegram sent to the Holy Synod on July 24, 1917 concerned the oath of loyalty that the Provisional Government was trying to impose on them: "We Orthodox Christians ardently beseech you to explain to us in the newspaper *Russkoye Slovo* what constitutes before the Lord God the oath given by us to be faithful to the Tsar, Nicholas Alexandrovich. People are saying amongst us that if this oath is worth nothing, then the new oath to the new Tsar is also worth nothing.

"Is that so, and how are we to understand all this? Following the advice of someone we know, we want this question decided, not by ourselves, but by the Governing Synod, so that everyone should understand this in the necessary way, without differences of opinion. The zhids [Jews] say that the oath is nonsense and a deception, and that one can do without an oath. The popes [priests] are silent. Each layman expresses his own opinion. But this is no good. Again they have begun to say that God does not exist at all, and that the churches will soon be closed because they are not necessary. But we on our part think: why close them? – it's better to live by the church. Now that the Tsar has been overthrown things have got bad, and if they close the churches it'll get worse, but we need things to get better. You, our most holy Fathers, must try to explain to all of us simultaneously: what should we do about the old oath, and with the one they are trying to force us to take now? Which oath must be dearer to God. The first or the second? Because the Tsar is not dead, but is alive in prison. And is it right that all the churches should be closed? Where then can we pray to the Lord God? Surely we should not go in one band to the zhids and pray with them? Because now all power is with them, and they're bragging about it..."⁵¹⁷

The hierarchy had no answers to these questions...

What could it have done? It could and should have rallied round the sacred principle of the Orthodox Autocracy and used its still considerable influence among the people to restore monarchical rule. Thus Babkin writes that since, in March, 1917 "the monarchy in Russia, in accordance with the act of Great Prince Michael Alexandrovich, continued to exist as an institution", the Synod should have acted as if there was an "interregnum" in the country.⁵¹⁸ Again, Bishop Diomedes writes: "It was necessary in the name of the hierarchy of the Russian Orthodox Church to persuade the Ruling House not to leave the Russian State to be destroyed by rebels, and to call all the rebels to repentance by anathematizing them with the 11th anathema of the Sunday of Orthodoxy."⁵¹⁹

A clear precedent existed: in the recently canonized Patriarch Hermogen's call to liberate Russia from foreign Catholic rule and restore a lawful monarchy in 1612. St. Hermogen had called on the people to rise up against the false Dmitri and expel him in a war of national liberation. Like Hermogen, the Holy Synod in 1917 could have called on the Russian people to take up arms against those who had *forced* the

⁵¹⁷ Groyan, *op. cit.*, pp. CXXII-CXXIII.

⁵¹⁸ Babkin, *Dukhoventstvo*, p. 210.

⁵¹⁹ Bishop Diomedes, Address of November 21 / December 4, 2008, <http://www.russia-talk.com/otkliki/ot-601.htm>.

abdication of both the Tsar and Great Prince Michael, and who were therefore, in effect, rebels against lawful authority and subject to anathema.

But the opportunity was lost through a combination of a commendable desire to avoid bloodshed and a less commendable lack of courage. Some hierarchs supported the revolution, others rejected it, but the Synod as a whole sided with its supporters; it was simply not prepared to lead the people in such a way as to oppose the rebels and protect the monarchical principle. Nor did the Church approach any member of the Romanov dynasty with an invitation that he ascend the throne and end the interregnum.

Of course, following the example of St. Hermogen in this way would have been very difficult, requiring great courage. But it was not impossible. And we know the tragic, truly *accursed* consequences of the failure to follow it...

The weakness of the Church at this critical moment was the result of a long historical process. Having been deprived of its administrative independence by Peter the Great, the Church hierarchy had acquired the habit of servility and was not ready to stand alone against the new regime and in defence of the monarchical principle in March, 1917. Instead, in the early days of March, it hoped that, in exchange for recognizing it and calling on the people to recognize it, it would receive full administrative freedom. But it was deceived: when Lvov came to power, he began to act like a tyrant worse than the old tsarist over-procurators. And then a wave of democratization began at the diocesan and parish levels which the hierarchs did not have the strength to resist...

Thus was the prophecy of St. Ignaty (Brianchaninov) fulfilled: "Judging from the spirit of the times and the intellectual ferment, we must suppose that the building of the Church, which has already been wavering for a long time, will collapse quickly and terribly. There will be nobody to stop this and withstand it. The measures undertaken to support [the Church] are borrowed from the elements of the world hostile to the Church, and will rather hasten her fall than stop it..."⁵²⁰

And so we must conclude that in March, 1917 the Church – *de facto*, if not *de jure* - renounced Tsarism, one of the pillars of Russian identity for nearly 1000 years. With the exception of a very few bishops, such as Metropolitan Macarius of Moscow and Archbishop Andronicus of Perm, the hierarchy hastened to support the new democratic order. As Bishop Gregory (Grabbe) writes: "There were few who understood at that moment that, in accepting this coup, the Russian people had committed the sin of oath-breaking, had rejected the Tsar, the Anointed of God, and had gone along the path of the prodigal son of the Gospel parable, subjecting themselves to the same destructive consequences as he experienced on abandoning his father."⁵²¹

⁵²⁰ Sokolov, L.A. *Episkop Ignatij Brianchaninov*, Kiev, 1915, vol. 2, p. 250.

⁵²¹ Grabbe, *op. cit.*, p. 4.

However, the fact that Tsarism was renounced only de facto and not de jure means that Bishop Diomedes' thesis that the whole Church lost grace in 1917 is false. The pusillanimity of individual hierarchs, however senior or numerous, does not amount to heresy. Nevertheless, that a very serious sin was committed in the name of the Church cannot be denied.

Fortunately, this was not the end of the story, and in the following years the great sin of the Church in 1917 began to be at least partially recognized... Thus when, on the day after the Bolshevik coup, October 26 (old style), Lenin nationalized all Church land, the Local Council of the Russian Church which was then in session reacted strongly. In a letter to the faithful on November 11, the Council called the revolution "descended from the Antichrist and possessed by atheism": "Open combat is fought against the Christian Faith, in opposition to all that is sacred, arrogantly abasing all that bears the name of God (II Thessalonians 2.4)... But no earthly kingdom founded on ungodliness can ever survive: it will perish from internal strife and party dissension. Thus, because of its frenzy of atheism, the State of Russia will fall... For those who use the sole foundation of their power in the coercion of the whole people by one class, no motherland or holy place exists. They have become traitors to the motherland and instigated an appalling betrayal of Russia and her true allies. But, to our grief, as yet no government has arisen which is sufficiently one with the people to deserve the blessing of the Orthodox Church. And such will not appear on Russian soil until we turn with agonizing prayer and tears of repentance to Him, without Whom we labour in vain to lay foundations..."⁵²²

This recognition of the real nature of the revolution came none too early. On November 15, a Tver peasant, Michael Yefimovich Nikonov, wrote to the Council: "We think that the Most Holy Synod made an irreparable mistake when the bishops greeted the revolution. We do not know the reasons for this. Was it for fear of the Jews? In accordance with the prompting of their heart, or for some laudable reasons? Whatever the reason, their act produced a great temptation in the believers, and not only in the Orthodox, but even among the Old Ritualists. Forgive me for touching on this question - it is not our business to judge that: this is a matter for the Council, I am only placing on view the judgement of the people. People are saying that by this act of the Synod many right-thinking people were led into error, and also many among the clergy. We could hardly believe our ears at what we heard at parish and deanery meetings. Spiritual fathers, tempted by the deception of freedom and equality, demanded that hierarchs they dislike be removed together with their sees, and that they should elect those whom they wanted. Readers demanded the same equality, so as not to be subject to their superiors. That is the absurdity we arrived at when we emphasized the satanic idea of the revolution. The Orthodox Russian people is convinced that the Most Holy Council in the interests of our holy mother, the Church, the Fatherland and Batyushka Tsar, should give over to anathema and curse all self-called persons and all traitors who trampled on their oath together with the satanic idea of the revolution. And the Most Holy Council will show to its flock who will take over the helm of administration in the great State. We suppose it must be he who is in

⁵²² On the same day, however, the Council decreed that those killed on both sides in the conflict should be given Christian burials.

prison [the Tsar], but if he does not want to rule over us traitors,... then let it indicate who is to accept the government of the State; that is only common sense. The act of Sacred Coronation and Anointing with holy oil of our tsars in the Dormition Cathedral [of the Moscow Kremlin] was no simple comedy. It was they who received from God the authority to rule the people, giving account to Him alone, and by no means a constitution or some kind of parliament of not quite decent people capable only of revolutionary arts and possessed by the love of power... Everything that I have written here is not my personal composition alone, but the voice of the Russian Orthodox people, the 100-million-strong village Russia in which I live."⁵²³

Many people were indeed disturbed by such questions as: had the Church betrayed the Tsar in March 1917? Were Christians guilty of breaking their oath to the Tsar by accepting the Provisional Government? Should the Church formally absolve the people of their oath to the Tsar? The leadership of the Council passed consideration of these questions, together with Nikonov's letter, to a subsection entitled "On Church Discipline". This subsection had several meetings in the course of the next nine months, but came to no definite decisions...⁵²⁴

On January 19, 1918 (old style) Patriarch Tikhon issued his famous anathema against the Bolsheviks: "By the power given to Us by God, we forbid you to approach the Mysteries of Christ, we **anathematize** you, if only you bear Christian names and although by birth you belong to the Orthodox Church. We also adjure all of you, faithful children of the Orthodox Church of Christ, not to enter into any communion with such outcasts of the human race: 'Remove the evil one from among you' (I Corinthians 5.13)." The decree ended with an appeal to defend the Church, if necessary, to the death. For "the gates of hell shall not prevail against Her" (Matthew 16.18).⁵²⁵

The significance of this anathema lies in the fact that the Bolsheviks were to be regarded, not only as apostates from Christ (that was obvious), but also as having no moral authority, *no claim to obedience whatsoever* – an attitude taken by the Church to no other government in the whole of Her history. Coming so soon after the Bolsheviks' dissolution of the Constituent Assembly, it indicated that now that constitutionalism had proved its uselessness in the face of demonic barbarism, it was time for the Church to enter the struggle in earnest...⁵²⁶

⁵²³ http://www.ispovednik.org/fullst.php?nid=31&binn_rubrik_pl_news=136.

⁵²⁴ M. Babkin, "Pomestnij Sobor 1917-1918 gg.: 'O Prisyage pravitel'stvu voobsche i byvshemu imperatoru Nikolaius II v chastnosti'" (The Local Council of 1917-1918: On the Oath to the Government in general and to the former Emperor Nicholas II in particular), <http://www.portal-credo.ru/site/print.php?act=lib&id=2704>.

⁵²⁵ Russian text in M.E. Gubonin, *Akty Sviateishego Patriarkha Tikhona* (The Acts of His Holiness Patriarch Tikhon), Moscow: St. Tikhon's Theological Institute, 1994, pp. 82-85; *Deiania Sviashennogo Sobora Pravoslavnoj Rossijskoj Tserkvi* (The Acts of the Sacred Council of the Russian Orthodox Church), 1917-1918, Moscow, 1918, 1996, vol. 6, pp. 4-5 (Act 66.6) .

⁵²⁶ On January 1, 1970 the Russian Church Abroad under Metropolitan Philaret of New York confirmed this anathema and added one of its own against "Vladimir Lenin and the other persecutors of the Church of Christ, dishonourable apostates who have raised their hands against the Anointed of God, killing clergymen, trampling on holy things, destroying the churches of God, tormenting our

It was important that the true significance of the anathema for the Church's relationship with the State be pointed out. This was done immediately after its proclamation, when Count D.A. Olsufyev pointed out that at the moleben they had just sung 'many years' to the powers that be - that is, to the Bolsheviki whom they had just anathematized! "I understand that the Apostle called for obedience to all authorities - but hardly that 'many years' should be sung to them. I know that his 'most pious and most autocratic' [majesty] was replaced by 'the right-believing Provisional Government' of Kerensky and company... And I think that the time for unworthy compromises has passed."⁵²⁷

On January 22 the Patriarch's anathema was discussed in a session of the Council presided over by Metropolitan Arsenius of Novgorod, and the following resolution was accepted: "The Sacred Council of the Orthodox Russian Church welcomes with love the epistle of his Holiness Patriarch Tikhon, which punishes the evil-doers and rebukes the enemies of the Church of Christ. From the height of the patriarchal throne there has thundered the word of excommunication [preschenia] and a spiritual sword has been raised against those who continually mock the faith and conscience of the people. The Sacred Council witnesses that it remains in the fullest union with the father and intercessor of the Russian Church, pays heed to his appeal and is ready in a sacrificial spirit to confess the Faith of Christ against her blasphemers. The Sacred Council calls on the whole of the Russian Church headed by her archpastors and pastors to unite now around the Patriarch, so as not to allow the mocking of our holy faith." (Act 67.35-37).⁵²⁸

In April the feast of the Holy New Martyrs and Confessors was instituted. In July the Tsar and his family were killed. But just as the Council had paid no attention to him during his life, not calling for his release from prison, so now they did not glorify him after his death - although the Patriarch did condemn his murder.

On April 15 the Council decreed: "Clergymen serving in anti-ecclesiastical institutions... are subject to being banned from serving and, in the case of impenitence, are deprived of their rank". On the assumption that "anti-ecclesiastical institutions" included all Soviet institutions, this would seem to have been a clearly anti-Soviet measure.

Unfortunately, however, on August 15, 1918, the Council took a step backwards, declaring invalid all defrockings based on political considerations. They applied this measure particularly to the eighteenth-century Metropolitan Arsenius (Matsevich) of Rostov, and Priest Gregory Petrov. Metropolitan Arsenius had indeed been unjustly defrocked for his righteous opposition to Catherine II's anti-Church measures. However, Fr. Gregory Petrov had been one of the leaders of the Cadet party in the Duma in 1905 and was an enemy of the monarchical order. How could his defrocking

brothers and defiling our Fatherland"

(http://catacomb.org.ua/modules.php?name=Pages&go=print_page&pid=1775)

⁵²⁷ *Deiania*, op. cit., vol. 6, p. 7; quoted in A.G. Yakovitsky, "Sergianstvo: mif ili real'nost? (Sergianism: myth or reality?)", *Vernost'*, 100, January, 2008.

⁵²⁸ *Deiania*, op. cit., vol. 6, p. 36.

be said to have been unjust in view of the fact that the Church had officially prayed for the Orthodox Autocracy, and Petrov had worked directly against the fulfilment of the Church's prayers? The problem was: too many people, including several hierarchs, had welcomed the fall of the Tsarist regime. If the Church was not to divide along political lines, a general amnesty was considered necessary. But if true recovery can only begin with repentance, and repentance must begin with the leaders of the Church, this decree amounted to covering the wound without allowing it to heal.

As Bishop Dionysius (Alferov) of Novgorod writes, the Council could be criticized for its "its legitimization of complete freedom of political orientation and activity, and, besides, its rehabilitation of the Church revolutionaries like Gregory Petrov. By all this it doomed the Russian Church to collapse, presenting to her enemies the best conditions for her cutting up and annihilation piece by piece.

"That this Council... did not express the voice of the complete fullness of the Russian Church is proved by the decisions of two other Councils of the time: that of Karlovtsy in 1921, and that of Vladivostok in 1922.

"At the Karlovtsy Council remembrance was finally made of the St. Sergius' blessing of the Christian Sovereign Demetrius Donskoj for his battle with the enemies of the Church and the fatherland, and of the struggle for the Orthodox Kingdom of the holy Hierarch Hermogenes of Moscow. The question was raised of the 'sin of February', but because some of the prominent activists of the Council had participated in this, the question was left without detailed review. The decisions of this Council did not receive further official development in Church life because of the schisms that began both in the Church Abroad and in the monarchist movement. But the question of the re-establishment of the Orthodox Kingdom in Russia had been raised, and thinkers abroad worked out this thought in detail in the works, first of Prince N.D. Zhevakhov and Protopriest V. Vostokov, and then, more profoundly, in the works of Archbishop Seraphim (Sobolev), Professor M.V. Zyzykin, Archimandrite Constantine Zaitsev, V.N. Voejkov and N.P. Kusakov.

"The Church-land Council in Vladivostok, which is now almost forgotten, expressed itself more definitely, recognizing the Orthodox autocracy to be the only lawful authority in Russia. 'This Council recognizes that the only path to the regeneration of a great, powerful and free Russia is the restoration in it of the monarchy, headed by a lawful Autocrat from the House of the Romanovs, in accordance with the Basic laws of the Russian Empire'."

A significant further step towards ecclesiastical repentance and rehabilitation took place in 1981, when the Russian Church Abroad canonized the Tsar himself together with all the Holy New Martyrs and Confessors who had suffered for their resistance to Soviet power. In 2000 even the hierarchy of the Sovietized Moscow Patriarchate was forced to bow before the podvig of him whom they once called "Bloody Nicholas". And now, in 2012, a series of billboards bearing the image of Tsar Martyr Nicholas

and his family are appearing in towns and cities all across Russia with the general message: "*Forgive us, our Sovereign.*"⁵²⁹

But this is not the end... The end of the process of rehabilitation will come only when the Church has done what it should have done and failed to do in 1917 – that is, lead the expulsion of the neo-Soviet authorities for whom Stalin is a hero and the fall of communism in 1991 “a geo-political tragedy”. Only then will it be possible to place a true Tsar on the throne of all the Russias and finally expiate the sin of February, 1917.

*June 29 / July 12, 2012.
Holy Apostles Peter and Paul.*

⁵²⁹ <http://www.angelfire.com/pa/ImperialRussian/blog/index.blog/1438574/forgive-us-our-sovereign/>

24. ECUMENISM AND NATIONALISM

False love versus Real Hatred

The Orthodox Church today is afflicted by two spiritual diseases that are opposite and equal to each other, ecumenism and nationalism. These are the Scylla and Charybdis of contemporary Orthodoxy. Like Nestorianism and Monophysitism in the fifth century, they represent two apparently opposite heresies, each leading as surely as the other to alienation from Orthodoxy and the abyss of hell. They have grown in tandem in the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, spreading from Western Europe (France and Germany) to Central and Eastern Europe (Poland and the Balkans), and from Europe throughout the world. It may seem strange at first that such opposite movements should develop together; but we often find similar phenomena in history, one exaggerated and one-sided view eliciting the reaction of another, equally exaggerated and one-sided view. Orthodoxy lies, not in some compromise between the two extremes, but in a higher point of view that sees the dangers and falsehood of both. The tragedy is that many who have escaped the one disease fall into the other one, and few indeed are those who have escaped both and remained spiritually healthy.

The origins of ecumenism lie in the eighteenth-century English and French Enlightenment. The philosophers of the Enlightenment, when they did not deny religion altogether, regarded it as outdated and unimportant. On this basis, it was a short step to the creation of a new religion, ecumenism, which accepts completely contradictory beliefs but considers these contradictions unimportant, since the only important thing is "love" – not love for the truth, it goes without saying, but love for a false peace in which there are no arguments over matters of the faith, so that people can concentrate together on the things that supposedly really matter – the improvement of the material conditions of all through the exercise of reason unhindered by superstition and ignorance.

The origins of nationalism lie much deeper in history, perhaps in the Greek exaltation of themselves above all "barbarians", or in the first-century Jewish rebellion against Roman power. But in modern times, the cult of the nation began in the French revolution – which, not coincidentally, also marked the beginning of the liberation of the Jews from the power of the Gentile nations. The Declaration of the Rights of Man of 1789 saw the nation as the supreme value, placing it above all other values as their arbiter.

However, the French revolution contained an inner tension between the universal, internationalist values that it inherited from the Enlightenment – freedom, equality and brotherhood – and the Rousseauist cult of the nation. So on the one hand, it sought the freedom and equality of *all* nations and *all* human beings. But on the other hand, it exalted France as "the great nation" par excellence that had the right to impose her power and world-view on the rest of the world. So the internationalist phase of the revolution quickly metamorphosed into a nationalist phase under Napoleon... This metamorphosis was aided by the German war of liberation from Napoleon's yoke in 1813-15, which gave a still sharper and more egotistical edge to the cult of the nation. German nationalism was based on the German Counter-Enlightenment, which

consciously rejected the universalism of the French Enlightenment, favouring the cult of the particular as opposed to the universal, and the emotional as opposed to the rational. It was this German-led transition from nationalism as the cult of *the nation in general* to the cult of *my nation in particular* that would prove to be so fatal to the peace of the world.

From a Christian point of view, neither form of the cult is acceptable; for in Christ there is neither Greek nor Jew (Colossians 3.7); neither the nation in general nor any nation in particular is to be worshipped. Nevertheless, Christianity does not condemn a healthy love of one's country, or patriotism, that is not pitched consciously and aggressively against other patriotisms, nor seeks to place the good of the nation above the good of the Church and the universalist commandments of the Gospel. Christ loved His earthly homeland, and wept over its fall. But He also praised the Roman centurion for having a faith greater than any in Israel; He similarly praised the faith of the Syro-Phoenician woman; and He converted the Samaritan woman and portrayed Himself in the role of the Good Samaritan. Most importantly, He refused to join in or approve of the Jewish nationalist rebellion against Roman power, which was the real reason why the Jews killed Him: Christ was killed by the nationalists because He refused to be a nationalist...

Both ecumenism and nationalism are essentially political movements aiming at earthly good things - peace and prosperity in the case of ecumenism, power and prestige in the case of nationalism. But they clothe themselves in a religious covering in order to make themselves more attractive to believers. Ecumenism clothes its rejection of dogmatic religion in a cloak of "love" - "God is love", they say, "there are many ways to God and God accepts all of them", "tolerance is the highest form of virtue", "love and do what you will". Its attractiveness lies in its removal of all conflict over questions of truth and all moral struggle against fallen passion. Nationalism rejects this wishy-washy approach to truth and reintroduces the element of struggle. But its "truth", while clear and uncompromising, is self-evidently false: my nation is always *essentially* in the right and always the innocent victim of other nations, whatever minor mistakes she may make and whatever rational arguments you may produce to prove that she is wrong. As for the reintroduction of struggle, this is only apparent; for in fact the struggle for superiority over neighbouring nations is conducted through a full-scale *surrender* to the most evil of passions - pride and hatred. For, as Metropolitan Anastasy (Gribanovsky) writes: "The nation, this collective organism, is just as inclined to deify itself as the individual man. The madness of pride grows in this case in the same progression, as every passion becomes inflamed in society, being refracted in thousands and millions of souls."⁵³⁰ Thus if ecumenism is the religion of false, sentimental love, nationalism is the religion of all-too-genuine hatred...

Although they appear to be opposites, there is in fact a close kinship between ecumenism and nationalism. This kinship was elucidated by the Russian diplomat and publicist Constantine Leontiev, who, though an ardent philhellene, was strongly

⁵³⁰ Metropolitan Anastasy (Gribanovsky) of New York, *Besedy s sobstvennym serdtsem* (Conversations with my own heart), Jordanville, 1998, p. 33.

critical of the nationalism of the Greek revolution. He also thought that the Serbian and Bulgarian nationalisms that motivated the other Balkan revolutions were very similar in their aims and psychology to the Greek – that is, sadly lacking in that "universalist nationalism" that he called *Byzantinism*. These petty nationalisms, argued Leontiev, were closely related to liberalism. They were all rooted in the French revolution: just as liberalism insisted on the essential equality of all men and their "human rights", so these nationalisms insisted on the essential equality of all nations and their "national rights". But this common striving for "national rights" made the nations very similar in their essential egoism.⁵³¹ It replaced *individuality* with *individualism*, *hierarchy* with *egalitarianism*, *right faith* with *indifferentism* (ecumenism)⁵³².

Leontiev believed, as Andrzej Walicki writes, that "nations were a creative force only when they represented a specific culture: 'naked' or purely 'tribal' nationalism was a corrosive force destroying both culture and the state, a leveling process that was, in the last resort, cosmopolitan; in fact, nationalism was only a mask for liberal and egalitarian tendencies, a specific metamorphosis of the universal process of disintegration".⁵³³ According to Leontiev, the nations' striving to be independent was based precisely on their desire to be like every other nation: "Having become politically liberated, *they are very glad, whether in everyday life or in ideas, to be like everyone else*". Therefore nationalism, freed from the universalist idea of Christianity, leads in the end to a soulless, secular cosmopolitanism. "In the whole of Europe the purely national, that is, *ethnic* principle, once released from its *religious fetters*, will at its triumph give fruits that are by no means national, but, on the contrary, in the highest degree cosmopolitan, or, more precisely, *revolutionary*."⁵³⁴ The revolution consisted in the fact that state nationalism would lead to the internationalist *abolition* or *merging* of states. "A grouping of states according to pure nationalities will lead European man very quickly to the dominion of internationalism"⁵³⁵ – a European Union or even a Global United Nations. "A state grouping *according to tribes and nations* is... nothing other than the preparation – striking in its force and vividness – for the transition to a cosmopolitan state, first a pan-European one, and then, perhaps, a global one, too!..."⁵³⁶

In 1872 the Ecumenical Patriarchate anathematized the ecclesiastical form of nationalism known as "phyletism". But this did not prevent inter-Orthodox nationalism between Greeks, Serbs, Bulgarians and Romanians reaching a crescendo of hatred and violence in the next four-and-a-half decades. Nor did nationalist

⁵³¹ "The Greeks have 'the Byzantine empire', 'the Great Hellenic Idea'; while the Bulgars have 'Great Bulgaria'. Is it not all the same?" ("Pis'ma o vostochnykh delakh - IV" (Letters on Eastern Matters - IV), *Vostok, Rossia i Slaviansstvo* (The East, Russia and Slavdom), Moscow, 1996, p. 363.

⁵³² "So much for the national development, which makes them all similar to contemporary Europeans, which spreads petty rationalism, egalitarianism, religious indifference, European bourgeois uniformity in tastes and manners: machines, pantaloons, frock-coats, top hats and demagogu!" ("Plody natsional'nykh dvizhenij" (The Fruits of the National Movements), *op. cit.*, p. 560).

⁵³³ Walicki, *A History of Russian Thought*, Oxford: Clarendon, 1988, p. 303.

⁵³⁴ Leontiev, *Letter of a Hermit*.

⁵³⁵ Leontiev, "On Political and Cultural Nationalism", letter 3, *op. cit.*, p. 363.

⁵³⁶ Leontiev, "Tribal Politics as a Weapon of Global Revolution", letter 2, in Constantine Leontiev, *Izbrannie Sochinenia* (Selected Works), edited by I.N. Smirnov, Moscow, 1993, p. 314.

passions truly abate thereafter: in the years 1918-41, Italian and German fascism elicited considerable sympathy in Eastern Europe, especially in Romania and Croatia. From 1945 the communist conquest of most of the region served to dampen nationalist passions for a time. But after the fall of communism in 1989-91, nationalist wars broke out again in many parts of the former Soviet Union and especially in the former Yugoslavia.

As for ecumenism, since it was not heralded by open wars and the shedding of blood, it developed in a much more insidious manner that escaped the condemnation of church authorities for a long time. It was not until 1983 that the first formal anathematization of ecumenism took place, by the Russian Church Abroad under St. Philaret of New York. As in the case of the condemnation of phyletism, this did not have an immediate effect; and to this day the great majority of those who call themselves Orthodox Christians remain immersed in the "heresy of heresies" through their participation in the World Council of Churches and the wider ecumenical movement.

In our time, ecumenism has become *interwoven* with nationalism. Just as several of the communist leaders of Eastern Europe held onto power by transforming themselves into nationalist leaders, so the waning attraction of ecumenism has been recharged by association with nationalist passion.

We can also understand this interweaving of ecumenism and nationalism in psychological terms: the feeling of guilt engendered by the involvement of the Orthodox with the western heresies through the ecumenical movement has been suppressed or compensated for by a fierce wave of anti-western (especially anti-American) nationalism.

The first and most fundamental fact in this connection is that although the ecumenist Orthodox have now been immersed in the heresy of ecumenism for many decades, increasing numbers of them *know* that this is wrong. They know that this is a betrayal of the faith of their fathers, and they know, albeit obscurely, that they are no longer worthy to be called their sons. This applies more to many thinking clergy and laity, and less to the hierarchs, whose consciences are scarred and appear no longer capable of repentance. The present writer remembers a meeting of dissident clergy of the Moscow Patriarchate in Moscow late in 1989 at which there was universal condemnation of the hierarchs and a determination to escape the heresy of ecumenism. In the end, pressure was applied from above, and only one of the priests at the meeting joined the True Church; but the meeting demonstrated real and sincere feeling – a feeling that is probably no less widespread today.

However, the failure to act in accordance with church truth over a longish period of time creates a condition of psychological and spiritual tension, of *guilt*, that demands resolution. Repentance is the only real way of resolving this tension. But, failing that, one of the ways seemingly to resolve the tension and justify one's remaining in the false church is to endow the latter with the status of a national institution, a treasure that must be preserved and honoured for cultural and national reasons, if not strictly spiritual ones.

Terminology plays an important role here. The false church is called simply “the Russian Church” or “the Serbian Church”, as if there were no other with a greater claim to the title. If repeated over time, the idea is inculcated that this is the one and only Church, to leave which would amount to individual and collective apostasy...

Nationalism has here come to the rescue of ecumenism. “You cannot leave the ecumenist church,” goes the thought, “because she is the church of *the nation*. So by leaving her you will be betraying *the nation*. As for those zealots of Orthodoxy who leave the official church, they are proud, placing their own need for ‘correctness’ above their duty to the nation. By dividing the flock they weaken the nation, which can only go forward if it is united under its present leaders.”

This is a false argument because the exaltation of the nation above the truth leads, not to true national greatness, but to moral and spiritual downfall. The Lord said that he who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me (Matthew 10.37), and he who loves his fatherland more than the Lord is similarly unworthy of Him. For it is a form of idolatry. As Fr. John Vostorgov, one of the first martyrs of the Bolshevik revolution, pointed out, true patriotism can only be founded on true faith and morality. “Where the faith has fallen,” he said, “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.”⁵³⁷

Both ecumenism and nationalism appeal to unity as the supreme value – in the case of ecumenism, a mythical unity of all men of good will and sense, and in the case of nationalism, a hardly less mythical unity of all men of the same blood and/or culture. Those who refuse to join these unities are categorized as mad or traitors or both. But Orthodoxy values above all unity with *the truth*, with God Who is the truth, and with the One True Church, “the pillar and ground of the truth” (I Timothy 3.15). He who is in unity with the truth may find himself in disunity with almost all those around him, as did many of the holy confessors. But this is not to be wondered at; for, as St. Paul says, “let God be true and every man a liar” (Romans 3.4). Indeed, “when the Son of Man comes,” said the Lord, “will He really find faith on the earth?” (Luke 18.8).

August 6/19, 2013.

The Transfiguration of our Lord, God and Saviour Jesus Christ.

⁵³⁷ Vostorgov, in Fomin S. & Fomina T., *Rossia pered Vtorym Prishestviem* (Russia before the Second Coming) Moscow, 1994, p. 400.

25. ORTHODOXY AND HUMAN RIGHTS

A man kicks another man who is lying on the ground and is not threatening anyone. Is that right or wrong? No civilized person would deny that it is wrong. The question is: why is it wrong? Is it wrong because God has commanded us to love our neighbour, not abuse him? This is the answer that an Orthodox Christian (and most religious people) would give. Is it wrong because unprovoked violence is a crime according to the laws of the State? Again, an Orthodox Christian (and most law-abiding people) would answer: yes. Is it wrong because every human being has the right to be treated with dignity and respect? Here an Orthodox Christian would probably hesitate to answer... Not because he denies that human beings should be treated with dignity and respect, but because the way the question is posed presupposes a philosophy of human rights which is not Orthodox...

1. The Origins of the Philosophy: The Grigorian Revolution

The modern philosophy of human rights is a theory of universal morality binding on all men and all human institutions and states that is not dependent on the existence of God or any personal lawgiver.

The roots of this philosophy lie in the medieval western idea of *natural law*, which in turn had its roots in the eleventh-century Grigorian revolution in the Western Church. This revolution, if it was to be permanent, required a legal underpinning. For “the order defined by the Roman Church was one that consciously set itself against primordial customs..., or ephemeral codes drawn up on the whims of kings, or mildewed charters. Only one law could maintain for the entirety to Christendom the ties of justice and charity that bound together a properly Christian society: ‘the eternal law, that creates and rules the universe’. This was not an order that could be administered by priests alone...”⁵³⁸

The impetus to acquiring this law was given by Pope Gregory VII himself, who, as Siedentop writes, “may have encouraged the Countess Matilda of Tuscany to establish law lectures at Bologna, in order to promote the study of Roman law. Within a few decades this school of law acquired a remarkable reputation. It began to attract students from across Europe. By the end of the century a jurist, Irnerius, was lecturing at Bologna on the body of Roman law, the *Corpus Juris Civilis* of Justinian [which had been discovered in a library in Northern Italy, together with important works from pre-Christian antiquity, [such as Aristotle’s *Politics*⁵³⁹]. Irnerius and other jurists did not merely discover in Roman law a rich, sophisticated collection of rules relating to different conditions of life and society. Their encounter with Roman law stimulated reflections on the nature and requirements of a legal system, a kind of jurisprudence. For them, Roman law conjured up the vision of an autonomous, self-contained legal system.

⁵³⁸ Tom Holland, *Dominion*, London: Abacus, 2019, p. 220.

⁵³⁹ Fukuyama, *op. cit.*, p. 268.

“Such a vision inevitably prompted comparison with the rules or canons supposedly governing the life of the church. These seemed painfully inadequate when compared to the elaborate, articulated structure of Justinian’s *Corpus*. There had, it is true, been earlier collections of canons that brought together the decisions of ‘universal’ church councils, papal decrees and the opinions of church Fathers such as Augustine and Gregory the Great. But these collections were centuries-old and incomplete, often incoherent or inconclusive. The new Roman lawyers or ‘civilians’ viewed them with some contempt.

“What was needed to introduce order and unity into the laws of the church? What were the legal and practical prerequisites of a legal system? Justinian’s *Corpus Juris Civilis* suggested a clear answer: ‘The emperor is not bound by statutes’. Supreme authority had to be invested in a single agency that would itself be above the law. Just as the emperor’s imperium had become the final source of Roman law, the laws of the church required a source that was not itself bound by law and so was able to prevent contradictions or anomalies developing within the system. Such a source for law provided the means of abrogating undesirable customs.”⁵⁴⁰

What was needed, therefore, was a new body of law in which the final source of legislative authority would be the pope, not the emperor. However, the new law would have to be very wide-ranging, with major inroads into what, in both East and West to that time, had been within the secular ruler’s jurisdiction. For this was the whole essence of the Gregorian revolution: the invasion of Caesar’s domain by God’s (i.e. the Pope’s).

This meant pillaging Justinian’s *Corpus* for what was compatible with the Gregorian project while discarding all the rest (together, of course, with the whole spirit of Byzantine jurisprudence). “As Ivo of Chartres insisted at the end of the eleventh century, only those parts of Roman law acceptable to the church should be adopted. Yet before long the areas invaded by canon lawyers included important parts of both private and communal law, for the church took a close interest in matters such as marriage, testaments, adultery, divorce, perjury, usury and homicide. Little wonder that at times civil lawyers felt their domain was under threat...”⁵⁴¹

The result was the publication, in about 1140, of Gratian’s *Concordia discordantium canonum*, “Concord of Discordant Canons”, later called simply the *Decretum*, in which much of Justinian’s *Corpus* was collated, compared and commented on. It quickly became the standard compilation of church law, so much so that, as Bernard of Clairvaux complained, “Every day the papal palace resounds to the laws of Justinian and not those of the Lord.”⁵⁴² The *Decretum* was bound to be revolutionary because it assumed to itself an authority higher – because more God-given – than any existing code of laws with a new supreme law-giver, the Pope. The question was: would the other lawgivers accept it?

⁵⁴⁰ Siedentop, *op. cit.*, p. 212.

⁵⁴¹ Siedentop, *op. cit.*, p. 213.

⁵⁴² Comby, *op. cit.*, p. 138.

The other question was: how were the discordances in the canons to be made concordant? "Gratian and his colleagues," writes Holland, "had two recourses. There was the guidance provided by scripture, and by the Church fathers – men such as Irenaeus, and Origen, and Augustine. Yet even these authorities did not provide Gratian with what Muslim lawyers had long taken for granted: a comprehensive body of written rulings supposedly deriving from God himself. No Christians had ever had such a resource. God, as they believed, wrote his rulings on the human heart. Paul's authority on this score was definitive. The entire law is summed up in a single command: 'Love your neighbour as yourself'. Here, for Gratian, was the foundations-stone of justice. So important to him was the command that he opened the *Decretum* by citing. Echoing the Stoics as much as Paul had done, he opted to define it as natural law – and the key to fashioning a properly Christian legal system. All souls were equal in the eyes of God. Only if it were founded on this assumption could justice truly be done. Anything obstructing it had to go. 'Enactments, whether ecclesiastical or secular, if they were proved to be contrary to natural law, must be totally excluded.'

"Much flowed from this formulation that earlier ages would have struggled to comprehend. Age-old presumptions were being decisively overturned: that custom was the ultimate authority; that the great were owed a different justice from the humble; that inequality was something natural, to be taken for granted. Clerks trained in Bologna were agents of revolution as well as of order. Legally constituted, university-trained, they constituted a new breed of professional. Gratian, by providing them with both a criterion and a sanction for weeding out objectionable customs, had transfigured the very understanding of law. No longer did it exist to uphold the differences in status that Roman jurists and Frankish kings alike had always taken for granted. Instead, its purpose was to provide justice to every individual, regardless of rank, or wealth, or lineage – for every individual was equally a child of God.

"Gratian, by inscribing this conviction into the *Decretum*, had served to set the study of law upon a new and radical course. The task of a canon lawyer, like that of a gardener, was never done. The weeds were always sprouting, always menacing the flowers. Unlike the great corpus of Roman law, which scholars in Bologna regarded as complete and therefore immutable, canon law was oriented to the future as well as to the past. Commentaries on the *Decretum* worked on the assumption that it could always be improved. To cite an ancient authority might also require reflection on how best to provide it with legal sanction in the here and now. How, for instance, were the Christian people to square the rampant inequality with the insistence of numerous Church Fathers that 'the use of all things should be common to all'? The problem was one that, for decades, demanded the attention of the most distinguished scholars in Bologna. In 1200, half a century after the completion of the *Decretum*, a solution had finally been arrived at – and it was one fertile with implications for the future. A starving pauper who stole from a rich man did so, according to a growing number of legal scholars, *iure naturali* – 'in accordance with natural law'. As such, they argued, he could not be reckoned guilty of a crime. Instead, he was merely taking what was properly owed him. It was the wealthy miser, not the starving thief, who was the object of divine disapproval. Any bishop confronted by such a case, so canon lawyers

concluded, had a duty to ensure that the wealthy pay their due of alms. Charity, no longer voluntary, was being rendered a legal obligation.

“That the rich had a duty to give to the poor was, of course, a principle as old as Christianity itself. What no one had thought to argue before, though, was a matching principle: that the poor had an entitlement to the necessities of life. It was – in a formulation increasingly deployed by canon lawyers – a human ‘right.’

“Law, in the Latin West, had become an essential tool of its ongoing revolution...”⁵⁴³

Larry Siedentop makes a similar point: “Canon law developed around a new theory of justice, a theory resting on the assumption of moral equality. To find it, we have only to look at the opening words of Gratian’s *Decretum*: ‘Natural law [*jus*] is what is contained in the Law and the Gospel by which each is to do to another what he wants done to himself and forbidden to do to another what he does not want done to himself.’ Here the biblical ‘golden rule’ has been imposed on the ancient theory of natural law, so that equality and reciprocity are made the mainsprings of justice. Without, perhaps, fully realizing the novelty of his move, Gratian fused Christian moral intuitions with a concept inherited from Greek philosophy and Roman law. Relations of equality and reciprocity are now understood as antecedent to both positive and customary law. They provide ultimate standards for judging the contents of each. By identifying natural law with biblical revelation and Christian morality, Gratian gave it an egalitarian basis – and a subversive potential – utterly foreign to the ancient world’s understanding of natural law as ‘everything in its place.’”

At first sight, there would seem to be nothing wrong with placing the Gospel commandments at the foundation of justice. However, the rub came in the principle’s application, its “subversive potential” in the hands of the Pope...

“This new theory of justice, developing within canon law, would have far-reaching consequences. For it marked a departure from the assumptions about status embedded in Roman law since antiquity. For example, the second-century jurist Gaius had relied on three tests to establish personal status:

- Is the person free or unfree?
- Is the person a citizen or foreign born?
- Is the person a *paterfamilias* or in the power of an ancestor?

Evidently, Gaius did not assume an underlying equality of moral status. His use of ‘person’ was purely descriptive and physical. It carried no moral implications. The church, following Constantine’s conversion, had accepted much Roman private law, modeling its courts and procedures on that law. But when knowledge and practice of Roman law declined after the fall of the Western empire, the overriding concern of the clergy was to save as much as possible, by helping Germanic rulers to create law codes for their new kingdoms and trying to protect their Romanized subjects. The

⁵⁴³ Holland, *Dominion*, London: Abacus, 2019, pp. 221-223.

understanding of Roman legal terms became fragile. For centuries there was neither leisure nor the ability to review basic assumptions about status in Roman law.

“Gratian’s interpretation of the requirements of natural law amounted, however, to just such a review. It amounted to a reversal of assumptions in favour of human equality. For, in effect, it stipulated that all ‘persons’ should be considered as ‘individuals’, in that they share an underlying equality of status as the children of God. Instead of traditional social inequalities being deemed natural – and therefore not needing justification – an underlying moral equality was now deemed natural. This reversal of assumptions meant that paterfamilias and lordship were no longer ‘brute’ facts that stood outside and constrained the claims of justice. They too were now subject to the scrutiny of justice...

“Of course, the canonists did not foresee all the implications of this reversal of moral presumptions. They were not social revolutionaries. But the fact remains that they laid the foundation for a move away from an aristocratic society to a ‘democratic’ society. Such a reversal of assumptions not only foreshadowed a fundamental change in the structure of society. It also freed the human mind, giving a far wider scope and a more critical edge to the role of analysis. It made possible what might be called the ‘take-off’ of the Western mind...

“We can see the impact of this intellectual revolution on thinking about political authority. The canonists were greatly influenced by the notion of imperium in Roman law. Yet their translation of imperium into the papal claim of sovereignty changed its meaning. Individuals rather than established social categories or classes became the focus of legal jurisdiction. Individuals or ‘souls’ provided the underlying unit of subjection in the eyes of the church, the unit that counted for more than anything else. In effect, canon lawyers purged Roman law of hierarchical assumptions surviving from the social structure of the ancient world...”⁵⁴⁴

Siedentop makes a valid and important point here. Nevertheless, he exaggerates the role that the Gregorian revolution played in the emergence of the concept of the individual. That concept did not emerge as a consequence of the idea of the papal sovereignty over all Christians. The idea that God will judge all men impartially in accordance with His commandments and regardless of their social status was introduced at the beginning, not at the end of the first Christian millennium. Moreover, the Byzantine Autocracy and all her children in the East and the West fully understood that the individual person is the unit of moral evaluation, and that kings and paupers, clergy and laity – all will be judged according to the same criterion. The difference with the epoch that begins with Gregory VII was that the pre-schism Church, following St. Paul’s words: “Let each one remain in the same calling in which he was called” (I Corinthians 7.20), believed that the race, sex, wealth, calling and social status of each individual were not accidental facts about them, but providential – that is, decreed by God for the sake of that individual’s salvation. It followed that social mobility, still less social revolution and the overthrowing of hierarchies and social structures, were not Christian aims; even slavery – notoriously, according to

⁵⁴⁴ Siedentop, *Inventing the Individual*, London: Penguin, 2014, pp. 216-217, 218, 219.

liberal thinkers – remained virtually untouched as an institution, although Christians were encouraged to liberate their slaves and in any case treat them well, as brothers in Christ. At most, the “anointed of God”, the Orthodox emperor or king, could make some minor changes around the edges to the social structure. But Orthodox Christian society remained consciously conservative, traditional and hierarchical.

A further impulse to the development of this new understanding of law was born out of the need to place limits on two institutions that in different ways were thought to be *above the law*: the Holy Roman Empire, and the Roman papacy.

According to Roman law, the emperor was above the law, or freed from human laws (*legibus solutus*), insofar as “what pleases the prince has the power of law”. For if he broke his own laws, who was to judge him, and who was to prevent him passing other laws to make his previous transgression of the law lawful? The pope was similarly considered to be above the law – that is, freed from the provisions of canon law. This was a consequence of his “absolute power” (*potestas absoluta*), for if he sinned against canon law, or became a heretic, who was to judge him if not the supreme expert on the subject, the pope himself? And who could judge him if he refused to judge himself?

However, although a monarch might be freed from the laws of the State, and the pope might be freed from the canon law of the Church, they were both theoretically subject to another kind of law. This higher law was called by medieval theorists *natural law*. Natural law is defined by the historian of medieval scholastic philosophy Fr. Frederick Copleston as “the totality of the universal dictates of right reason concerning that good of nature which is to be pursued and that evil of man’s nature which is to be shunned.”⁵⁴⁵

But this definition begs the question: how do we know what is “right reason”? And what is “the good of nature”? The answer given by the medieval theologians, according to J.S. McClelland, was roughly as follows: “For a maxim of morality or a maxim of good government to be part of natural law, it has to be consistent with scripture, with the writings of the Fathers of the Church, with papal pronouncement, with what the philosophers say, and it must also be consistent with the common practices of mankind, both Christian and non-Christian.”⁵⁴⁶

But this, too, begs several questions. What are we to do if “papal pronouncement” contradicts “the writings of the Fathers of the Church” (as it often does)? And is not “what the philosophers say” likely to be still more at variance with the Holy Fathers? And is not “the common practices of mankind, both Christian and non-Christian” an extremely vague and debatable concept?

It is indeed; which is why, even in its more modern and secularized version, the philosophy of natural law, or human rights, has remained extremely vague and

⁵⁴⁵ Copleston, *A History of Philosophy*, Westminster, Maryland: The Newman Press, vol. 2, part II, p. 129.

⁵⁴⁶ McClelland, *A History of Western Political Thought*, Routledge: London and New York, 1996, p. 123.

debatable. But this does not prevent it from being, both then and now, a very powerful weapon in the hands of those who, for one reason or another, wish to overturn the prevailing hierarchy or system of morality. We see this even in Thomas Aquinas, the greatest of the scholastics, and a loyal son of the Roman Catholic Church. He defined the relationship of natural law to man-made laws as follows: "Every law framed by man bears the character of a law exactly to that extent to which it is derived from the law of nature. But if on any point it is in conflict with the law of nature, it at once ceases to be a law; it is a mere perversion of the law."⁵⁴⁷

The first important application of the principle of natural law came during the Magna Carta crisis in England. Pope Innocent III had placed the whole of England under ban because King John disagreed with him over who should be archbishop of Canterbury. He excommunicated John, deposed him from the throne and suggested to King Philip Augustus of France that he invade and conquer England! John appealed to papal mediation to save him from Philip. He received it, but at a price – full restitution of church funds and lands, perpetual infeudation of England and Ireland to the papacy, and the payment of an annual rent of a thousand marks. Only when all the money had been paid was the ban lifted. And then, as Peter De Rosa puts it acidly: "by kind permission of Pope Innocent III, Christ was able to enter England again".⁵⁴⁸ This enraged King Philip, however; for he was now ordered to abandon his preparations for war, and was not allowed to invade what was now, not English, but *papal* soil. Moreover, the abject surrender of John to the Pope, and the oath of fealty he made to him, aroused the fears of the English barons, whose demands led to the famous Magna Carta of 1215 that limited the powers of the king and is commonly regarded as the beginning of modern western democracy. Thus the despotism of the Pope elicited the beginnings of parliamentary democracy....

Now Magna Carta was a limitation of royal, not papal power. Nevertheless, it affected the papacy, too: first because England was supposed to be a papal fief, but more importantly because it set a dangerous, revolutionary precedent which might be used against the Pope himself. And so Pope Innocent III "from the plenitude of his unlimited power" condemned the charter as "contrary to moral law", "null and void of all validity for ever", absolved the king from having to observe it and excommunicated "anyone who should continue to maintain such treasonable and iniquitous pretensions".

But Archbishop Stephen Langton of Canterbury refused to publish this sentence. And the reason he gave was very significant: "*Natural law is binding on popes and princes and bishops alike: there is no escape from it. It is beyond the reach of the pope himself.*"⁵⁴⁹

And so the doctrine of natural law opened the way for the people to judge and depose both popes and kings... However, throughout the medieval period and into the beginning of the modern period, natural law remained tied to Christianity and

⁵⁴⁷ Aquinas, in Bertrand Russell, *A History of Western Philosophy*, London: Allen Unwin, 1946, p. 648.

⁵⁴⁸ De Rosa, *Vicars of Christ*, London: Bantam Press, 1988, p. 71.

⁵⁴⁹ De Rosa, *op. cit.*, p. 72.

Christian norms of behaviour. And since Christianity in general does not favour rebellion against the powers that be, the full revolutionary potential of the concept was not yet realized.

2. From Natural Law to Human Rights

First the concept of natural law needed to be fleshed out. The first question was: If natural law exists, who is the lawgiver? Or, if there is no lawgiver, what is its basis in reality? And the second question was: assuming that a real basis for natural - as opposed to Divine, or ecclesiastical, or state - law exists, what does it prescribe? In particular, since all law implies rights and obligations. what are the rights and obligations legislated by natural law, and to whom are they given?

Considerable "progress" in answering these questions was made in the Early Modern period. During the Renaissance interest began to be focused on the nature of man, and in particular on man's *freedom and dignity* - a promising basis, in the view of the Renaissance man, for a theory of natural law. Thus Leonardo da Vinci wrote: "The chief gift of nature is... freedom." Again, Pico della Mirandola wrote in his *Oration on the Dignity of Man*: "O sublime generosity of God the Father! O highest and most wonderful felicity of Man! To him it was granted to be what he wills. The Father endowed him with all kinds of seeds and with the germs of every way of life. Whatever seeds each man cultivates will grow and bear fruit in him." So man is supposedly granted "to be what he wills" ... But is he? Is he not in fact constrained in all kinds of ways in what he can do? If by man's freedom we mean *freewill*, then yes, man has freewill. God's creation of man in His image means that he is born with freedom and rationality in the image of God's Freedom and Reason. But that is by no means the same as the ability to "grow the germs of every way of life" in himself. Can a stupid man "grow the germs" of genius within himself?

However, the idea that man is "born free" now became a commonplace of political thought, and the basis for very far-reaching conclusions about life and morality. If man is born free, then he is not by nature subject to any external power, whether it be God, the Church, the State or the Family. And since he is this by nature, he has the *right to remain* such...

If any one man can be said to be its originator of the modern, non-Christian and religionless philosophy of human rights, that man is probably the seventeenth-century Dutch jurist, Hugo Grotius (1583-1645). Grotius was writing under the influence of the wars of religion between Catholics and Protestants, and also the trade wars between European nations such as England, Holland and France. He wanted to find a way of regulating wars in accordance with principles that would be universally accepted. Like most men of his time, he was a Christian, and even wrote a popular work, *On the Truth of the Christian Religion*. However, in his most influential work, *On the Law of War and Peace*, he let slip a phrase that would point the way to a theory of international law and human rights that was completely independent of Christian morality or theology: "Even the will of an omnipotent Being," he wrote, "cannot change or abrogate" natural law, which "would maintain its objective validity *even if*

we should assume the impossible, that there is no God or that He does not care for human affairs” (Prolegomena XI).

According to Grotius, therefore, natural law is *the most* objective truth, more objective, if that were possible, even than the existence of God or God’s care for the world. That being the case, *theoretically* if natural law says that something is right, whereas God says it is wrong, we should stick to natural law. Of course, if natural law derives ultimately from God, there will never be any such conflict between Divine and natural law; but Grotius appears here to envisage the possibility of a world with natural law but without God.

3. Human Rights and the French Revolution

Let us fast-forward now to the French revolution and the “Universal Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen” that became its theoretical underpinning:

“I. Men are born and remain free and equal in rights. Social distinctions can only be founded on public utility.

II. The purpose of every political association is the preservation of the natural and unprescriptible rights of men. These rights are liberty, property, and safety from, and resistance to, oppression.

III. The principle of all sovereignty lies in the nation. No body of men, and no individual, can exercise authority which does not emanate directly therefrom.

IV. Liberty consists in the ability to do anything which does not harm others.

V. The Law can only forbid actions which are injurious to society...”

There was no mention in the Declaration of *women’s* rights. But in *The Rights of Women and the Citizen* (1791) Olympe de Gouges wrote: “1. Woman is born free, and remains equal to Man in rights... 4. The exercise of Woman’s natural rights has no limit other than the tyranny of Man’s opposing them... 17. Property is shared or divided equally by both sexes.” Again, in *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792) Mary Wollstonecraft denied that there were any specifically feminine qualities: “I here throw down my gauntlet, and deny the existence of sexual virtues, not excepting modesty.” And there were other additions. Thus Article XXI of the revised Declaration of 1793 stated: “Public assistance is a sacred obligation [*dette*]. Society owes subsistence to unfortunate citizens, whether in finding work for them, or in assuring the means of survival of those incapable of working.”⁵⁵⁰

Pope Pius VI condemned the Declaration of Human Rights. In particular he condemned the idea of “absolute liberty”, a liberty “which not only assures people of the right not to be disturbed about their religious opinions but also gives them this licence to think, write and even have printed with impunity all that the most unruly imagination can suggest about religion. It is a monstrous right...” For God, said the Pope, also had rights: “What is more contrary to the rights of the Creator God Who limited human freedom by prohibiting evil, than ‘this liberty of thought and action

⁵⁵⁰ Norman Davies, *Europe: A History*, London: Pimlico, 1997, pp. 713-714.

which the National Assembly accords to man in society as an inalienable right of nature'?"⁵⁵¹

There are two innovations in this revolutionary philosophy. First, the source of authority in society is proclaimed to be neither God, nor any existing political authority, but "the nation". Hence nations are to be seen as free agents with rights, and the source of all particular rights in their own societies.⁵⁵²

But what constitutes the nation? The essence of the nation, and the source of its rights, is what Rousseau called "the General Will" – a very vague term which anybody can claim to represent. At the same time, this "nation" or "General Will" ascribes to itself the most complete power, so that "no body of men, and no individual, can exercise authority which does not emanate directly therefrom." This immediately destroys the authority, not only of the king, but also of the Church – and indeed, of every other person and body.

The second innovation is the concept of "rights" that are "unprescriptible" – that is, prescribed neither by God nor by man. Man, according to the Declaration, has the unprescriptible "right" to do anything he likes – providing he doesn't harm others (article 4). However, this latter qualification is not elaborated on, and was in practice ignored completely in the French revolutionary tradition. Thus man is in principle free to do anything whatsoever. The only limitation on his freedom is other men's freedom: their right not to be limited or restricted by him.

4. An Analysis of the Philosophy

Leaving aside historical exposition, let us now analyse the philosophy of human rights in its modern form point by point. The philosophy can be summarized in the following propositions:

1. What is natural is what is right.
2. What is natural and right is what we desire.
3. All human beings are equal.
4. All human beings have the same human nature and more or less the same desires.
5. Therefore every human has the right to have whatever he desires provided the satisfaction of his desire does not interfere with the desires of other human beings.

There are major problems with each of these propositions.

1. First, let us ask the question: Why should what is natural be what is right? Why should any natural fact or desire create a right or obligation for us? If I want food, why do I have the right to have food? If I am walking in a desert place and there is no food

⁵⁵¹ Jean Comby, *How to Read Church History*, London: SCM Press, 1989, volume 2, p. 113.

⁵⁵² This was not such a new notion. Thus Hugh Grotius wrote in *Concerning the Law of Prize* (1604): "Freedom of trade is based on a primitive right of nations".

around and I have forgotten to bring food with me, then I go hungry. But no right of mine has been violated – only my will.

Linguistic philosophers in the twentieth century argued that it is impossible to get from a statement of fact to a statement of value, from “is” statements to “ought” statements. So from the fact that I am hungry it is impossible to deduce that I ought to have food in the sense that I have the *right* to have food. We only get from facts to values, from *natural* laws to *moral* laws, by exploiting an apparent ambiguity in the term “law”.

“Law” in its original meaning implies a personal lawgiver who *lays down the law*, that is, *prescribes* what should and should not be done: “Thou shalt not kill”, “Thou shalt not commit adultery”, etc. Outside the context of a rational lawgiver giving laws to rational receivers of the law, the concept of law is strictly speaking inapplicable. However, in a metaphorical sense we can speak of observed regularities in nature as *laws* of nature, the underlying idea being that these regularities did not come into being by chance, but were *commanded* by God: “He spake, and they came to be; He commanded, and they were created” (Psalm 148.5). But of course the elements of nature are not rational beings; they follow the laws of nature, not from choice, but out of necessity; so their obedience to the laws of nature creates no moral right or obligation. At the same time, the fact that God both creates natural laws for all creation and prescribes moral laws for rational men shows that there *is* a link between fact and value. That link is God Himself; for He alone is Truth *and* Goodness, the Giver of *both* the natural *and* the moral law. However, human rights theorists, following Grotius, construct their philosophy without assuming the existence of God; and their “self-evident” laws are not prescribed by God or anybody else, but are “unprescriptible”, as the 1789 Declaration puts it. Therefore they fail to find – because they do not want to see – the only possible link between the world of facts and the world of values: the commandment of the Creator. In view of this, their attempt to base human rights on natural law collapses...

2. Secondly, why should we assume that all our desires are natural? It is the teaching of the Orthodox Church that all our desires are in fact fallen, warped, distorted from their original, natural form. Of course, the idea of the fall forms no part of the philosophy of human rights – it undermines it completely. But even leaving aside the idea of the fall, human rights theorists have to deal with the fact that, in the opinion of most human beings, certain desires are natural and others unnatural. They deal with this problem in a remarkable way: *by simply denying the fact that there are unnatural desires.*

Let us take the key test-case of homosexuality. It is completely obvious that homosexuality is unnatural; it frustrates the biological purpose of sexual intercourse, which is the procreation of children. St. Paul says that male homosexuals “have given up *natural* intercourse to be consumed with passion for each other”, and that female homosexuals “have turned from *natural* intercourse to unnatural practices” (Romans 1.26-27). Until about 1960 the vast majority of people in the western world considered that homosexuality was both unnatural and wrong. The proportion of people who believe this in the West has fallen in more recent decades; but it remains the official

position of the three monotheistic religions, Christianity, Islam and Judaism, although many Christians now reject it; and with the rapid increase of Islam in recent decades it is very likely that anti-homosexuality is still the majority opinion. In spite of this, human rights theorists insist that homosexuals have the “right” to practise their perversions. This clearly shows that the human rights agenda is based neither on nature nor natural law nor even on the “democratic” consensus of mankind...

Even when human rights theorists agree that something is wrong – for example, paedophilia – they rarely use the argument that it is unnatural. After all, if some people *want* to do it, then it must be natural in some sense... Thus paedophilia is wrong, it is argued, not because it is unnatural, but because the child is assumed *not* to want it, and therefore it is a violation of *his* human rights. And yet if it could be proved that the child did want it, or that it caused him no objective harm, presumably paedophilia would be acceptable today, as it was in Classical Greece... By the same criterion, it is possible that a whole range of other perversions – incest, bestiality, necrophilia – may one day become acceptable because some people, at any rate, want them, and so these practices must have some basis in human nature. The usual way this is “proved” is by pretending to find some area in the brain that accounts for the perverse behaviour and therefore makes it “natural” – in the case of homosexuality, the current candidate is the hypothalamus, which is supposed to be smaller in homosexuals than in heterosexuals...

In the absence of a teaching on the fall, there is no theoretical way of distinguishing natural wants from unnatural ones. Thus the only restriction on *my* egoism becomes the possibility that it may clash with *your* egoism – a restriction that we shall discuss later. And so if the first axiom of modern ontology is Descartes’ “I think, therefore I am”, the first axiom of modern morality is “I want, therefore I can”...

3 and 4. The essential equality of all men has been an essential part of the human rights philosophy since at least the time of the American revolution. For egalitarianism was the essential tool for the realization of the real aim of the philosophy: to destroy all social, political and ecclesiastical hierarchies. The equality of man was one of those truths that the American Founding Fathers declared to be “self-evident”.

However, it is by no means self-evident that all men are equal; they differ in intelligence, strength, beauty, courage, taste, sporting and musical ability, sense of humour, moral worth and in countless other ways. The only thing that makes them in any real sense equal is the fact they are all made in the image of God and have the capacity, through the exercise of their free-will and the grace of God, to become in His likeness. And yet even in the Kingdom of heaven one star differs from another in brightness...

The new science of genetics shows that it is not strictly true that all men have the same human nature; for if a man’s human nature – or, at any rate, his psycho-physical, if not his spiritual nature – is defined by his DNA, then every man’s DNA is unique. Eve had the same nature as Adam (except her gender). But as their descendants multiplied, so did their differences...

Of course, men differ only within the bounds of the species or “kind” determined by God – and this, too, can be seen in the DNA. However, the species “man” is not an absolute: it is an abstraction derived from studying many particular men. In fact, as Archbishop Theophan of Poltava writes, “Only in relation to the absolute Divine [nature] is the concept of nature used by the Fathers of the Church in an absolute sense, insofar as the Divine nature is absolutely one both in concept and in reality. But in relation to the units of created nature, and in particular to people, the concept of one nature is understood in the sense of complete unity only abstractly, insofar as every concept of genus or species is one, but in application to reality it indicates only the oneness of the nature of all the units of the given genus.”⁵⁵³

Having different natures, or only relatively similar natures, men also differ in their desires. Some of these differences are trivial: one prefers tea, another – coffee; one man prefers Mozart, another – Bach. But others are less trivial: one man longs for chastity, another – for the satisfaction of his lust at every opportunity. Often the same man will desire quite opposite things, as when St. Augustine prayed: “Lord, give me chastity – but not yet.” This shows that we may even speak of each man, or at any rate each Christian, having two different human natures – the old Adam and the new Adam.

And then there are the differences between men which, as has been generally recognized in generation after generation, make a material difference to their rights and obligations: the differences between a man and a child, between a man and a woman, between a knowledgeable man and an ignoramus, between an employer and an employee, etc. In their levelling, egalitarian passion, human rights activists have tended to regard these differences as accidental or inessential, and have created special categories of “children’s rights”, “women’s rights”, “students’ rights”, “workers’ rights”, etc., in order to iron out the differences. It must be admitted that this activity has often had beneficial effects in abolishing discrimination and cruelty that is based more on prejudice than on reason. However, the fact of unjust discrimination in some, even many cases does not alter the fact that many of the physical, sexual, maturational, psychological and social differences between men are important, and require corresponding differences in rights and obligations if the good of each man, and of society as a whole, is to be achieved. Moreover, the argument based on commonality of nature has been taken to absurd extremes in recent times, when it has been seriously maintained that if an animal has, say, 95% of the DNA of a human being he should have 95% of his human rights!

⁵⁵³ Archbishop Theophan, *On the Unity of Nature*, p. 11. In what sense, it may then be asked, did Christ take on human nature? Did He take on human nature understood as an abstract unity, or as the human species comprising all individual human hypostases? Neither the one nor the other, according to St. John of Damascus. For, as Professor Georgios Mantzaridis explains the Holy Father’s thought: “‘nature’ can be understood firstly to denote an abstraction, in which case it has no intrinsic reality; secondly, to denote a species, in which case it comprises all the individual hypostases of that species; and thirdly, it can be viewed as a particular, in which case it is linked with the nature of the species but does not comprise all its individual hypostases. The Logos of God made flesh did not take on human nature in the first two senses, because in the first case there would be no incarnation but only delusion, and in the second case there would be incarnation in all human individual hypostases. Therefore, what the Logos of God took on in His incarnation was the ‘first-fruits of our substance’, individual nature, which did not previously exist as individual in itself, but came into existence in His hypostasis” (*The Deification of Man*, Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1984, pp. 29-30).

Christianity teaches *love*, not egalitarianism. Thus St. Paul exhorts masters and slaves to love and respect each other, but forbids slaves to rebel against their masters – and says not a word about their “right” to freedom. It is love, not egalitarianism, that relieves the sufferings of men. Revolutions, being the fruit, not of love, but of hatred and envy, only make things worse – much worse. Nor will they ever destroy hierarchy in society, because God created men to live in hierarchical societies.

5. The only serious check that human rights theorists admit on the absolute freedom and right of human beings to do whatever they want is the so-called harm principle, which was enshrined in article 4 of the original 1789 Declaration of Human Rights and was developed by John Stuart Mill in his famous essay, *On Liberty*. Mill, fully in keeping with the Anglo-Saxon “freedom from” tradition, sees the harm principle not so much as restriction *on* liberty, as an affirmation *of* liberty, an affirmation of the individual’s right to be free from the control, not only of the state, but of any “tyrannical majority” in matters that were his private business: “The object of this essay is to assert one very simple principle, as entitled to govern absolutely the dealings of society with the individual in the way of compulsion and control, whether the means to be used be physical force in the form of legal penalties or the moral coercion of public opinion. That principle is that the sole end for which mankind are warranted, individually or collectively, in interfering with the liberty of action of any of their number is self-protection. That the only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of a civilized community, against his will, is to prevent harm to others. His own good, either physical or moral, is not a sufficient warrant. He cannot rightfully be compelled to do or forbear because it will be better for him to do so, because it will make him happier, because, in the opinion of others, to do so would be wise or even right. These are good reasons for remonstrating with him, or reasoning with him, or persuading him, or entreating him, but not for compelling him or visiting him with any evil in case he do otherwise. To justify that, the conduct from which it is desired to deter him must be calculated to produce evil to someone else. The only part of the conduct of anyone or which it is amenable to society is that which concerns others. In the part which merely concerns himself, his independence is, of right, absolute. Over himself, over his own body and mind, the individual is sovereign.”⁵⁵⁴ Mill asserted that this “Liberty Principle” or “Harm Principle” applied only to people in “the maturity of their faculties”, not to children or to “those backward states of society in which the race itself may be considered as in its nonage.”⁵⁵⁵ For “Liberty, as a principle, has no application to any state of things anterior to the time when mankind have become capable of being improved through free and equal discussion”.⁵⁵⁶

However, everything depends on what we mean by “harm”. And that depends on our fundamental belief-system. So it all comes down to the fundamental question: what is the ultimate good of man?... But this question can only answered by answering the further questions: “Who made us?” “What did He make us for?” “Can the goal of

⁵⁵⁴ Mill, *On Liberty*, London: Penguin Classics, 1974, pp. 68-69.

⁵⁵⁵ Mill, *On Liberty*, p. 69.

⁵⁵⁶ Mill, *On Liberty*, p. 69.

human life as created by God be attained by striving to fulfil all our fallen human desires?"

These are religious questions that are resolutely pushed aside by human rights theorists. They start, by contrast, from the premise that the goal of human life is not prescribed by God, but by ourselves, and consists solely in the satisfaction of fallen desire...

This anti-religious bias of the philosophy of human rights arose from its original need to create a rational basis for resolving *conflict* within and between societies. Although its originators considered themselves to be Christians, Christian teaching was eliminated from the beginning as the basis of conflict resolution, since the Pope was considered the final judge in matters of Christian teaching – and the Pope was the cause of most of the conflicts in the first place. The basis therefore had to be *above* Christianity – while incorporating Christian values, since the warring parties were still (at that time) Christians. It had to be a “self-evident”, common-sense consensus on which all the parties could agree. And if a philosophical rationale for this consensus was required, it was to be found in the common human needs and desires that all the parties shared.

However, this whole approach was implicitly *anti-Christian* for two important reasons. First, by placing something other than the Word of God at the base of the theoretical structure, it was implicitly asserting that a human philosophy can supplement, complement, or, still worse, *improve on* the Word of God – which implies a lack of faith in the Word of God. And secondly, it implies that the purpose of life is to satisfy the fallen needs and desires of human nature, which is an essentially *pagan* approach to life.

This latter point was quite consciously recognized by J.S. Mill, who defended his Harm or Liberty Principle on the basis, among other things, that it fostered that ideal of the vigorous, independent man, unafraid of being different, even eccentric, which he found in Classical Greece. Indeed, he openly rejected the ascetic, Calvinist ideal in favour of the pagan Greek: “There is a different type of human excellence from the Calvinistic: a conception of humanity as having its nature bestowed on it for other purposes than merely to be abnegated. ‘Pagan self-assertion’ is one of the elements of human worth, as well as ‘Christian self-denial’. There is a Greek ideal of self-development, which the Platonic and Christian ideal of self-government blends with, but does not supersede. It may be better to be a John Knox than an Alcibiades, but it is better to be a Pericles than either; nor would a Pericles, if we had one in these days, be without anything good which belonged to John Knox.”⁵⁵⁷

This from a conservative liberal who was certainly against any revolutionary excess. But in the hands of consciously anti-Christian revolutionaries, the philosophy of human rights became the instrument, not of “pagan self-assertion” of the cultured, Periclean type, but of pagan destruction of the most uncultured, barbarian type. The

⁵⁵⁷ Mill, *On Liberty*, p. 127.

long series of bloody revolutions set off by, and claiming their justification from, the 1789 Declaration of the Rights of Man is the proof of that...

Conclusion

“If God does not exist,” says one of Dostoyevsky’s characters, “then everything is permissible.” For God and His commandments are the only foundation of morality. Every other foundation devised by the wit of man has proved to be porous, unstable, liable at any moment to dissolve into the abyss of anarchical egotism, on the one hand, or tyrannical despotism, on the other. Human rights is a philosophy that leads to anarchical egotism and then to its apparent opposite, tyrannical despotism, as we saw in 1789 and again in 1917. But, as Nicholas Berdiaev pointed out: "Neither 'human rights' nor 'the will of the people', nor both together can be the foundation of human society. For the one contradicts the other: 'the rights of the human personality', understood as the final foundations of society, deny the primacy of social unity; 'the will of the people', as an absolute social basis, denies the principle of personality. There can be, and in fact is, only some kind of eclectic, unprincipled compromise between the two principles, which witnesses to the fact that neither is the primary principle of society. If one genuinely believes in the one or the other, then one has to choose between the unlimited despotism of social unity, which annihilates the personality - and boundless anarchy, which annihilates social order and together with it every personal human existence."⁵⁵⁸

In spite of the manifest failures of these extremes, modern man continues to search for some such foundation for his life. For although He does not believe in God, he does believe in morality. Or rather, he believes in morality for others, not himself. What he really wants is to be free to pursue the life he wants to lead, - the life which brings him the maximum of pleasure and the minimum of pain, - without being interfered with by anybody else, whether God, or the State, or some other individual or group of individuals. However, he knows that in a society without laws, in which *everybody* is free to pursue the life he wants the life he wants to lead without any kind of restriction, he will not achieve his personal goal. For if everybody were completely free in this way, there would be anarchy, and life would be “nasty, brutish and short” - for everybody. So a compromise must be found. The compromise is a kind of religionless morality. Let some powerful body - preferably the post-revolutionary State, certainly not God or the Church, because God is unpredictably and unpleasantly demanding - impose certain limits on everybody. But let those limits be as restricted and unrestrictive as possible. And let there be a set of rules accepted by all States - preferably enforced by some World Government - that puts limits on the limits that States can place on their citizens. These rules we can then call “human rights”, and they can be our morality. Thus “human rights” include civil and political rights, such as the right to life and liberty, freedom of expression, and equality before the law; judicial rights, like the right to a free trial, and freedom from torture and the death penalty; sexual rights, like the rights to have sex with any consenting adult, reproduce a child by any means, and to destroy that child in the womb; and economic, social and

⁵⁵⁸ Berdyaev, N. "Religioznie osnovy obschestvennosti" ("The Religious Foundations of Society"), *Put'* (*The Way*), № 1, September, 1925, p. 13.

cultural rights, like the right to participate in culture, to have food and water and healthcare, the right to work, and the right to education. This morality will be permissive in the sense that it will permit very many things previous, more religious ages considered unlawful. But it will not permit everything; it will not permit others to interfere with my life of pleasure so long as I don't interfere with theirs...

There will be another important advantage to this system: for those who believe in, and champion, "human rights", it will be a source of great pride and self-satisfaction. They will be able to preach it to others, even impose it on others, with the sweet knowledge that they are doing good and serving mankind - no, rather, saving mankind.⁵⁵⁹ After all, the 1993 *Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action* declares: "All human rights are universal, indivisible and interdependent and related. The international community must treat human rights globally in a fair and equal manner, on the same footing, and with the same emphasis". This provides the justification for the invasion of individual countries by "the international community" in order to correct human rights abuses. So the belief in, and justification and implementation of, "human rights" will turn out to be a new kind of universal religion, with a new kind of god, a new kind of sanctity and a new kind of paradise - a kingdom of god on earth that is so much more conducive to the needs of modern man than the old kind that was too far away in "heaven" and boringly devoid of the real pleasures of life!

The revolution sparked off by the *Declaration of the Rights of Man* in 1789 is continuing today, not as bloodily as before, but more extreme than ever in the absurdity and multiplicity of its claims. Thus the numbers of "human rights" have increased exponentially. The fact that many of these rights contradict each other (for example, the right to life contradicts the right to abortion), and that there is no way that more than a fraction of these rights can be fulfilled for more than a fraction of the world's population for the foreseeable future, only increases the zeal and ambition of the "human righters", who believe that they alone can put the world to right. Now every minority group that has not fulfilled its desires to the utmost claims victim status, the violation of its "human rights", and blames the oppressor state and society. If Mill feared above all the "tyranny of the majority" opinion, and therefore championed the rights of every eccentric to express his views (provided they were "decent"), today, by contrast, because of the ultra-liberalism and "cultural Marxism" that has taken the place of traditional Marxism, it is the tyranny of millions of minorities that has taken over society, almost outlawing the beliefs of "the silent majority".

If the majority remains silent, then there is only one possible outcome: one of these minorities will take complete and tyrannical control over all. For as Edmund Burke said, the only requirement for the complete triumph of evil is that good people should do nothing...

*January 21 / February 3, 2009; revised June 14/27, 2012 and October 22 / November 4, 2013
and October 9/22, 2020.*

⁵⁵⁹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vienna_Declaration_and_Programme_of_Action. This statement was endorsed at the 2005 World Summit in New York (paragraph 121).

26. ST. VLADIMIR. THE UKRAINE AND THE FUTURE OF EUROPE

The struggle for power on the streets of Kiev is more than a struggle for the soul of the Ukraine, over whether it should belong to the sphere of influence of the European Union or Russia. It is a debate over what Europe really is, not for the Ukrainians only, but generally for all Europeans. And the paradox is: neither side in the debate is truly European; both are conspiring to suppress the re-emergence of the real Europe, the only Europe that can provide peace, prosperity and salvation for the whole continent.

After the fall of the Roman empire, and especially after the Muslim conquest of most of the Middle East in the seventh century, Europe became synonymous with Christian statehood. "Europe" stood for Christianity - which at that time, in both East and West, was only *Orthodox* Christianity - against Islam in particular and Asiatic non-Christianity and anti-Christianity in general. The front-line in this struggle was occupied by Byzantium, the major power both in Eastern Europe and in Asia Minor until its fall to the Seljuk Turks after the battle of Manzikert in 1071. But from the tenth century an increasing burden was undertaken by Kievan Rus'. After the baptism of Rus' in 988 by St. Vladimir, the Great Princes of Kiev were formally speaking junior brothers of the Emperor in Constantinople. *De facto*, however, Rus' was fully independent of Constantinople; and by the time of St. Vladimir's death in 1015 her dominion stretched over most of the great plain that stretches from the Carpathians in the south and west to the Urals in the north and east, thus making her territorially the greatest state in Europe. Moreover, in the twelfth century, which is usually taken as the beginning of Western Europe's rise to world domination, Kiev far excelled the most important city in the West, Paris, in both population, wealth and cultural richness.

It should be remembered that in this early medieval period, before the Church schism between Rome and Constantinople had become deeply rooted, Europe was a real unity. There was still much intercourse between the Greek East and the Latin West; dynastic marriages between princes and princesses of the two halves of Europe were frequent; and over the whole of Northern Europe, from England through Scandinavia to Novgorod and Kiev, a single race of Viking stock and similar language and culture held sway. We see this kinship in, for example, the lives of St. Olaf of Norway, who once sought refuge at the court of St. Vladimir and was canonized by the English Church, and of St. Anna of Novgorod, a Swedish princess baptized by an English bishop who became a Russian saint.

In the thirteenth century the breach between East and West opened up by the schism of Old Rome from the unity of the Orthodox Church was deepened by several events. The first was the conquest and rape of Constantinople by the western crusaders in 1204. The second was the Fourth Lateran Council under Pope Innocent III, which entrenched and formalized the heresies of the Catholic West. And the third was the conquest by the Mongols of the whole of Kievan Rus' except Novgorod. A recovery of Orthodoxy was launched by St. Alexander Nevsky in the north, by St. Savva of Serbia in the south and by the Greek Nicaean emperors in the East - but the unity of Europe was not restored...

Let us now fast-forward eight hundred years to September 12, 1815. It was the namesday of the greatest ruler in Europe, Tsar Alexander I, the true heir of the Great Princes of Kiev – like them of mixed Slavic and Western blood, and like them of the Orthodox Christian faith. On this day, on seven altars on the Plaine de Vertus, eighty miles east of Paris, the Orthodox liturgy was being celebrated in the presence of the Russian army and all the leading political and military leaders of Europe. Neither before nor since in the modern history of Europe has there been such a universal witness, by all the leaders of the Great Powers, to the true King of kings and Lord of lords. And if this was just a diplomatic concession to the conqueror of Napoleon on the part of the non-Orthodox powers, it was much more than that for Alexander. His Orthodox spirit, so puzzling to the other leaders of Europe, was manifested in a letter he wrote that same evening: “This day has been the most beautiful in all my life. My heart was filled with love for my enemies. In tears at the foot of the Cross, I prayed with fervour that France might be saved...”⁵⁶⁰

Fast forward another one hundred years, to 1915, and we come to the Russian reconquest of Galicia, the westernmost outpost of Kievan Rus', now restored to Rus' by the “gatherer of the Russian lands” and “Tsar of all the Russias”, Great, Little and White. Of course, it is precisely the Russianness of Galicia that is one of the main points at issue on the streets of Kiev and other Ukrainian cities today. After many centuries under the dominion of the Catholic Poles and Austrians, most Galicians and Western Ukrainians in general feel closer to the Catholic West than to Russian Orthodoxy. Not surprisingly, this feeling is supported by the Ukrainian Uniate Church, which is in communion with Rome, and by the westward-looking Kievan Patriarchate, which is recognized by the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew. These cultural and ecclesiastical links with the West, together with the terrible experiences suffered by the Ukrainians at the hands of Soviet Russia, make the desire of many Ukrainians to join the European Union quite natural.

Ukrainian nationalism also contributes to this desire. Understandably, the Russian Orthodox greatly regret the rupture of that spiritual and cultural unity of all the Russias that still existed in 1915 as it existed in 1015, 1215 and 1815. But the fact remains that today, in 2013, that unity has become much weaker. And it is no use pointing to ties of blood, language and culture between two races if one of those races feels itself to be so different from the other that it does not want to remain in one state with the other. It is no use insisting that the Ukrainians are in fact a variety of Russians and therefore should belong to the Russian sphere of influence if they simply do not feel themselves to be Russians. For, as the Dutch historian G.J. Renier wrote: “Nationality exists in the minds of men... its only conceivable habitat... Outside men's minds there can be no nationality, because nationality is a manner of looking at oneself not an entity *an sich*. Common sense is able to detect it, and the only human discipline that can describe and analyse it is psychology... This awareness, this sense of nationality, this national sentiment, is more than a characteristic of a nation. It is nationhood itself.”⁵⁶¹

⁵⁶⁰ Alan Palmer, *Alexander I*, London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1974, p. 333.

⁵⁶¹ Renier, in Norman Davies, *Europe*, London: Pimlico, 1997, p. 381.

Having said that, there is no question that the Ukraine's attraction to the West is fraught with grave spiritual dangers. Not only is the European Union a highly corrupt organization (last year 130 billion euros of the European budget disappeared in corruption) with strong tendencies towards totalitarianism, a banking sector in crisis, high unemployment and the real possibility of the withdrawal of its southern members Greece, Italy and Spain, from the Union. It is also ruled by a human rights ideology that is legalizing all kinds of doctrinal and moral abominations, from "respect" for Islam to assisted suicide to the aggressive introduction of "gay pride".

It is above all the issue of "gay pride" that has been used by Russia's politicians and churchmen in attempting to dissuade the Ukrainian Europhiles. And there is no question that it is a powerful argument, not only for the Ukrainian Orthodox, but also for the Catholics and Uniates, who have traditionally been among the most conservative believers on the continent. Perhaps the Ukrainian believers think that the Pope will protect them from having to make compromises with their consciences in this sphere. But if they think this, they are mistaken. The papacy failed to get even a single mention of the word "God" into the European constitution, and it has so far failed to wrench any concessions from the gay rights lobby that rules Europe. In fact, the signs are the new Pope Francis is "going soft" on this issue himself. The only significant opposition to the gays in Europe has come from the Muslims...

Of course, the sudden support of "traditional values" on the part of KGB Colonel Putin and Patriarch Cyril of Moscow is blatantly opportunist and hypocritical. There is a powerful "gay lobby" in the Moscow Patriarchate, where homosexuality is known as "the sin of Metropolitan Nicodemus" of Leningrad, the famous KGB general who was the patron of the present patriarch. Ex-KGB Colonel, now Subdeacon Konstantine Preobrazhensky writes that for the last 70 years the KGB has been actively promoting homosexuals to the episcopate. "Even Patriarch Sergius is said to have been one of them. The homosexual bishops were in constant fear of being unmasked, and it made them easily managed by the KGB." In 1999, after persistent complaints by his clergy, the homosexual Bishop Nikon of Yekaterinburg was forced to retire to the Pskov Caves monastery. However, within three years he was back in Moscow as dean of one of the richest parishes, saved by the patriarchate's gay lobby.⁵⁶² Just recently it has been announced that the patriarchate is sending a commission to investigate homosexuality in the Kazan Theological Academy⁵⁶³, although whether this announcement is simply an attempt to warn the offenders to cover their traces before the investigators arrive, is open to question.

In their "righteous" indignation, some anti-liberals have gone so far as to advocate violence. Thus the MP priest Alexander Shumsky writes: "Russia is not Europe. If the liberals are not suppressed, Russia will unfailingly perish. But if rational violence is consistently applied to the liberals, then there is a chance Russia will be saved. But here we must not display weakness, as happened in pre-revolutionary Russia. If we

⁵⁶² Preobrazhensky, "Ecumenism and Intelligence".

⁵⁶³ "Goluboj - tsvet neba?", *Christ Civilization*, <http://christ-civ.livejournal.com/321587.html?thread=9594163#t9594163>.

let the moment pass, the cowardly pack of jackals will be even more dangerous. We do not have the right to allow the gay swine to torment Russia in a liberal zoo!"⁵⁶⁴

Europeans in general, and the Ukrainians in particular, find themselves between two fires: the fire of liberal West European human-rightism, and the fire of Illiberal East European neo-Sovietism. Since fire cannot be driven out by fire, there is no salvation in the triumph of either side. Only the water of the Holy Spirit, which is to be found in the True – that is, truly Orthodox - Church of Christ, can quench the flame of evil passion on both sides. But a resurgence of the True Church looks highly unlikely as long as these two anti-Christian regimes straddle the continent. Therefore the only hope for the Ukraine, as for the rest of Europe, must be: a plague on both these houses, a burning out of both fires so as to allow the green shoots of a genuinely different, third way to grow on the blackened landscape of post-Christian Europe...

Such an outcome is not as impossible as it may sound. Liberal commentators have speculated that the pressure of liberal Europe on neo-Soviet Russia via Kiev will result in the collapse of Putin's regime sooner or later, creating a liberal sea from the Atlantic to the Urals. Other commentators have speculated, however, that Russia will never liberalize peacefully, and that the Ukraine is too big even for greedy Europe to swallow - even if Putin allowed it. There has already been much talk of a "two-tier" or "multi-speed" European Union to accommodate the enormous tensions created by the very different economies of its northern and southern regions. Then there are the tensions created by the mass immigration of people from the poorer countries of Eastern Europe, especially Romania and Bulgaria, into Western Europe. If the Ukraine, one of the largest and poorest countries of Europe, is encouraged to enter the Union (together, perhaps, with Serbia and Albania), then the Union itself may well collapse under its own weight...

In any case, and whatever the outcome of the present conflict on Euromaidan, the centre of gravity in Europe is bound to move further to the East – that is, closer to where it was in the time of St. Vladimir. And this presents a great opportunity, an opportunity for "the mother of Russian cities" to become again what it was in the time of St. Vladimir: the centre of a truly Orthodox civilization and a lighthouse for the whole of Europe. What matters is that when the time of resurrection comes there will be no quarrelling over national labels, but only agreement over spiritual realities, and in particular the reality that salvation resides only in a return to Holy Rus', the Rus' of St. Vladimir and St. Alexander Nevsky, Tsar Alexander I and Tsar Nicholas II, the Rus' of which St. John of Kronstadt prophesied: "I foresee the restoration of a powerful Russia, still stronger and mightier than before. On the bones of these martyrs, remember, as on a strong foundation, will the new Russia we built - according to the old model; strong in her faith in Christ God and in the Holy Trinity! And there will be, in accordance with the covenant of the holy Prince Vladimir, a single Church! Russian people have ceased to understand what Rus' is: it is the footstool of the Lord's

⁵⁶⁴ Shumsky, "Ot 'kontrol'noj progulki' do kontrol'nogo vystrela", *Russkaia Narodnaia Linia*, May 19, 2012.

Throne! The Russian person must understand this and thank God that he is Russian".⁵⁶⁵

December 7/20, 2013.

⁵⁶⁵ St. John of Kronstadt, in Fomin, S. & Fomina, T. *Rossia pered Vtorym Prishestviem*, Sergiev Posad, 1998, third edition, volume II, p. 331.

27. PUTIN'S COVER HAS BEEN BLOWN

It was very close. For a moment it looked as if the most ambitious deception plan in KGB history was on the verge of success, and the head of the KGB – and fervent admirer of Stalin – Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin would be hailed by Orthodox around the world as the restorer of Orthodoxy and “champion of traditional values” – “the new St. Constantine”, no less. Of course, in the West, as also in the East, there are still many “useful idiots” as Lenin called them, who admire Putin and would probably enrol in his “army of liberation” if they could. But his first press-conference after annexing the Crimea from the Ukraine has really blown his cover for all those who have eyes to see and ears to hear. For, looking distinctly nervous, he not only lied and lied about the absence of Russian troops in the Crimea, the presence of hordes of “Banderovtsy” nationalist terrorists in the region and the great need and desire of all Russian Ukrainians to be defended from them: he even called Tsar-Martyr Nicholas “bloody Nicholas”...⁵⁶⁶

There was no irony in his words, and no need for him, a supposedly Orthodox ruler who claims that his state is the successor both of Tsarist and of Soviet Russia, to use such pejorative, purely chekist language. But he was worried; he must have learned that just about every state in the world, including even his closest allies Belarus’ and Kazakhstan, had condemned his invasion of the Crimea; and he must have realized that there was a distinct possibility that his so-far failed attempt to destabilize Ukraine might end up with the destabilization of Russia and his own fall from power. In such circumstances, the mask tends to slip from the face even of the most skilled and experienced actor. And it did more than slip here. It clattered noisily to the ground, revealing the snarling face of a wounded animal, ready to lash out at its natural enemies – among whom, of course, is Tsar Nicholas II and the whole tradition of Tsarist Orthodox Russia.

Now a wounded animal is a very dangerous animal, and we may confidently predict that, sooner or later, the so-far bloodless skirmish in the Crimea will develop into a bloody and wide-ranging conflict. The leader of a gang of thieves – which is what the present-day administration of Russia in essence is – cannot afford to look weak or vulnerable to his fellow-thieves, otherwise one of them will quickly take his place. So this is only the beginning. But it is probably also the beginning of the end. The final end of Soviet Russia... We shall not speculate about how this will take place. It will be more useful at the present time to indicate the nature of the deception that Putin and his team has created, so that those who are still deceived may see and learn.

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The CHEKA/GPU/OGPU/NKVD/MGB/KGB/FSB, to list some of its names, is probably the cruellest, most powerful and most sophisticated agency of deception and manipulation in world history. Like Satan, the KGB’s most effective ploy is to make people think it does not exist. And since the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991, very many have believed just that.

⁵⁶⁶ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J9jnv8FTDYU>

In fact, however, the KGB is now more powerful than at any time in its history. In the Soviet Union there were three centres of power: the Communist Party, the Army, and the KGB. Now there is only the KGB controlling all the levers of power. Some years ago, the intelligence expert Edward Lucas calculated that 40% of all posts in the Russian bureaucracy were filled by KGB agents. More recently, he has upped the figure to 70%...

In his book *The Perestroika Deception*, the former KGB agent and defector to the West Anatoly Golitsyn outlined a plan that the KGB had conceived for deceiving the West about its basic intentions. Several later defectors, planted by the KGB, tried to persuade the West that this plan was fictitious. But the development of events in the perestroika years, 1985-91, showed that almost all his predictions had been accurate...⁵⁶⁷

In the early 1990s, however, the KGB seemed temporarily to lose control of events. The democratic revolution which it instigated and directed with the aim of deceiving, using and infiltrating the West acquired a life of its own. Urgent measures to restore the situation were required. The ruse was to blow up several hundred Russian civilians, put the blame on the Chechens and demand the appointment of a "strong man" to restore order. That man was Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin, who came to power on January 1, 2000 with a mandate to fight the second Chechen war and more generally restore order in the country.

In the last fourteen years, "order" of a kind has certainly been restored. A creeping re-nationalization has taken place; the assets of "oligarchs" have been seized and given to Putin or his cronies (Putin is now the richest man in the world with an estimated \$130 billion); troublesome journalists and opposition politicians have been either killed or forced to flee the country; state control and censorship of the media has been re-imposed; the already KGB-controlled Moscow Patriarchate has been given unheard-of wealth, power and influence, while its opponents have been marginalized and their assets seized (as, for example, in Suzdal). Meanwhile, Russia's already shocking statistics on a wide variety of social indices – social equality, corruption, alcoholism, drug-taking, child mortality, suicide – have got worse, making her comparable only to some of the poorest and most corrupt nations of the Third World.

In the midst of these disasters, however, the KGB and its agents of influence worldwide have successfully promoted the image of a Russia resurrected, a free, democratic and Christian Russia, the champion of Orthodoxy and the last hope of all those suffering under the oppression of America and the CIA. So successful has this charade been that even the Russian Church Abroad, which throughout the twentieth century was almost alone in saying the whole truth about Russia to the world, fell into the snare and was united with the Moscow Patriarchate in 2007. However, even here there was a tell-tale sign that not all was as it seemed. Although most of ROCOR *outside* Russia fell into the snare, 95% of the Church's members *inside* Russia decided to

⁵⁶⁷ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zkw8nwHG2GM>

remain in the catacombs. Could it be that those who lived closest to the beast knew something that those in the West did not?

Of course, the KGB has been helped by some spectacular mistakes on the part of the West. Thus the West's decision to join the civil war in Syria on the side of the Sunni rebels has enabled Putin to put himself forward as the champion of those Christians who have suffered at the hands of the rebels. Again, the West's mindless pursuit of "gay rights" has enabled Putin to portray himself as the champion of "traditional Christian values", converting even Pat Buchanan and William Lind of *The American Conservative* to his cause. Of course, the irony is mind-boggling: the KGB, the biggest killer of Christians in history, which has used every trick in the book, not least well-trained heterosexual and homosexual prostitute-spies, to pursue its ends, being hailed as the champion of traditional Christian values! But very many in the West (fewer in Russia herself, where disillusion with Putin is growing) seem unable to see the irony...

"Russia has been using this issue to develop a constituency in Muslim and African countries," says Mark Gevisser, an Open Society fellow who is writing a book on the global debate on gay rights. "This brand of ideological moral conservatism was originally minted in the US. It is highly ironic that these countries are mounting an anti-western crusade using a western tool. Moscow plays on opposition to gay rights most effectively closer to home. Last November, when it looked like the Ukrainian Viktor Yanukovich was close to signing an Association Agreement with the European Union, billboards appeared across the country warning that the 'EU means legislating same-sex marriage' ['EURO=HOMO']. The campaign was paid for by Ukraine's Choice, a group associated with the Kremlin-connected politician and businessman Viktor Medvedchuk."⁵⁶⁸

But at this point, when Putin had so many people – including right-wing, conservative, Christian people – eating out his hand, he over-played it. Annoyed and worried that his henchman, the corrupt Yanukovich, had been driven out of the country by a small, unarmed, but determined and highly courageous, demonstration on the streets of Kiev, he over-confidently decided to bring his "hard power" to bear. And now he is being condemned all over the world, and even his natural constituency, the Russian-speakers of Eastern Ukraine, seem divided.

Of particular significance is the fact that the Ukrainian part of the Moscow Patriarchate, which is the largest Orthodox jurisdiction in the country, appears to be standing loyally behind the new government in Kiev. Whereas the Ukrainian bishops of the MP have been pleading with Putin not to invade the sovereign territory of the Ukraine, and have blessed Ukrainian soldiers to defend their homeland against invasion, Patriarch Cyril of Moscow (KGB Agent "Mikhailov") has been 100% behind his leader, saying that he hopes the Ukrainians will not resist the Russian army! Moreover, according to Russian media, the press-service of the Moscow Patriarchate has declared that "the Russian people is a nation divided on its own historical territory; it has the right to reunite it in a single state organism". What can this mean if not that the whole of the Ukraine should be absorbed into the Russian Federation?

⁵⁶⁸ Owen Matthews, "Putin's Masterplan", *The Spectator*, 22 February, 2014, pp. 12-13.

But this is something that not even Putin (or “Putler”, as he is now often called on the Russian internet) has been so bold as to affirm...

There is a very real danger now that Putin will lose the Ukraine completely, which would be disastrous for him in many ways.⁵⁶⁹ As Sergei Yekelchik writes: "The Ukrainian revolution of 2014 threatens the ideology of Putin's regime. It questions Russia's identity. It challenges Russia's plan to restore its influence in the region. It also shows that a Putinite regime can be destroyed by a popular revolution. No wonder Russia has recalled its ambassador from Ukraine and refuses to recognize the country's new government..."⁵⁷⁰

But if Ukraine falls out of the Russian sphere of influence, then there is a further danger that separatist movements will break out inside the Russian Federation itself. This could begin among the Crimean Tatars⁵⁷¹, and then spread to other regions such as the North Caucasus and Tatarstan. Turkey may decide to take up the cause of the Russian Muslims... And this in turn creates the further danger that Putin will declare a holy war on Sunni Islam, beginning with the Caucasian tribes on his southern border, continuing with the absorption of already half-conquered Georgia, and then going on into war-torn Syria, Turkey, Saudi Arabia (which he vowed to “destroy” in August, 2013) and Israel...

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But this is to speculate. Let us conclude with what seems to the present author to be a self-evident fact: that Putin has made a most serious blunder and his authority is severely shaken. Even if the short-term consequences for Orthodoxy may be painful and tragic, in the longer-term no truly Orthodox Christian can fail to welcome the impending fall of the most anti-Christian regime in history, the only regime ever to be formally anathematized by a large Orthodox Council (the Local Council of the Russian Church led by Patriarch Tikhon in January, 1918). Of course, we know that full cleansing and resurrection will not come to Russia until she is given a truly Orthodox Tsar. For, as St. John of Kronstadt said, Russia without a tsar is “a stinking corpse”. But is it too much to hope that the stinking corpse of Lenin may finally be cast out of its mausoleum on Red Square, as that of the false Dmitri was cast out (through the barrel of a gun) in 1612, so that the purified, renewed and reinvigorated body of Orthodox Russia will shine forth again in all its splendour, as the holy prophets said that it would? Could we be on the eve of that radical searching and repentance of Russian minds that, as the holy elders said, is the essential prerequisite of the resurrection of Holy Rus’?

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⁵⁶⁹ Igor Tyshkevich, “http://pokrovairpin.blogspot.co.uk/2014/03/blog-post_1505.html?sref=tw”

⁵⁷⁰ Yekelchik, “In Ukraine, Lenin finally falls”, WPOpinions, http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/in-ukraine-lenin-finally-falls/2014/02/28/a6ab2a8e-9f0c-11e3-9ba6-800d1192d08b_story.html

⁵⁷¹ Natalia Antelava, “Who will protect the Crimean Tatars?” *The New Yorker*, March 6, 2014, <http://www.newyorker.com/online/blogs/newsdesk/2014/03/who-will-protect-the-crimean-tatars.html>.

28. ALEXANDER DUGIN AND THE MEANING OF RUSSIAN HISTORY

“Putin’s Rasputin” – that is the name given by one commentator to Alexander Dugin, the most influential ideologist of contemporary Russia. And just as it was difficult to determine exactly who Rasputin was in his lifetime, so it has been difficult to pin down and classify Dugin. A professor of sociology and geopolitics at Moscow State University, he has influenced, and at one time been allied with, almost all the major politicians in Russia. He has been linked with the extreme right and with the extreme left, with fascism and with communism, with Orthodoxy and with paganism; most constantly - with Eurasianism. One thing you could never accuse him of being is a liberal, and in a country where “extremism” is a crime, one can be sure of one thing – that Dugin is an extremist (although he calls himself “a radical centrist”)...

However, he is not a stupid extremist, and only occasionally a crude one. When he recently appeared on television screens in Eastern Ukraine, stirring up the separatists and saying: “Putin is ALL!”, one could be forgiven for thinking that we are dealing here with a crazy whom we can dismiss as being of no significance. But that would be a mistake; and, judging from the number of academic articles that have come out in recent years attempting to summarize his very wide-ranging and complex world-view, commentators around the world have come to realize that in order to understand Putin you have to understand his Rasputin, Alexander Dugin.⁵⁷²

One approach to the enigma of Dugin is through a discussion of his little-known “eschatological ecclesiology”, and in particular his understanding of the role of the Orthodox Church and Russia in the last times. In 1999 Dugin became an Old Ritualist; whether he actually joined the schism or only the yedinoverie (Old Ritualist) section of the official Moscow Patriarchate is not clear. What is clear is that the Old Ritualist understanding of Russian and world history has deeply influenced his thought. Indeed, the present writer would go so far as to say that it is more fruitful and accurate to see his thought as a product of a kind of modernized Old Ritualism than as a species of right- or left-wing politics. It follows that in order to counter his undoubtedly malign influence on contemporary Russian thought, it is necessary to elucidate his eschatologism and subject it to criticism on the basis of the teaching of the Orthodox Church.

1. Dugin’s Eschatological Ecclesiology

Dugin’s “eschatological ecclesiology” is expounded in his book, *Absoliutnaia Rodina* (The Absolute Homeland)⁵⁷³. It divides Church history into three phases: the pre-Constantinian phase (to the Edict of Milan in 312), the Byzantine phase (to the Fall of Constantinople in 1453), which according to Dugin is the “thousand-year reign of Christ” mentioned in Revelation 20, and the modern, post-Byzantine phase. In

⁵⁷² The best of these articles that the present writer has read is Marlene Laruelle’s “Aleksandr Dugin: A Russian Version of the European Radical Right?”, Occasional Paper # 294 (2005), Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, Washington, D.C.

⁵⁷³ Moscow: Arktogetia, 1999.

essence, the third, contemporary phase of Church history, as coming after the “thousand-year reign of Christ”, is the reign of the Antichrist...

In the second, Byzantine phase of Church history, according to Dugin, there was an almost ideal relationship between Church and State that made possible the maximum number of converts to the faith and the preservation of a truly Christian life in the public as well as in the private spheres. True, the Western Church of Old Rome fell away in 1054, becoming thereafter the cradle of the antichristian civilization of the West. But in the East true piety was preserved, and the Byzantine emperors, acting as the “restrainers” of St. Paul’s prophecy (II Thessalonians 2.7), held back the appearance of the Antichrist.

However, in 1453 the Byzantine empire fell, after which, according to the prophecy, there was no “restrainer” and the Antichrist should have appeared. But then, according to the great mercy of God, a kind of “Indian summer” of truly Orthodox statehood, the “Third Rome” of Moscow, prolonged the “thousand-year reign of Christ” into the modern period. But only for a short time – until 1656, when Patriarch Nikon introduced the New Rite, or the council of 1666-67, which placed the Old Rite under anathema, or the reign of Peter the Great, who removed the patriarchate and gave free rein to western antichristian influences in Russia.

Being an Old Ritualist, Dugin can see very little good in the St. Petersburg period of Russian history. For him, this is the period of the “Laodicean Church”, which is neither hot nor cold, but lukewarm. True, there are flashes of “Philadelphian” piety here – especially among the Old Ritualists. And even in the official Russian Orthodox Church there is “an understanding of the necessity of giving a further theological ecclesiological reply to the ever-increasing might of the Antichrist, and to his penetration deep into social and natural reality” (p. 517). However, Dugin shows no recognition of the striking fact that far more saints are recorded in the St. Petersburg than in the Moscow period⁵⁷⁴, that the St. Petersburg empire, for all its westernizing tendencies, brought the light of Orthodoxy to many new peoples and protected the whole of the vast Orthodox commonwealth, and that the great glory of the twentieth century, the choir of the holy new martyrs and confessors of the Soviet yoke, was largely the fruit of the St. Petersburg Empire and Church.

Dugin’s attitude to the Soviet era is ambiguous. On the one hand, he does not deny the horrors of the persecutions and the attempt to destroy the last vestiges of Orthodox faith and piety. On the other hand, in sharp contrast to the eschatology of the True Orthodox Church, he does not see the revolution of 1917 as the beginning of the last days because of the removal of “him who restrains” and the appearance of “the collective Antichrist” (although that term is Old Ritualist in origin). The revolution appears to him as less of a tragedy than the date containing the fateful numbers “666”,

⁵⁷⁴ Archbishop Nathanael (Lvov) of Vienna writes: “In the century of the blasphemous Peter there were far more saints in Russia than in the century of the pious tsars Alexis Mikhailovich and Theodore Alexeyevich. In the second half of the 17th century there were almost no saints in Rus’. And the presence or absence of saints is the most reliable sign of the flourishing or, on the contrary, the fall of the spiritual level of society, the people or the state.” (“O Petre Velikom” (“On Peter the Great”), *Epokha* (The Epoch), № 10, 2000, no. 1, pp. 39-41)

the beginning of the Old Ritualist schism in 1666. Indeed, he sees positive elements in the post-1917 period – especially because in 1971 the Moscow Patriarchate (followed by the Russian Church Abroad in 1974) removed the anathemas on the Old Rite.

In general, Dugin tries to smooth over the vast differences between Orthodox Tsarist and Soviet reality. Thus he discerns similar positive features in the pre-revolutionary Slavophiles and their followers, on the one hand, and the revolutionary Social Revolutionaries, Eurasians and National Bolsheviks, on the other. The fact that the Slavophiles were faithful subjects of the Orthodox tsar, while the Eurasians and National Bolsheviks were faithful subjects of the anti-Orthodox Bolsheviks does not seem to be an important distinction in Dugin's eyes, who, in spite of his recognition of the vital role of the "restrainer" in Christian history, has shown no zeal for contemporary monarchism, but has at different times belonged to the Communist Party, the National Bolsheviks and the Eurasians (especially the latter, his most constant allegiance)... With regard to the Soviet regime itself, Dugin admits that "it overthrew the monarchy and put the Church practically outside the law. But here again there appeared that providential idea that is complex and often inaccessible to humble human reasoning – that the Bolsheviks on the secular level and with the use of slogans profoundly foreign to the people established in an extreme form a sharply anti-western order, and the contradiction between the Eastern Roman Empire and the West burst out with renewed force in the confrontation between socialism and capitalism. On the one hand, the Bolsheviks were even worse than the Romanovs, since atheism, mechanism, materialism and Darwinism are much further from the truth than an albeit mutilated Orthodoxy. On the other hand, even through the Bolsheviks there worked a strange power that was amazingly reminiscent in some aspects of the reign of Ivan the Terrible, the oprichnina and the return to archaic popular-religious elements" (p. 517).

It is clear that Dugin has a positive attitude towards this "strange power". He even appears to see in it the unifying theme of Russian history. Here we come to the nub of Dugin's understanding of Russian history: that the real break in that history came, not in 1917 but two-and-a-half centuries earlier, and that the "Eastern Roman Empire" not only did not come to an end in 1917, but in some mysterious way continued to exist under Soviet power, and continued to serve God and the True Church by opposing the real Antichrist – American power.

With regard to the Church, while the Soviet patriarchs beginning with Sergius (Stragorodsky) are mildly rapped on the knuckles by Dugin for placing the Orthodox Church in subjection to Soviet power, this act is considered no worse than the "complete spiritual conformism" of the hierarchs that condemned the Old Rite in 1666-67 (p. 518). Having absolved the official (sergianist) Russian Orthodox Church of all mortal sin, Dugin considers that the True, Philadelphian Church of the future should combine the official Church, the Old Ritualists and the Russian Church Abroad (this was before the surrender of the Church Abroad to Moscow in 2007): "On their own the three main currents in contemporary Russian Orthodoxy... are insufficient, but they bear within themselves separate aspects of ecclesiological truth. The Old Ritualists have a correct evaluation of the schism. The ROC has the fact of the presence

of the Russian patriarchate, hierarchical fullness and national solidarity with the destinies of the Russian State at any cost. The 'abroaders' have the emphasis on the role of the monarchy as 'that which restrains'." (p. 519).

And so, over 560 years after the ending of the supposed "thousand-year reign of Christ", Dugin believes that all these elements surviving from the apostatic Soviet past have "remained faithful in spite of everything to the True Church and the True Kingdom, the Last Kingdom of the unconquered, indestructible Holy Rus'" (p. 521) – all under the leadership of the KGB agent who is "all", Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin!

It is obvious that Dugin's "eschatological ecclesiology" is riddled with inconsistencies. Nevertheless, we can see in it a general idea that has been adopted by Putin and appears to have become a kind of "orthodoxy" among Russian political commentators and analysts: that the present State of the Russian Federation is legitimized and strengthened by its uniting within itself all that is best in Russia's history from both before and after the revolution. Putin, following Dugin's general conception in a secularized form, sees himself as the heir both of the Russian tsars and the Soviet commissars; he is all things to all men - an Orthodox with the Orthodox, a nationalist with the nationalists, a Stalinist with the Stalinists, and a democrat with the democrats.

However, an important qualification must be made to this statement. Neither Putin nor Dugin are *liberal* democrats. Putin calls his brand of democracy "sovereign democracy" – in other words, democracy controlled and limited by a sovereign, that is, himself; while Dugin believes in a kind of elemental, "organic" democracy that may have some roots in the "theocratic democracy" of Old Ritualist priestless communities⁵⁷⁵, but is quite compatible with a totalitarian form of government. For, as Laruelle writes, "this kind of democracy would express itself in political unanimity as well as in a return to a 'natural hierarchy' of social castes, and in a (professional, regional or confessional) corporation that would leave no room for the individual outside the collectivity".⁵⁷⁶ What neither man can abide is the liberal form of democracy based on human rights which is dominant in Western Europe and the United States. Putin has paid lip-service to liberal democracy and human rights in the past, when he was trying to join liberal clubs such as the G8 and the World Trade Organization. However, he has always maintained that the fall of the Soviet Union to liberal democracy in 1991 was "a geopolitical tragedy" of the first order. And now that he has entered on a collision course with the West in Crimea and the Ukraine, his contempt for western liberalism is unconcealed...

⁵⁷⁵ The communities of the priestless Old Ritualists, like those on the River Vyg in the north, were almost democratic communes, having no priests and recognising no political authority – not unlike the contemporary Puritan communities of North America. And gradually, as in the writings of Semeon Denisov, one of the leaders of the Vyg community, they evolved a new conception of Holy Russia, according to which the real Russia resided, not in the Tsar and the Church, for they had both apostasised, but in the common people. As Sergius Zenkovsky writes, Denisov "transformed the old doctrine of an autocratic Christian state into a concept of a democratic Christian nation" (in Geoffrey Hosking, *Russia: People and Empire, 1552-1917*, London: Harper Collins, 1997, p. 72).

⁵⁷⁶ Laruelle, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

In *Absoliutnaia Rodina*, Dugin expresses a hatred of America so intense as to demonstrate that, while he, with most of his countrymen, may have abandoned the *ideology* of the Soviet era, he has by no means been exorcised of its ruling *spirit*, its *hatred* of the collective enemy: "An ominous and alarming country on the other side of the ocean. Without history, without tradition, without roots. An artificial, aggressive, imposed reality, completely devoid of spirit, concentrated only on the material world and technical effectiveness, cold, indifferent, an advertisement shining with neon light and senseless luxury; darkened by pathological poverty, genetic degradation and the rupture of all and every person and thing, nature and culture. It is the result of a pure experiment of the European rationalist utopians.

"Today it is establishing its planetary dominion, the triumph of its way of life, its civilizational model over all the peoples of the earth. And over us. In itself and only in itself does it see 'progress' and 'civilizational norms', refusing everyone else the right to their own path, their own culture, their own system of values.

"How wonderfully exactly does all this remind us of the prophecy concerning the coming into the world of the Antichrist... The king of the dead 'green country', that arose out of the abyss of the ancient crime...

"To close down America is our religious duty..." (pp. 657-658)

Not for nothing did Dugin come from the family of a Colonel-General of the Soviet Army, study in a military Aviation Institute (until his expulsion because of his occultist leanings) and write the manifesto of the leader of the Russian Communist Party, Gennady Ziuganov. His hatred of America is imbibed from his mother's milk; it is the "pure" Soviet spirit that, while recognizing the defeat of Soviet Russia in the Cold War, is burning with the desire to avenge that defeat - if necessary in the hottest of hot wars, nuclear Armageddon (as Dmitri Kiselev made quite clear recently on Russian television). The only significant difference between this spirit and the spirit of the Soviet era is that in this mutation of the virus the "closing down" (in another place he openly says "destruction") of America is not our "patriotic", but our "religious" duty. For the main difference between Soviet and post-Soviet Russia is that religion has now been integrated into the ruling anti-American ideology. Such an unnatural union between militant atheism and religion was prefigured by Stalin's alliance with the official Orthodox Church in 1943; but it is only since 1991, and especially since Putin's (and Dugin's) rise to prominence at the turn of the century, that religion and politics have truly grown together in the Soviet Russian consciousness.

But what religion precisely? As we have seen, Dugin probably belongs to the official Orthodox Church, but in his spirituality is Old Ritualist (with plentiful admixtures of occult esoteric nonsense). This Old Ritualism gives his thought an eschatological, end-of-the-world colouring. For at the end of the seventeenth century the Old Ritualists fled into the woods and immolated themselves precisely in order to escape the "Antichrist" - the Russian State.

As Fr. George Florovsky writes, “the keynote and secret of Russia’s Schism was not ‘ritual’ but the Antichrist, and thus it may be termed a socio-apocalyptic utopia. The entire meaning and pathos of the first schismatic opposition lies in its underlying apocalyptic intuition (‘the time draws near’), rather than in any ‘blind’ attachment to specific rites or petty details of custom. The entire first generation of raskolouchitelei [‘teachers of schism’] lived in this atmosphere of visions, signs, and premonitions, of miracles, prophecies, and illusions. These men were filled with ecstasy or possessed, rather than being pedants... One has only to read the words of Avvakum, breathless with excitement: ‘What Christ is this? He is not near; only hosts of demons.’ Not only Avvakum felt that the ‘Nikon’ Church had become a den of thieves. Such a mood became universal in the Schism: ‘the censer is useless; the offering abominable’.

“The Schism, an outburst of a socio-political hostility and opposition, was a social movement, but one derived from religious self-consciousness. It is precisely this apocalyptic perception of what has taken place which explains the decisive or rapid estrangement among the Schismatics. ‘Fanaticism in panic’ is Kliuchevskii’s definition, but it was also panic in the face of ‘the last apostasy’...

“The Schism dreamed of an actual, earthly City: a theocratic utopia and chiliasm. It was hoped that the dream had already been fulfilled and that the ‘Kingdom of God’ had been realised as the Muscovite State. There may be four patriarchs in the East, but the one and only Orthodox tsar is in Moscow. But now even this expectation had been deceived and shattered. Nikon’s ‘apostasy’ did not disturb the Old Ritualists nearly as much as did the tsar’s apostasy, which in their opinion imparted a final apocalyptic hopelessness to the entire conflict.

“‘At this time there is no tsar. One Orthodox tsar had remained on earth, and whilst he was unaware, the western heretics, like dark clouds, extinguished this Christian sun. Does this not, beloved, clearly prove that the Antichrist’s deceit is showing its mask?’

“History was at an end. More precisely, sacred history had come to an end; it had ceased to be sacred and had become without Grace. Henceforth the world would seem empty, abandoned, forsaken by God, and it would remain so. One would be forced to withdraw from history into the wilderness. Evil had triumphed in history. Truth had retreated into the bright heavens, while the Holy Kingdom had become the tsardom of the Antichrist...”⁵⁷⁷

However, in spite of this apocalypticism, some of the Old Ritualists came to accept the Russian State as the legitimate Orthodox empire. Thus an investigator of the Old Rite in the 1860s, V.I. Kel’siev, asserted that “the people continue to believe today that Moscow is the Third Rome and that there will be no fourth. So Russia is the new Israel, a chosen people, a prophetic land, in which shall be fulfilled all the prophecies of the Old and New Testaments, and in which even the Antichrist will appear, as Christ appeared in the previous Holy Land. The representative of Orthodoxy, the Russian

⁵⁷⁷ Florovsky, *Ways of Russian Theology*, Belmont, Mass.: Nordland, part I, 1979, pp. 98, 99.

Tsar, is the most legitimate emperor on earth, for he occupies the throne of Constantinople..."⁵⁷⁸

Dugin has adopted this version of the apocalyptic Old Ritualism that has come to terms with the Tsar. Only the Tsar now is Putin, and it is the modern Russian Federation that is the last true kingdom on earth. America is the Antichrist, and will be destroyed, if not by Russian nukes, at any rate by the Second Coming of Christ...

If this seems suicidal, then we should remember that mass suicide was part of the culture of early Old Ritualism, as dramatized in Mussorgsky's opera *Khovanschina*... Moreover, some years ago in Munich Putin did something which none of the earlier, more cautious Soviet leaders did – he claimed the right of first strike in a nuclear war... Not in vain did the Ukrainian President say recently that Putin's actions could lead to the outbreak of World War Three (Dugin has said something similar)...

2. The American Antichrist

Dugin pays considerable attention to "the American idea", and analyses it into two components: *liberalism*, whose essence is *individualism*, and *Protestant messianism* or *eschatologism*, which is a kind of mirror image of his Russian eschatologism. Dugin's analysis of American liberalism is interesting. He sees it as the ultimate enemy, something much more than simply *laissez-faire* economics and political democracy, an ideology that has been subtly, skilfully and persistently insinuated into all countries. Its essence is the promotion of the individual above the collective in all its forms; "human rights" are always the rights of the individual against the collective.

In a recent lecture given in Sweden⁵⁷⁹, Dugin showed how even some recent surprising developments in the liberal ideology, such as gay rights, can be explained in terms of this liberal enmity towards collectivism and collectives. For individualism taken to its extreme denies the relevance of any fact that makes an individual not just an individual like any other individual, but also the member of a group that differentiates him from other individuals. So religion is irrelevant to human rights because it differentiates people; so is nationality; so is sex... These collective or group identities are not only irrelevant but must be *destroyed*: religion is replaced by ecumenism, nationality by internationalism, sex by unisex, gay sex, trans-sex... "Man is the measure of all things," as Protagoras once said – and "man" here, according to the liberal ideology, means man as an individual shorn of all differentiating characteristics...

Dugin sees fascism and communism as failed attempts to counter liberalism by exalting collectivist notions of the working class and the Aryan race respectively. Fascism was destroyed in 1945, and communism – in 1991. Dugin claims not to want to return to either of these failed alternatives. He speaks instead of a "fourth way" or "fourth theory", which he is in the process of developing. However, commentators

⁵⁷⁸ Hosking, *op. cit.*, p. 73.

⁵⁷⁹ Dugin, "Eurasianism and the political evolution to the Fourth Theory", <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JZxLxN77IF0>.

can be forgiven for thinking that he is deceiving either himself or others or both in this assertion; for not only does his “fourth way” as so far developed contain no clear and consistent alternatives to American individualism or Nazi or Soviet collectivism: he has himself spoken about creating a “truly fascist fascism”...

Also contained in the American idea, according to Dugin, is the messianic idea of “America, the promised land”, “America, the New Israel” (the ten lost tribes rather than the Jews of Judah), “America the New Jerusalem” (George Washington), the “pure and virtuous republic” whose “manifest destiny” is “to rule the world and bring people to perfection” (John Adams).

The American and Russian messianic ideas are diametrically opposed, being “rooted in the opposition between Catholicism (+Protestantism) and Orthodoxy, the Western Roman Empire and Byzantium. The western and eastern forms of Christianity constitute two choices, two paths, *two incompatible, mutually exclusive messianic ideals*. Orthodoxy is oriented on the spiritual transfiguration of the world in the rays of the uncreated light of Tabor, and Catholicism – in the material restructuring of the earth under the administrative leadership of the Vatican. The Orthodox value above all contemplation, the Catholics – action. Orthodox political teaching insists on ‘the symphony of powers’, which strictly separates the secular (the basileus, the tsar) and the spiritual (the patriarch, the clergy) principles. But Catholicism strives to spread the power of the Pope into secular life, provoking a reverse, usurping move on the part of the secular monarchs, who are eager to submit the Vatican to themselves. The Orthodox consider the Catholics to be ‘apostates’ who have given themselves up to ‘apostasy’; the Catholics look on the Orthodox as ‘a barbaric spiritualist sect’.

“The most anti-Orthodox traits – to the point of rejecting service [works?] and many dogmas – have been developed to their limit by the Protestants...”

“History is not linear, it often makes detours, goes to the side, over-emphasizes details, accentuates paradoxes and anomalies. Nevertheless, an axial line is evident. Undoubtedly there exists a certain ‘Manifest Destiny’ in the broad sense. – The West ascribes it to the American model, to the American way of life, to a super-power, while the East (at any rate the Christian East) is incarnate through the ages in Russia [the successor of Byzantium]. The socialist faith in the golden age of the Soviet Russians is like an absolutely symmetrical antithesis to market eschatologism. ‘The end of the world’ according to the liberal scenario and its opposite – ‘the end of the world’ according to the Russian Orthodox, socialist, Eurasian, eastern scenario. For them this is a general enslavement and rationalization, for us it is a general transfiguration and liberation.

“The logic of history on the most various of levels constantly and insistently illumines the basic dualism – the USA and the USSR, the West and the East, America and Russia...” (pp. 665, 666)

There is much that the Orthodox Christian can agree with Dugin in his analysis of the polarity between East and West, and especially Eastern and Western Christianity. But when “the East” comes to include, not only Byzantium and Holy Russia, but also

Soviet socialism, - that thoroughly western utopian construct dreamed up by a German Jew in the Reading Room of the British Library, - then we begin to suspect that this is Cold War rhetoric reworked in order to appeal to a semi-educated Orthodox readership. And indeed, the same could be said about the whole Putin-Dugin project and ideology: it is essentially a resurrection of the Cold War, its reheating and re-ignition and ideological reformulation as the result of changed political circumstances. Out go Marxism-Leninism and all the baggage of dialectical materialism, which nobody outside North Korea believes in any more. In come half-digested thoughts about the uncreated light and the symphony of powers, spiced with nostalgia for the “good old days” of Soviet sausages and a very large dose of “truly fascist fascism” and Old Ritualist mass-hysteria...

The irony - and the hypocrisy - is that the Russian Federation today looks a very long way from providing any kind of credible ideological alternative to Americanism. All the vices of the West are there in abundance. On almost all social indices - corruption, inequality, suicide, drunkenness, drug-taking, child mortality, even atheism - Russia comes well below America and on a par with the worst Third World countries. The official church contemplates, not the Divine Light, but its own obscenely inflated bank balances. As for a “symphony of powers” with the state, this is a bad joke: the KGB-run church is completely subservient to the KGB-run state...

3. Protestant Dispensationalism

Dugin rounds off his analysis of the American idea with an illuminating study of the place of “dispensationalism” in the American religio-political psyche. “There exists a special Protestant eschatological teaching called ‘*dispensationalism*’, from the Latin word *dispensatio*, which could be translated as ‘providence’ or ‘plan’. According to this theory, God has a ‘plan’ in relation to the Anglo-Saxon Christians, another in relation to the Jews, and a third in relation to all the other countries. The Anglo-Saxons are considered to be ‘the descendants of the ten tribes of Israel, who did not return to Judaea from the Babylonian captivity’. These ten tribes ‘remembered their origin, and accepted Protestantism as their main confession.’

“The ‘plan’ for the Protestant Anglo-Saxons, in the opinion of the adherents of dispensationalism, is as follows. - Before the end of time there must come a time of troubles (‘the great sorrow’ or tribulation). At this point the forces of evil, of ‘the evil empire’ (when Reagan called the USSR ‘the evil empire’, he had in mind precisely this eschatological Biblical meaning), will fall upon the Protestant Anglo-Saxons (and also the others who have been ‘born again’) and for a short time the ‘abomination of desolation’ will rule. The main anti-hero of the ‘tribulation period’ is ‘King Gog’. Now here is a very important point: *this person is persistently and constantly identified in the eschatology of the dispensationalists with Russia.*

“This was clearly formulated for the first time during the Crimean war, in 1855, by the Evangelist John Cumming. At that time he identified the Russian Tsar Nicholas I with the Biblical ‘Gog, prince of Magog’ - leader of the invasion of Israel foretold in the Bible [Ezekiel 38-39]. This theme again exploded with particular force in 1917,

while in the era of the 'Cold War' it became *de facto* the official position of the 'moral majority' of religious America.

"God has another 'plan', in the teaching of the dispensationalists, in regard to Israel. By 'Israel' they understand the literal re-establishment of a Jewish state before the end of the world. By contrast with the Orthodox and all other normal Christians, the Protestant fundamentalists are convinced that the Biblical prophecies concerning the participation of the people of Israel in the events of 'the last times' must be understood literally, in a strictly Old Testament way, and that they refer to those Jews who continue to confess Judaism even in our days. The Jews in the last times must return to Israel, re-establish their state (this 'dispensationalist prophecy' was in a strange way fulfilled literally in 1947) and then be subjected to the invasion of Gog, that is, the 'Russians', 'the Eurasians'.

"Then there begins the strangest part of 'dispensationalism'. At the moment of the 'great tribulation' it is supposed that the Anglo-Saxon Christians will be 'taken up' into heaven (the rapture) - 'as if on a space ship or saucer' - and there wait for the end of the war between Gog (the Russians) and Israel. Then they (the Anglo-Saxons), together with the Protestant 'Christ', will descend to earth again, where they will be met by the Israelites who had conquered Gog and immediately convert to Protestantism. Then will begin the 'thousand-year kingdom' and America together with Israel will rule without limits in a stable paradise of 'the open society' and 'one world'." (pp. 667-668)

Dugin goes on to explain how dispensationalism has been spread and strengthened by such figures as Cyrus Scofield (of the Scofield Reference Bible), Hal Lindsey and Jerry Falwell.

Then he concludes his diatribe against the American Antichrist as follows: "We arrive at a terrible (for the Russians) picture. The powers, groups, world-views and state formations that together are called 'the West', and which after their victory in the 'Cold War' are the only rulers of the world, behind the façade of 'liberalism' confess a harmonious eschatological theological doctrine in which the events of secular history, technological progress, international relations, social processes, etc. are interpreted *in an eschatological perspective*. The civilizational roots of this western model go back into deep antiquity, and, in a certain sense, a definite archaism has been preserved here right up to the present time in parallel with technological and social modernization. And these powers persistently and consistently identify us, the Russians, with 'the spirits of hell', with the demonic 'hordes of King Gog from the land of Magog', with the bearers of 'absolute evil'. The Biblical reference to the apocalyptic 'princes of Ros, Mesech and Tubal' are interpreted as unambiguously referring to Russia - 'Ros' (= 'Russia'), 'Meshech' (= 'Moscow') and 'Tubal' (= 'the ancient name for Scythia'). In other words, the Russophobia of the West and especially of the USA by no means proceeds from a pharisaical concern for 'the victims of totalitarianism' or the notorious 'rights of man'. We are talking about *a consistent and 'justified' doctrinal demonization of Eastern European civilization in all its aspects - historical, cultural, theological, geopolitical, social, economic, etc.*" (pp. 669-670)

Dugin has carried out a talented hatchet-job on American Protestant eschatologism. However, if he rejects the Protestant interpretation of the prophecy, he should, as a supposed Orthodox believer, be able to provide an Orthodox interpretation; but he does not. Moreover, he fails to take into account the striking fact that, whatever the defects of the American eschatological vision, the prophecy of Ezekiel concerning Gog and Magog *does* seem to point to Russia as its geographical context...

Most ancient commentators placed Gog in the region north of the Black Sea, which is now South Russia and Ukraine.⁵⁸⁰ Some place Gog in Armenia. Thus Plumptre writes: "The name Gog seems to be found in the name Gogarene, a district of Armenia, west of the Caspian (Strabo, xi, 528)."⁵⁸¹ In any case, "Gog" seems to be the name of a man - the Antichrist, according to Blessed Jerome, while "Magog" (the name first appears in Genesis 10.2 as the son of Japheth) is his people or his army.⁵⁸² Josephus, followed by St. Andrew of Caesarea, says that Magog was the ancestor of the Scythians, who also originally inhabited the Black Sea area.⁵⁸³

The lands Gog rules over are called "Ros, Meshech and Tubal". "Ros" - "Ρως" in the Greek of the Greek Old Testament, the Septuagint - is the ancient name for Russia.⁵⁸⁴ The identification with Russia is strengthened by the fact that Gog and Magog are said to come from "the extreme north" "during the last times" (Ezekiel 38.6, 39.2). "Meshech" may refer to Moscow, according to some commentators⁵⁸⁵, and "Tubal", according to Blessed Theodoretus of Cyrus - to Georgia.⁵⁸⁶

In his commentary on Ezekiel, M. Skaballanovich quotes, against the identification with Russia, the remark of a German scholar: "The Russians cannot be included among the enemies of the Kingdom of God".⁵⁸⁷ But that remark was made before the First World War: a century later, after the greatest persecution of Orthodox Christians in history, the idea that the Russians of the neo-Soviet regime of Putin or his successor

⁵⁸⁰ Josephus, *On Antiquities*, VI, 1; St. Proclus of Constantinople, in Socrates' *Ecclesiastical History*, VII, 41.

⁵⁸¹ Plumptre, *The Bible Educator*, London: Cassell, Petter & Green, vol. III, p. 251.

⁵⁸² Blessed Jerome, *Interpretation of the Apocalypse*, 20.7.

⁵⁸³ Josephus, *On Antiquities*, VI, 1. "Some think," writes St. Andrew of Caesarea in his commentary on the Apocalypse, "that Gog and Magog are the distant peoples of the Scythians, or, as we call them, the Huns". The Huns also came from the Eurasian steppes.

⁵⁸⁴ Thus St. Photius the Great used the same word when referring to the Russian attack on Constantinople in 860. Cf. Bishop Ignatius Brianchaninov: "In the 38th and 39th chapters of the Prophet Ezekiel is described the power and numerousness of a northern people called Ros; this people must attain a huge level of material development before the end of the world, and by its end will bring to an end the history of the wandering of the human race on earth..." (Letter to N.N. Muraviev-Karsky, May 14, 1863)

⁵⁸⁵ Plumptre (*op. cit.*) writes: "[Meshech is] generally identified with the Moschi, a race inhabiting part of the country between the Euxine and Caspian seas, and who were subdued by Tiglath-pileser I. They were neighbours to Tubal, a race dealing in iron, a branch of trade for which the south-east coast of the Euxine was early famous. The name Muscovy is thought with fair probability to be derived from Meshech (Rawlinson, *Ancient Monuments* ii. 65)." Henry Morris (*The Genesis Record*, Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Book House, 1976, pp. 247-248) believes Meshech (or Mosoch) to be Moscow.

⁵⁸⁶ Blessed Theodoretus, *Commentary on Isaiah*, 66.19.

⁵⁸⁷ Hengstenberg, in A. Lopukhin and his followers, *Tolkovaia Biblia*, vol. I, St. Petersburg, 1904-13, Stockholm, 1987, p. 446.

could be included among the enemies of God is much more plausible – and *especially* from an Orthodox point of view. Moreover, Gog’s allies and opponents in his invasion of the Middle East fit quite well with the present system of alliances in the region. Thus a rough correspondence can be discerned between the allies of Gog in the form of the Armenians (“Togarmah”⁵⁸⁸), the Shiite Persians and the Libyans, on the one side, and his enemies in the form of Israel and the Sunni Muslims of Turkey and the Arabian peninsula (“Sheba” and “Dedan”⁵⁸⁹), on the other. These two coalitions are already fighting a bloody proxy war in Syria, and it is entirely feasible that Putin, who declared in August, 2013 that he would “destroy” Saudi Arabia, will try to carry out his threat in an invasion of the Middle East.

The names “Gog and Magog” also appear in the twentieth chapter of the Apocalypse of St. John. There are two important differences between the Old and New Testament prophecies. The first is that whereas Ezekiel's Gog and Magog come from “the extreme north”, St. John's come from “the four quarters of the earth”. The second is that whereas the destruction of Ezekiel's Gog and Magog is followed by several more years of terrestrial life, that described in St. John is followed by the Last Judgement. So Ezekiel’s Gog and Magog come earlier in terrestrial history than St. John’s. Evidently, however, they are spiritually akin; both represent antichristian powers, perhaps the collective (Soviet) and the personal (Jewish) Antichrists respectively.

Conclusion: The Threat

These interpretations are, of course, speculative; but the threat posed by Dugin’s NeoFascist-NeoSoviet-NeoOldRitualist eschatologism is not. Putin is almost certainly a more pragmatic, less ideologically-motivated man than Dugin, who is not going to hurl his armies into the Middle East or against the West just in order to justify Dugin’s, or anybody else’s, interpretation of the prophecies. Nevertheless, he has shown favour to Dugin, and is certainly very happy to employ religious sentiment, however misguided, to strengthen his own popularity. There is no doubt that he would love to clothe himself in the robes of a Russian Orthodox White Tsar going to battle for Holy Rus’ against the American-Jewish Antichrist. And there is equally no doubt, alas, that many Orthodox both in Russia and abroad will be happy to accept him in that role. Western commentators have recognized that American Evangelical eschatologism is an important factor influencing American foreign policy.⁵⁹⁰ There is no reason why Russian (or Soviet or Old Ritualist) Orthodox eschatologism should not be accorded the same attention and recognition.

April 19 / May 2, 2014.

New Hieromartyr Victor, Archbishop of Vyatka.

⁵⁸⁸ Gary Stearman, “The Mystery of Sheba and Dedan”,
<http://www.theendtimesobserver.org/archives/index.php?id=39>

⁵⁸⁹ Stearman, *op. cit.*; Fred Zaspel, “The Nations of Ezekiel 38-39”,
<http://www.biblicalstudies.com/bstudy/eschatology/ezekiel.htm>.

⁵⁹⁰ See Walter Russell Mead, “God’s Country?”, *Foreign Affairs*, September/October, 2006, p. 39; Philip Giraldi, “Old Testament Armed Forces”, *The American Conservative*, February 12, 2014,
<http://www.theamericanconservative.com/articles/old-testament-army>.

29. RUSSIA, PUTIN AND CHRISTIAN VALUES

*How has the faithful city become a harlot! It was full of justice; righteousness lodged in it,
but now murderers...*
Isaiah 1.21.

The Sunday of All Saints of Russia is a good time to meditate on the contrast between the past glories and present degradation of this, the most important of Christian countries. Indeed, the contrast between pre- and post-1917 Russia is difficult to exaggerate. By far the greatest right-believing empire in history, Russia before the revolution stretched from the Baltic to the Black Sea to the Pacific Ocean, and had the fastest-growing population and fastest-developing economy in the world. Her armies, led by probably the finest man ever to sit on a throne from a moral point of view, protected one hundred million Orthodox believers within her own frontiers, and many millions more in the Balkans and the Middle East, while warding off revolution in the West. Within her frontiers she nourished great ascetics and saints, such as the elders of Optina and Valaam and St. John of Kronstadt; and she sent many missions led by holy men to foreign lands such as Persia, China, Japan, Alaska and the mainland United States.

After the revolution, by contrast, Soviet Russia exported, not true faith and morality, but militant atheism, lies and murder on a vast scale. No regime in history has directly murdered so many of its own citizens, and indirectly the citizens of so many other countries around the world. The only consolation and hope in the midst of this unparalleled evil and misery was the vast choir of the Holy New Martyrs and Confessors of Russia, who from Priest John Kochurov of Chicago to James Arkatov of the Altai lit up the blackness of communism with the heavenly light of true sanctity.

With the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991, however, millions ardently hoped that the longed-for reversal, the resurrection of Holy Russia prophesied by several of the holy elders, was at hand. But then came the bitterest disillusion of all: after a democratic interregnum during the 1990s, the Soviet Union was born again on January 1, 2000 with the coming to power of the KGB colonel, Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin. Gradually at first (so as not to elicit too much unwelcome attention), but then more confidently and aggressively, both the symbols and the reality of Soviet power, laced with liberal lashings of Nazi-style fascism, have taken centre-stage once more.

But with an important difference, a difference that has blinded the eyes and lulled the consciences of many Orthodox Christians: Putin claims to be the successor, not only of Stalin (whom he openly admires), but also of Tsar Nicholas II (although he recently called him "bloody Nicholas" out of ingrained habit). Out has gone the ideological apparatus of Leninist Marxism, and in has come Orthodox Christianity. And he has even claimed to be restoring "Christian values" to Russia by contrast with the decadent West...

This holier-than-thou propaganda campaign began in about 2006, at about the time, as we now know, that he was preparing his invasion of Georgia. It intensified during

the recent Kievan counter-revolution. And it is reaching an hysterical peak now, when Russia has annexed Crimea and is destabilizing Eastern Ukraine.

The underlying pattern seems clear: when Putin realizes that he is about to lose favour with the West because of some imminent aggressive foreign policy move, he attempts to sow division among western intellectuals by eliciting those pro-Soviet and anti-American sentiments that have never been far beneath the surface of western life since at least the 1930s. This is an old trick used very effectively by Stalin – although he, unlike his admirer Putin, never claimed to be restoring Christian values! However, as we shall see, it is hypocritical to a supreme degree. Moreover, while the pro-gay propaganda of the West is indeed a very serious threat to the salvation of those living in the West, especially the school-age generation, supporting Putin can in no way be described as any kind of deliverance from it. On the contrary, the supporting of one extreme evil against another is simply jumping from the frying pan into the fire...

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At the Valdai forum in 2013 Putin said: We see that many Euro-Atlantic countries have de facto gone down the path of the rejection of... Christian values. Moral principles are being denied... What could be a greater witness of the moral crisis of the human socium than the loss of the capacity for self-reproduction. But today practically all developed countries can no longer reproduce themselves. Without the values laid down in Christianity and other world religions, without the norms of ethics and morality formed in the course of millennia, people inevitably lose their human dignity. And we consider it natural and right to defend these values."⁵⁹¹

The strange thing about this statement is that Putin seems entirely unconscious of the fact that with regard to the "Christian value" that he cites here, "self-reproduction", Russia performs worse than any western country. Thus even after taking migration into account, the twenty-eight countries of the European Union have a natural growth in population that is twice as high as Russia's! And if he is referring not to the balance between the birth rate and the death rate, but to *homosexuality* as a factor that by definition inhibits reproduction, then the situation is little better in Russia than in the West. For in spite of Putin's much-vaunted ban on pro-gay propaganda to minors, the vice remains legal among adults, and even flourishing in places from which it should have been banished first of all. Thus among the three hundred bishops of the Moscow Patriarchate, 50 according to one estimate (Fr. Andrei Kuraev) and 250 according to another (Fr. Gleb Yakunin) are homosexuals...

The Lord said: "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy" (Luke 12.1). In relation to no other sin is the Lord as fierce as in relation to hypocrisy, and His contest with the Pharisees was the most critical of His life; it led literally to His death. Pharisaism is bad enough in the individual, alienating him completely from the life in Christ. It is even more dangerous when it seizes hold upon a whole people that has, or once had, the knowledge of God, and which then, in combination with the

⁵⁹¹ Andrei Movchan, "Rossia i Zapad: kto moral'nee?" (Russia and the West: who is more moral?), http://slon.ru/russia/rossiya_i_zapad_kto_moralnee-1114248.xhtml, June 17, 2014.

passions of hatred, resentment, wounded pride and xenophobic nationalism, exposes Orthodoxy to ridicule or disgust among the non-Orthodox nations. “The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you”, said the Prophet to the Jews when they were still the people of God (Ezekiel 16.27); and these words were echoed by the Apostle Paul in reference to the Jews of his time, when they had already fallen away (Romans 2.21).

The same is true of contemporary neo-Soviet and neo-Fascist Russia, led by the Russian equivalents of Annas and Caiaphas, Putin and Gundiaev (the “Patriarch” of Moscow), whose Sanhedrin, the KGB, now controls Russian life more completely than at any time since 1917...

Under the watch of these self-proclaimed guardians of Christian morality – both are dollar billionaires many times over, Putin mainly from the proceeds of oil and gas companies (some of them, like Yukos, stolen from their owners), and Gundiaev from the tax-free import of alcohol and tobacco – Russia, according to United Nations statistics cited by Vladimir Ruscher, occupies the following positions in the world league tables:

- 1st in suicides of adults, children and adolescents;
- 1st in numbers of children born out of wedlock;
- 1st in children abandoned by parents;
- 1st in absolute decline in population;
- 1st in consumption of spirits and spirit-based drinks;
- 1st in consumption of strong alcohol;
- 1st in tobacco sales;
- 1st in deaths from alcohol and tobacco;
- 1st in deaths from cardiovascular diseases;
- 2nd in fake medicine sales;
- 1st in heroin consumption (21st in world production).

These statistics show that Russia, far from leading the world in the practice of Christian virtue, is perhaps the most corrupt country of all. As regards general criminality, theft, corruption and murder (including abortion), Russia is very near the top of the league, and this not least because the government itself has taken the lead in these activities, making Russia into a mafia state run by and for a small clique of fantastically rich criminals. Thus the general picture is one of *extreme moral degradation*.

No nation in such a catastrophic state should preach morality to others...

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However, many Christians, both Orthodox and non-Orthodox, are unfazed by such revelations. The important thing for them is that, whatever her citizens *practise*, Russia, unlike the West, *preaches* Christian morality. Hence the support given to Putin even

by conservative American evangelicals such as Pat Buchanan.⁵⁹² “We have to give him a chance,” is the view. And if he succeeds, then Christianity as a whole is the winner...

But this is a deeply mistaken and naïve point of view; for we have to ask ourselves, first: the chance to do what? The chance to transform the neo-Soviet and neo-Fascist Russia of today into the truly Orthodox Russia of tomorrow? But only someone in complete ignorance of Putin and his regime can believe such a myth. Can we really believe that Putin is like the Apostle Paul, and that after working all his life for Sovietism (he calls the fall of the Soviet Union “a geo-political tragedy”), he has had a Damascus experience and is now working to undo the terrible things he has already done to the country and recreate Holy Russia like a new St. Constantine? Everything we know about him and his regime militates against such a view. As Putin himself once said, “once a chekist [KGB agent], always a chekist”. And while there have been KGB agents who have repented of their sins, Putin is not one of them, and the penitent agents do not count him as one of their own...

More fundamentally, however, this argument fails to appreciate the principle that God does not accept the praises of sinners, nor truth from the mouths of liars. The Lord strictly forbade the demons who confessed that He was the Son of God. And St. Paul similarly forbade the girl possessed with a Pythonic spirit who confessed, truthfully, that he was a servant of the Most High God (Acts 16.18). For truth uttered from lying lips only increases the credibility of the lying source, thereby increasing the overall deception. That is why we pray: “Let not the throne of iniquity have fellowship with Thee, which maketh mischief in the name of the law” (Psalms 93.20). Putin is trying to make his “throne of iniquity” have the appearance of being in fellowship with God. And he “maketh mischief in the name of the law”, pursuing antichristian ends by putting himself up as a defender of Christian law.

Archimandrite Cyril Zaitsev of Jordanville once remarked that the most terrible aspect of the Soviet yoke was not the open atheism, the mass murder of millions of believers and the destruction of churches, but the attempt to clothe all this horror and blasphemy in the guise of Christianity. He was thinking in particular of the Moscow Patriarchate, controlled since 1927 by the KGB and now headed by Agent “Mihailov”, Patriarch Cyril (Gundiaiev). Boris Talantov, who died in a Kirov prison in 1972, called the MP an “agent of worldwide antichristianity”.

What we are witnessing now is the spreading of this “communist Christianity” from the official church to other sections of society. Many atheists in Russia now count themselves as “Orthodox”, which shows that “Orthodoxy” tends to be a marker of nationality rather than religion. In Eastern Ukraine the Russian separatists are combining the cross with the hammer and sickle on the same banner, which is equivalent to worshipping Christ and Satan simultaneously. In February a “Russian Orthodox Army” began to be recruited – it now has 4000 soldiers – whose attitude to the Soviet Union is extremely positive. All this demonstrates that most Russians today – of course, there are always distinguished exceptions – are going *backwards*

⁵⁹² Buchanan, “Whose Side is God on Now?”, <http://buchanan.org/blog/whose-side-god-now-6337>, April 4, 2014.

spiritually; the Soviet demon has not been exorcised; on the contrary, it is manifesting itself with exceptional vigour, because it knows that “it has only a little time left” ...

The real struggle today is not between Russians and Ukrainians, or Russia and the West, but between the real, Orthodox Russia and a resurgent Soviet Russia, possessed by the demon of “communist Christianity”. That old struggle is not yet over; the evil empire is fighting back. And until victory has been achieved over it, there can be no real hope for victory for Orthodoxy anywhere else...

June 7/20, 2014.

New Hieromartyr Andronicus, Archbishop of Perm.

30. ORTHODOXY AND THE THEORY OF THE JUST WAR

Introduction

For most of Christian history, the theory of the just war has been a subject, not so much of Orthodox, as of Roman Catholic theology. Only in the late nineteenth century, with the appearance of Tolstoy's theory of non-resistance to evil, the outbreak of World War One and Archbishop Anthony (Khrapovitsky)'s *The Christian Faith and War* (1915), did the question of the morality of war become a subject of theological debate in Orthodox circles. Even now, after two World Wars and the many other wars in which Orthodox Christians have participated in the past century, there has been little systematic discussion of the subject from an Orthodox point of view.

The reason for this may be that until the Russian revolution most Orthodox Christians had neither the knowledge nor the need to judge the morality or otherwise of the wars they took part in. Following the words of St. John the Baptist, they saw nothing dishonourable in the soldier's life, even in service to a pagan ruler (Luke 3.14); and since, as St. Paul pointed out, "there is no authority that is not from God" (Romans 13.1), the idea of refusing service to the authorities on moral grounds simply did not arise. When Europe's leaders became Christian, the duty of military service was still more strongly felt; and since, after the Fall of Constantinople in 1453, Christians were not forced to serve in the Ottoman armies, the potential moral dilemma involved in fighting for infidels against Christians was avoided. There were exceptions to this rule, as when, for example, Serbian princes after the battle of Kosovo were forced to fight in Turkish armies as vassals of the Sultan, or when Serbian, Bulgarian and Greek rulers in the Balkans waged war against each other. But before the twentieth century we do not hear the argument: "This war is unjust, therefore I will not fight in it." Of course, *rulers* may have suffered torments of conscience in deciding whether to go to war in a particular case or not. But this was not a problem for their *subjects*: their duty was simply to obey, to give to Caesar what was Caesar's...

Today, however, politics has become all the rage, and almost everyone takes it upon himself to judge political leaders. As Paul Johnson rightly says, "Perhaps the most significant characteristic of the dawning modern world [which he dated to 1815-30] was the tendency to relate everything to politics."⁵⁹³ This tendency has now penetrated deeply into the Orthodox Church, where Obama and Putin are discussed with more passion than the properly theological issues of Ecumenism and Sergianism.

And yet both these issues are related to politics, so we cannot avoid politics altogether. What we can avoid, however, is speaking about it *in a political way*. Instead, we must develop a *theology* of politics. And among the most important questions that such a theology of politics must address is: what is a just war?

1. Old Testament Morality?

⁵⁹³ Johnson, *The Birth of the Modern, World Society 1815-1830*, London: Phoenix, 1992, p. 662.

A preliminary objection that needs to be dealt with first is: should not war and politics be judged by the more savage standards of the Old Testament rather than the mercifulness of the New? Would that not be more realistic, more in accordance with realpolitik? Thus pondering the morality of the Allies' call in World War Two for "unconditional surrender", we could refer to some Old Testament precedents. After all, did not the Lord order Joshua to enter the land of Canaan, destroy all the tribes they found therein, and occupy the land themselves? And did He not order Saul to destroy all the Amalekites, removing him from the kingship when he disobeyed?

The major problem with this approach is that the Lord in the Sermon on the Mount clearly and specifically *replaced* the cruder morals of the Old Testament with His own higher laws. Thus "an eye for an eye" was replaced by love for enemies; easy divorce and multiple marriages by monogamy and chastity. Nor did the Lord or the Apostles make an exception for rulers - although, of course, in their time there were as yet no *Christian* rulers. To say that as individuals we are subject to the New Testament Law, but that in collectives we can revert to a lightly tempered savagery is to introduce a kind of schizophrenia into the Christian Gospel, a double standard which appears to limit the power of Grace. And its weakness is demonstrated by the fact that Christian rulers, even heterodox ones, have rarely resorted to it, but have almost always tried to justify their actions, whether successfully or unsuccessfully, on the basis of Christian principles. Nor, as far as we know, has any truly Christian ruler attempted to exterminate a whole people on the basis of a supposed revelation from the Lord. Moreover, in those cases in which Orthodox rulers have acted cruelly in the name of Christianity - we think of Emperor Theodosius' slaughter of three thousand Thessalonians in the fourth century, or Charlemagne's extermination of the pagan Saxons in the eighth century, or Ivan the Terrible's slaughter of the Novgorodians in the sixteenth, - they have not received the approbation of Christian society.

In the Old Testament the Lord may have commanded merciless slaughter in some cases in order to test the obedience of a certain leader of the people - Abraham in the case of Isaac, Saul in the case of the Amalekites. Or, as in the case of Joshua and the Canaanites, it may have been a concession to barbarian mores, "because of the hardness of your hearts" (Matthew 19.8), or because the Old Testament Promised Land is a symbol or figure of the complete purity of the New Testament Kingdom of God. For "there shall by no means enter it anything that defiles, or causes an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the Lamb's Book of life" (Revelation 21.27).

It should also be remembered that even in the Old Testament there are commandments which are completely in the spirit of the New Testament. Thus in Leviticus we find an injunction that modern Orthodox nationalists would do well to take heed of: "If a stranger sojourn with thee in your land, ye shall not vex him. But the stranger that dwelleth with you shall be unto you as one born among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself; for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God." (19.33-34) Again, the king of Israel once asked the Prophet Elisha what he should do with some captured Syrians: "My father, shall I kill them? Shall I kill them?" But he answered: "You shall not kill them. Would you kill those whom you have taken captive with your sword and your bow? Set food and water before them, that they

may eat and drink and go to their master." As a result of the king's obedience to the prophet, "bands of Syrian raiders came no more into the land of Israel..." (II Kings 6:21-23)

However, it must be admitted that no society could exist for long if all crimes were simply forgiven. Punishment has to be part and parcel of any legal system, and has certainly been part of every historical Christian legal system. For while an individual Christian may forgive his enemies and persecutors, society as a whole cannot do that: it has to protect the innocent and deter future crime. And so when St. Vladimir, Great-Prince of Kiev, became a Christian and wanted to abolish the death penalty in his kingdom, his bishops dissuaded him, pointing to the general increase of crime that resulted. In his personal life he could turn the other cheek, but as a prince he could not...

Christian history is full of examples of Christian rulers transcending the letter of the law by forgiving their enemies and doing good to those who hate them in their personal life. But in public life they had to uphold the law, and even carry out executions and wage wars. For even in the New Testament it is written that the ruler is "the minister of God", who "does not bear the sword in vain, [but is] an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil" (Romans 13.4).

2. The First Five Centuries

The attitude of the Early Church to politics was moulded by two evangelical principles: that the political authorities of their time were established by God, and that the things of Caesar should be left to Caesar. Taken together, these principles precluded even the thought of revolution, whatever the moral defects of the Roman emperor. Following the command of their Lord, Christians kept their swords firmly within their sheaths, knowing that he who lives by the sword will die by the sword. And they unsheathed them only in obedience to the emperor. It was not for the Christians to question Caesar's decisions in Caesar's sphere. He was answerable to God, not to them. Of course, there were limits to the Christians' obedience: they refused, even at the price of martyrdom, to offer incense to false gods, and they refused to put other Christians to the sword. But this had nothing to do with pacifist or anti-war, still less democratic sentiment. They simply did not believe that it was their business to resist or question the State's political decisions, or to overthrow the State through violence. This would not have been a just war from their point of view.

Instead, they resorted to prayer, and patience, and the power of the Cross of Christ. And their patience and faith was rewarded: without the Christians having to shed a drop of Christian or non-Christian blood, the Lord raised up St. Constantine in the far north-west of the empire, and then granted him dominion over the whole of the oikoumene, the ancient Roman empire, throughout which he introduced Christian laws and customs that greatly increased the size and influence of the Church. Of course, Constantine did fight wars. But they were just wars, fulfilling all the criteria of a just war. First, he was himself a legitimate ruler, the heir to the western part of the Roman empire. Secondly, at least from the battle of Milvian Bridge in 312, he fought in the name of Christ, under the banner of the Cross; and all his subsequent works in

peacetime showed that his motivation had always been the prosperity of the True Church of Christ. And thirdly, he fought only when he had to, and to the degree that he had to: as when, for example, his co-ruler Licinius broke their common agreement and began persecuting the Christians in defiance of that agreement.

After Constantine, the Christians maintained their principles of obedience combined with non-interference in the purely political sphere. But since the emperors were now baptized, the bishops felt emboldened to rebuke them when they sinned against the faith or moral teaching of the Church. Thus St. Athanasius the Great was very fierce to Constantius when he became an Arian heretic. SS. Basil the Great and Gregory the Theologian were even fiercer against Julian the Apostate when he became a pagan. And St. Ambrose of Milan famously excommunicated St. Theodosius the Great when he killed three thousand innocents, and again rebuked him fiercely when he ordered the restoration of a synagogue that had been burned down by Christians.

In the East, war was not glorified, but considered a regrettable necessity in a fallen world. The Orthodox governed themselves in accordance with the spirit of St. Basil's Canon 13: "Our fathers did not consider killing on the field of battle as murder, pardoning, as it seems to me, defenders of chastity and piety. But it might be good that they refrain from Communion only in the Holy Mysteries for three years as people who have unclean hands..." This attitude was prefigured by David's not being allowed to build the Temple because he was a man of war, with blood on his hands. He made the preparations; but it was his son, Solomon, a man of peace, who was entrusted with the building. For, as Patrick Henry Reardon writes, "War, even justified war, even necessary war, yet carries a quality of defilement incompatible with the proper worship of God. Men are to offer their prayers with 'holy hands, without wrath' (I Timothy 2.8). Blood, in the Bible, is a holy thing. To have shed blood in anger – which in warfare takes place in profusion – carries a ritual, if not a moral, defilement that fits ill with the purity of God's worship. This persuasion has always been expressed in the Church's canons on priestly ordination [which forbid the participation of priests in war]."⁵⁹⁴

From the time of St. Augustine, however, we find the beginning of a subtly different approach to politics. War continued to be seen as justified in certain circumstances.⁵⁹⁵ However, the sack of Rome by the Goths in 406 had a huge impact on Western Christians; and while not renouncing the traditional approach, and the traditional loyalty of Christians to the Roman empire, St. Augustine exhibits a more radical, apolitical and even anti-political view in his famous work *The City of God*. Thus at one point he calls Rome a "second Babylon".⁵⁹⁶ For there was always a demonic element at the heart of the Roman state, he says, which has not been eliminated even now. Sin and fratricide – Romulus' murder of Remus – lie at the very root of the Roman state,

⁵⁹⁴ Reardon, *Chronicles of History and Worship: Orthodox Christian Reflections on the Books of Chronicles*, Ben Lomond, Ca.: Conciliar Press, 2006, p. 78.

⁵⁹⁵ Cf. St. Augustine in *The City of God*: "They who have waged war in obedience to the divine command, or in conformity with His laws, have represented in their persons the public justice or the wisdom of government, and in this capacity have put to death wicked men; such persons have by no means violated the commandment, 'Thou shalt not kill.'"

⁵⁹⁶ St. Augustine, *The City of God*, XVIII, 2.

just as sin and fratricide – Cain’s murder of Abel – lie at the beginning of the history of humanity. Moreover, the growth of the Roman Empire was achieved through a multitude of wars, many of which were quite unjust. For “without justice what are governments but bands of brigands?”⁵⁹⁷

Therefore it should not surprise us, says Augustine, that the Roman Empire should decline and fall. “If heaven and earth are to pass away, why is it surprising if at some time the state is going to come to an end? If what God has made will one day vanish, then surely what Romulus made will disappear much sooner.” “As for this mortal life, which ends after a few days’ course, what does it matter under whose rule a man lives, being so soon to die, provided that the rulers do not force him to impious and wicked acts?”⁵⁹⁸ For it is the Jerusalem above that is our *real* Fatherland, not Rome here below.

Augustine’s views are only the first “take” on a distinctly Western view of politics and war in the Orthodox period (up to the schism of the papacy in 1054). While the Eastern Empire acquired relative stability and therefore a stability of political thinking, the final collapse of the Western Roman Empire in 476, and the emergence of Germanic kingdoms that stood in various relations towards Christian Rome, raised hitherto unknown ethical dilemmas for western thought. These revolved around such questions as: What authority is from God? Can an authority be legal if it is not Orthodox or does not recognize the Eastern Emperor? Can the Church intervene to bless a war or curse it, or remove rulers that fail to fight just wars or insist on fighting unjust ones?

So it is perhaps not coincidental that the first sketches of a theory of the just war emerge precisely in this period of western imperial collapse, in the writings of St. Augustine.

“From Augustine’s diffuse comments on war,” writes Christopher Tyerman, “could be identified four essential characteristics of a just war that were to underpin most subsequent discussions of the subject. A just war requires a just cause; its aim must be defensive or for the recovery of rightful possession; legitimate authority must sanction it; those who fight must be motivated by right intent. Thus war, by nature sinful, could be a vehicle for the promotion of righteousness; war that is violent could, as some later medieval apologists maintained, act as a form of charitable love, to help victims of injustice. From Augustine’s categories developed the basis of Christian just war theory, for example, by Thomas Aquinas in the thirteenth century.”⁵⁹⁹

3. The Middle Ages

Byzantine political theory did not develop significantly after the reign of Justinian in the sixth century. State and Church were independent of each other, and yet in a “symphonic” relationship with each other. The State occupied itself with political matters, and all decisions regarding peace and war were made by the emperor. The

⁵⁹⁷ St. Augustine, *The City of God*, IV, 4.

⁵⁹⁸ St. Augustine, *The City of God*, V, 17.

⁵⁹⁹ Tyerman, *God’s War: A New History of the Crusades*, London: Penguin, 2006, p. 34.

Church was the conscience of the State, and the Patriarch had the right to intercede with the Emperor. But in practice the Church had little direct influence on the decision to go to war; nor did she develop any theory of the just war on the model of Aquinas.

Problems did arise the East with the emergence of new Orthodox kingdoms such as the Bulgarian. The question here was: could there be Orthodox Christian rulers independent of the Emperor of New Rome? And if not, were the Christian Romans justified in going to war to suppress recessionist movements? However, these problems did not lead to a significant development of political theory...

It was different in the West, where the lack of a single political authority, the greater influence of heresies such as Arianism, and the growing political role of the Papacy, created difficult dilemmas that encouraged the growth of political theory. For example, in the late sixth century the Orthodox Prince Hermenegild of Spain rebelled against his Arian father. The question was: was he justified in rebelling against his father on the grounds of religion? On the one hand, he was considered by many to be a martyr because he was killed in prison for refusing to receiving Arian communion. On the other hand, the Visigothic kings that killed him retained the allegiance of their mainly Roman and Orthodox subjects, an attitude that bore spiritual fruit in that, soon after his death, this dynasty became Orthodox, ushering in the most glorious period of Spanish history. So were Arian or pagan kings who nevertheless commanded the allegiance of the majority of the population to be considered legitimate or not? And was the waging of war against them to be encouraged or not?

From the time of Charlemagne the Western Orthodox had to fight wars against Vikings from the north, Saracens from the south and Magyars from the east. These could, of course, be justified as the defense of Christendom against the heathen. But they were sometimes accompanied by excesses – for example, Charlemagne’s forcible baptism of the Saxons in the 780s, or the English King Ethelred’s murder of several hundred of his Danish subjects in 1004. These again elicited the need for moral reflection and evaluation – a need that became urgent soon after the fall of the Western Church in 1054.

In the Orthodox West, consciousness of the evil that lurks even in the justest of wars remained strong up to the schism of 1054, as we see in the Truce of God movement. And even after the schism this consciousness lingered for a time, as when the Norman knights who had participated in the Conquest of England in 1066-70 were put on penance when they returned home. But by the end of the century, this Orthodox consciousness had disappeared completely in the West...

For this was now the era of the schismatic Papacy with its heretical understanding of Church-State relations. The Church became secularized and politicized; the symphony of powers broke down in kingdom after kingdom; and the Papacy took upon itself the right to raise up and cast down kings and emperors. It was now the Pope rather than any king who decided what wars were just, the criterion being, in effect, what was in the interests of the Papacy...

Especially just, in the Papacy's view, were the crusades, a new kind of war with a more exalted, religious pathos. For the crusader, as Jonathan Riley-Smith writes, "A crusade was a holy war fought against those perceived to be the external or internal foes of Christendom for the recovery of Christian property or in defence of the Church or Christian people. As far as the crusaders were concerned, the Muslims in the East and in Spain had occupied Christian territory, including land sanctified and made his very own by the presence of Christ himself, and they had imposed infidel tyranny on the Christians who lived there. The pagans in the Baltic region threatened new Christian settlements. The [Albigensian] heretics in Languedoc or Bohemia were rebels against their mother the Church and were denying the responsibility for teaching entrusted to her by Christ; they and the Church's political opponents in Italy disturbed rightful order. These people all menaced Christians and the Church, and their actions provided crusaders with the opportunity of expressing love for their oppressed or threatened brothers in a just cause, which was always related to that of Christendom as a whole. A crusading army was therefore considered to be international even when it was actually composed of men from only one region... The war it fought was believed to be directly authorized by Christ himself, the incarnate God, through his mouthpiece, the pope. Being Christ's own enterprise it was regarded as positively holy..."⁶⁰⁰

Those who incited the crusades were popes rather than kings (Gregory VII in 1074, Urban II in 1095); plenary remission of sins and penances, even eternal salvation, was touted as the reward - "by a transitory labour you can win an eternal reward", said Gregory VII. The crusades were holy wars blessed by the Pope and directed against Muslims (in Spain and Palestine), pagans (the Slavic Wends and Balts), and even other Christians (the Anglo-Saxons, the French Albigensians, the Novgorodians).

They were not strictly defensive wars any longer, but wars of *reconquest* of formerly Christian lands. To this was added a passionate and sinful element, the desire for *revenge*, albeit on God's behalf. Thus the Norman leader Robert Guiscard declared his wish to free Christians from Muslim rule and to "avenge the injury done to God"⁶⁰¹... The Lord said: "Vengeance is Mine; I will repay". But for the brave new world of heretical Roman Catholic Christendom, vengeance became once again a human obligation.

The evil consequences were not slow to reveal themselves. Thus the Crusades were wars of sadistic *cruelty*, as when the warriors of the First Crusade in 1099 slaughtered almost the whole of the Jewish and Muslim population of Jerusalem. "In the Temple," wrote one eye-witness, "[the Crusaders] rode in blood up to their bridles. Indeed it was a just and splendid judgement of God that this place should be filled with the blood of unbelievers."⁶⁰²

⁶⁰⁰ Riley-Smith, *The Crusades: A Short History*, London: Athlone Press, 1987, pp. xxviii-xxix.

⁶⁰¹ Tyerman, *op. cit.*, p. 54.

⁶⁰² Raymond of Aguilers, the Count of Toulouse's chaplain, in Simon Sebag Montefiore, *Jerusalem: The Biography*, London: Phoenix, 2012, p. 253.

Nor was this cruelty exceptional. Bernard of Clairvaux said about the crusade of 1147 against the Slavic Wends: "We expressly forbid that for any reason whatsoever they should make a truce with those peoples, whether for money or for tribute, until such time as, with God's help, either their religion or their nation be destroyed."⁶⁰³

For, as Bernard stressed, "the knight of Christ need fear no sin in killing the foe, he is a minister of God for the punishment of the wicked. In the death of a pagan a Christian is glorified, because Christ is glorified... [The knight] who kills for religion commits no evil but rather does good, for his people and himself. If he dies in battle, he gains heaven; if he kills his opponents, he avenges Christ. Either way, God is pleased."⁶⁰⁴

This was already a distinctly new, and heterodox understanding of the just war, one that owed more, ironically, to the Islamic concept of *jihad* than to the Gospel... *Jihad* is "the sixth pillar of Islam, the perpetual collective and sometimes individual obligation on all the faithful to struggle (*jihad*) spiritually against unbelief in themselves (*al-jihad al-akbar*, the greater *jihad*) and physically against unbelievers (*al-jihad al-asghar*, the lesser *jihad*)."⁶⁰⁵ The earth is divided into the world of Islam, and the world of war; and the normal relationship between the two is war. "Believers," says the Koran, "make war on the infidels who dwell around you. Deal firmly with them." (9.123). "Like Pharaoh's people and those before them, they disbelieved their Lord's revelations. Therefore we will destroy them for their sins..." (8.54).

In the fifteenth century the Islamic scholar Ibn Khaldun summed up the difference between the Christian view of war and mission and the Islamic view as follows: "In the Muslim community, jihad is a religious duty because of the universalism of the Muslim mission and the obligation to convert everybody to Islam either by persuasion or by force. The other religious groups do not have a universal mission, and the jihad is not a religious duty for them, save only for purposes of defense. But Islam is under obligation to gain power over other nations."

In the era of the Crusades, we see the lesser *jihad*, the physical struggle against unbelievers, becoming increasingly important in the thought and practice of the Catholic West, which in turn stimulated its revival among the Muslims. Not only war, but also cruelty against the infidels is justified "because of their sins". Traditional peaceful missionary work has no place in this Christian *jihad*...

In the long run, however, the crusaders *failed* in their aim of reconquering the Holy Land from the Muslims: by the late thirteenth century most of the Crusader kingdoms carved out of Syria and Palestine had been reconquered by the Muslims. So if that, too, was the "just and splendid judgement of God", it did not speak well for the justice or holiness of the Crusader wars. Rather, it confirmed the judgement of the great hermit St. Neophytus the Enclosed of Cyprus (+1219), who said of one of the

⁶⁰³ Bernard, in Richard Fletcher, *The Conversion of Europe*, London: HarperCollins, 1997, pp. 487-488.

⁶⁰⁴ Bernard, *De Laude Novae Militiae Ad Milites Templi*.

⁶⁰⁵ Tyerman, *op. cit.*, p. 269.

crusading attempts to reconquer Jerusalem: “It is similar to the wolves coming to chase away the dogs...”⁶⁰⁶

The original aim of the crusades was to help “liberate” the Eastern Churches. But they ended up by *destroying Orthodoxy* in large parts of the Balkans and Middle East, especially during the Fourth Crusade of 1204, which sacked Constantinople and turned it into a Latin city. Already before the Second Crusade Bernard of Clairvaux had expressed “bloodthirsty anti-Greek fulminations”.⁶⁰⁷ By 1204 “fulminations” had turned into actions – murder, theft and rape on a grand scale; and a project that had begun as a mission to liberate the Eastern Churches at the request of the Byzantine emperor ended up by destroying the Byzantine State (temporarily) and attempting to subject all the Orthodox Churches to Rome. Even Pope Innocent III disapproved. The Greek Church, he said, “now, and with reason, detests the Latins more than dogs”.⁶⁰⁸

The Crusades demonstrate how easily apparently good intentions – for what could be a better intention than the liberation of Christians living under the yoke of unbelievers in the land of Christ’s Birth? – can pave the way to hell.

The problem is that violence, even violence that is blessed by lawful authorities, can so easily unleash hatred and cruelty. And this in turn leads to false, heretical justifications of that hatred and cruelty; for “the sinner praiseth himself in the lusts of his soul, and the unrighteous man likewise blesseth himself therein” (Psalm 19.24). Evil passion is clothed in the vestments of righteousness; the regrettable and always tainted necessity of war is made into something far from regrettable, even holy. Defense turns into aggression; defense of the true faith – into the imposition of heresy (for Catholicism, of course, is a heresy); Christian morality – into pagan (or Muslim) immorality.

So can we find examples of truly holy wars in this period? We can indeed – but only in the Orthodox East. Paradoxically, some of these were precisely defensive wars *against* the Crusaders, as when St. Alexander Nevsky defeated the Teutonic Knights at the battle on the ice in present-day Estonia in 1242. But St. Alexander always governed his actions by the famous motto: “God is to be found, not in violence, but in righteousness”. Moreover, he did not believe that the mere fact that a Christian land had been conquered by unbelievers meant that he was *obliged* to make war against them. Thus while he fought the Roman Catholics, he voluntarily submitted to the Mongols, and paid them tribute, choosing the lesser of two evils. In other words, he rejected the Muslim principle of perpetual war (declared or undeclared) against unbelievers and heretics, but accepted the Christian principle that sometimes God takes away lands from the Christians, and that it is not His will that they be returned to them – at any rate for the time being, until they have repented of their sins...

⁶⁰⁶ Fr. Panagiotes Carras, “Saint Neophytos of Cyprus and the Crusades”, <http://orthodoxyinfo.org/Saints/StNeophytos.htm>.

⁶⁰⁷ Sir Steven Runciman, *The Eastern Schism*, Oxford, 1955, p. 100.

⁶⁰⁸ Tyerman, *op. cit.*, p. 538.

140 years later, however, the situation changed... In 1380, the Tatar Mamai invaded Muscovy. But St. Sergius of Radonezh blessed the Great-Prince Demetrius of Moscow to fight only when all other measures had failed: "You, my lord prince, must care and strongly stand for your subjects, and lay down your life for them, and shed your blood in the image of Christ Himself, Who shed His blood for us. But first, O lord, go to them with righteousness and obedience, as you are bound to submit to the khan of the Horde in accordance with your position. You know, Basil the Great tried to assuage the impious Julian with gifts, and the Lord looked on Basil's humility and overthrew the impious Julian. And the Scripture teaches us that such enemies want glory and honour from us, we give it to them; and if they want silver and gold, we give it to them; but for the name of Christ, the Orthodox faith, we must lay down our lives and shed our blood. And you, lord, give them honour, and gold, and silver, and God will not allow them to overcome us: seeing your humility, He will exalt you and thrust down their unending pride."

"I have already done that," replied the Great Prince: "but my enemy is exalted still more."

"If so," said the God-pleaser, "then final destruction awaits him, while you, Great Prince, can expect help, mercy and glory from the Lord. Let us hope on the Lord and the Most Pure Mother of God, that They will not abandon you". And he added: "You will conquer your enemies."⁶⁰⁹ Fortified by this blessing, Great-Prince Demetrius defeated the enemy at the great battle of Kulikovo Polje, at which over 100,000 Russian warriors gave their lives for the Orthodox faith and their Russian homeland.

It is important to emphasize that St. Sergius did not actively bless a policy of rebellion against those whom previous princes and metropolitans had seen as their lawful sovereigns. Rather, as we have seen, he advised submission in the first place, and war only if the Tatar could not be bought off. In any case, Mamai was a rebel against the Horde, so in resisting him the Russians were not rebelling against their lawful sovereign. And as if to emphasize that the legitimate Mongol Khan still had his rights, two years later he came and sacked Moscow. So there was not, and could not be, any radical change in policy from the time of Alexander Nevsky... It was not until a century later, in 1480, when God had changed the balance of power in their favour without war, that the Muscovites were able to refuse to pay tribute to the khans...

In 1389, St. Lazar of Serbia fell against the Turks in the battle of Kosovo. Kosovo Polje was a defensive battle in defense of the True Faith and blessed and led by legitimate authorities. It therefore fulfilled the criteria for a just war. But it contained an important extra lesson. According to tradition, on the eve of the battle King Lazar had a vision in which he was offered a choice between an earthly victory and an earthly kingdom, or an earthly defeat that would win him and his soldiers the Heavenly Kingdom. He chose the latter and lost both the battle and his own life - but

⁶⁰⁹ Archimandrite Nikon, *Zhitie i Pobedy Prepodobnago i Bogonosnago Otsa Nashego Sergia, Igumena Radonezhskago* (The Life and Victories of our Holy and God-bearing Father Sergius, Abbot of Radonezh), Sergiev Posad, 1898, p. 149.

his incorrupt relics continue to work miracles to this day⁶¹⁰, proving that he did indeed inherit the Heavenly Kingdom...

The significance of this event is critical to an understanding of the just war from an Orthodox point of view; for the ultimate aim of such a war must not be earthly territory, earthly victories or earthly gains in general. The aim must be *heavenly*, the salvation of souls. And sometimes from the point of view of the Heavenly Kingdom, the earthly kingdom may have to be sacrificed...

4. The Rise of Nationalism

After the fall of Constantinople in 1453, all the Balkan Orthodox peoples came under the Turkish Ottoman yoke. Amidst all the undoubted hardship and suffering this caused, it also brought some definite advantages. One was the restriction of Catholic, and later, Protestant missionary work among the Orthodox. The other was the suppression of the inter-Orthodox nationalism that had arisen in the centuries before the fall, and which had led to that unheard-of phenomenon: wars of Orthodox against Orthodox. Now the Orthodox, instead of fighting each other, could only sympathize with each other in their common oppression by the Turkish sultan.

And yet the nationalist virus was not destroyed, only suppressed... The French revolution of 1789 with its glorification of freedom and deification of the nation found a ready response in the hearts of many Orthodox under the Turkish yoke. They longed for the overthrow of the Ottoman Empire and the return of a Christian power – which was a natural longing, but not necessarily in accordance with the will of God, Who orders all things for our spiritual benefit.

Moreover, all the Balkan Orthodox were now under the secular as well as the spiritual authority of the Ecumenical Patriarch, who had sworn an oath of allegiance to the Sultan. There could therefore be no justification for rebellion against the Sultan. Not only was he a true political authority from God recognized as such by the highest spiritual authority: to rebel against him was also to rebel against the Church.

So when the Greeks of the Peloponnese rose up against the Turks in 1821, the result was bound to be tragic. Both the Patriarch and the Tsar refused to support the rebellion; and the Patriarch was hanged by the Turks. Pogroms took place on both sides: in the Peloponnese, the entire Turkish population (of over 47,000) was killed, and similar slaughters of Greeks by Turks took place in Chios and other places. The part of Greece that was eventually liberated formed its own independent Church that was anathematized by the Ecumenical Patriarchate. Monasticism declined sharply; secularism increased.

As the century progressed, other Orthodox Balkan nations followed the Greek example in rebelling from the Turks. The results were depressingly similar – hatred, cruelty and murder on both sides. And worst of all, instead of cooperating with each other against the common enemy, they fought bitter wars against each other. Thus

⁶¹⁰ Tim Judah, *The Serbs*, Yale University Press, 1997, p. 39.

Greeks, Bulgars and Serbs fought against each other for decades over Macedonia (a problem that is still not solved to this day). And after uniting with each other against the Turks in the First Balkan War of 1912, Greeks, Serbs, Montenegrins and Romanians (together with the Turks!) combined against the Bulgars in the Second Balkan War of 1913.

The nineteenth century saw the rise of a pernicious doctrine that may have had its origin in the heterodox West, but came to be embraced with especial passion in the Orthodox East (outside Russia), the doctrine, namely, that the boundaries of a nation-state should coincide with the boundaries of the population of that nation. The consequence of this doctrine is that if significant numbers of a certain national population live beyond the boundaries of the “mother” nation-state and in another state, then war can be declared – or, if war is impractical at the present time, terrorist acts committed – with the aim of extending the boundaries of the nation-state to include the “stray sheep”. Not only did this doctrine directly contravene the apostolic teaching on obedience to the powers that be (of whatever nationality or faith they may be): it was a recipe for unending political instability and war...

There was a corollary of this doctrine that turned out to be hardly less pernicious: the idea, namely, that minorities who do not belong to the dominant nationality of the nation-state can be treated as “strangers” who can be repressed or driven out in order to maintain the homogeneity and “purity” of the dominant nationality. But this contravened the commandment: “Ye shall neither mistreat a stranger nor oppress him, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt” (Exodus 22.21)...

Russia was the only Orthodox country that rejected this revolutionary doctrine of *nationalist revanchism*. One obvious reason for that, of course, was that such a doctrine would, of course, have quickly led to the dissolution of her multi-national empire. But Tsar Nicholas II took a more principled view. Following in the Roman Christian imperial tradition, he regarded the welfare of all his subjects, of whatever nationality, as equally his responsibility. Thus he refused to treat even those minorities that were most aggressive and rebellious as enemies, calling them “*my* Jews” and “*my* Poles”.

Similarly, he tried to temper and restrain the nationalism of the Balkan Orthodox. However, he also felt obliged to protect them when they were doing badly against their enemies or being unjustly treated by them ...

The Balkan Orthodox of this period were in danger of forgetting that the Lord Jesus Christ, though a fervent Lover of His earthly homeland, set His face firmly against Jewish nationalism. Christ refused to join the secret insurrection against Roman power that the Pharisees were planning, and it was His opposition to this national liberation movement that cost Him His life. For the leaders of the Jews feared that His opposition would guarantee the failure of the revolution: “If we let Him alone like this, everyone will believe in Him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and nation” (John 11.48). The leaders of the Jews were secret revolutionaries; they wished to throw off the hated Roman yoke; and in 70, and again in 135, they openly rose up against Rome. But Christ had made it clear that he did not want to be a nationalist liberator-king in their image (John 6.15); He had refused to be drawn into the

revolutionary act of refusing to pay tax to Caesar (Matthew 17.27; 22.21). Therefore the chief priests and Pharisees turned against Him, fearing (rightly) that Israel under Christ would not be a nation like other nations, pursuing purely nationalist and materialist ambitions, but would return to what God had always intended her to be – the core-people of His Church, and a light for the Gentile nations whereby they, too, could join His Church and become His people. And so great was their enmity towards Christ on this account, that in order to secure His condemnation at the hands of the Roman procurator Pontius Pilate they were prepared even to renounce their proud claim to being the people whose King was God alone, crying: "We have no king but Caesar..." (John 19.15)⁶¹¹

Once the Jews had renounced their true King and God for the sake of their revanchist hopes, they were punished as no other nation has ever been punished. In 70 AD the Romans destroyed Jerusalem and vast numbers of Jews were killed, starved to death or sold into slavery. Jewish revanchism was crushed because God willed that His fallen people, because of their sins, should remain under a foreign yoke...

Fortunately, there were also examples of true Christian universalism in this period. The most striking example was provided by the Russian Archbishop Nicholas (Kasatkin), the Apostle of Japan... On the eve of the Russo-Japanese war of 1904-05, "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. 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. 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

⁶¹¹ See Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky), "Christ the Savior and the Jewish Revolution", *Orthodox Life*, vol. 35, no. 4, July-August, 1985.

amidst the hostility of war to keep the peace of faith and love in the Church created by your labours..."⁶¹²

5. The Twentieth Century

By the beginning of the twentieth century, many were coming to believe that war had become almost unthinkable as an instrument of policy.

First, technological advances were increasing its sheer destructive power immeasurably, with the very real possibility of whole national populations being wiped out. Could even the most just of wars justify such massive slaughters of innocents?

Secondly, because of the spread of the nationalist virus, wars now involved, not just professional armies, as in the dynastic conflicts of earlier centuries, but *whole populations*; the wars became wars, not between governments or armies, but between whole peoples. Alexander Yanov writes: "On May 13, 1901, delivering a speech in the House of Commons, Churchill stated that 'the wars of peoples will be more terrible than those of kings' and that such wars 'can only end in the ruin of the vanquished and the scarcely less fatal commercial dislocation and exhaustion of the conquerors.' In Churchill's opinion, Europe was facing exactly that kind of peoples' war."⁶¹³

Thirdly, the world was becoming so inter-connected that a local war – say, in the Balkans – could quickly develop into something far larger.

All three factors converged to create the First World War of 1914-18, which killed more people and caused more deaths and greater destruction than any before it, especially for the Orthodox. Two Orthodox nations, Serbia and Russia, were closely involved in its outbreak. Was their conduct just?

For the Serbs it was indeed a just war, because, although the spark that caused it – the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand – was ignited by the nationalist passion of a Bosnian Serb, who was probably helped by the Serbian intelligence establishment, nevertheless the Serbian government itself was not involved and did everything it could to pacify the Austrians.

In the case of Russia, the justice of the war was still more pronounced. Tsar Nicholas went to war in order to save his fellow-Orthodox, the Serbs, thereby laying down his own life out of love for his neighbour. For he knew as well as anyone that for Russia to fight against such powerful enemies would almost certainly give the enemy within the chance it had been waiting for to seize power. But the commandment of love, the

⁶¹² *Pravoslavnaia Zhizn'* (Orthodox Life), 1982; in Fomin S. and Formina T. *Rossia pered Vtorym Prishestviem* (Russia before the Second Coming), Moscow, 1994, vol. I, p. 372.

⁶¹³ Alexander Yanov, "The Lessons of the First World War, or Why Putin's Regime is Doomed", September 5, 2014, <http://www.imrussia.org/en/analysis/nation/800-the-lessons-of-the-first-world-war-or-why-putins-regime-is-doomed>.

fulfillment of his promises to his allies, and the protection of Russian Orthodoxy against German Protestantism⁶¹⁴, compelled him to fight anyway.

And yet by the end of 1940s not only Russia and Serbia, but also Greece, Montenegro, Bulgaria, and Romania had been wiped off the map as Orthodox states, with either communist dictatorships or pseudo-Orthodox democracies in their place. This was because, with the fall in 1917 of “him that restraineth” the coming of the Antichrist (II Thessalonians 2.7), the Orthodox Emperor, the possibility of a fully just war, in the sense of a war for the true faith, and for the protection of true believers, became impossible. True, in the inter-war years the small Balkan Orthodox kingdoms continued to struggle; but their possibilities of action were extremely limited, and by the end of the Second World War they, too, had disappeared.

After the foundation of NATO in 1949, it was still possible to fight a just war in defense of king (or parliament) and country. But to say that one was fighting for *God* and *His* justice was possible only with heavy qualifications. For neither of the two main contestants – secular democracy led by America, and atheist communion led by the Soviet Union – set the restoration of Orthodoxy and the true worship of God as their aim.

This is not to say that they were equally evil – by no means. The Soviet Union was the first state in history that was *cursed* by the Orthodox Church (in the Moscow Council of 1918), and cooperation with the God-hating anti-authority that murdered tens of millions of Orthodox was forbidden under pain of anathema. That is why the Russian Church Abroad supported the United States in its struggle against the communists in Vietnam.

However, the Antichrist cannot be restrained by any other power than the God-anointed power of the Orthodox monarchy. Therefore even when the democratic West triumphed over the communist East in 1989-91, there was only temporary relief for the true believers. Soon the process of religious and civilizational degradation resumed in the formerly Orthodox lands of Eastern Europe, as the servants of the collective Antichrist both in Church and State remained firmly in place (but now with different ideological labels).

Nor has the Orthodox cause been helped by supposedly post-communist and democratic regimes, such as Putin’s Russia, carrying out revanchist wars in the name of Orthodoxy but in fact in order to preserve the power of communist/fascist dictators and thieves. The deceptive pseudo-Orthodoxy of these revanches was made manifest by their evil works, their heresies and, above all, by their cruelty...

Conclusion: The True Revanche

At a time when a new paganism has enshrouded the whole of the inhabited earth in a gloom still deeper than in the time of the early Christians, the example of their discretion, faith and patience is especially important. We must reject the seductive but

⁶¹⁴ Archbishop Anthony (Khrapovitsky), *The Orthodox Faith and War*, Jordanville, 2003, pp. 8-9.

false path of revanchism, which has only brought the Orthodox terrible suffering and defeat while defiling the image of the Faith in the rest of the world. Instead, we must wait in faith and hope for the appearance of a true successor of St. Constantine, and follow only him, rejecting all pretenders and pseudo-Orthodox saviours. We must act above all *in moral and doctrinal purity, not out of hatred for enemies, but out of love for the truth*. There is a time for peace, and a time for war, a time patiently to accept the chastisement of the Lord as He takes away our power and our lands because of our sins, and a time when, turning from strict justice to mercy, the Lord gives the signal and again grants victory to *truly* Orthodox armies led by a *truly* Orthodox king for the sake of the resurrection of *True* Orthodoxy. This will be the true and God-blessed Revanche, the timing of which will be revealed to all those who wait and watch in faith. Until then, our watchword must be: "By your patience possess ye your souls" (Luke 21.19)...

September 17/30, 2014; revised March 4/17, 2016.

Appendix: Orthodox Prayer for Protection of Soldiers during War

O Holy Master, Almighty Father and Pre-Eternal God, Who alone hast made and directed all things; Who risest up quickly against the evil of the impious ones; Who, by Providence, teachest Thy people the preservation of Justice and the obliteration of the sword on earth; Who condescendest to raise up military columns to help the people: O God, Who commanded the Forerunner John to say to the soldiers coming to him in the desert, "Do not intimidate anyone ... and be content with your wages":

We entreat Thee with compunction: as Thou gavest Thy child David the power to defeat Goliath, and as Thou didst condescend, through Judas Maccabeus, to seize victory from the arrogant pagans who would not call upon Thy Name; so too, grant protection in righteousness and truth to these Thy servants against the enemies rising against them, and by Thy heavenly loving-kindness, grant strength and might for the preservation of faith and truth.

Condescend out of Thy mercy, O Master, to grant them the fear of Thee, together with humility, obedience and good endurance; that they kill no one unrighteously, but rather preserve all righteousness and truth; that they may fear Thee and honour Justice; that they run in friendship to those who are scattered, extending Thy love to those near them, serving the elderly with justice; and that their ranks fulfil all things righteously;

For thou art our God, and to Thee do we ascribe glory; to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

31. MOSCOW THE THIRD ROME

The imperialist and expansionist policies of V.V. Putin have been accompanied by the claim that modern neo-Soviet Russia is laying claim to the heritage of the pre-revolutionary Russian empire even in that highly religious form that early Muscovite elders and rulers understood under the term "The Third Rome". Briefly defined, "Moscow the Third Rome" refers to the claim that the Russian Orthodox empire is the lawful successor of the Old Rome in Italy and the Second Rome of Constantinople, in the sense that, like its predecessors, it is destined by God to carry the cross of leading, championing and protecting the whole of the Orthodox Christian commonwealth throughout the world. Perhaps the most influential proponent of this view is the Moscow professor Alexander Dugin...

This article aims to answer the following questions:- What are the origins of the idea of Moscow the Third Rome? Was the idea accepted by significant Orthodox authorities outside Russia – for example, the Ecumenical Patriarchate? How, if at all, did the idea change when the Muscovite autocracy was transformed into the St. Petersburg autocracy? Assuming that there was substance to the claim, to what extent did Moscow carry out her high calling? And finally: has the neo-Soviet regime of Putin any right at all to claim to be the Third Rome today?

1. Great Prince Ivan III and the *Translatio Imperii*

The Byzantine empire, the Second or New Rome of Constantinople, fell in 1453. But Rome is eternal and invincible– and not only in the minds of pagan Romans. "It is interesting to note," writes Alexander Dvorkin, "how long the peoples did not want to part with the myth of the Empire, to become the centre of which became the dream of practically every European state both in the East and in the West, from Bulgaria to Castile. In the course of the 13th-14th centuries the canonists of many countries independently of each other developed the principle of the *translatio imperii* (translation of the empire). The process touched Russia a little later – in the 15th century, in the form of the theory of the Third Rome, which Moscow became..."⁶¹⁵

The idea of the universal empire survived into the modern period because it was *necessary*. In the middle of the fifteenth century, as compared with a thousand years earlier, or even five hundred years earlier, Orthodoxy was in much greater danger of fragmentation from centrifugal forces of a quasi-nationalist kind. Moreover, the quasi-universal empires of Islam in the East and the Papacy in the West were preparing to divide up the Orthodox lands between them. The Orthodox as a whole had to learn the lesson that the Serbian Prince Lazar had taught his people: *Samo Slogo Srbina Spasava*, "Only Unity Saves the Serbs". And while that unity had to be religious and spiritual first of all, it also needed the support of *political* unity.

It was not only the political outlook that was threatening in 1453: if the empire was no more, what would become of the Church? Did not the prophecies link the fall of Rome with the coming of the Antichrist? But perhaps the empire was not yet dead...

⁶¹⁵ Dvorkin, *Ocherki po istorii Vselenskoj Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi*, Nizhni-Novgorod, 2006, p. 716.

There were two possibilities here. One was that the Ottoman empire could be construed as a continuation of Rome. After all, there had been pagans and heretics and persecutors of the Church on the throne, so why not a Muslim? Or was Rome to be translated elsewhere, as St. Constantine had once translated the capital of his empire from Old Rome to the New Rome of Constantinople.

Unlikely as it may sound, some Greeks embraced the idea of Istanbul being Rome, and the Sultan – the Roman emperor. Thus in 1466 the Cretan historian George Trapezuntios said to the conqueror of Constantinople, Mehmet II: "Nobody doubts that you are the Roman emperor. He who is the lawful ruler in the capital of the empire and in Constantinople is the emperor, while Constantinople is the capital of the Roman empire. And he who remains as emperor of the Romans is also the emperor of the whole world."⁶¹⁶

Certainly, the Ottoman sultans were powerful enough to claim the title. "Their empire did not have the great eastward sweep of the Abbasid Caliphate, but it had succeeded in spreading Islam into hitherto Christian territory – not only the old Byzantine realms on either side of the Black Sea Straits, but also Bulgaria, Serbia and Hungary. Belgrade had fallen to the Ottomans in 1521, Buda in 1541. Ottoman naval power had also brought Rhodes to its knees (1522). Vienna might have survived (as did Malta) but, having also extended Ottoman rule from Baghdad to Basra, from Van in the Caucasus to Aden at the mouth of the Red Sea, and along the Barbary coast from Algiers to Tripoli, Suleiman the Magnificent (1520-66) could... claim: 'I am the Sultan of Sultans, the Sovereign of Sovereigns, the distributor of crowns to the monarchs of the globe, the shadow of God upon Earth...'... A law-maker and a gifted poet, Suleiman combined religious power, political power and economic power (including the setting of prices)."⁶¹⁷

However, it was precisely his combination of all political and religious power – the definition of despotism – that prevented the Sultan from being a true Autocrat or Basileus. As for the other vital criterion – Christianity – there could be no deception here: the Ottoman Sultans made no pretence at being Orthodox (which even the heretical Byzantine emperors did), and they had no genuine "symphony of powers" with the Orthodox Church (even if they treated it better than some of the emperors). Therefore at most they could be considered analogous in authority to the pagan emperors of Old Rome, legitimate authorities to whom obedience was due (as long as, and to the degree that, they did not compel Christians to commit impiety), but no more.

So had the clock been turned back? Had the Christian Roman Empire returned to its pre-Christian, pre-Constantinian origins? No, the clock of Christian history never goes back. The world could never be the same again after Constantine and the Christian empire of New Rome, which had so profoundly changed the consciousness of all the peoples of Europe. So if the Antichrist had not yet come, there was only one

⁶¹⁶ Trapezuntios, quoted in Simon Sebag Montefiore, *Prince of Princes: The Life of Potemkin*, London: Phoenix Press, 2001, p. 215.

⁶¹⁷ Niall Ferguson, *Civilization*, London: Penguin, 2012, pp. 52, 53.

alternative: the one, true empire had indeed been translated somewhere - but not unlawfully, to some heretical capital such as Aachen or Old Rome, but lawfully, to some Orthodox nation capable of bringing forth the fruits of the Kingdom.

What could that nation be? It had to be one that was independent of the Ottomans, or that could re-establish its independence. The last remaining Free Greeks showed little sign of being able to do this. The last Byzantine outpost of Morea in the Peloponnese fell in 1461, and in the same year the Comnenian “empire” of Trebizond on the south coast of the Black Sea also fell, after a siege of forty-two days.⁶¹⁸ Georgia, Serbia and Bulgaria were already under the Muslim yoke.

Another possibility was the land we now call Romania, but which then comprised the Principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia. Prince Vlad “the Impaler” of Wallachia conducted a courageous rearguard action against the Ottomans north of the Danube.⁶¹⁹ Stronger still was the resistance of the northern Romanian principality of Moldavia, under its great Prince Stephen (1457-1504).

But in spite of her name it was not Romania that was destined to be the Third Rome. In time the Principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia came under the power of the Turkish Sultans and Greek Phanariots. The honour and the cross of being the protector and restorer of the fortunes of the Orthodox Christian commonwealth fell to a nation far to the north – Russia...

The idea that the Orthodox Empire could be translated to the forests of the north was a bold one. St. Constantine’s moving the capital of the empire from Old Rome to New Rome had also been bold - but that step, though radical and fraught with enormous consequences, had not involved going beyond the bounds of the existing empire, and had been undertaken by the legitimate emperor himself. The Serbs and Bulgarians had each in their time sought to capture New Rome and make it the capital of a Slavic-Greek kingdom – but this, again, had not involved moving the empire itself, as opposed to changing its dominant nation. The Frankish idea of the translatio imperii from New Rome to Aachen had involved both changing the dominant nation and taking the capital beyond the bounds of the existing empire – and had been rejected by the Greeks as heretical, largely on the grounds that it involved setting up a second, rival empire, where there could only be one true one.

Let us remind ourselves of the eschatological idea on which the idea of the translatio imperii rested. According to this, Rome in its various successions and reincarnations will exist to the end of the world – or at least, to the time of the Antichrist. As Michael Nazarov writes: “This conviction is often reflected in the patristic tradition (it was shared by Saints: Hippolytus of Rome, John Chrysostom, Blessed Theodoret, Blessed Jerome, Cyril of Jerusalem and others). On this basis Elder Philotheus wrote: ‘the Roman [Romejskoe] kingdom is indestructible, for the Lord was enrolled into the Roman [Rimskuiu] power’ (that is, he was enrolled among the inhabitants at the census in the time of the Emperor Augustus). Here Philotheus

⁶¹⁸ Neal Ascherson, *Black Sea*, London: Vintage, 1996, pp. 180-181.

⁶¹⁹ M.J. Trow, *Vlad the Impaler: In Search of the Real Dracula*, Stroud: Sutton Publishing, 2003.

distinguishes between the indestructible 'Roman kingdom', whose successor was now Rus', and Roman power, which had gone into the past."⁶²⁰

In fact the only real candidate for the role of leadership in the Orthodox world was Muscovite Russia. (There were other Russian principalities, but after its conquest of Novgorod in 1487 Moscow had no real rivals.) Only the Russians could be that "third God-chosen people" of the prophecy.⁶²¹ Only they were able to re-express the Christian ideal of the symphony of powers on a stronger, more popular base – as a symphony, in effect, of three powers – Church, State and People – rather than two. For the Russians had the advantage over the Romans and the Greeks that they were converted to the faith as a single people, with their existing social organisation intact, and not, as in Rome, as an amalgam of different peoples whose indigenous social structures had already been smashed by the pagan imperial power. Thus whereas in Rome, as Lev Tikhomirov writes, "the Christians did not constitute a social body", and "their only organisation was the Church"⁶²², in the sense that it was not whole peoples or classes but individuals from many different peoples and classes that joined the Church, in Russia the whole of the richly layered and variegated, but at the same time socially and politically coherent society came to the Church at one time and was baptized together. Moreover, Russia remained a nation-state with a predominantly Russian or Russian-Ukrainian-Belorussian population throughout its extraordinary expansion from the core principality of Muscovy, whose territory in 1462 was 24,000 square kilometres, to the multi-national empire of Petersburg Russia, whose territory in 1914 was 13.5 million square kilometres...⁶²³

Now the Russians retained their loyalty to the Byzantine Church and Empire until the very last moment – that is, until both emperor and patriarch betrayed the Orthodox faith at the Council of Florence in 1438-39. Even after this betrayal, the Russians did not immediately break their canonical dependence on the patriarch. And even after the election of St. Jonah to the metropolitanate of Kiev by a Council of Russian bishops without the blessing of the patriarch, Great Prince Basil III's letter to the patriarch shows great restraint and humility, speaking only of a "disagreement" between the two Churches. He stressed that St. Jonah had received the metropolitanate without asking the blessing of the patriarch, but in accordance with the canons, only out of extreme necessity. The patriarch's blessing would again be asked once they were assured that he adhered to "the ancient piety".

⁶²⁰ Nazarov, *Taina Rossii*, Moscow, 1999, p. 538.

⁶²¹ An 8th or 9th century Greek prophecy found in St. Sabbas' monastery in Jerusalem, declares: "The sceptre of the Orthodox kingdom will fall from the weakening hands of the Byzantine emperors, *since they will not have proved able to achieve the symphony of Church and State*. Therefore the Lord in His Providence will send a third God-chosen people to take the place of the chosen, but spiritually decrepit people of the Greeks." (Archbishop Seraphim, "Sud'by Rossii", *Pravoslavnij Vestnik*, N 87, January-February, 1996, pp. 6-7; translated in Fr. Andrew Phillips, *Orthodox Christianity and the Old English Church*, English Orthodox Trust, 1996)

⁶²² Tikhomirov, *Monarkhicheskaia Gosudarstvennost'*, St. Petersburg, 1992, p. 164.

⁶²³ Dominic Lieven, *Empire*, London: John Murray, 2000, pp. 262, 278.

Since the Russian Great Prince was now the only independent Orthodox ruler⁶²⁴, and was supported by an independent Church (even if that independence, in Greek eyes, was not canonical), he had a better claim than any other to inherit the throne of the Roman Emperors and therefore call himself “Tsar” (from “Caesar”, the equivalent of the Greek “Basileus”).⁶²⁵ The title had been floated already before the fall of Constantinople: in 1447-48 Simeon of Suzdal had called Great Prince Basil Vasilievich “faithful and Christ-loving and truly Orthodox... White Tsar”.⁶²⁶ And St. Jonah wrote to Prince Alexander of Kiev that Basil was imitating his “ancestors” – the holy Emperor Constantine and the Great-Prince Vladimir.⁶²⁷

The Russian Great Princes’ claim was further strengthened by the marriage of Ivan III to the last surviving heir of the Palaeologan line, Sophia, in 1472. It was on this basis that the Venetian Senate accorded Ivan the imperial title.⁶²⁸ Ivan himself indicated that in marrying Sophia he had united Muscovite Russia with Byzantium by uniting two coats of arms – the two-headed eagle of Byzantium with the image of St. George piercing the dragon with his spear. From now on the two-headed eagle became the Russian coat of arms with the image of St. George in the centre of it, as it were in its breast.⁶²⁹

In 1492 Metropolitan Zosimus of Moscow wrote: “The Emperor Constantine built a New Rome, Tsarigrad; but the sovereign and autocrat (samoderzhets) of All the Russias, Ivan Vassilievich, the new Constantine, has laid the foundation for a new city of Constantine, Moscow.”⁶³⁰ Then, in 1498 Ivan had himself crowned by Metropolitan Simon as “Tsar, Grand Prince and Autocrat of All the Russias”. “In the coronation ceremony, which was a rough copy of the Byzantine, the metropolitan charged the Tsar ‘to care for all souls and for all Orthodox Christendom’. The title of Tsar had now

⁶²⁴ With the exception of Georgia, which later entered the Russian empire. The metropolitan of Georgia had been among the very few, with St. Mark of Ephesus, who refused to sign the unia in Florence. Romania, as we have seen, was also independent for a time, but soon came under the suzerainty of the Ottomans. Technically, even Moscow was not completely independent until 1480, when it stopped paying tribute to the Tatars.

⁶²⁵ “The primary sense of imperium is ‘rule’ and ‘dominion’, with no connotation of overseas territories, or oppressed indigenous peoples. Though ambitious monarchs, of course, aspired to as extensive an imperium as possible, the main point about being an emperor was that you did not have to take orders from anybody.” (Alan MacColl, “King Arthur and the Making of an English Britain”, *History Today*, volume 49 (3), March, 1999, p. 11).

⁶²⁶ Simeon of Suzdal, in Fomin S. & Fomina T., *Rossia pered Vtorym Prishestviem*, Moscow, 1994, p. 242.

⁶²⁷ Fr. John Meyendorff, “Was there an Encounter between East and West at Florence?”, *Rome, Constantinople, Moscow*, Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, p. 108.

⁶²⁸ Meyendorff, op. cit., pp. 109-110.

⁶²⁹ Archpriest Lev Lebedev, *Velikorossia*, St. Petersburg, 1999, p. 44.

⁶³⁰ Quoted in Sir Steven Runciman, *The Great Church in Captivity*, Cambridge University Press, 1968, p. 323. Ya.S. Lourié writes: “The idea of ‘Moscow – the new city of Constantine’ was put forward by Zosimus, who was linked with the heretical movement [of the Judaizers] at the end of the 15th century; Zosimus boldly referred the New Testament prophecy, ‘the first shall be last, and the last first’ to the Greeks and the Russians...” (“Perepiska Groznogo s Kurbskim v Obschestvennoj Mysli Drevnej Rusi”, in Ya.S. Lourié and Yu.D. Rykov, *Perepiska Ivana Groznogo s Andreem Kurbskim*, Moscow: “Nauka”, 1993, p. 230).

become the official title and brought with it the implication that the Russian monarch was, before God, the head of the Orthodox, that is, of the true Christian world."⁶³¹

However, there were problems associated with the assumption of this title at this time – that is, in the fifteenth century. First, there were other Russian princes with claims to be “the new Constantine”, “the saviour of Orthodoxy” – “for instance,” writes Fr. John Meyendorff, “the prince Boris of Tver, who had also sent a representative to the council [of Florence] and now, after rejecting the Latin faith, was said by one polemicist to deserve an imperial diadem. Furthermore, in Novgorod, under Archbishop Gennadius (1484-1509), there appeared a curious Russian variation on the Donation of Constantine, the Legend of the White Cowl. According to the Legend, the white cowl (klobuk; Gr. επικαλιμαυκον) was donated by Constantine the Great to pope Sylvester following his baptism; the last Orthodox pope, foreseeing Rome’s fall into heresy, sent the cowl for safe-keeping to patriarch Philotheus of Constantinople, who eventually (also foreseeing the betrayal of Florence), sent the precious relic to the archbishop of Novgorod. Thus, not only Moscow, but also Tver and Novgorod, were somehow claiming to be the heirs of ‘Rome’, the center of the true Christian faith...”⁶³²

This problem would resolve itself as Moscow gradually absorbed the other Russian princedoms. More serious, however, was a second problem associated with the fact that the Muscovite Russian Church was now not the only Russian Church. In 1451 the uniate Patriarch Gregory Mammias of Constantinople had fled to Rome, where he consecrated Gregory Bolgarin as metropolitan of Kiev in opposition to St. Jonah. This was justified by the Latins not only on the grounds that there was no communion between themselves and the Orthodox of Muscovy, - the Pope had called St. Jonah “the schismatic monk Jonah, son of iniquity”, - but also because a large part of the Russian population was now living within the domain of King Casimir of Poland-Lithuania, who was a Roman Catholic. Thus the fall of the Greek Church into uniatism led directly to a schism in the Orthodox Russian Church, which had the consequence that the Russian Great Prince could not count on the obedience even of all the Russian people – hardly a strong position from which to be proclaimed emperor of all the Orthodox Christians!

Thirdly, and still more fundamentally, after the death of St. Jonah (who still retained the title of metropolitan of Kiev) in 1461, the Muscovite metropolia was officially declared schismatic by Constantinople. The Muscovites’ old excuse for not returning into obedience to Constantinople – the latter’s departure from “the ancient piety” of Orthodoxy into uniatism, - no longer held water since the enthronement of St. Gennadius Scholarius, a disciple to St. Mark of Ephesus, to the see of the former imperial City. Moreover, in 1466 Gregory Bolgarin also returned to Orthodoxy, whereupon he was recognized as the sole canonical Russian metropolitan by Constantinople. This created a major problem, because in the consciousness of the Russian people the blessing of the Ecumenical Patriarch was required for such a major

⁶³¹ Runciman, *op. cit.*, pp. 323-324.

⁶³² Meyendorff, “Was There Ever a ‘Third Rome’? Remarks on the Byzantine Legacy in Russia”, in *Rome, Constantinople, Moscow*, *op. cit.*, p. 135.

step as the assumption of the role of Orthodox emperor by the Russian Great Prince – which was out of the question so long as the Russians were in schism from the Greeks... However, the Muscovites felt, with some reason, that it made no sense to subject their own free Russian Church living under a free, Orthodox and increasingly powerful sovereign to a metropolitan living under a hostile Roman Catholic king and a patriarch living under a hostile Muslim sultan!

The schism between Constantinople and Moscow, as we shall see, continued well into the sixteenth century...

Lack of recognition by the Second Rome was not the only obstacle that the Russian Great Princes had to overcome before they could truly call themselves the rulers of the Third Rome. They had to reunite, first, all the Russian lands under their own dominion, and then, if possible, all the lands of the Orthodox East. This point can be better appreciated if it is remembered that when the Emperor Constantine transferred the capital of the empire from Old Rome to the New Rome of Constantinople, he was already the undisputed ruler of the whole of the Roman Empire, in which the great majority of Orthodox Christians lived. Ivan III, by contrast, ruled none of the traditional territories of the Roman empire, and not even “the mother of Russian cities”, Kiev.

The gathering of all the Russian lands into a single national kingdom involved three major stages: (i) the uniting of the free Russian princedoms under Moscow, (ii) the final liberation of the Eastern and Southern Russian lands from the Tatar-Mongol-Turkish yoke, and (iii) the liberation of the Western Russian lands from the Catholic yoke of Poland-Lithuania.

2. *Tsar Ivan the Terrible and the Ecumenical Patriarchate*

Significant progress towards the gathering of the Russian lands was made in the reign of Ivan IV, “the Terrible”. Moreover, the schism between the Greek and Russian Churches was healed. As for the Ecumenical Patriarch recognizing Moscow’s claim to be the Third Rome, this came closer had to wait for fulfillment until the reign of Ivan’s son, Theodore Ivanovich.

The theme of Moscow the Third Rome became steadily more important throughout the sixteenth century. Thus in the reign of Basil III, Ivan’s father, Elder Philotheus of Pskov expressed the idea in its full splendour: “I would like to say a few words about the existing Orthodox empire of our most illustrious, exalted ruler. He is the only emperor on all the earth over the Christians, the governor of the holy, divine throne of the holy, ecumenical, apostolic Church which in place of the Churches of Rome and Constantinople is in the city of Moscow, protected by God, in the holy and glorious Dormition church of the most pure Mother of God. It alone shines over the whole earth more radiantly than the sun. For know well, those who love Christ and those who love God, that all Christian empires will perish and give way to the one kingdom of our ruler, in accord with the books of the prophet [Daniel 7.14], which is the Russian

empire. For two Romes have fallen, but the third stands, and there will never be a fourth..."⁶³³

Again, in 1540 Elder Philotheus wrote to Tsar Ivan, who was not yet of age, that the "woman clothed with the sun" of *Revelation* chapter 12 was the Church, which fled from the Old Rome to the New Rome of Constantinople, and thence, after the fall of Constantinople, to the third Rome "in the new, great Russia". And the master of the third Rome, in both its political and ecclesiastical spheres, was the tsar: "Alone on earth the Orthodox, great Russian tsar steers the Church of Christ as Noah in the ark was saved from the flood, and he establishes the Orthodox faith."

This rhetoric was all very fine, but in the minds of the highly religious Russians, not to mention the Greeks, it meant nothing if the Russian tsar not in communion with the first see of Orthodoxy, Constantinople. Nor was it only the simple people who felt this incongruity. St. Maximus the Greek and Metropolitan Joasaph of Moscow (1539-42), non-possessors both, tried unsuccessfully to bridge the gap between Moscow and Constantinople. For their pains they were cast into prison and then house arrest, dying in the same year (1555/56). However, the Ecumenical Patriarch thought up a cunning stratagem that after some years achieved the desired effect...⁶³⁴

In June of that year, a Council of over 50 bishops enthroned the new patriarch, Dionysius II, and sent an epistle to the tsar announcing the fact. In the same epistle they did two things that were meant to be seen together. On the one hand, an appeal was made to release St. Maximus the Greek, who had been imprisoned, at least in part, because he accepted Constantinople's ecclesial claims. And on the other, the tsar himself was addressed as "tsar and great prince". And this even before Ivan was formally anointed and crowned with the Cap of Monomakh by Metropolitan Macarius of Moscow on January 16, 1547! In diplomatic language the Ecumenical Patriarch was saying: we are willing to recognize you as tsar, if you return the Muscovite Church into submission to us. And as a sign of your good intent, release St. Maximus...⁶³⁵

Now the word "tsar" in Russian was roughly equivalent to the word "basileus" in Greek, but it was not equivalent to "emperor of the Romans". It was a term that had been accorded, grudgingly, to both Charlemagne and the tsar of Bulgaria, as indicating that they were independent and lawful Christian sovereigns; but it fell short of according its bearer the dignity of the ruler and protector of all Orthodox Christians. But in his crowning by Metropolitan Macarius, the tsar's genealogy had been read, going back (supposedly) to the Emperor Augustus, which implied that he was the successor of the Roman emperors.

The patriarch did not respond to this hint, however. Nor was it really plausible to do so insofar as the Ecumenical Patriarch was meant to be in "symphony" with the

⁶³³ Philotheus, *Letter against the Astronomers and the Latins*, quoted in Wil van den Bercken, *Holy Russia and Christian Europe*, London: SCM Press, 1999.

⁶³⁴ V.M. Lourié, "Prekraschenie moskovskogo tserkovnogo raskola 1467-1560 godov: final istorii v dokumentakh", on whose account I rely heavily in this section.

⁶³⁵ Lourié, *op. cit.*

Roman emperor as his secular partner, whereas his real secular “partner” was not Ivan the Terrible, but the Ottoman Sultan! Nevertheless, the limited recognition that the tsar was being offered constituted an important step forward in the Russian tsars’ campaign for recognition in the Orthodox world, and would be something that the tsar would not want to reject out of hand.

The next step in the tsarist campaign was the Stoglav council of 1551, whose decisions were framed in the form of 100 answers to questions posed to the Russian tsar. In general, the council was concerned with uprooting corruption in various aspects of church life. Its Russocentric, even nationalist character was emphasized by its decision to the effect that, in all cases where Russian Church ritual differed from Greek, the Russian version was correct. “This unilateral decision,” writes Sir Steven Runciman, “shocked many of the Orthodox. The monks of Athos protested and the Russian monks there regarded the decisions of the synod as invalid.”⁶³⁶

It is in the context of this Russocentrism that we must understand the Council’s citation of Canon 9 of the Fourth Ecumenical Council, which ascribed to the Ecumenical Patriarch the final instance in judging internal church quarrels, and of the Emperor Justinian’s *Novella 6* on the “symphony” between Church and State. As Lourié has argued, these citations in no way implied that the Russian Church was not fully autocephalous. The implication was rather that while the Ecumenical Patriarch was accorded all the power granted him by the holy canons, his “partner”, with whom he should remain in harmony, was the Russian tsar...⁶³⁷

The following few years (1552-1556) witnessed Ivan’s great victories over the Tatars of Kazan and Astrakhan, when the State began to spread from Europe into Asia, and change from a racially fairly homogeneous state into a multi-national empire, “the Third Rome”. The famous cathedral of St. Basil the Blessed – originally dedicated to the Protecting Veil of the Virgin – was built to celebrate the conquest of Kazan.

In 1909, Archbishop Anthony (Khrapovitsky) pointed out that the conquest of Kazan “was great precisely because with it there began the gradual ascendancy of Christianity over Islam, which had already subjected the Eastern Churches and before that time had not yet been subdued by the Muscovite kingdom. Having now destroyed the wasps’ nest of the Tatar God-fighting tribe, our forefathers understood that this event defined with all clarity the great calling of the Russian land gradually to unite at the foot of the Cross of Christ all the eastern peoples and all the eastern cultures under the leadership of the White Tsar. The great ascetics of piety Gurias, Barsonuphius and Herman were immediately sent to Kazan together with church valuables. There they built churches and monasteries and by the light of their inspired teaching and angelic holiness drew crowds upon crowds of various foreigners to holy baptism. The Russians understood that now – not in separate rivulets, but in a single broad wave – the life and faith of the Trans-Volgan region and Siberia would pour into the sea of the Church, and that the work of St. Stephen of Perm and the preachers of God in the first centuries that were like him would continue without hindrance.

⁶³⁶ Runciman, op. cit., p. 329.

⁶³⁷ Lourié, op. cit.

And then our ancestors decided, on the one hand, to cast off from themselves every shadow of exaltation in the glorious victory and conquest, and to ascribe all this to Divine Providence, and on the other hand to seal their radiant hope that Moscow, which was then ready to proclaim itself the Third and last Rome, would have to become the mediator of the coming universal and free union of people in the glorification of the Divine Redeemer. The tsar and people carried out their decision by building a beautiful cathedral on Red square, which has justly been recognized as the eighth wonder of the world. The pious inspiration of the Russian masters exceeded all expectation and amazed the beholders. Before them stands a church building whose parts represent a complete diversity, from the ground to the higher crosses, but which as a whole constitutes a wonderful unity – a single elegant wreath – a wreath to the glory of Christ that shone forth in the victory of the Russians over the Hagarenes [Muslims]. Many cupolas crown this church: there is a Mauritanian cupola, an Indian cupola, there are Byzantine elements, there are Chinese elements, while in the middle above them all there rises a Russian cupola uniting the whole building.

“The thought behind this work of genius is clear: Holy Rus’ must unite all the eastern peoples and be their leader to heaven. This thought is a task recognized by our ancestors and given by God to our people; it has long become a leading principle of their state administration, both inwardly and outwardly: the reigns of the last Ruriks and the first Romanovs were marked by the grace-filled enlightenment of the Muslims and pagans of the North and East, the support of the ancient Christians of the East and South and the defense of the Russian Christians of the West, oppressed by heretics. Rus’ expanded and became stronger and broader, like the wings of an eagle; in the eyes of her sons the Russian cross on [the cathedral of] Basil the Blessed shone ever more brightly; her impious enemies in the South and West trembled; the hands of the enslaved Christians – the Greeks, the Serbs and the Arabs – were raised imploringly to her; at various times Moscow saw within her walls all four eastern patriarchs and heard the liturgy in her churches in many languages...”⁶³⁸

With his prestige greatly enhanced by his victories over the Muslims, in 1557 the tsar sent Archimandrite Theodorit to Constantinople with the purpose of receiving the patriarch’s blessing to crown him with the full ceremonial accorded to the Byzantine emperors. The reply was not everything that the tsar was hoping for: the patriarch’s blessing was obtained – but only on the tsar’s earlier crowning by Metropolitan Macarius. This constituted, however, only a de facto rather than a de jure recognition; it could not be otherwise, since Macarius was still formally a schismatic in the Greeks’ eyes.

In 1561 the tsar finally received a fuller, less ambiguous response to his request in the form of an account of a conciliar decision of the Ecumenical Patriarchate dating to December, 1560. But the conciliar decision’s reasoning was unexpectedly roundabout, even devious. First, there was no mention of Ivan’s descent from Augustus, but only from Anna, the Byzantine princess who married St. Vladimir the Saint. In other words,

⁶³⁸ Khrapovitsky, in Archbishop Nicon (Rklitsky), *Zhizneopisanie Blazhennejshago Antonia, Mitropolita Kievskago i Galitskago* (Biography of his Beatitude Anthony, Metropolitan of Kiev and Galich), New York, 1971, volume 1, pp. 14-15.

Ivan's pretensions to be "emperor of the Romans" were rejected: he was the lawful "God-crowned" ruler or emperor only of Russia...

Secondly, Ivan is said to have sought to be crowned by the patriarch because his crowning by Macarius "has no validity, since not only does a Metropolitan not have the right to crown, but not even every Patriarch, but only the two Patriarchs: the Roman and Constantinopolitan". In fact, Ivan had made no request for a repetition of the rite. But the patriarch then proposed a way out of the impasse: he said that he himself, in the conciliar decision of December, 1560, had joined his own hand to the crowning carried out by Macarius in 1547, thereby making it valid "in hindsight", as it were. And that is why he called Ivan's coronation "God-crowned" in spite of its invalidity!

Another important feature of the conciliar decision was that Macarius was called "metropolitan of Moscow and the whole of Great Russia", a much more precise designation than the previous "metropolitan of Russia", implying that Macarius was a fully canonical metropolitan having a territorial jurisdiction distinct from that of the metropolitan of Kiev.

Moreover, in another (non-conciliar) *gramota*, the patriarch suggested that while it might be rational to carry out a second crowning of Ivan by the patriarch insofar as the first one was invalid, it would be "useful and salutary" to consider this as already done, insofar as Metropolitan Macarius was the "catholic patriarchal exarch" able to carry out all hierarchical acts without hindrance, and the coronation he performed in 1547 was mystically carried out also by the patriarch...

"And so," concludes Lourié, "the abolition of the Muscovite autocephaly was achieved, while no recognition of the Moscow tsar as emperor of the Romans was given in exchange. The Moscow authorities could not dispute this, since the rejection of the autocephaly was now bound up with the recognition of the tsar's coronation."⁶³⁹

The second half of Ivan's reign was in complete contrast to the first: military success in the east was followed by military failure in the west; thousands of Russians were slaughtered with horrific cruelty by Ivan's *oprichnina*; he killed even his own son and the head of the Russian Church, St. Philip.

3. Tsar Theodore Ivanovich and the Ecumenical Patriarchate

However, the ideal of Moscow the Third Rome, though discredited (and future mockers would frequently cite the example of Ivan the Terrible), did not die...

"After the horrors of the reign of Ivan IV," writes Archpriest Lev Lebedev, "a complete contrast is represented by the soft, kind rule of his son, Theodore Ivanovich. In Russia there suddenly came as it were complete silence... However, the silence of the reign of Theodore Ivanovich was external and deceptive; it could more accurately be called merely a lull before a new storm. For that which had taken place during the

⁶³⁹ Lourié, *op. cit.*

oprichnina could not simply disappear: it was bound to have the most terrible consequences.”⁶⁴⁰

But this lull contained some very important events. One was the crowning of Theodore according to the full Byzantine rite, followed by his communion in both kinds in the altar. This further enhanced the status of the Russian State, which now, as in the reign of Ivan the Terrible, was closely linked to the status of the Moscow metropolia...

As A.P. Dobroklonsky writes, “the Moscow metropolitan see stood very tall. Its riches and the riches of the Moscow State stimulated the Eastern Patriarchs – not excluding the Patriarch of Constantinople himself – to appeal to it for alms. The boundaries of the Moscow metropolitanate were broader than the restricted boundaries of any of the Eastern Patriarchates (if we exclude from the Constantinopolitan the Russian metropolitan see, which was part of it); the court of the Moscow metropolitan was just as great as that of the sovereign. The Moscow metropolitan was freer in the manifestation of his ecclesiastical rights than the Patriarchs of the East, who were restricted at every step. Under the protection of the Orthodox sovereigns the metropolitan see in Moscow stood more firmly and securely than the Constantinopolitan Patriarchate, which had become a plaything in the hands of the sultan or vizier. The power of the Moscow metropolitan was in reality not a whit less than that of the patriarchate: he ruled the bishops, called himself their ‘father, pastor, comforter and head, under the power and in the will of whom they are the Vladykas of the whole Russian land’. Already in the 15th century, with the agreement of the Constantinopolitan Patriarch, he had been elected in Rus’ without the knowledge or blessing of the Patriarch; the Russian metropolia had already ceased hierarchical relations with the patriarchal see. If there remained any dependence of the Moscow metropolitan on the patriarch, it was only nominal, since the Russian metropolia was still counted as belonging to the Constantinopolitan Patriarchate...”⁶⁴¹

Not only was the Moscow metropolia a de facto patriarchate already: its exaltation would simultaneously raise the status of the Russian Autocracy, whose prosperity was vital for the survival, not only of Russian Orthodoxy, but of Greek, Balkan, Middle Eastern and Georgian Orthodoxy, too. And so in 1586 talks began with Patriarch Joachim of Antioch, who had arrived in Moscow. He promised to discuss the question of the status of the Russian Church with his fellow patriarchs. In 1588, the Ecumenical Patriarch Jeremiah II (Trallas) came to Moscow on an alms-raising trip.⁶⁴² Then he went on an important tour of the beleaguered Orthodox in the Western Russian lands, ordaining bishops and blessing the lay brotherhoods.

It was the desperate situation of the Orthodox in Western Russia that made the exaltation of the Muscovite see particularly timely. In 1582 the Pope had introduced the Gregorian calendar, whose aim was to divide the Orthodox liturgically; and in

⁶⁴⁰ Lebedev, *op. cit.*, p. 105.

⁶⁴¹ Dobroklonsky, *Rukovodstvo po istorii russkoj tserkvi*, Moscow, 2001, pp. 280-281.

⁶⁴² See A.V. Kartashev, *Ocherki po Istorii Russkoj Tserkvi*, Paris: YMCA Press, 1959, pp. 10-46, Vladimir Rusak, *Istoria Rossijskoj Tserkvi*, 1988, pp. 152-156, Dobroklonsky, *op. cit.*, pp. 282-285; and the life of St. Job, first patriarch of Moscow, in *Moskovskij Paterik*, Moscow: Stolitsa, 1991, pp. 110-113.

1596 the Orthodox hierarchs in the region signed the unia of Brest-Litovsk with the Roman Catholics. It was now obvious that Divine Providence had singled out the Church and State in Muscovy, rather than that in Poland-Lithuania, as the centre and stronghold of Russian Orthodoxy as a whole, and this needed to be emphasised in the eyes of all the Orthodox.

Patriarch Jeremiah understood this; and in January, 1589 he and Tsar Ivan Fyodorovich presided over a “Holy Synod of the Great Russian Empire and of the Greek Empire” which sanctioned the creation of an autocephalous Russian patriarchate, a decision published in a *gramota* by the tsar in May of the same year. The act was confirmed in a highly unusual and even, strictly speaking, uncanonical manner: the new Russian patriarch, Job, was given a second (or even a third) consecration by Patriarch Jeremiah.⁶⁴³

The decision was confirmed by two Pan-Orthodox Councils in Constantinople in 1590 and 1593. In the later Council the Russian Church was assigned the fifth place among the patriarchates, and the Pope’s introduction of the Gregorian calendar was anathematized.

As Dan Mureşan has argued, these two last acts were closely linked. Up to this period, Rome, though in heresy, was considered still belong to the pentarchy of patriarchs, without whose combined presence no Ecumenical Council could be convened. But the introduction of the Gregorian calendar in 1582 had so appalled the Orthodox that the pretense of a pentarchy including Rome was finally abandoned. So the Council of 1590 was called “ecumenical”, although it was convened without Rome, and the Russian Church took the place of Rome, thereby recreating the pentarchy to reflect present realities.

In agreeing to the tsar’s request for a patriarchate of Moscow, Patriarch Jeremiah showed that he understood that in having a Patriarch at his side, the status of the Tsar, too, would be exalted: “In truth, pious tsar, the Holy Spirit dwells in you, and this thought is from God, and will be realised by you. For the Old Rome fell to the Apollinarian heresy, and the Second Rome, Constantinople, is in the possession of the grandsons of the Hagarenes, the godless Turks: but your great Russian kingdom, the Third Rome, has exceeded all in piety. And all the pious kingdoms have been gathered

⁶⁴³ Mureşan, “Rome hérétique? Sur les décisions des conciles de Moscou et de Constantinople (1589, 1590 et 1593”,

[file:///localhost/Users/anthonymoss/Documents/Rome%20he%CC%81re%CC%81tique%20%20%20Sur%20les%20de%CC%81cisions%20des%20conciles%20de%20Moscou%20et%20de%20Constantinople%20\(1589,%201590%20et%201593\).html](file:///localhost/Users/anthonymoss/Documents/Rome%20he%CC%81re%CC%81tique%20%20%20Sur%20les%20de%CC%81cisions%20des%20conciles%20de%20Moscou%20et%20de%20Constantinople%20(1589,%201590%20et%201593).html).

V.M. Lourié writes: “The case of the raising to the patriarchy of Job, who was already Metropolitan of Moscow by that time, was strangely dual. The first Episcopal consecration was carried out on Job already in 1581, when he became Bishop of Kolomna, and the second in 1587, when he was raised to the rank of Metropolitan of Moscow. Now, with his raising to the rank of Patriarch of Moscow, a third Episcopal ordination was carried out on him (Uspensky, 1998).” This uncanonical custom appears to have originated with Patriarch Philotheus of Constantinople, when he transferred St. Alexis from Vladimir to Moscow (<http://hgr.livejournal.com/1099886.html>, June 1, 2006).

into your kingdom, and you alone under the heavens are named the Christian tsar throughout the inhabited earth for all Christians.”⁶⁴⁴

The Patriarch’s language here is very reminiscent of that of the famous prophecy of Elder Philotheus of Pskov in 1511. In particular, the Patriarch follows the elder in ascribing the fall of Old Rome to “the Apollinarian heresy”. Now the Apollinarian heresy rarely, if ever, figures in lists of the western heresies. And yet the patriarch here indicates that it is the heresy as a result of which the First Rome fell. Some have understood it to mean the Latin practice of using unleavened bread in the Eucharist. In order to understand why the patriarch should have spoken of Apollinarianism as the heresy of the West, we need to look for some matching in form, if not in substance, between the Apollinarian and papist heresies. Now Apollinarius taught that in Christ only the body and the soul were human, but His mind was Divine. In other words, Christ did not have a human mind like ours, but this was replaced, according to the Apollinarian schema, by the Divine Logos.

A parallel with Papism immediately suggests itself: just as the Divine Logos replaces the human mind in the heretical Apollinarian Christology, so a quasi-Divine, infallible Pope replaces the fully human, and therefore at all times fallible episcopate in the heretical papist ecclesiology. The root heresy of the West therefore consists in the unlawful exaltation of the mind of the Pope over the other minds of the Church, both clerical and lay, and its quasi-deification to a level equal to that of Christ Himself. From this root heresy proceed all the heresies of the West.

Thus the Filioque with its implicit demotion of the Holy Spirit to a level below that of the Father and the Son becomes necessary insofar as the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of truth Who constantly leads the Church into all truth has now become unnecessary - the Divine Mind of the Pope is quite capable of fulfilling His function. Similarly, the epiclesis, the invocation of the Holy Spirit on the Holy Gifts, is also unnecessary - if Christ, the Great High Priest, sanctified the Holy Gifts by His word alone, then His Divine Vicar on earth is surely able to do the same without invoking any other Divinity, especially a merely subordinate one such as the Holy Spirit.

The exaltation of the Russian Church and State to patriarchal and “Third Rome” status respectively shows that, not only in her own eyes, but in the eyes of the whole Orthodox world, Russia was now the chief bastion of the Truth of Christ against the heresies of the West. Russia had been born as a Christian state just as the West was falling away from grace into papism in the eleventh century. Now, in the sixteenth century, as Western papism received a bastard child in the Protestant Reformation, and a second wind in the Counter-Reformation, Russia was ready to take up leadership of the struggle against both heresies as a fully mature Orthodox nation.

⁶⁴⁴ Zzyzkyin, *Patriarkh Nikon*, Warsaw: Synodal Press, 1931, part I, p. 156. This thought was echoed by the patriarch of Alexandria, who wrote to the “most Orthodox” tsar in 1592: “The four patriarchates of the Orthodox speak of your rule as that of another, new Constantine the Great... and say that if there were no help from your rule, then Orthodoxy would be in extreme danger.” (van den Bercken, *op. cit.*, p. 160).

However, as we have seen, the Eastern Patriarchs, while confirming the establishment of the Moscow Patriarchate, made it only the fifth in seniority, after the four Greek patriarchates. This meant that the relationship between Church and State in the Third Rome still did not quite correspond to that between Church and State in the Second Rome. For whereas in the latter the Emperor's partner was the first see in Orthodoxy (at least after the fall of the papacy), the Emperor's partner in the Third Rome was only number five in the list of patriarchs. Nevertheless, this was probably in accordance with Divine Providence; for in the decades that immediately followed the prestige of the "Third Rome" was severely dented when the Poles briefly conquered Moscow during the "Time of Troubles", necessitating the continued supervision of the Western and Southern Russian Orthodox by Constantinople. And by the beginning of the eighteenth century, the Russian patriarchate was abolished by Peter the Great and replaced by a "Holy Governing Synod" ... On the other hand, the elevation of the head of the Russian Church to the rank of patriarch was to prove beneficial now, in the early seventeenth century, when the Autocracy in Russia had been shaken to its foundations and the patriarchs had taken the place of the tsars as the leaders of the Russian nation. We witness a similar phenomenon in 1917, when the restoration of the Russian patriarchate to some degree compensated for the fall of the tsardom. In both cases, the patriarchate both filled the gap left by the fall of the state (up to a point), and kept alive the ideals of true Orthodox statehood, waiting for the time when it could restore political power into the hands of the anointed tsars.

4. *Tsar Alexis Mikhailovich and Patriarch Nikon*

As the power of the Russian State recovered towards the middle of the seventeenth century, hopes were raised that Moscow could fulfill her destiny as the Third Rome and reconquer Constantinople for the Orthodox. Tsar Alexis Mikhailovich listened with sympathy to the pleas of Greek merchants in Moscow that he launch a war of Orthodox liberation in the south.

However, a major internal problem of an ideological nature now presented itself before him. The problem consisted in the fact that a large section of the population of his kingdom, who later came to be called the Old Ritualists, had a quite different conception of Moscow the Third Rome, a more nationalist and Russian-centred conception. Now the schism of the Old Ritualists is usually considered to centre on arguments over books and rites, over such matters as whether the sign of the Cross should be made with two fingers or with three, or whether during processions "Alleluia" should be sung walking clockwise or anti-clockwise. But the differences between the Orthodox and the Old Ritualists, writes Lebedev, related "not only to the correction of books and rites. The point was the deep differences in perception of the ideas forming the basis of the conception of 'the third Rome', and in the contradictions of the Russian Church's self-consciousness at the time."⁶⁴⁵

The differences over the concept of the Third Rome, on the one hand, and over books and rites, on the other hand, were linked in the following way... By the middle of the century the Russian State was ready to go on the offensive against Catholic

⁶⁴⁵ Lebedev, *Moskva Patriarshaia*, Moscow, 1995, p. 37.

Poland, and rescue the Orthodox Christians who were being persecuted there. In 1654 Eastern Ukraine was wrested from Poland and came within the bounds of Russia again. But the Orthodox Church in the Ukraine had been under the jurisdiction of Constantinople and employed some Greek liturgical practices that differed somewhat from those in the Great Russian Church. So if Moscow was to be the Third Rome in the sense of the protector of all Orthodox Christians, it was necessary that the faith and practice of the Moscow Patriarchate should be in harmony with the faith and practice of the Orthodox Church as a whole. That is why Patriarch Nikon, supported by the Grecophile Tsar Alexis, encouraged the reform of the service-books to bring them into line with the practices of the Greek Church.

In pursuing this policy the Tsar and the Patriarch were continuing the work of St. Maximus the Greek, who had been invited to Russia to carry out translations from Greek into Russian and correct the Russian service books against the Greek originals. For this he was persecuted by Metropolitan Daniel. And yet "the mistakes in the Russian Divine service books were so great," writes Professor N.N. Pokrovsky, "that the Russian Church finally had to agree with Maximus' corrections – true, some 120 years after his trial, under Patriarch Nikon (for example, in the Symbol of the faith)."⁶⁴⁶

Paradoxically, the Old Ritualists cited St. Maximus the Greek in their support because he made no objection to the two-fingered sign. However, Professor Pokrovsky has shown that he probably passed over this as being of secondary importance by comparison with his main task, which was to broaden the horizons of the Russian Church and State, making it more ecumenical in spirit – and more sympathetic to the pleas for help of the Orthodox Christians of the Balkans. On more important issues – for example, the text of the Symbol of faith, the canonical subjection of the Russian metropolitan to the Ecumenical Patriarch, and a more balanced relationship between Church and State – he had made no concessions.

The Old Ritualists represented a serious threat to the achievement of the ideal of Ecumenical Orthodoxy. Like their opponents, they believed in the ideology of the Third Rome, but understood it differently. First, they resented the lead that the patriarch was taking in this affair. In their opinion, the initiative in such matters should come from the tsar insofar as it was the tsar, rather than the hierarchs, who defended the Church from heresies. Here they were thinking of the Russian Church's struggle against the false council of Florence and the Judaizing heresy, when the great prince did indeed take a leading role in the defence of Orthodoxy while some of the hierarchs fell away from the truth. However, they ignored the no less frequent cases – most recently, in the Time of Troubles – when it had been the Orthodox hierarchs who had defended the Church against apostate tsars.

Secondly, whereas for the Grecophiles of the "Greco-Russian Church" Moscow the Third Rome was the continuation of Christian Rome, which in no wise implied any break with Greek Orthodoxy, for the Old Ritualists the influence of the Greeks, who

⁶⁴⁶ Pokrovsky, *Putieshestvia za redkimi knigami (Journeys for rare books)*, Moscow, 1988; http://catacomb.org.ua/modules.php?name=Pages&go=print_page&pid=779. The mistake in the Creed consisted in adding the word "true" after "and in the Holy Spirit, the Lord".

had betrayed Orthodoxy at the council of Florence, could only be harmful. They believed that the Russian Church did not need help from, or agreement with, the Greeks; she was self-sufficient. Moreover, the Greeks could not be Orthodox, according to the Old Ritualists, not only because they had apostasized at the council of Florence, but also because they were “powerless”, that is, without an emperor. And when Russia, too, in their view, became “powerless” through the tsar’s “apostasy”, they prepared for the end of the world. For, as V.M. Lourié writes, “the Niconite reforms were perceived by Old Ritualism as apostasy from Orthodoxy, and consequently... as the end of the last (Roman) Empire, which was to come immediately before the end of the world.”⁶⁴⁷

This anti-Greek attitude was exemplified by Archpriest Avvakum, who told the Greek bishops at his trial of 1667: “You, ecumenical teachers! Rome has long since fallen, and lies on the ground, and the Poles have gone under with her, for to the present day they have been enemies of the Christians. But with you, too, Orthodoxy became a varied mixture under the violence of the Turkish Muhammed. Nor is that surprising: you have become powerless. From now on you must come to us to learn: through God’s grace we have the autocracy. Before the apostate Nicon the whole of Orthodoxy was pure and spotless in our Russia under the pious rulers and tsars, and the Church knew no rebellion. But the wolf Nicon along with the devil introduced the tradition that one had to cross oneself with three fingers...”⁶⁴⁸

It was this attempt to force the Russians into schism from the Greeks that was the real sin of the Old Ritualists. Their schism was not essentially about rites, but about national pride; it was the first nationalist schism in modern Orthodox history. And it was against this narrow, nationalistic and state-centred conception of Moscow the Third Rome that Patriarch Nicon erected a more universalistic, Church-centred conception which stressed the unity of the Russian Church with the Churches of the East.

“In the idea of ‘the Third Rome’,” writes Lebedev, “his Holiness saw first of all its ecclesiastical, spiritual content, which was also expressed in the still more ancient idea of ‘the Russian land – the New Jerusalem’. This idea was to a large degree synonymous with ‘the Third Rome’. To a large extent, but not completely! It placed the accent on the Christian striving of Holy Rus’ for the world on high.

“In calling Rus’ to this great idea, Patriarch Nicon successively created a series of architectural complexes in which was laid the idea of the pan-human, universal significance of Holy Rus’. These were the Valdai Iveron church, and the Kii Cross monastery, but especially the Resurrection New-Jerusalem monastery, which was deliberately populated with an Orthodox, but multi-racial brotherhood (Russians, Ukrainians, Belorussians, Lithuanians, Germans, Jews, Poles and Greeks).

⁶⁴⁷ Lourié, “O Vozmozhnosti”, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

⁶⁴⁸ Avvakum, translated in Van den Bercken, *op. cit.*, p. 165. Avvakum also said to the Tsar: “Say in good Russian ‘Lord have mercy on me’. Leave all those Kyrie Eleisons to the Greeks: that’s their language, spit on them! You are Russian, Alexei, not Greek. Speak your mother tongue and be not ashamed of it, either in church or at home!” Again, he announced “that newborn babies knew more about God than all the scholars of the Greek church”.

“This monastery, together with the complex of ‘Greater Muscovite Palestine’, was in the process of creation from 1656 to 1666, and was then completed after the death of the patriarch towards the end of the 17th century. As has been clarified only comparatively recently, this whole complex, including in itself Jordan, Nazareth, Bethlehem, Capernaum, Ramah, Bethany, Tabor, Hermon, the Mount of Olives, the Garden of Gethsemane, etc., was basically a monastery, and in it the Resurrection cathedral, built in the likeness of the church of the Sepulchre of the Lord in Jerusalem with Golgotha and the Sepulchre of the Saviour, was a double image – an icon of the historical ‘promised land’ of Palestine and at the same time an icon of the promised land of the Heavenly Kingdom, ‘the New Jerusalem’.

“In this way it turned out that the true union of the representatives of all the peoples (pan-human unity) in Christ on earth and in heaven can be realised only on the basis of Orthodoxy, and, moreover, by the will of God, in its Russian expression. This was a clear, almost demonstrative opposition of the union of mankind in the Church of Christ to its unity in the anti-church of ‘the great architect of nature’ with its aim of constructing the tower of Babylon. But it also turned out that ‘Greater Muscovite Palestine’ with its centre in the New Jerusalem became the spiritual focus of the whole of World Orthodoxy. At the same time that the tsar was only just beginning to dream of becoming the master of the East, Patriarch Nikon as the archimandrite of New Jerusalem had already become the central figure of the Universal Church.

“This also laid a beginning to the disharmony between the tsar and the patriarch, between the ecclesiastical and state authorities in Russia. Alexis Mikhailovich, at first inwardly, but then also outwardly, was against Nikon’s plans for the New Jerusalem. He insisted that only his capital, Moscow, was the image of the heavenly city, and that the Russian tsar (and not the patriarch) was the head of the whole Orthodox world. From 1657 there began the quarrels between the tsar and the patriarch, in which the tsar revealed a clear striving to take into his hands the administration of Church affairs, for he made himself the chief person responsible for them.”⁶⁴⁹

In 1666-67, at a “Great Council” of Greek and Russian hierarchs, Tsar Alexis Mikhailovich secured the unjust deposition of Patriarch Nikon...

5. The Eighteenth-Century Tsars and the Loss of Symphony

The Russian Church never fully recovered from this massive blow to the “symphony of powers”; and within two generations, by the just judgement of God, the Church had become subject to despotism of Tsar Peter the Great. As a direct result, the whole country was subjected, by force at times, to the cultural, scientific and educational influence of the West. This transformation was symbolized especially by the building, at great cost in human lives, of a new capital at St. Petersburg. Situated at the extreme western end of the vast empire as Peter's “window to the West”, this extraordinary city was largely built by Italian architects on the model of Amsterdam, peopled by shaven and pomaded courtiers who spoke more French than Russian, and

⁶⁴⁹ Lebedev, *Moskva Patriarshaia*, pp. 40-41.

ruled, from the middle of the eighteenth century onwards, by monarchs of German origin. In building St. Petersburg, Peter was also trying to replace the traditional idea of Russia as the Third Rome by the western idea of the secular empire on the model of the *First Rome*, the Rome of the pagan Caesars and Augusti.

As Wil van den Bercken writes: "Rome remains an ideological point of reference in the notion of the Russian state. However, it is no longer the second Rome but the first Rome to which reference is made, or ancient Rome takes the place of Orthodox Constantinople. Peter takes over Latin symbols: he replaces the title tsar by the Latin imperator, designates his state imperia, calls his advisory council senate, and makes the Latin Rossija the official name of his land in place of the Slavic Rus' ...

"Although the primary orientation is on imperial Rome, there are also all kinds of references to the Christian Rome. The name of the city, St. Petersburg, was not just chosen because Peter was the patron saint of the tsar, but also to associate the apostle Peter with the new Russian capital. That was both a diminution of the religious significance of Moscow and a religious claim over papal Rome. The adoption of the religious significance of Rome is also evident from the cult of the second apostle of Rome, Paul, which is expressed in the name for the cathedral of the new capital, the St. Peter and Paul Cathedral. This name was a break with the pious Russian tradition, which does not regard the two Roman apostles but Andrew as the patron of Russian Christianity. Thus St. Petersburg is meant to be the new Rome, directly following on the old Rome, and passing over the second and third Romes..."⁶⁵⁰

And yet the ideal of Russia as precisely the *Third Rome*, not a reincarnation of the First, was preserved. "It was preserved because neither the people nor the Church renounced the very ideal of the Orthodox kingdom, and, as even V. Klyuchevsky noted, continued to consider as law that which corresponded to this ideal, and not Peter's decrees."⁶⁵¹

But if Russia was still the Third Rome, it was highly doubtful, in the people's view, that Peter was her true Autocrat. For how could one who undermined the foundations of the Third Rome be her true ruler? The real Autocrat of Russia, the rumour went, was sealed up in a column in Stockholm, and Peter was a German who had been substituted for him...

However, if the Russians were beginning to doubt, the Greeks were beginning to take to the idea, especially as Peter was now extending his power to the south... Thus in 1709 he defeated the Swedes and began to build a navy for the Black Sea - a threat to Constantinople itself that translated into real influence with the Sultan. In fact, it is with Peter the Great and his eighteenth-century successors that we can first talk realistically about Russia fulfilling her role as the protector of the non-Russian Orthodox...

⁶⁵⁰ Van den Brecken, op. cit., pp. 168-169.

⁶⁵¹ Hieromonk Dionysius, Priest Timothy Alferov, *O Tserkvi, Pravoslavnom Tsarstve i Poslednem Vremeni*, Moscow, 1998, p. 66.

As V.M. Lourié writes: “At that time hopes in Greece for a miraculous re-establishment of Constantinople before the end of the world [based on the prophecies of Leo the Wise and others], were somewhat strengthened, if not squeezed out, by hopes on Russia. Anastasius Gordius (1654-1729), the author of what later became an authoritative historical-eschatological interpretation of the Apocalypse (1717-23) called the Russian Empire the guardian of the faith to the very coming of the Messiah. The hopes of the Greeks for liberation from the Turks that were linked with Russia, which had become traditional already from the time of St. Maximus the Greek (1470-1555), also found their place in the interpretations of the Apocalypse. Until the middle of the 19th century itself – until the Greeks, on a wave of pan-European nationalism thought up their ‘Great Idea’ – Russia would take the place of Byzantium in their eschatological hopes, as being the last Christian Empire. They considered the Russian Empire to be their own, and the Russian Tsar Nicholas (not their Lutheran King Otto) as their own, to the great astonishment and annoyance of European travellers.”⁶⁵²

Less in the tradition of the Orthodox Emperor was Peter’s abolition of the Russian patriarchate and its replacement by a Synod that was formally a department of the State. In 1721 Peter petitioned the Ecumenical Patriarch to recognize this “governmental” (*pravitel’svennij*) Synod as having “equal to patriarchal power”. In 1723 the reply came in the form of “two nearly identical letters, one from Patriarch Jeremiah of Constantinople, written on behalf of himself and the patriarchs of Jerusalem and Alexandria, and the other from Patriarch Athanasius of Antioch. Both letters ‘confirmed, ratified, and declared’ that the Synod established by Peter ‘is, and shall be called, our holy brother in Christ’; and the patriarchs enjoined all Orthodox clergy and people to submit to the Synod ‘as to the four Apostolic thrones’.”⁶⁵³

The Eastern Patriarchs’ agreement to the abolition of the patriarchate they themselves had established needs some explanation. Undoubtedly influential in their decision was the assurance they received from Peter that he had instructed the Synod to rule the Russian Church “in accordance with the unalterable dogmas of the faith of the Holy Orthodox Catholic Greek Church”. Of course, if they had known all the Protestantizing tendencies of Peter’s rule, and in particular his reduction of the Church to a department of the State, they might not have felt so assured...

Also relevant was the fact that the Russian tsar was the last independent Orthodox ruler and the main financial support of the Churches of the East. This made it difficult for the Patriarchs to resist the Tsar in this, as in other requests. Thus in 1716 Patriarch Jeremiah III acceded to Peter’s request to allow his soldiers to eat meat during all fasts while they were on campaign⁶⁵⁴; and a little later he permitted the request of the

⁶⁵² Lourié, “O Vozmozhnosti Kontsa Sveta v Odnog Otdel’no Vzyatoj Strane” (“On the Possibility of the End of the World in One Separate Country”), pp. 1-2 (MS).

⁶⁵³ James Cracraft, *The Church Reform of Peter the Great*, London: Macmillan, 1971, p. 223.

⁶⁵⁴ However, “Christopher Hermann von Manstein found that during the Ochakov campaign in the 1730s ‘though the synod grants them a dispensation for eating flesh during the actual campaign, there are few that choose to take the benefit of it, preferring death to the sin of breaking their rule’ (in Janet M. Hartley, *A Social History of the Russian Empire, 1650-1825*, Oxford University Press, 1999, p. 242).

Russian consul in Constantinople that Lutherans and Calvinists should not be baptized on joining the Orthodox Church.⁶⁵⁵

But a still more likely explanation is the fact that the Eastern Patriarchs were themselves in an uncanonical (simoniac) situation in relation to their secular ruler, the Sultan, which would have made any protest against a similar uncanonicity in Russia seem hypocritical. In fact, in the 18th century we have the tragic spectacle of the Orthodox Church almost everywhere in an uncanonical position vis-à-vis the secular powers: in Russia, deprived of its lawful head and ruled by a secular, albeit formally Orthodox ruler; in the Greek lands, under a lawful head, the Ecumenical Patriarch, who nevertheless unlawfully combined political and religious roles and was chosen, at least in part, by a Muslim ruler; in the Balkans, deprived of their lawful heads (the Serbian and Bulgarian patriarchs) and ruled in both political and religious matters by the Ecumenical Patriarch while being under the supreme dominion of the same Muslim ruler, or, as in Montenegro, ruled (from 1782) by prince-bishops of the Petrovic-Njegos family.

Only little Georgia retained something like the traditional symphony of powers. But even the Georgians were forced, towards the end of the eighteenth century, to seek the suzerainty of Orthodox Russia in the face of the Muslim threat. The idea was: better submit to the absolutist but Orthodox ruler of the Third Rome than the similarly absolutist but infidel ruler of the Second Rome.

The problem for the smaller Orthodox nations was that there was no clear way out of this situation. Rebellion on a mass scale was out of the question. So it was natural to look in hope to the north, where Peter, in spite of his "state heresy" (Glubokovsky's phrase), was an anointed sovereign who greatly strengthened Russia militarily and signed all the confessions of the faith of the Orthodox Church. All these factors persuaded the Eastern Patriarchs to employ "economy" (leniency, condescension to weakness) and bless the uncanonical replacement of the patriarchate with State-dominated Synod...

Under Catherine the Great the empire continued to expand to the west and the south. "New Russia" and the Crimea was conquered from the Turks, and Russia's age-old enemy, Catholic Poland, was divided between Russia, Austria and Prussia. And Catherine called her grandson Constantine in the hope that he might become the ruler of Constantinople...

But Catherine went even further than Peter in subjecting the Church to the State. Under Peter, the election of bishops had been as follows: the Synod presented two candidates for the episcopacy of a vacant see to the monarch, and he chose one of them. (In late Byzantium, the emperor had chosen from three proposed candidates.) The newly elected bishop then had to swear an oath that included recognizing the monarch as "supreme Judge" of the Church. Catherine did not change this arrangement; and she restricted the power of the bishops still further, in that out of

⁶⁵⁵ Fomin & Fomina, *op. cit.*, part I, p. 294. At the Moscow council of 1666-67, it had been decreed, under pressure from Ligarides, that papists should be received, not by baptism, but by chrismation.

fear of “fanaticism”, as Vladimir Rusak writes, “cases dealing with religious blasphemies, the violation of order in Divine services, and magic and superstition were removed from the competence of the spiritual court...”⁶⁵⁶

Paradoxically, therefore, at the same time that Russia was departing further and further from the *spiritual* ideals of the Third and Second Romes, her *external, political* mission to liberate the Orthodox peoples and unite them under her aegis was proceeding apace.

Already at the very beginning of her reign, between 1762 and 1764, Catherine reduced the number of monasteries from 1072 to 452, and of monastics – from 12,444 to 5105! It goes without saying, therefore, that Catherine was no supporter of the traditionally Orthodox “symphonic” model of Church-State relations. “[The Archbishop of Novgorod],” she wrote to Voltaire, “is neither a persecutor nor a fanatic. He abhors the idea of the two powers”.⁶⁵⁷ And in her correspondence with the Austrian Emperor Joseph II she called herself head of the Greek Church.

Nevertheless, the eighteenth-century sovereigns of Russia, while being despotic in their administration and non-Russian in their culture, never formally renounced the Orthodox faith, and even defended it at times.

Thus “Peter I,” writes Dobroklonsky, “who allowed himself a relaxed attitude towards the institutions of the Church, and even clowning parodies of sacred actions, nevertheless considered it necessary to restrain others. There was a case when he beat Tatischev with a rod for having permitted himself some liberty in relation to church traditions, adding: ‘Don’t lead believing souls astray, don’t introduce free-thinking, which is harmful for the public well-being; I did not teach you to be an enemy of society and the Church.’ On another occasion he subjected Prince Khovansky and some young princes and courtiers to cruel physical punishments for having performed a blasphemous rite of burial on a guest who was drunk to the point of unconsciousness and mocked church vessels. While breaking the fast himself, Peter I, so as not to lead others astray, asked for a dispensation for himself from the patriarch. Anna Ioannovna, the former duchess of Courland, who was surrounded by Germans, nevertheless paid her dues of veneration for the institutions of the Orthodox Church; every day she attended Divine services, zealously built and adorned churches, and even went on pilgrimages. Elizabeth Petrovna was a model of sincere piety: she gave generous alms for the upkeep of churches, the adornment of icons and shrines both with money and with the work of her own hand: in her beloved Alexandrovsk sloboda she was present at Divine services every day, rode or went on foot on pilgrimages to monasteries, observed the fast in strict abstinence and withdrawal, even renouncing official audiences. There is a tradition that before her death she had the intention of becoming tonsured as a nun. Even Catherine II, in spite of the fact that she was a fan of the fashionable French philosophy, considered it necessary to carry out the demands of piety: on feasts days she was without fail present at Divine services; she

⁶⁵⁶ Rusak, *Istoria Rossijskoj Tserkvi*, USA, 1993, p. 276.

⁶⁵⁷ Isabel de Madariaga, *Russia in the Age of Catherine the Great*, London: Phoenix, 2002, p. 114.

venerated the clergy and kissed the hands of priests..."⁶⁵⁸ Moreover, the eighteenth-century sovereigns patronized important missionary work. Thus it was with the active support of Peter I that the Russian Spiritual Mission in Beijing was established.⁶⁵⁹ Again, it was towards the end of the century that the Russian mission to Alaska began...

The eighteenth-century rulers of Russia can be seen *both* as forerunners of the Antichrist, insofar as they undermined the traditional Orthodox way of life in Russia, *and* as restrainers of the Antichrist, one of the chief functions of the Roman emperor in Orthodox eschatological thought, in that they built up a mighty state that was able to defend what was left of the Orthodox way of life in the next century. Thus they made possible both the glorious victory of 1812 over the French Antichrist, and the catastrophic surrender of 1917 to the Soviet Antichrist. And so it was in the eighteenth century that Russia finally emerged on the world stage as the universalist empire of the Third Rome, the heir of the Second, New Rome of Byzantium – only to fall, in the twentieth century, to the pagan spirit of the First Rome that these same eighteenth-century rulers had re-implanted in her...

6. The Nineteenth-Century Tsars and the Recovery of Symphony

Tsar Paul I, who ascended the throne on the death of his mother in 1797, had been educated by Metropolitan Platon of Moscow, and shared his teacher's devotion to pre-Petrine Russia. And so at his coronation, before putting on the purple, he was vested in the dalmatic, one of the royal vestments of the Byzantine emperors. Thus the rite moved a significant step away from the symbolism of the First Rome, which had been the model of Peter, and back to the symbolism of the New Rome of Constantinople, the Mother-State of Holy Rus'. Moreover, through his attention to the needs of the Church and the poor, and his resistance to the claims of the pampered nobility, Tsar Paul showed himself to be in reality, and not only in symbolism, a truly Orthodox autocrat. Sensing this, the westernising nobility spread the rumour – accepted to the present day by western historians – that Paul was mad, and finally succeeded in murdering him in 1801...

His son and successor, Alexander I, did not at first follow the blessed example of his father (in whose murder he is said to have a part); but he redeemed himself in the second half of his reign by two great feats. First, of course, he defeated Napoleon in 1812 and planted the standards of the Orthodox autocracy in the heart of the western revolution, Paris. Secondly, he banned Freemasonry, the religion and organizational focus of the revolution... In this way, the scene was set for the long struggle between Russia and the revolution which straddled the whole of the "long" nineteenth century from 1812 to 1914. After wavering between Orthodoxy and the West during the eighteenth century, the Russian autocracy now set its face firmly against westernism, taking up the banner of the Third Rome in earnest.

⁶⁵⁸ Dobroklonsky, *op. cit.*, pp. 717-718.

⁶⁵⁹ Dr. Jeremias Norman, "The Orthodox Mission to the Chinese", *Orthodox Tradition*, vol. XVIII, N 1, 2001, pp. 29-35.

It was especially during the reigns of Tsars Nicholas I and Alexander II, with their wars to protect the Orthodox Christians of the Balkans, that the idea of Moscow the Third Rome began to be revived, and Orthodox Christians again began to see this as the role that Divine Providence had entrusted to Russia.⁶⁶⁰ The wars waged by Russia for the liberation of Greece in 1829-31, of the Holy Places in 1854-56, of Bulgaria in 1877-78 and of Serbia in 1914-17, and in the suppression of revolution in Poland in 1830 and 1863, and in Hungary in 1848, can all be seen as carrying out the mission of the Third Rome to protect Orthodox Christianity – indeed, the whole of Christian civilization – against the atheist revolution. The climax of this external mission of Moscow the Third Rome was seen as the reconquest of Hagia Sophia in Constantinople and the placing of the Cross instead of the crescent on its roof. As the saying went, “Constantinople will be ours”... And indeed, but for the external threat of a military intervention by the British in 1878, and the internal revolution of the Freemasons of the Duma and the Army in 1917, this goal might well have been achieved...

Not only externally, but also internally, the nineteenth-century tsars were well on the way to realizing the ideal of Moscow the Third Rome. Particular progress in this respect was made by Tsar Nicholas II, who in 1901 removed the phrase “Supreme Judge” from the Basic Laws, and was actively considering convening a Church Council, the first since 1682, that would re-establish the patriarchate abolished by Peter. Tsar Nicholas, like Tsar Paul, was consciously striving to cleanse the Russian State of the absolutist legacy of Petrine westernism and return it to the symphonic model of seventeenth-century Muscovy. As he once said: “Of course, I recognize that my famous ancestor had many merits, but I must admit that I would be insincere if I repeated your raptures. This is the ancestor whom I love less than others because of his obsession with western culture and his trampling on all purely Russian customs. One must not impose foreign things immediately, without reworking them. Perhaps this time it was necessary as a transitional period, but I do not sympathize with it.”

However, there were major problems, both external and internal. On the international scene, the mission of Moscow the Third Rome was not recognized – even by other Orthodox states. For the Balkan Orthodox did not see themselves, either actually or potentially, as part of any greater Orthodox empire. Or rather, the Greeks had become enamoured of what they called “the great idea” – that is, the idea of a resurrected *Second* Rome of Constantinople, while the Serbs and the Bulgarians were striving for a Great Serbia and a Greater Bulgaria respectively.

What had changed since the seventeenth century to make the Greeks and other Orthodox lose faith in the idea of Moscow the Third Rome? The answer is: the French revolution, and the consequent release of the virus of nationalist passion into the bloodstream of both Eastern and Western Europeans. Orthodox Christianity and the ideal of the Orthodox Empire – Christian Rome – are internationalist ideas in essence. While not necessarily opposed to nationalist aspirations in certain circumstances, their ideal is Christ, in Whom there is “neither Greek nor Jew”. The Christian Roman

⁶⁶⁰ See N. Ulyanov, “Kompleks Filofea”, *Voprosy Filosofii* (Questions of Philosophy), 1994, N 4, pp. 152-162.

empire is Orthodox first and foremost; and since all Orthodox Christians are brothers and in essence equal, there can be no exalting of one race over the others, even if one race – Roman, Greek or Russian – takes the lead in governing the others.

And so, as Fr. George Metallinos writes, in the Second Rome whose capital was Constantinople, "a great number of peoples made up the autocracy but without any 'ethnic' differentiation between them. The whole racial amalgam lived and moved in a single civilization (apart from some particularities) - the Greek⁶⁶¹, and it had a single cohesive spiritual power – Orthodoxy, which was at the same time the ideology of the oikoumene - autocracy. The citizens of the autocracy were Romans politically, Greeks culturally and Orthodox Christians spiritually. Through Orthodoxy the old relationship of rulers and ruled was replaced by the sovereign bond of brotherhood. Thus the 'holy race' of the New Testament (I Peter 2.9) became a reality as the 'race of the Romans', that is, of the Orthodox citizens of the autocracy of the New Rome."⁶⁶²

The Third Rome of Moscow differed from the Second Rome in that it never had political control over all the territories whose religion was Orthodoxy.⁶⁶³ Nevertheless, as we have seen, in 1589 the Ecumenical Patriarch Jeremiah II proclaimed Moscow to be the Third Rome and the protector of Orthodox Christians everywhere; and until at least the end of the eighteenth century the Orthodox living under Ottoman rule certainly looked towards Moscow as their protector and defender. Moreover, both the territorial expansion of the Russian empire, and the high birth-rate of its population, meant that by 1914 almost eight out of every nine Orthodox Christians in the world lived within the empire, while many millions more looked to it as their chief protector, making the Third Rome far greater in territory, population and power than its predecessors...

But from the Greek revolution of 1821 the Balkan Orthodox began wars of national liberation from the Ottoman yoke without consulting with the Russian Tsar – until they got into difficulties, and were compelled to call on the tsar to rescue them. The indiscipline and nationalist fervour of the Balkan Orthodox were such that after 1878 Greeks, Serbs and Bulgars were fighting not only the Turks but also each other for the prize of Macedonia. And from the beginning of the twentieth century, further territorial expansion by the Balkan Orthodox, especially the Serbs and Montenegrins, carried the threat of igniting a pan-European and even a World War. This very nearly happened during the First Balkan War in 1912, and Tsar Nicholas only restrained his "allies" with the greatest difficulty. As we all know, he was not able to control the situation in 1914, as a result of which the Empire itself fell in 1917, bringing catastrophe to all the Orthodox peoples...

⁶⁶¹ However, there was no attempt to force Greek (or Latin) upon the non-Greek parts of Christendom. Thus in the East Syriac and Coptic were still spoken by millions, and some of the Fathers of the Church, such as St. Ephraim the Syrian, spoke no Greek at all. (V.M.)

⁶⁶² Metallinos, "Apo ti Romaiki oikoumenikotita ston Ethnistiko Patriotismo", *Exodos*, Athens, 1991, p. 38.

⁶⁶³ Strictly speaking the same was true of the First and Second Rome, which never, for example, controlled Ireland, although Celts such as St. Patrick considered themselves to be citizens of Christian Rome. However, in the fourth century, at any rate, the great majority of the Orthodox Christians in the world lived within the Roman empire.

Internally, Tsar Nicholas had no less serious problems. The nationalist malaise had infected some of the constituent nationalities of his empire, especially the Poles, while the pseudo-internationalism of the Second Internationale infected others, especially the Jews. Most of the educated classes had lost their Orthodox faith, as a result of which monarchism, and the whole concept of Moscow the Third Rome became incomprehensible to them (except for those who interpreted it in a perverted, nationalist sense). The cry went up from many quarters: Roma delenda est. And as no kingdom divided against itself can stand, Moscow the Third Rome was destroyed...

7. A Red Tsar?

Historians like to look for continuities between pre- and post-revolutionary Russia; and if we look for some kind of continuation of the idea of Moscow the Third Rome, then we can find it in the Comintern, the international confederation of communist parties – although this “continuation” should more accurately be called a grotesque parody of its pre-revolutionary counterpart. True, the uniting power of the new “Rome” was still a Russian-speaking empire covering roughly the same territory as the former empire. But though Russian-speaking, this new empire so despised everything that the old empire stood for that it chose to change its name to “the Soviet Union” in 1922, and subjected the Russian people to the greatest persecution any people has known in the history of the world. True, the new empire and its Comintern allies or satellites were united, like the old, by a kind of religious faith, Marxism-Leninism. But Marxism-Leninism is about as different from Orthodox Christianity as any two religions can be, while the moralities of the two religions are also polar opposites...

Nevertheless, the idea did not die. As Simon Sebag Montefiore writes, Stalin “privately believed that Russia needed a ‘tsar’: in April 1926, he mused that, although the Party ruled, ‘the people understand little of this. For centuries the people in Russia were under a tsar. The Russian people are tsarist... accustomed to one person being at the head. And now there should be one.’ He studied Ivan the Terrible and Peter the Great particularly. ‘The people need a tsar,’ he said in the 1930s, ‘whom they can worship and for whom they can live and work.’ He carefully crafted his own image to create a new template of tsar, fatherly and mysterious, industrial and urban, the leader of an international mission yet the monarch of the Russians. As the Germans advanced in 1941, he studied 1812 and, in 1942-3, restored ranks, gold braid and epaulettes – and promoted tsarist heroes Kutuzov and Suvorov. Stalin’s Terror allowed him to perform total reversals of policy, such as his pact with Hitler, to survive colossal self-inflicted disasters and force astonishing sacrifices from the Russians. His personal authority, homicidal brutality, Marxist-nationalistic propaganda, breakneck industrialization and command economy meant that he could deploy resources that would have been unimaginable to Nicholas. Stalin was a murderous tyrant, the Soviet experience a dystopian tragedy for the Russians, yet he out-performed the tsars, defeating Germany, leaving Russia as ruler of eastern Europe and a nuclear superpower. He always measured himself against the Romanovs. In

1945, when the US ambassador Averell Harriman congratulated him on taking Berlin, Stalin riposted: 'Yes, but Alexander I made it to Paris.'"⁶⁶⁴

From the death of Stalin in 1953 until the "enthronement" of Vladimir Putin in 2000, the idea of Moscow the Third Rome went into eclipse. However, in the new millennium a new, hardly less grotesque parody has been in the process of construction. The chief ideologist of this process has been a Moscow professor of geopolitics, the son of a Soviet army colonel and since 1999 an Old Ritualist, Alexander Dugin.

That Dugin should be an Old Ritualist provides us with an important clue to the essence of this new version of the idea. For paradoxically, while rejecting both the Moscow Patriarchate and the Russian empire, the Old Ritualists remained enamoured of the idea of Moscow the Third Rome - but rejected its international mission in favour of a more inward-looking and nationalist concept. Thus V.I. Kel'siev, an investigator of the Old Rite in the 1860s, declared that "the people continue to believe today that Moscow is the Third Rome and that there will be no fourth. So Russia is the new Israel, a chosen people, a prophetic land, in which shall be fulfilled all the prophecies of the Old and New Testaments, and in which even the Antichrist will appear, as Christ appeared in the previous Holy Land. The representative of Orthodoxy, the Russian Tsar, is the most legitimate emperor on earth, for he occupies the throne of Constantinople..."⁶⁶⁵

Dugin's reworking of the idea adopts this Old Ritualist nationalism, together with a certain suicidal apocalypticism reminiscent of the mass self-immolations of the Old Ritualists in the late seventeenth century. And into this heady potion he pours pagan elements, a strong dose of Nazism, "Eurasianism" (the Putinist version of the Comintern) and a modernized version of Sovietism.

With regard to the Soviet regime itself, Dugin admits that "it overthrew the monarchy and put the Church practically outside the law. But here again there appeared that providential idea that is complex and often inaccessible to humble human reasoning - that the Bolsheviks on the secular level and with the use of slogans profoundly foreign to the people established in an extreme form a sharply anti-western order, and the contradiction between the Eastern Roman Empire and the West burst out with renewed force in the confrontation between socialism and capitalism. On the one hand, the Bolsheviks were even worse than the Romanovs, since atheism, mechanism, materialism and Darwinism are much further from the truth than an albeit mutilated Orthodoxy. On the other hand, even through the Bolsheviks there worked a strange power that was amazingly reminiscent in some aspects of the reign of Ivan the Terrible, the oprichnina and the return to archaic popular-religious elements."⁶⁶⁶

⁶⁶⁴ Montefiore, *The Romanovs*, London: Vintage, 2016, pp. 654-655.

⁶⁶⁵ Kel'siev, in Sir Geoffrey Hosking, *Russia, People and Empire, 1552-1917*, London: Harper Collins, 1997, p. 73.

⁶⁶⁶ Dugin, *Absolutnaia Rodina*, Moscow, 1997, p. 517.

Is Dugin here approving of Ivan the Terrible and his *oprichnina*, and even of the KGB as the *oprichnina*'s modern-day successor? It is not clear - but it would not be entirely unexpected in this most fanatical of modern Russian nationalist ideologists. After all, Dugin's idol, Putin, is KGB. What is clear is that Dugin has a positive attitude towards the "strange power" that worked through the Bolsheviks. He even appears to see in it the unifying theme of Russian history...

Here we come to the nub of Dugin's understanding of Russian history: that in spite of its ideological fall in the mid-seventeenth century (from the Old Ritualist point of view), the "Eastern Roman Empire" in its Russian incarnation not only did not come to an end in 1917, but in some mysterious way continued to exist under Soviet power, and continues even now to serve God and the True Church by opposing the real Antichrist - American power - in the regime of Vladimir Putin.

Unlike Dugin the ideologue, Putin is an opportunist who only uses these ideas for propaganda purposes, to bolster his personal power. But this does not make them any the less dangerous, especially when they are supported not only by the country's religious leader, Patriarch Cyril of Moscow, but even by conservative foreign religious and political leaders, such as Pat Buchanan. Thus according to Ryan Gorman, Buchanan claims "that Moscow is 'the third Rome,' a claim that goes back to the 12th century and the Byzantines, and the West is the source from which evils such as gay marriage tolerance, abortion acceptance and devil worshiping emanate.

"Many Euro-Atlantic countries have moved away from their roots, including Christian values," he writes Putin said in a recent speech...

"Western leaders who compare Putin's annexation of Crimea to Hitler's Anschluss with Austria... believe Putin's claim to stand on higher moral ground is beyond blasphemous," writes Buchanan.

"But Vladimir Putin knows exactly what he is doing..."⁶⁶⁷

As for Patriarch Cyril, Putin's colleague in the KGB, he promotes the idea of "the Russian world", which is "a special civilization that comprises people who now call themselves different names: Russians, Ukrainians, and Belorussians. This world may also include people who do not belong to the Slavic world at all, but who have taken the cultural and spiritual component of this world [i.e. Orthodoxy] as their own."⁶⁶⁸ In other words, he is talking about an Orthodox commonwealth of nations led by Russia whose superficial similarity to the concept of Moscow the Third Rome is obvious.

The future of this latest, Putinist version of the "Moscow the Third Rome" idea will depend on how it is received by the people to whom it is aimed - the Orthodox

⁶⁶⁷ Gorman, "Pat Buchanan claims GOD is on Russia's side and that Moscow is the 'third Rome'", *Mail Online*, April 6, 2014, <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2597663/Pat-Buchanan-claims-GOD-Russias-Moscow-Rome.html>.

⁶⁶⁸ Patriarch Cyril, *Interfax*, September 8, 2014.

peoples of Russia and Eastern Europe. If they compare it with its supposed predecessors - the Second Rome of Constantinople, and the Third Rome of pre-revolutionary Russia, - then they will quickly see that it is a fake, being based on a heretical "Orthodoxy" and a pseudo-internationalism that is indeed very similar (contrary to Pat Buchanan's assertion) to Hitler's Nazism. And if they look closely at the reality of modern-day neo-Soviet Russia, then they will see, that whatever the sins of the West (which cannot be denied), Russia has no right to denounce them without incurring the charge of extreme hypocrisy. The problem is that hypocrisy and deception have always been the business of the KGB, at which it continues to excel; and, as KGB man Putin declared long ago: "Once a chekist [KGB man], always a chekist". In the last analysis, Putin's Russia, by trying to appropriate the legacy and glory of the Orthodox Christian Empire in order to regenerate its fading power, is only witnessing to the fact that the revolution that destroyed it is in its last throes...

And who knows? Perhaps on the ruins of Putin's fake, the genuine article will be resurrected for the support of the last generation of truly believing Christians. For "Moscow is the Third Rome, and a fourth there will not be..."

January 1/14, 2015; revised April 9/22, 2017.

32. THE CAUSES OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR

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 protectorate it exercised over the Orthodox of the Balkans and the Middle East, to its important ecclesiastical missions in Persia, China, Japan, Alaska and the United State. 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. 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 control with the government over the newly-acquired territories in Macedonia, and "Apis", Colonel Dragutin Dimitrijevič, the leading regicide of 1903 and inspirer of the terrorist "Black Hand" organization, was in charge of military intelligence...

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. "With overwhelming stupidity," as 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."⁶⁶⁹

Christopher 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."⁶⁷⁰

Seven assassins from *Mlada Bosna* were waiting for the Archduke and his wife. The first attempt to kill them failed, but the second, by Gavrilo Princip, was successful. By an extraordinary coincidence, on the very same day Rasputin was stabbed in the

⁶⁶⁹ Malcolm, *Bosnia: A Short History*, London: Papermac, 1996, p. 155.

⁶⁷⁰ Clark, *Sleepwalkers. How Europe Went to War in 1914*, London: Penguin, 2013, pp. 368-369.

stomach by a mad woman and so separated from the Russian Tsar for the rest of the summer. Thus were the two men who might have prevented their respective emperors from going to war removed from the scene. Evidently it was God's will: exactly one month later, Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia, followed soon after by Russia's mobilization in defence of her ally. And a few days after that, all the Great Powers of Europe were at war...

Many thought that war would be averted as it had been averted at similar moments of crisis several times in recent years. But it was different this time, because Austria-Hungary *wanted* war this time. As David Stevenson writes: "... Although in summer 1914 international tension was acute, a general war was not inevitable and if one had not broken out then it might not have done so at all. It was the Habsburg monarchy's response to Sarajevo that caused a crisis. Initially all it seemed to do was order an investigation. But secretly the Austrians obtained a German promise of support for drastic retaliation [on 7 July]. On 23 July they presented an ultimatum to their neighbour, Serbia. Princip and his companions were Bosnians (and therefore Habsburg subjects), but the ultimatum alleged they had conceived their plot in Belgrade, that Serbian officers and officials had supplied them with their weapons, and that Serbian frontier authorities had helped them across the border. It called on Serbia to denounce all separatist activities, ban publications and organizations hostile to Austria-Hungary, and co-operate with Habsburg officials in suppressing subversion and conducting a judicial inquiry. 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..."⁶⁷¹

The Serbs had some more or less plausible alibis. Though a Great Serbian nationalist, the Serbian Prime Minister Pašić, as Max Hastings writes, "was an inveterate enemy of Apis, some of whose associates in 1913 discussed murdering him. 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."⁶⁷²

Although there is evidence that Pašić was trying to control the Black Hand, he had 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. The very fact that he warned the Austrians about the plot shows that he knew what Apis was planning. As for Apis himself, besides taking part in the regicide of 1903, he confessed to participation in plots to murder King Nicholas of Montenegro, King Constantine of

⁶⁷¹ Stevenson, *1914-1918: The History of the First World War*, London: Penguin, 2005, pp. 10-11.

⁶⁷² Hastings, *Catastrophe: Europe goes to War 1914*, London: William Collins, 2014, p. xxxv.

Greece, Kaiser Wilhelm of Germany and King Ferdinand of Bulgaria!⁶⁷³ 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 Stevenson writes, "Serbia's army and intelligence service were out of control"⁶⁷⁴ – at least until 1917, when Apis was shot...

The terrorists were given four pistols and six bombs by Major Vojin Tankos of the Black Hand, and 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."⁶⁷⁵

As Malcolm writes, while "many theories still circulate about Apis's involvement and his possible political motives, ... the idea that the Serbian government itself had planned the assassination can be firmly rejected.

"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."⁶⁷⁶

The Austrians saw the assassination as a good reason (some called it a "pretext") for dealing with the Serbian problem once and for all. 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..."⁶⁷⁷

"The Serbian evidence," continues Stevenson, "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

⁶⁷³ West, *Black Lamb and Grey Falcon*, Edinburgh: Canongate, 2006, p. 369.

⁶⁷⁴ Stevenson, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

⁶⁷⁵ 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..." (*The War that Ended Peace*, London: Profile, 2014, p. 515)

⁶⁷⁶ Malcolm, *op. cit.*, pp. 156-157.

⁶⁷⁷ Stevenson, *op. cit.*, p. 11.

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. Yet previously Vienna had been less bellicose: the chief of the general staff, Franz Conrad von Hötzendorff, had pressed for war against Serbia since being appointed in 1906, but his appeals had been rejected. The Emperor Franz Joseph was a cautious and vastly experienced ruler who remembered previous defeats. He and his advisers moved to war only because they believed they faced an intolerable problem for which peaceful remedies were exhausted."⁶⁷⁸

Austria's aggressiveness was reinforced by Germany; on July 6 the Kaiser gave the Austrians the famous "blank cheque" promising them support whatever they did. As the German historian Fritz Fischer wrote: "The official documents 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 agree to the despatch 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."⁶⁷⁹

On this reading, the *primary* responsibility for the outbreak of war would seem to belong to the two German-speaking nations, especially Germany. As David Fromkin writes: "The generals in Berlin in the last week of July were agitating for war - not Austria's war, one aimed at Serbia, but Germany's war, aimed at Russia... Germany deliberately started a European war to keep from being overtaken by Russia..."⁶⁸⁰ Malcolm confirms this verdict: "it is now widely agreed that Germany was pushing hard for a war, in order to put some decisive check on the growing power of Russia".⁶⁸¹

Again, J.M. Roberts points out, it was Germany that first declared war on France and Russia when neither country threatened her. And by August 4 Germany had "acquired a third great power [Britain] as an antagonist, while Austria still had none... In the last analysis, the Great War was made in Berlin..."⁶⁸²

As for Russia, according to Dominic Lieven, her rulers "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,

⁶⁷⁸ Stevenson, *op. cit.*, pp. 12-13.

⁶⁷⁹ Fischer, *Germany's Aims in the First World War*, 1961, chapter 2.

⁶⁸⁰ Fromkin, *Europe's Last Summer*, London: Vintage, 2005, pp. 272, 273.

⁶⁸¹ Malcolm, *op. cit.*, p. 157.

⁶⁸² Roberts, *The Penguin History of Europe*, London: Penguin, 1997, pp. 510-511. See also Keith Wilson, "Hamlet - With and Without the Prince: Terrorism at the Outbreak of the First World War", *The Journal of Conflict Studies*, vol. 27, no. 2, 2007.

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 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."⁶⁸³

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Not only most European governments at the time, but also most historians, since then, have accepted the account outlined in the last section. But there are some "revisionists" who would spread the blame more evenly. Let us consider the alternative view of Professor Christopher Clark.

Clark points out, first, that the news of the assassination was greeted with jubilation in Serbia. Nor did the Serbian government led by Pašić do anything to calm Serbian

⁶⁸³ 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.

passions or reassure Austrian opinion – quite the reverse.⁶⁸⁴ So whatever judgement one forms of the Austrian actions, there can be no question that they were sorely provoked... The Russians also incurred guilt at this point in that they did little to rein in the nationalist passions of the Serbs, but rather supported them...⁶⁸⁵

Secondly, Clark demonstrates that the German decision to give the famous “blank cheque” on July 6 was 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 for war (their military programme was not due for completion until 1917), and secondly because, as the Kaiser repeatedly said, he could not imagine that the Tsar would side “with the regicides” against two monarchical powers. The other possibility considered by the Germans was that the Russians *wanted* to mobilize and start a European war. If that was the case, thought the Germans (there was some evidence for the hypothesis in the French and Russian newspapers), then so be it - better that the war begin now rather than later, when the advantage would be with the Russians.⁶⁸⁶ So an element of miscalculation entered into the German decision of July 6.

Thirdly, the Germans blessed the Austrians to invade Serbia - but not start a world war. In fact, both of the German-speaking nations wanted to *localize* the conflict. This is not to deny the weighty evidence that the German military had been planning a preventive war against Russia and France for years. But in July, 1914, the German civilian leadership, and in particular the Chancellor Bethmann – and even the Kaiser himself – were counting on the Austrians dealing with the Serbs and leaving it at that. Only 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 further military action. It was unfortunate that the Austrians were for various reasons not capable of acting quickly...

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, followed immediately by French intervention on the side of Russia. (Britain was also in alliance with France and Russia, but more loosely. For Britain, as it turned out, the tripwire was not Austria’s invasion of Serbia but Germany’s invasion of Belgium.) Clark produces considerable evidence to show that important figures in both the French, the Russian and the British leadership did not want the conflict to be localized, but wanted the trigger to be pulled 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, but was also true of Russian Agriculture Minister Krivoshein and British First Lord of the

⁶⁸⁴ Clark, *op. cit.*, pp. 387-391.

⁶⁸⁵ Clark, *op. cit.*, pp. 407-412.

⁶⁸⁶ Clark, *op. cit.*, pp. 415-423.

Admiralty Winston Churchill, who rejoiced on hearing that the Austrians had declared war on the Serbs on July 28.⁶⁸⁷

In fact, Russia was not fully committed to the tripwire scenario. 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."⁶⁸⁸ However, some important changes had taken place in the intervening months in the Russian foreign policy establishment. First, Prime Minister Kokovtsev, an opponent of intervention in the Balkans, had been forced out by the nationalists in the government. Then, in January, 1914, when the Tsar offered the vacant post to Pyotr N. Durnovo, - in Clark's words "a forceful and determined man who was adamantly opposed to Balkan entanglements of any kind"⁶⁸⁹, - Durnovo turned it down, and the post passed to Goremykin, a much weaker character. With this change there probably also passed the last chance for the Russian government to abandon the "tripwire" policy of the nationalists.

One could argue that the Tsar should have imposed his will on 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, was not in a position simply to ignore what his ministers thought and impose his will on them. In any case, he was running out of wise and loyal men to place in the higher reaches of government...

It must be admitted, moreover, that the Tsar himself coming closer to the nationalists' position; he probably now occupied a position somewhere in the middle between the nationalists such as Sukhomlinov, Krivoshein and Sazonov and the more cautious ministers such as Stolypin, Kokovtsev and Durnovo. He did not want war, and fully understood that it might destroy Russia in the end (which it did); but he was determined to defend the Serbs; and the other foreign policy considerations outlined by Lieven above probably also played their part in his thinking - especially, as we know for certain, his fears that the Dardanelles could be cut off for the Russian navy and Russian exports...

Proof of the Tsar's sincere desire to avert war by all honourable means 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: "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

⁶⁸⁷ Clark, *op. cit.*, p. 552.

⁶⁸⁸ Clark, *op. cit.*, p. 484.

⁶⁸⁹ Clark, *op. cit.*, p. 557.

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 if one good thing came out of the First World War it was the strengthening of that religious bond both during and after it, when the remnants of the White Armies and the Russian Church in Exile settled in Yugoslavia as the guest of King Alexander. 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."

The Tsar proved to be a faithful ally. In 1915, after being defeated by the Germans, the Serbian army was forced to retreat across the mountains to the Albanian coast. Tens of thousands began to die. Their allies looked upon them with indifference from their ships at anchor in the Adriatic. The Tsar informed his allies by telegram that they must immediately evacuate the Serbs, otherwise he would consider the fall of the Serbs as an act of the greatest immorality and he would withdraw from the Alliance. This telegram brought prompt action, and dozens of Italian, French and English ships set about evacuating the dying army to Corfu, and from there, once they had recovered, to the new front that the Allies were forming in Salonika.

As the Serbian Bishop Nicholas (Velimirovich) of Zhicha, wrote: "Great is our debt to Russia. The debt of Serbia to Russia, for help to the Serbs in the war of 1914, is huge - many centuries will not be able to contain it for all following generations. This is the

debt of love, which without thinking goes to its death, saving its neighbour. 'There is no greater love than this, that a man should lay down his life for his neighbour.' These are the words of Christ. The Russian Tsar and the Russian people, having taken the decision to enter the war for the sake of the defence of Serbia, while being unprepared for it, knew that they were going to certain destruction. The love of the Russians for their Serbian brothers did not fear death, and did not retreat before it. Can we ever forget that the Russian Tsar, in subjecting to danger both his children and millions of his brothers, went to his death for the sake of the Serbian people, for the sake of its salvation? Can we be silent before Heaven and earth about the fact that our freedom and statehood were worth more to Russia than to us ourselves? The Russians in our days repeated the Kosovo tragedy. If the Russian Tsar Nicholas II had been striving for an earthly kingdom, a kingdom of petty personal calculations and egoism, he would be sitting to this day on his throne in Petrograd. But he chose the Heavenly Kingdom, the Kingdom of sacrifice in the name of the Lord, the Kingdom of Gospel spirituality, for which he laid down his own head, for which his children and millions of his subjects laid down their heads..."⁶⁹⁰

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On July 28 the Austrians declared war on the Serbs. Sazonov immediately told London, Paris, Vienna, Berlin and Rome that Russia would mobilize the districts adjoining Austria the next day. General mobilization duly took place on the evening of July 29. In fact, Russia had *already* begun military preparations for war on July 25, while Germany "remained, in military terms, an island of relative calm throughout the crisis" ...⁶⁹¹

There was now only one hope for the prevention of war: that the Emperors of Russia and Germany would intervene and work out to some compromise. It nearly happened. For 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.⁶⁹² The family was German in origin, being made up of branches of the Saxe-Coburg dynasty.⁶⁹³ Thus even the matriarch of the family, Queen Victoria of England, once told King Leopold of the Belgians: "My heart is so German..."⁶⁹⁴ For many generations, the Russian tsars and 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

⁶⁹⁰ Victor Salni and Svetlana Avlasovich, "Net bol'she toj ljubvi, kak esli kto polozhit dushu svoiu za drugi svoia" (There is no greater love than that a man should lay down his life for his friend), http://catacomb.org.ua/modules.php?name=Pages&go=print_page*pid=966.

⁶⁹¹ Clark, *op. cit.*, p. 510.

⁶⁹² 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 (Ferguson, *The War of the World*, p. 100).

⁶⁹³ Sophie Gordon, "The Web of Royalty", *BBC History Magazine*, February, 2012, pp. 16-18. Victoria's son, Edward VII, reacted against this Germanism by becoming very anti-German.

⁶⁹⁴ Ferguson, *The War of the World*, London: Penguin, 2007, p. 97.

princesses with an English mother.⁶⁹⁵ However, a disunifying 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; for the Danes 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 Germany, thereby weakening the traditional hostility that existed between Russia and England and turning them against Germany. Meanwhile, the German Kaiser Wilhelm 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. 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...”⁶⁹⁶ And they did talk, even after the outbreak of war. But in this case the talking was to no avail. For in the last resort family unity (and the avoidance of world war) counted for less for the Kaiser than nationalist pride and solidarity with the Austrians, and less for the Tsar than solidarity in faith and blood with the Serbs...

On the morning of July 29 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. “Saying ‘I will not be responsible for a monstrous slaughter’, the Tsar insisted that the order [for general mobilization] be cancelled. Yanushkevich [Chief of the Russian General Staff] 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.”⁶⁹⁷

However, as Sazonov hastened to tell the Tsar, the reversal of the previous order was impractical for purely military and logistical reasons. (The Kaiser encountered the same problem when, to the consternation of the German Chief of Staff von Moltke, he tried to reverse German mobilization a few days later; this was the “railway

⁶⁹⁵ 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).

⁶⁹⁶ Carter, *The Three Emperors*, London, 2010, p. 145. As 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” (*op. cit.*, p. 170).

⁶⁹⁷ Clark, *op. cit.*, p. 521.

timetables problem.”) Moreover, Sazonov advised the Tsar to undertake a full mobilization because “unless he yielded to the popular demand for war and unsheathed the sword in Serbia’s behalf, he would run the risk of a revolution and perhaps the loss of his throne”. The Tsar made one last 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.” On July 30 the Kaiser replied that he was neutral in the Serbian question (which he was not). And he reiterated the warning issued by the German Ambassador Pourtalès the previous day to the effect that “Germany favours the unappeasable attitude of Austria”. The Tsar now “abandoned any hope that a deal between the cousins could save peace and returned to the option of general mobilization...”⁶⁹⁸

Grand Duchess Elizabeth said that the Tsar did not want war. She blamed her cousin, the Kaiser, “who disobeyed the bidding of Frederick the Great and Bismarck to live in peace and friendship with Russia.”⁶⁹⁹ However, if Clark is right, the situation was both more complicated and more finely balanced than that. In the last analysis, both monarchs had cold feet about war, but both were pushed into it by the pressure of their subordinates and the logic of the opposing alliances to which they themselves ascribed at least to some degree. This logic had been built up on both sides over the course of generations, and the monarchs were neither solely responsible for it nor able on their own to free themselves from its gravitational force... This is not to equate them from a moral point of view: as we shall see, they were far from equal in terms of moral stature. But it does help us to understand a little better why they both acquiesced in a war that was to destroy both their kingdoms and the very foundations of European civilization...

In any case, the die was now cast; war between Russia and Germany could no longer be prevented. The Tsar gave the order for general mobilization on July 31, and the Germans declared war on the next day, August 1, the feast of St. Seraphim of Sarov, the great prophet of the last times...

On that first day, as Lubov Millar writes, “large patriotic crowds gathered before the Winter Palace, and when the Emperor and Empress appeared on the balcony, great and joyful ovations filled the air. When the national anthem was played, the crowds began to sing enthusiastically.

“In a sitting room behind this balcony waited Grand Duchess Elizabeth, dressed in her white habit; her face was aglow, her eyes shining. Perhaps, writes Almedingen, she was thinking, ‘What are revolutionary agents compared with these loyal crowds? They would lay down their lives for Nicky and their faith and will win in the struggle.’ In a state of exaltation she made her way from the Winter Palace to the home of Grand Duke Constantine, where his five sons – already dressed in khaki uniforms – were preparing to leave for the front. These sons piously received Holy Communion and

⁶⁹⁸ Clark, *op. cit.*, p. 513.

⁶⁹⁹ 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.

then went to the Romanov tombs and to the grave of Blessed Xenia of Petersburg before joining their troops."⁷⁰⁰

The great tragedy of the war from the Russian point of view was that the truly patriotic-religious mood that was manifest at the beginning did not last, and those who rapturously applauded the Tsar in August, 1914 were baying for his blood less than three years later...

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Turning from the narrow legal question of war guilt to more fundamental moral issues and the overarching role of Divine Providence, we must first acknowledge that the fatal passions of pride and nationalist vainglory were common to all the combatants to some degree. Typical of the spirit of the time were the words of the Austrian chief of staff, Conrad von Hötzendorff, on hearing of the assassination in Sarajevo: they now had to fight Serbia (and probably Russia) "since an old monarchy and a glorious army must not perish without glory".⁷⁰¹ But important distinctions need to be made between the quality, intensity and consequences of the different nationalisms.

Clark summarises the motivation of the key actors as follows: "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..."⁷⁰²

However, an important qualification needs to be made to this analysis: 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 ended 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 1871 and into the building of the Second Reich. 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

⁷⁰⁰ Millar, *op. cit.*, p. 171.

⁷⁰¹ Strachan, *The First World War*, London: Pocket Books, 2006, p. 11.

⁷⁰² Clark, *op. cit.*, p. 558.

Spirit... To these false and idolatrous philosophies must be added a belief that was especially common in the German-speaking countries - Social Darwinism. Thus 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."⁷⁰³ Again, 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.⁷⁰⁴

Thus the most fundamental ideological divide between the antagonists, according to the famous Serbian Bishop Nicholas Velimirovich, was the struggle 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... 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."⁷⁰⁵

Nietzsche had been opposed to the new Germany that emerged after 1871. However, many of his nihilist ideas had penetrated deep into the German consciousness. What drove him, writes Macmillan, "was a conviction that Western civilisation 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 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

⁷⁰³ Von Bernhardi, *Germany and the Next War*.

⁷⁰⁴ Von Hötzendorff, in Strachan, *op. cit.*, pp. 10-11.

⁷⁰⁵ Velimirovich, "The Religious Spirit of the Slavs", in *Sabrana Dela* (Collected Works), volume 3, 1986, Khimelstir, 1986, pp. 221-222.

Ferdinand and so precipitated the Great War were deeply impressed by Nietzsche's views..."⁷⁰⁶

In another place Bishop Nicholas 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, 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."⁷⁰⁷

⁷⁰⁶ Macmillian, *op. cit.*, pp. 237-238.

⁷⁰⁷ Velimirovich, "The Agony of the Church", in *Sabrana Dela* (Collected Works), volume 3, 1986, Khimelstir, pp. 83-84.

A disciple of Bishop Nicholas, Archimandrite Justin (Popovich), followed his teacher in attributing the cause of God's wrath against Christian Europe in the two world wars to its betrayal of True Christianity and its embracing an antichristian humanistic metaphysics of progress that was in fact regression. The end of such a nihilist metaphysic could only be death, death on a massive scale, death with no redeeming purpose or true glory, no resurrection in Christ: "It is obvious to normal eyes: European humanistic culture systematically blunts man's sense of immortality, until it is extinguished altogether. The man of European culture affirms, with Nietzsche, that he is flesh and nothing but flesh. And that means: I am mortal, and nothing but mortal. It is thus that humanistic Europe gave itself over to the slogan: man is a mortal being. That is the formula of humanistic man; therein lies the essence of his progress.

"At first subconsciously, then consciously and deliberately, science, philosophy, and culture inculcated in the European man the proposition that man is completely mortal, with nothing else left over... Humanistic man is a devastated creature because the sense of personal immortality has been banished from him. And without that sentiment, can man ever be complete?

"European man is a shrunken dwarf, reduced to a fraction of man's stature, for he has been emptied of the sense of transcendence. And without the transcendent, can man exist at all as man? And if he could, would there be any meaning to his existence? Minus that sense of the transcendent, is he not but a dead object among other objects, and a transient species among other animals?

"... [Supposedly] equal to the animals in his origin, why should he not also assimilate their morals? Being part of the animal world of beasts in basic nature, he has also joined them in their morals. Are not sin and crime increasingly regarded by modern jurisprudence as an unavoidable by-product of the social environment and as a natural necessity? Since there is nothing eternal and immortal in man, ethics must, in the final analysis, be reduced to instinctive drives. In his ethics, humanistic man has become equal to his progenitors, monkeys and beasts. And the governing principle of his life has become: homo homini lupus.

"It could not be otherwise. For an ethic that is superior to that of the animals could only be founded on a sentiment of human immortality. If there is no immortality and eternal life, neither within nor around man, then animalistic morals are entirely natural and logical for a bestialized humanity: let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die (cf. I Corinthians 15.32).

"The relativism in the philosophy of European humanistic progress could not but result in an ethical relativism, and relativism is the father of anarchism and nihilism. Wherefore, in the last analysis, the practical ethic of humanistic man is nothing but anarchy and nihilism. For anarchy and nihilism are the unavoidable, final and apocalyptic phase of European progress. Ideological anarchism and nihilism, ideological disintegration, necessarily had to manifest themselves in practical anarchism and nihilism, in the practical disintegration of European humanistic man

and his progress. Are we not eyewitnesses to the ideological and practical anarchism and nihilism that are devastating the European continent? The addenda of European progress are such that, no matter how they might be computed, their sum is always anarchism and nihilism. The evidence? Two world wars (actually European wars).

“European man is stupid, catastrophically stupid, when, while disbelieving in God and the immortality of the soul, he still professes belief in progress and life’s meaning and acts accordingly. What good is progress, if after it comes death? What use are the world, the stars, and cultures, if behind them lurks death, and ultimately it must conquer me? Where there is death, there can be no real progress. If there is any, it can only be the cursed progress of the mill of death, which ought to be demolished totally and without a trace...”⁷⁰⁸

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But how different was Slavic Orthodox man from European man at this juncture, and was there any difference in how the First World War affected the Orthodox East by contrast with the heterodox West?

We may agree that the teachings of the Nietzschean Superman or the Darwinian Apeman had not yet penetrated as deeply into the Orthodox East as into the heterodox West. And yet we have seen 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. Moreover, terrorism of a more openly atheist, internationalist kind had already counted thousands of innocent victims in Russia and would soon produce many millions more....

In accordance with the principle that “to whom much is given, much is asked”, the Orthodox nations to whom had been entrusted the riches of the Orthodox faith must be considered to have borne a very major share of the responsibility for the catastrophe. We have seen that both faith and morals were in sharp decline in the Orthodox countries. Moreover, when war broke out, the Orthodox nations did not form a united front behind the Tsar in spite of the fact that the defeat of Russia was bound to have catastrophic effects on Orthodoxy as a whole. Thus the Orthodox Bulgarians, who owed their independence almost entirely to the Russians, decided to join the Germans.⁷⁰⁹ Again, the Romanians (who resented the Russian takeover of

⁷⁰⁸ Popovich, *The Orthodox Church and Ecumenism*, Thessaloniki, 1974, translated in *Orthodox Life*, September-October, 1983, pp. 26-27.

⁷⁰⁹ 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 fulfillment 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

Bessarabia in 1878) and the Greeks (who had a German king) were for the time being neutral...

For all these reasons, the judgement of God fell hardest on the Orthodox, "the household of God". 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 blind nationalism, as we have seen, was a significant cause of 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 Europeanism gradually to drive out their God-given inheritance...

But were there no redeeming features for the Orthodox in this, the great watershed in modern European history?

One possible reason why Divine Providence should have allowed it is that it was not so much a war between Slavdom and Germandom, as between Orthodoxy and Westernism, on which the future of Orthodoxy depended. Divine Providence allowed it saved the Orthodox, according to this argument, not only from *violent* conquest by those of another *race*, but also, and primarily, from *peaceful*, ecumenist merging with those of another *faith*. This is how many Russians understood the war. In 1912 the country had celebrated the one hundredth anniversary of the Battle of Borodino, and in 1913 – the three-hundredth anniversary of the establishment of the Romanov dynasty. These were patriotic celebrations, but also religious ones; for both the commemorated events had taken place on the background of great threats to the Orthodox Faith from western nations. So when the Tsar went to war in 1914, this was again seen as the beginning of a great patriotic *and religious* war. It was not so much Teutonism versus Slavism as Protestantism versus Orthodoxy.

As Archbishop 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

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>)

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..."⁷¹⁰

Again, a disciple of Archbishop Anthony, Archimandrite Hilarion (Troitsky), regarded the war as "liberational in the broadest meaning of the word", and called on his students at the theological academy to resist German influence in theology with books and words.⁷¹¹

The problem with this argument is that while Protestant chapels were indeed prevented from being built in Russia, and the influence of Protestant ecumenist theology was checked for the time being, another, still more destructive product of German (and Jewish) culture, the Marxist doctrine of dialectical materialism, was planted very firmly in Russian soil - with absolutely catastrophic results for Russian Orthodoxy...

However, there is no doubt that one definitively positive result of the war and of the revolution that followed closely upon it was that it forced many people to reconsider the emptiness of the lives they had leading and return to God. For while defeat and revolution had a 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: the spreading of Russian Orthodoxy throughout the world through the emigration, and within Russia - the emergence of a mighty choir of new martyrs and confessors.

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The unprecedented destructiveness of the war had been predicted by Engels as early as 1887: "Prussia-Germany can no longer fight any war but a world war; and a war of hitherto unknown dimensions and ferocity. Eight to ten million soldiers will swallow each other up and in doing so eat all Europe more bare than any swarm of locusts. The devastation of the Thirty Years War compressed into the space of three or four years and extending over the whole continent; famine, sickness, want, brutalizing the army and the mass of the population; irrevocable confusion of our artificial structure of trade, industry and credit, ending in general bankruptcy; collapse of the old states and their traditional statecraft, so that crowns will roll by dozens in the gutter and no one can be found to pick them up. It is absolutely impossible to predict

⁷¹⁰ Khrapovitsky, *The Christian Faith and War*, Jordanville, 2005, pp. 8-9.

⁷¹¹ 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.

where it will end and who will emerge from the struggle as victor. Only *one* result is absolutely certain: general exhaustion and the establishment of conditions for the final victory of the working class."⁷¹²

And truly: after the war, everything was different. The Russian empire was gone, and with its disappearance all the islands of Orthodoxy throughout the world began to tremble and contract within themselves. Also gone were the German and Austrian empires. The very principle of monarchy was fatally undermined, surviving in a feebler, truncated form for a short time in Orthodox Eastern Europe. Christianity as a whole was on the defensive; in most places it became a minority religion again, and in some it was fiercely persecuted, as if the Edict of Milan had been reversed and a new age of the catacombs had returned. The powerful, if superficial pax Europaica had been succeeded by a new age of barbarism, in which nations were divided within and between themselves, and neo-pagan ideologies held sway.

The nature of the war itself contributed to this seismic change. It was not like almost all earlier wars – short, involving only professional armies, with limited effects on the civilian population. It was (with the possible exception of the Napoleonic wars) the first of the *total wars*, involving the *whole* of the people and taking up *all* its resources, thereby presaging the appearance of *the totalitarian age*.

The war's length, the vast numbers of its killed and wounded, the unprecedented sufferings of the civilian populations, and the sheer horror of its front-line combat deprived it, after the patriotic élan of the first few months, of any chivalric, redemptive aspects – at any rate, for all but the small minority who consciously fought for God, Tsar and Fatherland. Indeed, the main legacy of the war was simply *hatred* – hatred of the enemy, hatred of one's own leaders – a hatred that did not die after the war's end, but was translated into a kind of universal hatred that presaged still more horrific and total wars to come. Thus the Germans so hated the English that Shakespeare could not be mentioned in Germany. And the English so hated the "Huns" that Beethoven could not be mentioned in England. And the Russians so hated the Germans that the Germanic-sounding "St. Petersburg" had to be changed to the more Slavic "Petrograd"...⁷¹³

But this was not its only legacy. As we have seen, the Tsar's truly self-sacrificial support for Serbia in August, 1914 constituted a legacy of *love*; while the intercessions of the great choir of holy new martyrs and confessors that he headed constitute the long-term basis for hope in the resurrection of Russia and Orthodoxy as a whole. And it may be hoped that in the grand scheme of Divine Providence this legacy of love and faithfulness will prove the stronger...

However, if we look at 1914 from the perspective of a century later, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the decision to go to war was catastrophic, not only for Russia but for the whole world. If the Tsar had known its consequences, would he not

⁷¹² Engels, in M.J. Cohen and John Major, *History in Quotations*, London: Cassell, 2004, p. 707.

⁷¹³ Edvard Radzinsky, interview with Vladimir Posner, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0waA2YwhLnw>.

have regretted his decision, just as he came to regret his decision to abdicate in February, 1917? Perhaps... And yet "there is a tide in the affairs of men", and there is no question that the tide in European politics, all over the continent, was towards war. The Tsar might have resisted the tide for a while, as he resisted it in 1912. But reading his diary entries and speeches, it is difficult to avoid the further conclusion that the Tsar felt he had no real alternative. The best he could do was choose a time when honour and loyalty (to the Serbs) provided at any rate a certain moral justification for the war. As for the ultimate consequences, the Tsar's famed "fatalism" may have played a part here. As the proverb goes, "Man proposes, but God disposes". The Tsar sincerely wanted peace, knowing the terrible consequences of war. But he knew that God controls the destinies of nations and orders them in accordance with His inscrutable Providence. Who was he - who was any man - to resist the will of God if He wanted to punish His people and all the nations?

Pascha, 2015.

33. THE BIG THREE IN WORLD WAR TWO

The enormous initial successes of the Germans in Russia came to an end on December 6, 1941, when the Russians counter-attacked and saved Moscow. The next day, the Japanese attacked the American fleet in Pearl Harbour, bringing the United States into the war. Shortly after that, Hitler recklessly declared war on the Americans. The linking of the European and Far Asian theatres, and the entrance of the United States, the world's greatest industrial power, into the war against the Axis made it genuinely global and swung the pendulum of war slowly but inexorably against the Axis powers...

The alliance of the three nations of Britain, the United States and the Soviet Union was cemented when Churchill flew into Moscow in May, 1942. It was an unequal relationship from the beginning. The Soviets insisted, often rudely and sarcastically, on the Anglo-Saxons' opening a second front in the West - something the British and the Americans were not strong enough to do yet. Instead, recognizing the enormous importance of the Soviet-German front for the ultimate outcome of the war, they sent vast quantities of arms and supplies by convoy around the Northern Cape to Murmansk and Archangelsk. Meanwhile, the Americans kept the British afloat with Lend-lease supplies from across the Atlantic.

There could hardly have been a more paradoxical and contradictory alliance than that between the aristocratic British lord and fierce anti-communist, Churchill, and the leader of the communist world revolution, Stalin. There is a Russian proverb that in certain situations one should be ready to use "even the devil and his grandma" - Stalin once quoted this to the British and American leaders.⁷¹⁴ But there is another, English proverb that the Anglo-Saxons could have quoted: "When you go to dinner with the devil, use a very long spoon". Unfortunately, the Anglo-Saxons tended to follow the Russian proverb more than their own, better one; for the tragic fact was that during the war, in order to drive out one demon, Hitler, they decided to enlist the aid of another, bigger demon, Stalin. Thus they repeated the mistake of the good King Jehoshaphat of Judah, who was rebuked by God for allying himself with the wicked King Ahaziah of Israel, and was told: "Because you have allied yourself with Ahaziah, the Lord has destroyed your works" (II Chronicles 20.37). As an inevitable result, while the smaller demon was defeated, the larger one triumphed...

One British sailor, who later became an Orthodox subdeacon, was on a cruiser in the Mediterranean when he heard the news of the alliance between Britain and the Soviet Union. Turning to a friend of his, he said: "Before, we were fighting for God, king and country. Now we are fighting for king and country."⁷¹⁵ For, of course, in fighting alongside the devil's Stalin, they could not be fighting for God...

Demonology occupied the war leaders from the beginning. Thus when Hitler invaded Soviet Russia in 1941, Churchill told the House of Commons that if Hitler had invaded hell, he would have found it in himself "to make a favourable reference to

⁷¹⁴ Jonathan Fenby, *Alliance*, London: Pocket Books, 2006, p. 160.

⁷¹⁵ Subdeacon Paul Inglesby, personal communication.

the devil in the House of Commons".⁷¹⁶ Again, when Churchill met Stalin for the first time, in May, 1942, Stalin wished him success in Operation Torch, the invasion of North Africa.

"'May God help you,' he added.

"'God, of course, is on our side,' Churchill said.

"'And the devil is, naturally, on mine, and through our combined efforts we shall defeat the enemy,' Stalin chuckled."⁷¹⁷

Very funny, no doubt, for the devil's chief agent on earth... But the joke obscured, while at the same time pointing to, a supremely important truth: that God and the devil can never be on the same side, and that while God may use the devil and his servants towards his ultimate, supremely good aim, no human being can attempt to be so clever without destroying himself. For the ends do *not* justify the means: if we use evil means towards a good end, the end of it all will turn out to be evil...

Evidently, the deep meaning of this joke continued to occupy the minds of the leaders, because they returned to it at the Teheran conference in 1943.

"'God is on our side,' Churchill said. 'At least I have done my best to make Him a faithful ally.'

"'And the devil is on my side,' Stalin chipped in. 'Because, of course, everybody knows that the devil is a Communist and God, no doubt, is a good Conservative.'..."⁷¹⁸

Stalin was now in a much more powerful position than he had been in 1941, and so he was not afraid to point out the great gulf between Soviet Communism and British Conservatism, even hinting that the two were *not* on the same side. Churchill, of course, as an old anti-communist warrior, was well aware of this - as Roosevelt, apparently, was not. Or if Roosevelt was aware, he chose to ignore this difference, while increasingly highlighting, to Churchill's great embarrassment, the ideological differences between imperialist Britain and the supposedly anti-imperialist United States. For Churchill was now in a much weaker position in relation to both Stalin and Roosevelt, being almost entirely dependent on Stalin to defeat Hitler on land, and on

⁷¹⁶ Fenby, *op. cit.*, p. 65. "Ironically," writes Niall Ferguson, "Hitler said the same about the Japanese in May 1942: 'The present conflict is one of life or death, and the essential thing is to win - and to that end we are quite ready to make an alliance with the Devil himself'" (*The War of the World*, London: Penguin, 2007, p. 511, footnote).

⁷¹⁷ Fenby, *op. cit.*, p. 152.

⁷¹⁸ Fenby, *op. cit.*, p. 239. He repeated the point once more in Teheran. Nor were the Big Three averse to some straight blasphemy. Thus in Moscow in October, 1944 Churchill spoke of "our three great democracies" which were "committed to the lofty ideals of freedom, human dignity and happiness". Later, "When somebody compared the Big Three to the Holy Trinity, Stalin said Churchill must be the Holy Ghost because 'he is flying all over the place'." (Fenby, *op. cit.*, pp. 331, 333)

Roosevelt to supply his island with arms and food by sea. And so he was afraid to highlight *any* ideological differences between the three.

In fact, by this time both Churchill and Roosevelt were well on the path towards full appeasement of the bloody dictator – an appeasement that was even worse than that of Munich, and which had a much profounder and more degrading influence on the behaviour of the western democracies.

It all began very differently, with the agreement known as the Atlantic Charter in August, 1941. Britain and America agreed then that they would seek no territorial gains in the war; that territorial gains would be in accordance with the wishes of the peoples concerned; that all peoples had the right to self-determination; that trade barriers were to be lowered; that there was to be global economic cooperation and advancement of social welfare; that the participants would work for a world free of want and fear; that the participants would work for freedom of the seas; and that there was to be disarmament of aggressor nations, and a postwar common disarmament. In September a number of other western and Asiatic nations signed up to these principles. And on January 1, 1942 the Soviet Union and China, among other countries, also signed up.⁷¹⁹

But of course the Soviets had no intention of granting self-determination to the countries they had first conquered during their alliance with the Nazis (the Baltic States, Eastern Poland, Bukovina and Bessarabia). As Norman Stone writes, “Churchill did not have the strength to resist Stalin, and the Americans did not have the will.”⁷²⁰ Already by the time of the Teheran Conference in November, 1943 they had effectively given in. “‘Now the fate of Europe is settled,’ Stalin remarked, according to Beria’s son. ‘We shall do as we like, *with the Allies’ consent.*’”⁷²¹ Or, as Churchill put it in October, 1944: “[It’s] all very one-sided. They get what they want by guile, flattery or force.”⁷²²

Indeed, already on February 20, 1943, Roosevelt wrote to the Jew Zabrowsky, who acted as liaison officer between himself and Stalin, that the USSR could be assured of control of most of Europe after the war with full equality with the other “tetrarchs” (Britain, America and China) in the post-war United Nations Security Council: “You can assure Stalin that the USSR will find herself on a footing of complete equality, having an equal voice with the United States and England in the direction of the said Councils (of Europe and Asia). Equally with England and the United States, she will be a member of the High Tribunal which will be created to resolve differences between the nations, and she will take part similarly and identically in the selection, preparation, armament and command of the international forces which, under the orders of the Continental Council, will keep watch within each State to see that peace is maintained in the spirit worthy of the League of Nations. Thus these inter-State

⁷¹⁹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Atlantic_Charter;

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Declaration_by_United_Nations.

⁷²⁰ Stone, *The Atlantic and its Enemies*, London: Penguin, 2010, p. 5.

⁷²¹ Fenby, *op. cit.*, p. 211. My italics (V.M.).

⁷²² Fenby, *op. cit.*, p. 331.

entities and their associated armies will be able to impose their decisions and to make themselves obeyed...

"We will grant the USSR access to the Mediterranean [overriding the territorial claims of Turkey]; we will accede in her wishes concerning Poland and the Baltic, and we shall require Poland to show a judicious attitude of comprehension and compromise [i.e. surrender to all Stalin's demands]; Stalin will still have a wide field for expansion in the little, unenlightened [*sic!*] countries of Eastern Europe – always taking into account the rights which are due to the fidelity of Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia – he will completely recover the territories which have temporarily been snatched from Great Russia."⁷²³

The essential truth of the Zabrowsky letter was confirmed by Cardinal Spellman in a book by R.I. Gannon, SJ, *The Cardinal Spellman Story*. Describing a long talk he had had with Roosevelt on September 3, 1943, he wrote: "It is planned to make an agreement among the Big Four. Accordingly the world will be divided into spheres of influence: China gets the Far East; the US the Pacific; Britain and Russia, Europe and Africa. But as Britain has predominantly colonial interests it might be assumed that Russia will predominate in Europe. Although Chiang Kai-shek will be called in on the great decisions concerning Europe, it is understood that he will have no influence on them. The same thing might become true – although to a lesser degree – for the US. He hoped, 'although it might be wishful thinking', that the Russian intervention in Europe would not be too harsh.

"*League of Nations*: The last one was no success, because the small states were allowed to intervene. The future league will consist only of the four big powers (US, Britain, Russia, China). The small states will have a consultative assembly, without right to decide or to vote. For example, at the armistice with Italy, the Greeks, Yugoslavs and French asked to be co-signers. 'We simply turned them down.' They have no right to sit in where the big ones are. Only the Russians were admitted, because they are big, strong and simply impose themselves.

"*Russia*: An interview with Stalin will be forced as soon as possible. He believes that he will be better fitted to come to an understanding with Stalin than Churchill. Churchill is too idealistic, he [Roosevelt] is a realist. So is Stalin. Therefore an understanding between them on a realistic basis is probable. The wish is, although it seems improbable, to get from Stalin a pledge not to extend Russian territory beyond a certain line. He would certainly receive: Finland, the Baltic States, the Eastern half of Poland, Bessarabia. There is no point to oppose these desires of Stalin, because he has the power to get them anyhow. So better give them gracefully.

"Furthermore the population of Eastern Poland wants to become Russian [!]. Still it is absolutely not sure whether Stalin will be satisfied with these boundaries. On the remark that Russia has appointed governments of communistic character for Germany, Austria and other countries which can make a communist regime there, so

⁷²³ Roosevelt, in Count Léon de Poncins, *State Secrets*, Chulmleigh: Britons Publishing Company, 1975, pp. 77, 78.

that the Russians might not even need to come, he agreed that this is to be expected. Asked further, whether the Allies would not do something from their side which might offset this move in giving encouragement to the better elements, just as Russia encourages the Communists, he declared that no such move was contemplated [!!]. It is therefore probably that Communist Regimes would expand, but what can we do about it. France might eventually escape if it has a government *à la* Leon Blum. The Front Populaire would be so advanced, that eventually the Communists would accept it. On the direct questions whether Austria, Hungary and Croatia would fall under some sort of Russian protectorate, the answer was clearly yes. But he added, we should not overlook the magnificent economic achievements of Russia. Their finances are sound. It is natural that the European countries will have to undergo tremendous changes in order to adapt to Russia, but in hopes that in ten or twenty years the European influences would bring the Russians to become less barbarian.

“Be that as it may, he added, the US and Britain cannot fight the Russians...”⁷²⁴

The eventual post-war outcome, though very bad, was not quite as bad as Roosevelt envisaged. But no thanks to him! His attitude of defeatism and surrender in relation to Stalin, his plans, in spite of his democratic ideals and his acceptance of the Atlantic Charter, to surrender most of Europe to the worst despotism in human history (while trying to break up the far milder tyranny of Britain over her colonies), involuntarily makes one think that he was somehow bewitched or even enrolled by Stalin to serve the interests of Soviet Communism alone!

Roosevelt’s claim that the Russians could take everything they wanted anyway was false. The Allies’ shipments of all kinds of supplies (suffering huge losses along the North Cape route) were vital to the Soviet war effort⁷²⁵, and they could have threatened to stop these in exchange for concessions. But the Americans seemed determined to allow the Soviet maximum freedom to do what they liked without regard to the Atlantic Charter or the rights of smaller nations.

⁷²⁴ Spellman, in de Poncins, *op. cit.*, pp. 89-90.

⁷²⁵ Ferguson writes: “All told, Stalin received supplies worth 93 billion roubles, between 4 and 8 per cent of Soviet net material product. The volumes of hardware suggest that these official statistics understate the importance of American assistance: 380,000 field telephones, 363,000 trucks, 43,000 jeeps, 6,000 tanks and over 5,000 miles of telephone wire were shipped along the icy Arctic supply routes to Murmansk, from California to Vladivostok, or overland from Persia. Thousands of fighter planes were flown along an ‘air bridge’ from Alaska to Siberia. Nor was it only hardware that the Americans supplied to Stalin. Around 58 per cent of Soviet aviation fuel came from the United States during the war, 53 per cent of all explosives and very nearly half of all the copper, aluminium and tyres, to say nothing of the tons of tinned Spam – in all, somewhere between 41 and 63 per cent of all Soviet military supplies. American engineers also continued to provide valuable technical assistance, as they had in the early days of Magnitogorsk” (*op. cit.*, p. 529).

74% of the tanks employed by the Russians at the battle of Moscow in December, 1941 were imported from Britain. However, Norman Davies argues that Western supplies were less important to the Soviets in the early stages of the war. “British tanks were not what the Red Army needed, and British Army greatcoats (like German greatcoats) were totally unsuited to the Russian winter. The Soviets had already gained the upper hand on their own account before Western aid began to reach them in quantity” (*Europe at War*, London: Pan Books, 2006, p. 484)

This was true not only of Roosevelt but also of his Foreign Secretary, Cordell Hull. "What he wanted from the conference was a grand declaration on the post-war international organization. The future of smaller European nations was of no concern to him - 'I don't want to deal with these piddling little things,' he told Harriman, adding that Poland was a 'Pandora's box of infinite trouble' best left unopened."⁷²⁶

But the British could not easily give up on Poland, for whose sake they had entered the war in September, 1939, and which contributed many tens of thousands of soldiers and airmen to the British Armed Forces. So Churchill continued to support the Polish government-in-exile and its underground army in Poland while Stalin built up another, communist underground army and government (the Lublin Committee). One of the reasons why he stopped on the eastern side of Vistula and did not allow the Red Army to aid the Warsaw uprising in August, 1944 was his desire to wrinkle out the Polish royalists and have them destroyed - whether by the Germans or his own men.

In September, writes Fenby, "though Stalin now claimed that he had been misinformed about the reasons for the rising, the Red Army still did not advance as anti-Communist Polish forces in the city were reduced to a handful. The deadly inaction had done the Lublin Committee's work for it. Reporting to Washington, Harriman concluded that Stalin did not want the Poles to take credit for the liberation of Warsaw, and wished the underground leaders to be killed by Nazis or stigmatised as enemies who could be arrested when the Russians entered. 'Under these circumstances,' he added, 'it is difficult for me to see how a peaceful or acceptable solution can be found to the Polish problem...'"⁷²⁷

But Churchill, too, made unacceptable compromises. Thus he, like the Americans, turned a blind eye to Stalin's slaughter of 20,000 of Poland's elite at Katyn, accepting the lie that the Germans had done it. Again, when Foreign Minister Eden visited Stalin in October, 1943, he "carried a note by Churchill recognising that Moscow's accession to the Atlantic Charter had been based on the frontiers of June 11, 1941, and taking note of 'the historic frontiers of Russia before the two wars of aggression waged by Germany in 1914 and 1939'".⁷²⁸ In other words, Germany's conquests in Poland after the shameful Molotov-Ribbentrop pact were not to be recognised, but Russia's were!

The difference between Roosevelt and Churchill was that the latter, unlike the former, sometimes got angry with the dictator and did wrestle some concessions from him. Thus his famous percentages agreement with Stalin in October, 1944 over spheres of influence in Eastern Europe was firmly adhered to by Stalin, enabling Greece to escape the communist yoke. And yet this concession could have been greatly improved on if only the Americans had accepted the British plan, put forward at Quebec in August, 1943, of attacking Hitler in the Western Balkans. In the next month, Italy surrendered; so the time was right. The implementation of such a plan would not

⁷²⁶ Fenby, *op. cit.*, p. 208.

⁷²⁷ Fenby, *op. cit.*, p. 301.

⁷²⁸ Fenby, *op. cit.*, p. 207.

only have saved the Balkans from communist domination: it would have shortened the war with Germany considerably.

However, as Misha Glenny writes, “the Americans stalled, insisting instead on driving up through difficult Italian terrain in preparation for Operation Dragoon, the seaborne assault on southern and western France. ‘I still don’t understand,’ noted General Rendulic, the man coordinating the Wehrmacht’s struggle against Tito, ‘why the Allies gave up their drive across the Balkans after they had taken Sicily in August [1943]. Instead, they sustained many losses over a period of months as they squeezed their way through the narrow roads of the Italian peninsula before finally landing on the West coast of France, far away from all the strategic theatres of war. I am convinced that by giving up an assault on the Balkans in 1943, the Allies might have postponed the end of the war by a year.’”⁷²⁹

Churchill raised the idea of a joint Anglo-American thrust into the Balkans at Yalta in February, 1945. But neither Stalin nor Roosevelt responded. The idea was dead...⁷³⁰

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All these tendencies reached fruition in the famous conference of the Big Three in Yalta in February, 1945. By then, Stalin already held all the cards. Not only was the Red Army already in effective control of most of Eastern and Central Europe (its forward units were 70 kilometres from Berlin while the Western Allies were 600 kilometres away). Through his listening devices at Yalta and his spies in the West – especially Guy Burgess in the British Foreign Office and Donald Maclean in the British Embassy in Washington – he knew exactly what the plans of the western leaders were, what they wanted in their negotiations with him and their disagreements amongst themselves.⁷³¹

Indeed, Roosevelt did everything he could to demonstrate to the Soviets that he was *not* in agreement with the British on many points, and sabotaged all attempts to establish a joint Anglo-American position before the beginning of the conference. He appeared to prefer the role of mediator between the Soviets and the British perhaps because this gave him more flexibility in his negotiations with Stalin, over whom he counted on being able to work his charm.⁷³² Or perhaps he was deliberately aiming at giving the Soviets the very large sphere of influence as envisaged in the Zabrusky letter (though formally he rejected the idea of “spheres of influence”). In any case, his behavior annoyed the British and definitely strengthened the Soviet negotiating position.

But there was one question on which both the Americans and the British dug their heels in – for a time: Poland. They recognized only the London government-in-exile, while the Soviets recognized only the Lublin Committee. However, after Roosevelt

⁷²⁹ Glenny, *The Balkans, 1804-1999*, London: Granta Books, 2000, p. 519.

⁷³⁰ S.M. Plokhy, *Yalta: The Price of Peace*, London: Penguin, 2010, p. 85.

⁷³¹ Plokhy, *op. cit.*, pp. 78-79.

⁷³² Plokhy, *op. cit.*, pp. 101, 35.

had obtained two of his goals from Stalin (albeit with major concessions) – the foundation of the United Nations and the Soviet entry into the war with Japan – his resistance effectively collapsed. The British conducted a spirited rearguard action, but effectively the battle was lost: it was the Lublin regime that was recognized, albeit “reorganized” and with the promise of “fair” elections in which non-communists could take part.

The British had some victories to make up for this, their greatest defeat. One was the inclusion of the French in the Allied Control Commission and the creation of the French occupation zone. Stalin had opposed this, but he surrendered after Roosevelt changed his mind and swung behind the British position.

Another British victory was over the question of reparations from Germany. Stalin demanded \$20 billion in reparations, with \$10 billion going to the Soviets. Churchill and Eden argued that such an enormous demand would jeopardize Germany’s economic recovery, which was vital to the economy of the whole world; it would mean that they would have no money to pay for imports, which would hinder other countries’ export trade; and it would threaten mass unemployment and starvation in Germany, not to mention the resurrection of that resentment which had played such an important part in the rise of Hitler after the First World War. They were supported by a letter from the British war cabinet which said that this huge sum could not be paid “by a Germany which has been bombed, defeated, perhaps dismembered and unable to pay for imports”. Molotov mocked the British: “The essence of Eden’s statement comes down to taking as little from Germany as possible”. Stalin employed the same tactic, asking Churchill whether he was “scared” by the Soviet request. But Churchill held his ground. And then Roosevelt once again changed course and backed the British. “Under pressure from the State Department and seeking to placate the media, Roosevelt had abandoned the Morgenthua plan, but could easily return to some of its provisions in spirit if not in letter, to placate the Soviets.”⁷³³ With great reluctance, the Soviet dictator accepted that the amount and nature of reparations should be decided by the Reparations Commission, to which both sides would present their proposals...

Here was another demonstration of how much more could have been achieved if the western allies had always worked together...

If at the top of Stalin’s wish-list was his complete control over Poland, German reparations and the return of all Soviet prisoners of war (about which more in a later chapter), Roosevelt’s main desires were for the Soviets’ entry into the war against Japan, and the establishment of the United Nations. Stalin agreed to enter the war against Japan three months after a German surrender, but extracted a high price – mainly at the expense of China, but also at the expense of Roosevelt’s loudly proclaimed principles of political behaviour. For in a secret agreement, to which even the British were not party, Roosevelt agreed that the Soviets should take control of the Kurile islands, southern Sakhalin, Port Arthur, the Manchurian railroads, and that

⁷³³ Plokhy, *op. cit.*, p. 259.

outer Mongolia should become an independent country (under Soviet control, naturally).

Thus were the worst fears of the Chinese nationalists realized. They naturally wanted to free their country not only from the Japanese but also from the Chinese Communists, whose allies, of course, were the Soviet Communists. But Roosevelt wanted not only to hand large chunks of China to the Soviets, but also to appease the Chinese Communists. However, as Fenby writes, "Despite US efforts, Chiang Kai-shek and Mao Zedong were intent on renewing their civil war. The Generalissimo remarked pointedly to Patrick Hurely, who had become the US ambassador, that he did not want a repetition in his country of what had happened in Poland and Yugoslavia. His perennial concern about the reliability of American support was deepened by the discovery of an OSS plan to train and equip the Communists..."⁷³⁴

The Far Eastern agreement, together with other, less important agreements on Iran, the Dardanelles and the Balkans, demonstrate in a fascinating way how the foreign policy aims of Stalin in 1945 and of Tsar Nicholas over thirty years earlier were very similar - except, of course, that Stalin's aim was to strengthen the kingdom of satan over these territories, whereas the Tsar's aim had been precisely the opposite, to strengthen Orthodoxy. The Yalta conference took place in the Tsar's former villa in Livadia, and Stalin arrived in the Crimea in the Tsar's former railway carriage. Nothing demonstrated more clearly the essence of the situation: the temporary triumph of evil over good, of the enemies of Russia over Holy Rus', of the Antichrist over Christ...

As was to be expected, the Soviet press lauded the Yalta agreements. The Western press also lauded it, and all the members of the American and British delegations to Yalta thought it had been a success and "Uncle Joe" a most pleasant and cooperative negotiator. Roosevelt and his adviser Hopkins were in "a state of extreme exultation", according to Hopkins' biographer.⁷³⁵

Churchill as always was a mass of contradictions. On the last day at Yalta, as the other leaders left, he said to Eden: "The only bond of the victors is their common hate".⁷³⁶ And he continued to express fears about the future - especially, and with good reason, in regard to Poland. But he did so only in private. In public he joined in the general dithyrambs to the collective Antichrist. As he said in the House of Commons: "Most solemn declarations have been made by Marshal Stalin and the Soviet Union that the sovereign independence of Poland is to be maintained, and this decision is now joined in both by Great Britain and the United States... The impression I brought back from the Crimea, and from all my other contacts, is that Marshal Stalin and the Soviet leaders wish to live in honourable friendship and equality with the Western democracies. I feel also that their word is their bond. I know of no Government which stands to its obligations, even in its own despite, more solidly than

⁷³⁴ Fenby, *op. cit.*, p. 347.

⁷³⁵ Fenby, *op. cit.*, p. 381.

⁷³⁶ Fenby, *op. cit.*, p. 379.

the Russian Soviet Government. I decline absolutely to embark here on a discussion about Russian good faith..."⁷³⁷

It did not take the Soviets long to break their pledges on Poland, to the fury of the western leaders. But their protests fell on deaf ears. It could not have been otherwise. The Allies supped with the devil at Yalta, although they knew all about his demonism, and returned fatally poisoned. As Ferguson puts it: "The wartime alliance with Stalin, for all its inevitability and strategic rationality, was nevertheless an authentically Faustian bargain..."⁷³⁸ And it immediately involved lying: lying, for example, about Stalin's slaughter of the Polish elite at Katyn, lying about the betrayal of Eastern Europe in general. For just as, in the words of George Orwell, "totalitarianism probably demands a disbelief in the very existence of objective truth", so those who ally themselves with totalitarianism become infected with its mendacity.

This brings us back to the question: could the Allies have acted differently? Plokhy's conclusion is: no. "There were of course other possibilities, but they had the potential of leading to a new war before the old one was over. Joseph Goebbels nourished high hopes as he followed the coverage of inter-Allied tensions in the Western media from his hideout in Berlin. If one were to take Stalin's fears as a guide to policy alternatives, then a separate peace with the dying Nazi regime or, more realistically, an armistice leading to the end of hostilities on the western front, could have been adopted instead of the policy that Roosevelt and Churchill followed at Yalta. These options could only be perceived as dead ends by the two Western leaders, who were committed to leading their nations and the long-suffering world toward peace. As Charles Bohlen wrote to George Kennan [the architect of the western policy of containment in the Cold War] from Yalta, regarding his proposal to divide Europe in half: 'Foreign policy of that kind cannot be made in democracy.'"⁷³⁹

It is this last point that is the most important and indisputable. A successful war against apocalyptic evil – for that is what the war against the Soviet Antichrist was in reality – can only be undertaken by a leader who truly leads his people and is not led by them, who can inspire them to "blood, sweat and tears" not only in defence of their own sovereignty but for the sake of some higher, supra-national ideal – in essence a religious ideal in obedience to God and for the sake, not of earthly survival, but of salvation for eternity. But democracy is a mode of political life that is centred entirely on secular, earthly goals. An exceptional democratic leader may briefly be able to raise his people to a higher than usual level of activity and personal self-sacrifice, as Churchill did Britain in 1940. But the aim remains earthly – in Churchill's case, the preservation of national sovereignty. Moreover, even an exceptional leader cannot run far in front of his people, by whom he is elected and to whom he remains answerable. That is the lesson of Churchill's defeat in the British elections in 1945. The people were tired of war (as they had been in 1919, when Churchill again tried to inspire them to continue fighting against the Soviets after defeating the Germans), and certainly did

⁷³⁷ Plokhy, *op. cit.*, p. 335. As he said to his doctor Moran during the conference: "I don't think he [Stalin] is unfriendly to us. Chamberlain had been wrong to trust Hitler, he reflected, but he did not think he was wrong to trust Stalin" (Fenby, *op. cit.*, pp. 381-382).

⁷³⁸ Ferguson, *op. cit.*, p. 511.

⁷³⁹ Plokhy, *op. cit.*, p. 399.

not want to undertake another war against Soviet Russia. So an inspirational leader of the Churchillian type was not what they wanted, and in a democracy the people gets what it wants, whether it is good for them or not. They wanted a new leader who would concentrate once again on earthly matters – tax rates, redistribution of wealth, a National Health Service, etc. A despot like Stalin can, paradoxically, do more than a democratic leader in propelling his people to feats of self-sacrifice – as Stalin did the Soviet people in 1941-45. But they are compelled to such feats by fear, and if they have a love which is stronger than their fear, it is nevertheless inevitably for an earthly, secular ideal. Only an Orthodox Autocrat can inspire his people to sacrifice themselves for a truly heavenly ideal, even if that spells the end of all their earthly hopes – as St. Lazar did the Serbs on Kosovo field. But by 1945 there were no more Orthodox Autocrats; Autocracy, the only truly God-pleasing form of political life, was – temporarily – no more...

Pascha, 2015.

34. VICTORS' JUSTICE IN 1945

Every year the Allied victories over Nazi Germany and Japan in World War II are celebrated in both East and West (VE Day, significantly, is on a different day in Russia). But how good and how real were those victories? And to what extent was justice done?

Wars are to be judged by their aims, by the resources expended in human lives and suffering in order to attain those aims, and by their results. Let us apply these criteria to the Second World War.

The war aims of the western victor nations were largely good: they were to crush three undoubtedly evil regimes – those of Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy and Hirohito's Japan – and liberate the populations enslaved by them. The resources they expended were, of course, great – but proportionately not greater than those expended in other wars, such as the First World War (for Britain and France) or the American Civil War (for the United States). But the results were very mixed. In Europe, Fascism was crushed and Western Europe saved. But Poland was not liberated – although this had been the *casus belli* for Britain and France. Moreover the whole of Eastern Europe except Greece was deprived of their Orthodox rulers and came under totalitarian rule. In Asia, the liberation of the Pacific was accomplished; but China soon (in 1949) came under the power of Mao...

The war aim of the Soviets, if we count the war as starting from 1939, was undoubtedly evil: to divide up Poland with Hitler and take over the Baltic States and Finland. Their aim was largely achieved, with the addition of Bessarabia and Northern Bukovina; only Finland slipped from their grasp (although she was attacked again in June, 1941). 50,000 prisoners from the Polish elite were killed by them at Katyn – a fact admitted only many decades later. Moreover, they acted with an unprecedented savagery even against their own people. Thus the NKVD killed many Gulag prisoners as they retreated in June, 1941; they executed 157,000 of their own soldiers (the figures for the Wehrmacht were 15-20,000⁷⁴⁰) and arrested almost a million more.⁷⁴¹ From June, 1941, when the Nazis invaded, the Soviet war aim changed to a defensive one and was therefore morally less dubious. (However, the former GRU agent Suvorov has argued that Stalin was about to launch a western offensive when Hitler anticipated him a few weeks earlier.⁷⁴²) The further Soviet war aims of subduing Germany with the utmost savagery, pillaging its wealth to the maximum and bringing as much of Europe as possible under communist rule, were undoubtedly evil.

In 1945, the Red Army conquered Eastern Germany and Berlin, leaving behind an unparalleled path of murder and rape. As Richard Evans writes: "Women and girls were subjected to serial rape wherever they were encountered. Rape was often accompanied by torture and mutilation and frequently ended in the victim being shot

⁷⁴⁰ Ferguson, *The War of the World*, London: Penguin, 2007, p. 539.

⁷⁴¹ Alexander Yakovlev, *A Century of Russian Violence in Soviet Russia*, Yale University Press, 2003.

⁷⁴² See Suvorov's interview, "Nikakoj Velikoj Otechestvennoj vojny ne bylo" (There was no Great Fatherland war), <http://faraj.com.tj/opinion/2616-viktor-suvorov-nikakoy-velikoy-otechestvennoy-voyny-ne-bylo.html>.

or bludgeoned to death. The raging violence was indiscriminating. Often, especially in Berlin, women were deliberately raped in the presence of their menfolk, to underline the humiliation. The men were usually killed if they tried to intervene. In East Prussia, Pomerania and Silesia it is thought that around 1,400,000 women were raped, a good number of them several times. Gang-rapes were the norm rather than the exception. The two largest Berlin hospitals estimated that at least 100,000 women had been raped in the German capital. Many caught a sexually transmitted disease, and not a few fell pregnant; the vast majority of the latter obtained an abortion, or, if they did give birth, abandoned their baby in hospital. The sexual violence went on for many weeks, even after the war formally came to an end. German women learned to hide, especially after dark; or, if they were young, to take a Soviet soldier, preferably an officer, as a lover and protector...⁷⁴³

The Soviets justified themselves on the grounds of their right “to have a bit of fun”, as Stalin put it, at the expense of the Germans, who had been so cruel to them both on their own territory (about three million Russian POWs died in Nazi labour camps) and in the Soviet Union (where most of the twenty seven million who died were civilians killed by one side or the other).⁷⁴⁴ But if vengeance has to be the law, then it can only be against the guilty, not against the innocent, and not against innocent women and children. However, the Soviet beast, being a hater of *all* men, spared nobody...

The main result of the Soviet victory, therefore, apart from the crushing of Fascism, was unequivocally evil: to bring an enormous area from Berlin and Belgrade in the West to Vladivostok and Peking in the East under the power of communist totalitarianism, a Eurasian empire that exceeded all its historical predecessors in cruelty against man and blasphemy against the Most High God...

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The post-war division of Germany largely reflected what had been agreed at the Yalta Conference in February, 1945. As Bernard Simms writes: “Germany was divided into four occupation zones: Soviet, American, British and French. She was to pay extensive reparations, mainly in kind of such items as ‘equipment, machine tools,

⁷⁴³ Evans, *The Third Reich at War*, London: Penguin Books, 2009, pp. 710-711.

⁷⁴⁴ The question of Soviet losses in World War Two is contentious. Pavel Gutiontov writes: “Stalin, on the basis of considerations inadmissible to a normal person, personally defined the USSR’s losses as 7 million people – a little less than those of Germany. Khrushchev – as 20 million. Under Gorbachev there came out a book prepared for the Ministry of Defence under the editorship of General Krivosheev, *The Seal of Secrecy Removed*, in which the authors gave this very figure of 27 million, justifying it in all sorts of way. Now it has become clear: this also was not true.” For in 1917 the Duma Deputy Nikolai Zemstov, referring to declassified data of the USSR’s Gosplan, declared: “The general losses of the population of the USSR from 1941 to 1945 were more than 52 million, 812 thousand people. Out of these, irreplaceable losses as a result of war-related factors were more than 19 million soldier and about 23 million civilians. The general natural mortality of soldiers and civilians in this period can be put at more than 10 million, 833 thousand people (including 5 million, 760 thousand children who died before they reached four years of age). Irreplaceable losses of the population of the USSR as a result of war-related factors were almost 42 million people.” (“Pobeda prediavljaet Schet” (The Victory Presents its Bill), *Novaia Gazeta*, March 21, 2017)

ships, rolling stock... these removals to be carried out chiefly for the purpose of destroying the war potential of Germany'. The British, Americans and Russians promised to 'take such steps, including the complete disarmament, demilitarization and dismemberment of Germany as they deem[ed] requisite for future peace and security'. A joint Allied Control Council of Germany would administer the country after victory had been achieved."⁷⁴⁵

The terms dictated to Germany, unconditional surrender, were tough (Churchill was unpleasantly taken aback by them when Roosevelt first mentioned it in Morocco in 1943). In 1919 justice had not really been done: Germany had not really paid for starting the First World War, for invading neutral countries, for inventing the killing of civilians by aerial bombardment (from zeppelins), for wiping out whole nations (the Herero of South-West Africa), above all for destroying Orthodox Russia and releasing the revolution. After all, although Germany had lost millions of men, her own territory had not been touched... And, most importantly, she had not repented of her sins, but insisted, on the contrary, that a great injustice had been done to her... But in 1945 it was a different matter: after still greater sins, including the murder of "six million Jews (two-thirds of the Jewish population of Europe), 3 million Russians, 3 million non-Jewish Poles, 750,000 Slavs, 500,000 Gypsies, 100,000 of the mentally ill, 100,000 Freemasons, 15,000 homosexuals and 5000 Jehovah's Witnesses"⁷⁴⁶, the German homeland was devastated, much of it occupied by the most barbarian army in history – that of the Soviet Union. This time it seemed that justice had been done.

But did the Germans repent? At the beginning (in fact, until the 1960s) – hardly. In May, 1945 there were eight million Nazi Party members, and if all top Nazis had been put on trial and purged, as the Allies wanted, the whole country would have ground to a halt. Moreover, the Allies simply did not have the personnel to conduct a thorough denazification. So most former Nazis were removed from their posts for a short while and then returned to them. Moreover, many scientists and engineers were whisked away to America where they lived a good life working for the American military. This manifest injustice caused resentment and mockery among the Germans themselves, which did not encourage repentance.

As Max Hastings writes: "Among Germans in the summer of 1945, self-pity was a much more prevalent sensation than contrition: one in three of their male children born between 1915 and 1924 were dead, two in five of those born between 1920 and 1925. In the vast refugee migrations that preceded and followed VE-day, over fourteen million ethnic Germans left homes in the east, or were driven from them. At least half a million – modern estimates vary widely – perished during their subsequent odysseys; the historic problem of Central Europe's German minorities was solved in the most abrupt fashion, by ethnic cleansing."⁷⁴⁷

⁷⁴⁵ Simms, *Europe: The Struggle for Supremacy*, London: Allen Lane, 2013, p. 385.

⁷⁴⁶ Montefiore, *Titans of History*, London: Quercus, 2012, p. 545. For a good account of the Jewish Holocaust, see Paul Johnson, *History of the Jews*, London: Phoenix, 1987, part 6.

⁷⁴⁷ Hastings, *All Hell Let Loose*, London: HarperPress, 2011, pp. 653-654.

Tony Judt writes that “throughout the years 1945-49 a consistent majority of Germans questioned in a survey of the American zone took the view that ‘Nazism was a good idea badly implemented’. In November 1946, 37 per cent of Germans questioned in a survey of the American zone took the view that the extermination of the Jews and Poles and other non-Aryans was necessary for the security of Germans’.

“In the same poll of November 1946, one German in three agreed with the proposition that ‘Jews should not have the same rights as those belonging to the Aryan race.’ This is not especially surprising, given that respondents had just emerged from twelve years under an authoritarian government committed to this view. What *does* surprise is a poll taken six years later in which a slightly higher percentage of West Germans – 37 percent – affirmed that it was better for Germany to have no Jews on its territory. But then in that same year (1952) 25 percent of West Germans admitted to having a ‘good opinion’ of Hitler...”⁷⁴⁸

Nevertheless, however imperfect the process of denazification was, in the longer term it – and/or the experience of living under a very different regime - had a good effect. Later generations of Germans, even though they were born only during or after the war, felt a certain collective guilt for the sins of their fathers. And the extraordinary success story that is Germany since the war surely witnesses to the fact that they had learned their lesson and that God had withdrawn His chastening hand...

The Nuremberg war trials have been condemned as “victors’ justice”. If this is taken to mean that the legal process was often unwieldy, that it proved difficult for the victors to obtain completely convincing evidence in all cases, that they invented new crimes unknown to jurisprudence, and that they applied these definitions retrospectively to deeds committed before the definitions had been made, then this is true, but relatively trivial. After all, nobody doubts that the accused were guilty as charged, and that trials of this kind, however impromptu their juridical basis, were far better than no justice at all or the summary execution of 50,000 Germans as Stalin once demanded.

As A.T. Williams writes, although the justice obtained at Nuremberg may have been “symbolic, shambolic, illusory... it was essential for all that.”⁷⁴⁹

For the desire for truth and justice is one of the ineradicable elements of human nature: it can be despised or overlooked only at great cost for future generations. A.N. Wilson writes, “The Nuremberg trials of the twenty-two surviving movers in the Third Reich made it clear, beyond any doubt, that this was a regime founded upon the idea of aggressive war, sustained by banditry, theft and the abolition of morality and justice, and glutted like some blood-feeding ogre on mass murder. The catalogue of crimes, the abuses of science by doctors, the systematic use of slave labour, and the detailed programme to eliminate the Jews, could not, after the trials, be in any doubt...

⁷⁴⁸ Judt, *Postwar: A History of Europe since 1945*, London: Pimlico, 2007, p. 58.

⁷⁴⁹ Williams, *A Passing Fury: Searching for Justice at the End of World War II*, London: Jonathan Cape, 2016.

“The first stage of the trials, then, the hearings about the twenty-two chief Nazis, was a purgative experience, for Germany, for the Allies, and for the world. The trial tried to set the precedent, alas too optimistic, that any future tyrant would know that one day he would stand answerable for his crimes before the bar of justice and the law.

“Clearly, when it came to dealing with all the tens of thousands of underlings who had done the dirty work in the Third Reich, and, even more complicated, with the numberless thousands who had somehow or other colluded in the crimes while not actually perpetrating murder or theft, what was to be done? For several years after the war, many of the nastier individuals involved in labour and death camp atrocities and so on had escaped to South America. Most of them escaped justice altogether...”⁷⁵⁰

The Germans, not unnaturally, were in general punished more severely than collaborators of other nationalities in the occupied territories⁷⁵¹, where the process of justice varied greatly from country to country and involved many compromises. As Judt points out, “such compromises were probably inevitable. The very scale of destruction and moral collapse in 1945 meant that whatever was left in place was likely to be needed as a building block for the future. The provisional government of the liberation months were almost helpless. The unconditional (and grateful) cooperation of the economic, financial and industrial elites seemed vital if food, clothing and food were to be supplied to a helpless and starving population. Economic purges could be counter-productive, even crippling. But a price for this was paid in political cynicism and a sharp falling away from the illusions and hopes of the liberation...”⁷⁵²

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“In 1945,” writes Protodeacon Christopher Birchall, “there were some 4 million Russians in the former territory of the Third Reich. About 6 million Russian prisoners of war fell into German hands, most of them soon after the invasion of Russia in 1941. The Russian prisoners of war were kept in appalling conditions; some were simply herded into open fields in the winter and left to die of exposure. This treatment, so different from that accorded to British prisoners by the Germans, was explained largely by the fact that Joseph Stalin had renounced them, stating that anyone who allowed himself to be taken captive, rather than die fighting, was a traitor. As a result, most Russian prisoners died and only about 1 million survived by May 1945. Understandably most of these ‘traitors’ were terrified at the prospect of returning to the Soviet Union. In addition, there were the *Ostarbeiter* (“workers from the east”) – Russians who were brought to Germany to work in the war industries. Some had volunteered but most were conscripts. They were treated poorly and humiliated by the Nazis, who regarded them as *Untermenschen* (“subhumans”), close to the bottom

⁷⁵⁰ Wilson, *op. cit.*, pp. 482, 483.

⁷⁵¹ Willing collaborators in the Holocaust in occupied countries included Poles, Ukrainians, Latvians, Croats, Vichy Frenchmen and others. See Judt, “The ‘Problem of Evil’ in Postwar Europe”, in *When the Facts Change*, London: Vintage, 2015, p. 131.

⁷⁵² Judt, *op. cit.*, p. 51.

of the racial hierarchy they devised. Whenever outside the camps, these workers were required to wear a badge with the *OST* (EAST) written on it to display their origin.

“When the war ended, there were some 3 million *Ostarbeiter* in Germany. These formed the majority of the vast numbers of Russians liberated by the Allies in 1945. In addition, there were refugees who had decided to leave Soviet territory with the retreating German armies. Some were terrified of Soviet reprisals meted out to anyone ‘contaminated’ by contact with the invaders; others, especially those in areas where the Germans had behaved with a degree of restraint, simply seized the opportunity to escape from communist rule. The populations of entire districts, particularly Cossacks from the Caucasus, piled their possessions into wagons and evacuated to the west. Finally, there were those who agreed to fight with the Germans in the hope of overthrowing communism in Russia, approximately 800,000 in all. The largest group was the Russian Army of Liberation (ROA – *Russkaya Osvoboditel’naya Armiya*), nominally led by General Andrey Vlasov, who was taken from a prisoner of war camp by the Germans and made head of this organisation. However, the ROA existed more on paper than in the field because Vlasov had very little control over the units, most of which had German officers. The Germans distrusted these brigades of Slavic *Untermenschen* and sent many to the western front after the Normandy invasions. In addition to the ROA, Cossack units were formed under the German General Helmuth von Pannwitz.

“At the infamous Yalta Conference of February 1945, Winston Churchill and Franklin D. Roosevelt reached an agreement with Stalin to hand over any ‘Soviet Nationals’ who fell into British or American hands. A Soviet National was defined as anyone who had lived in Soviet territory before September 1, 1939. Thus excluded were the old émigrés as well as inhabitants of western parts of Russia and Ukraine, which had been annexed to Poland during the Civil War. On arrival in the Soviet Union, the displaced persons were either shot or sent directly to labour camps, most in the Far North of Siberia. Alexander Solzhenitsyn described graphically the fate of many such people in his book *The Gulag Archipelago*.

“One might wonder why the Soviet authorities were so determined to secure the return of these people. The explanation largely lies in the personal paranoia of Stalin, which infected the rest of the Soviet power apparatus. Another significant factor was the Soviets’ genuine fear of the existence of a strong, anti-Soviet emigration or even scattered groups of exiles. As one Soviet leader observed, ‘That’s the way we got our start!’ Only thirty years previously, the émigré Russians were not ‘White’ Russian exiles but rather various groups of Bolsheviks, Mensheviks, and anarchists who were plotting the overthrow of Imperial Russia...”⁷⁵³

Shortly after D-day, large numbers of Russian soldiers in German uniform began to be captured by the Allies. Of these, some had put on German uniform involuntarily, forced to it by the threat of death or the terrible conditions in the German POW camps. Others, the “Vlasovites”, had volunteered to fight in the German army, not out of love

⁷⁵³ Birchall, *Embassy, Emigrants, and Englishmen: The Three Hundred Year History of a Russian Orthodox Church in London*, Jordanville, N.Y.: Holy Trinity Publications, 2014, pp. 321-323.

of Nazism, but simply in order to help in the destruction of the hated Soviet regime. Among the Vlasovites, some had been Soviet citizens, but others were former White soldiers who had fled from Russia after the Civil War and had never been Soviet.⁷⁵⁴ Most of them did not want to be repatriated, but pleaded to stay in the West.

This created a major problem for the British government. Lord Selborne, Minister for Economic Warfare, who was also in charge of secret espionage and sabotage (SOE), argued passionately that they should be allowed to stay because they had not voluntarily donned German uniforms, they had suffered terribly already, and would probably be shot if returned to Russia. Churchill was for a time inclined to listen to Selborne, but the Foreign Secretary, Anthony Eden, who had already made a verbal agreement with Molotov, argued that they had to return the prisoners if Stalin insisted on it, that to anger the Soviets would be dangerous for the war effort, that the British had “no legal or moral right” to interfere in the way they were treated in Russia, and that if they did not accede to Soviet demands British and American prisoners liberated from German camps by Soviet forces might not be repatriated to the West. Unfortunately, by September, Eden had won the argument, and thousands of Russians began to be deported from Britain to Murmansk and Odessa, in accordance with the Yalta Conference agreement.

However, well into 1945, writes S.M. Plokhy, the State Department “continued to resist Soviet requests for the extradition of those Soviet citizens who had been captured in German uniform and claimed the protection of the Geneva Convention until the end of hostilities in Europe. But then the department’s position suddenly changed. As Joseph Grew explained in a letter to Secretary of the Navy James Forrestal, he did not object to extradition ‘now that Germany has unconditionally surrendered, that all American prisoners of war held by the German armed forces have been liberated and that therefore there no longer exists any danger that the German authorities will take reprisals against American prisoners of war.’

“On June 29, after learning of the decision to extradite them to the USSR, 154 Soviet prisoners of war in Fort Dix, New Jersey, shut themselves in their barracks and attempted to commit mass suicide. The American guards fired tear-gas grenades into the building, forcing the prisoners to break out of their quarters. Seven POWs were gunned down by the guards as they rushed at them. In the barracks they found three men hanging from the rafters next to fifteen nooses prepared for the next group. News of the revolt of Soviet prisoners who preferred death to extradition leaked out to the press, aborting the next attempt to ship POWs to the USSR. In August, however, James Byrnes, who succeeded Stettinius as secretary of state, authorized extradition ‘in conformity with commitments taken at Yalta’...”⁷⁵⁵

A particularly tragic case of mass repatriation took place in May-June, 1945, in Lienz in Austria, when “the English occupying authorities handed over to Stalin to certain death some tens of thousands of Cossacks who had fought in the last months

⁷⁵⁴ The following account is taken mainly from Nicholas Bethell’s *The Last Secret* (London: Futura, 1976) and Sebastyen, *op. cit.*, ch. 13.

⁷⁵⁵ Plokhy, *Yalta: The Price of Peace*, London: Penguin, 2010, p. 304.

of the war on the side of Germany. Eye-witnesses of this drama recall that the hand-over began right during the time of the final liturgy, which Smersh did not allow to finish. Many Cossacks tried to hurl themselves into the abyss so as not to be delivered to the communists, and the first shots were heard from the Soviet occupational zone already a few minutes after the hand-over."⁷⁵⁶

Many of the British soldiers involved in the handover had come to like the Cossacks and were deeply distressed that they had to lie to them about the handover and that they had to use force against them. Some confessed that they had been wrong; but most justified themselves on the grounds that they were following orders. It is interesting to note, however, that in the Nuremberg trials this excuse, in the mouth of Nazi defendants, was not considered sufficient...

Another aspect of the tragedy is that among the Cossacks handed over were men who had never been Soviet citizens, including the famous White Generals Krasnov and Shkuro (who were hanged in Moscow in 1947). So the British "over-fulfilled" their "duty" according to the Yalta agreement, which specified only "Soviet nationals" ...⁷⁵⁷

The British were also involved in the handover of thousands of Croats and Slovenes to Tito's Partisans. At Kocevje and Maribor in Slovenia between 50 and 65,000 were shot by the Partisans without any kind of trial.⁷⁵⁸

Plokhy summarises the difference between the western and Soviet attitudes to prisoners of war: "There was no higher priority for soldiers of the Western democracies at the end of the conflict than to save their prisoners of war. There was no greater crime in the Soviet code than that of falling into enemy hands..."⁷⁵⁹

Alexander Soldatov writes: "The memory of the 'Vlasovites' is dear to many children of the Russian Church Abroad (ROCOR)... In the memorial cemetery of ROCOR in Novo Diveyevo near New York there stands an obelisk which perpetuates the memory of all the officers and soldiers of the Russian Army of Liberation, who perished 'in the name of the idea of a Russia free from communism and fascism'..."⁷⁶⁰ The slogan, "Russia free from communism and fascism" is as relevant now as it was in 1945...

⁷⁵⁶ Archbishop Savva (Raevsky), "Lienz", *Orthodox Life*, vol. 56, N 4, 2005, pp. 2-8. The head of ROCOR, Metropolitan Anastasy, blessed the Cossacks who had formally ended their lives through suicide because they did not want to fall into the hands of the Reds, to be given a church burial. 'Their actions,' he wrote, 'are closer to the exploit of St. Pelagia of Antioch, who hurled herself from a tall tower so as escape desecration [rape].' ..."

⁷⁵⁷ Protopresbyter Michael Polsky, *Novie Mucheniki Rossijskie* (The New Martyrs of Russia), Jordanville, volume 3, chapter 26, in <http://cliuchinskaya.blogspot.co.uk/2017/01/iii-xxvi-1944-1946.html>.

⁷⁵⁸ Sebastyen, *op. cit.*, p. 150. Tony Judt gives a figure of 40,000 Croats killed and 10,000 Slovenes handed over (*op. cit.*, pp. 23, 30, notes).

⁷⁵⁹ Plokhy, *op. cit.*, pp. 305-06.

⁷⁶⁰ Soldatov, "Radosti Paskhi i Skorb' Pobedy" (The Joys of Pascha and the Sorrow of Victory), *Moskovskie Novosti* (Moscow News) and *Vertograd*, N 520, May 14, 2005.

And so “from 1945 to 1947, 2,272,000 people were handed over by the Allies to the USSR. Of these more than 600,000 had served in the ‘eastern forces’ of the German army. About 200,000 managed to remain in the West.”⁷⁶¹

According to Sergius Shumilo, however, “more than 6 million ‘Soviet’ prisoners of war, ‘Osty’ workers, refugees and émigrés were forcibly repatriated to the U.S.S.R. up to 1948. The majority of them perished within the walls of Stalin’s NKVD.”⁷⁶²

Protopriest Michael Ardov writes: “I remember quite well the years right after the war, 1945, 1946, and how Moscow was literally flooded with cripples, soldiers who were missing arms and legs, returning from the war, and then, suddenly, they all disappeared. Only later did I learn that they were all picked up and packed off to die on the island of Valaam, in order not to spoil the view in the capital. There was no monastery there then. You can just imagine for yourselves the conditions that they had to endure there while living out their last days. They were so poor, and were reduced to begging in order to survive. This is how they were treated, just so that the capital should not be spoiled by their presence! This I remember quite well. Besides this, as we all know that, because of Stalin and his military leaders, an enormous number of Soviet citizens were taken out of the country as prisoners. The government immediately disowned them; they were immediately branded traitors. And the consequences of this were that when they, for some reason or another, came back to our country, most of them were whisked off to Stalin’s labour camps. This is how they treated the veterans then...

“Under the pretext of restoring ‘socialist legality’ whole families, and even settlements, were sent to Siberia, mainly from Western Ukraine, Belorussia and the Baltic region. By the end of the 40s, Soviet Marshal Zhukov had ordered the forcible removal from Western Ukraine to Siberia, Kazakhstan and other regions of more than 600,000 people.”⁷⁶³

Sister Tatiana (Spektor) writes: “With the help of the English and American military authorities, by January 1, 1953 5 million, 457 thousand and 856 Soviet and ‘equated’ with them citizens had been repatriated. Of these 2 million 272 thousand were prisoners of war and their families. The cruellest of these repatriations were the handovers of the Cossack camp in Lienz (24 thousand military and civilians), the Caucasians in Oberdrauburg (4 thousand 800) and the Cossack cavalry corps in Feldkirchen (about 35 thousand). All these people had been given the status of prisoners of war and were assured that the English would not hand them over to certain death. But their hopes were not realized.

“What was their fate in the homeland? 20% of the prisoners of war returned to the USSR received the death penalty or 25 years in the camps; 15-20% - 5-10 years in the camps; 10% were exiled to distant regions of Siberia for a minimum of 6 years; 15%

⁷⁶¹ Soldatov, *op. cit.*, p. 11, footnote 6.

⁷⁶² Shumilo, “Sovietskij Rezhim i ‘Sovietskaia Tserkov’ v 40-e-50-e gody XX stoletia” (The Soviet Regime and the ‘Soviet Church’ in the 40s and 50s of the 20th Century), <http://catacomb.org.ua/modules.php?name=Pages&go=page&pid=678>.

⁷⁶³ Shumilo, *op. cit.*

were sent to forced labour in regions destroyed by war, of whom only 15-20% returned to the places of their birth after their labour. Of the remaining 15-20%, some were killed or died on the road, while others fled..."⁷⁶⁴

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Norman Davies writes: "The Strategic Bombing Offensive, which killed perhaps half a million civilians, has long been the subject for charges of 'excessive force', and if the German raid on Coventry, which killed 380 persons, is judged a crime, it is hard to see why the British raids on Cologne, Hamburg, Kassel, Berlin and Dresden should not be classed in the same way. In morality, two wrongs do not make a right, and pleas of justified response do not wash. If a criminal kills another man's brother, the injured party is not entitled, even in the middle of a just war, to go off and kill all the criminal's neighbours and relatives. And there are further matters to be examined. One of them would be the forcible and large-scale repatriation of Soviet citizens in 1945 to near-certain death at the hands of Stalin's security organs. Another would be the joint decision that was reached at Potsdam to expel by force several million German civilians from lands newly allotted to Poland, Czechoslovakia and Hungary. To contemporary sensitivities, the Potsdam decision put into motion a campaign that looks suspiciously like 'ethnic cleansing'."⁷⁶⁵

The Allies condemned the Germans for bombing civilians at Guernica in the Spanish Civil War and Coventry in 1940, and the Japanese for bombing the Chinese in 1937. However, Churchill himself had ordered such bombing in the Iraqi rebellion in 1920.⁷⁶⁶ And already from May, 1940 the British began drawing up plans to send bombers to targets that could not be called military. Thus in October, Churchill declared: "The civilian population around the target areas must be made to feel the weight of war." Throughout 1941 he "repeatedly emphasized the need for Bomber Command to target the morale of ordinary Germans."⁷⁶⁷ In March, 1942 it was decided to adopt the plan of the government's scientific advisor Lindemann to bomb working-class German homes with the final aim of destroying 50 percent of all houses in the larger cities.⁷⁶⁸ With the Americans in full agreement, this paved the way for the horrific Allied bombings of Hamburg (45,000 killed, 250,000 homes destroyed in July, 1943), Lubeck, Cologne, Berlin and, finally, Dresden (35,000 killed, 95,000 homes destroyed in February, 1945).

In all, writes Hastings, "between 1940 and 1942, only 11,228 Germans were killed by Allied bombing. From January 1943 [the month in which Roosevelt declared the "unconditional surrender" policy in Casablanca] to May 1945, a further 350,000 perished, along with unnumbered tens of thousands of foreign PoWs and slave labourers. This compares with 60,595 British people killed by all forms of German air bombardment including V-weapons between 1939 and 1945."⁷⁶⁹

⁷⁶⁴ Spektor, *Facebook* communication, June 2, 2016.

⁷⁶⁵ Davies, *Europe at War 1939-1945*, London: Pan, 2006, pp. 67-68.

⁷⁶⁶ Ferguson, *The War of the World*, London: Penguin, 2007, p. 558.

⁷⁶⁷ Ferguson, *op. cit.*, p. 559.

⁷⁶⁸ Count Léon de Poncins, *State Secrets*, Chulmleigh: Britons Publishing Company, 1975, p. 57.

⁷⁶⁹ Hastings, *op. cit.*, p. 480.

Of course, military targets were also hit, together with munitions factories; by the spring of 1943 this forced 70 per-cent of the German fighter force to be diverted from the east to the west, thereby helping the Soviet advance. And by D-Day most of those had been shot down, thereby helping the Anglo-American advance. Speer called the air war “the greatest lost battle on the German side”.⁷⁷⁰ However, the killing of soldiers and military equipment was not the main aim of the bombing campaign: it was *civilian* casualties that were seen, not as inevitable, albeit regrettable “collateral damage”, but as *essential* to the main purpose of the bombing, which was, in Churchill’s words, “the progressive destruction and undermining of the morale of the German people to a point where their capacity for armed resistance is fatally weakened”.⁷⁷¹ But, as Bishop George Bell of Chichester said in 1943: “To bomb cities as cities, deliberately to attack civilians, quite irrespective of whether they are actively contributing to the war effort, is a wrong deed, whether done by the Nazis or by ourselves.”⁷⁷² Notwithstanding, on February 16, 1945, just after the Dresden bombing, the Allies announced that the new plan was to “bomb large population centres and then to attempt to prevent relief supplies from reaching and refugees from leaving them – all part of a programme to bring about the collapse of the German economy”...⁷⁷³

After Dresden, even Churchill began to have doubts: “The moment has come when the question of the bombing of German cities simply for the sake of increasing the terror... should be revised... The destruction of Dresden remains a serious query against the conduct of Allied bombing.” However, Sir Arthur Harris, the head of Bomber Command, “remained impertinent and uncomprehending. ‘In Bomber Command we have always worked on the assumption that bombing anything in Germany is better than bombing nothing.’ ...”⁷⁷⁴

“The crux of the case at Nuremburg,” writes Niall Ferguson, “as agreed by the victorious powers in London in the summer of 1945, was that the leaders of Germany and Japan had premeditated and unleashed ‘aggressive war’ and ‘set in motion evils which [had left] no home in the world untouched’. They were accused, firstly, of the ‘planning, preparation, initiation, or waging of a war of aggression, or war in violation of international treaties, agreements and assurances, or participation in a common plan or conspiracy for the accomplishment of any of the foregoing’. Yet whose side had the Soviet Union been on in 1939?”⁷⁷⁵

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The American policy of “unconditional surrender” probably contributed more to the prolongation of the war in the west - as in the east - than any other single factor.

⁷⁷⁰ Ferguson, *op. cit.*, pp. 566-568.

⁷⁷¹ Ferguson, *op. cit.*, p. 562.

⁷⁷² Ferguson, *op. cit.*, p. 570. Bishop Bell was a friend both of Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Bishop Nikolai Velimirovich.

⁷⁷³ De Poncins, *op. cit.*, p. 41.

⁷⁷⁴ Wilson, *After the Victorians*, London: Hutchinson, 2003, p. 418.

⁷⁷⁵ Ferguson, *op. cit.*, pp. 578-579.

This policy in relation to Germany became known as “the Morgenthau plan” after Roosevelt’s Jewish Secretary to Treasury, Henry Morgenthau, who, with his deputy, Harry Dexter White, formulated it in detail.

Count Leo de Poncins writes that, according to Dr. Anthony Kubek, the editor of the *Morgenthau Diaries*, “the objective of the Morgenthau Plan was to de-industrialize Germany and diminish its people to a pastoral existence once the war was won. If this could be accomplished, the militaristic Germans would never rise again to threaten the peace of the world. This was the justification of all the planning, but another motive lurked behind the obvious one. The hidden motive was unmasked in a syndicated column in the New York *Herald Tribune* in September 1946, more than a year after the collapse of the Germans. The real goal of the proposed condemnation of ‘all of Germany to a permanent diet of potatoes’ was the Communization of the defeated nation. ‘The best way for the German people to be driven into the arms of the Soviet Union,’ it was pointed out, ‘was for the United States to stand forth as the champion of indiscriminate and harsh misery in Germany’ (issue of 5th September 1946). And so it then seemed, for in a recent speech Foreign Minister Molotov had declared the hope of the Soviet Union to ‘transform’ Germany into a ‘democratic and peace-loving State which, besides its agriculture, will have its own industry and foreign trade’ (10th July 1946). Did Russia really plan on becoming the saviour of the prostrate Germans from the vengeful fate which the United States had concocted for them? If this was indeed a hidden motive in the Morgenthau Plan, what can be said of the principal planner? Was this the motive of Harry Dexter White? Was White acting as a Communist but without specific instructions? Was he acting as a Soviet agent when he drafted the plan? There is no confession in the Morgenthau Diaries in which White admits that he was either ideologically a Communist or actively a Soviet agent. But it is possible, given an understanding of Soviet aims in Europe, to reconstruct from the Diaries how White and certain of his associates in the Treasury worked assiduously to further those aims. From the Diaries, therefore, it is possible to add significant evidence to the testimonies of J. Edgar Hoover [head of the CIA] and Attorney General Herbert Brownell that Harry Dexter White was ideologically a Communist and actively a Soviet agent from the day he entered the service of the United States Government.”⁷⁷⁶

The State Department had a very different plan, which was that there was to be no “large-scale and permanent impairment of all German industry”; instead it called for “eventual integration of Germany into the world economy”.⁷⁷⁷ On hearing of it, Morgenthau flew to England in August, 1944 and managed to get General Eisenhower on his side. Finally, after strong opposition from State and War, Roosevelt came down on the side of Morgenthau, and at the Quebec Conference in September, an initially angry Churchill (he did not want to be “chained to a dead Germany”) was won over with the promise of a \$6.5 billion loan...

Foreign Secretary Hull wrote in his *Memoirs*: “The whole development at Quebec, I believe, angered me as much as anything else that had happened during my career

⁷⁷⁶ Kubek, in de Poncins, *op. cit.*, p. 100.

⁷⁷⁷ De Poncins, *op. cit.*, p. 104.

as Secretary of State. If the Morgenthau Plan leaked out, as it inevitably would – and shortly did – it might well mean a bitter German resistance that could cause the loss of thousands of American lives.

“... I still feel that the course proposed by the Treasury would in the long run certainly defeat what we hope to attain by a complete military victory, that is, the peace of the world, and the assurance of social, economic and political stability in the world... I cannot believe that they (the Treasury proposals) will make for a lasting peace. In spirit and in emphasis they are punitive, not, in my judgement, corrective or constructive. They will tend through bitterness and suffering to breed another war, not to make another war undesired by the Germans or impossible in fact... the question is not whether we want Germans to suffer for their sins. Many of us would like to see them suffer the tortures they have inflicted on others. The only question is whether over the years a group of seventy million educated, efficient and imaginative people can be kept within bounds on such a low level of subsistence as the Treasury proposals contemplate. I do not believe that is humanly possible... Enforced poverty... destroys the spirit not only of the victim but debases the victor... it would be a crime against civilization itself.”⁷⁷⁸

Fortunately, the Morgenthau Plan was never fully realised; and after the war the generous Marshall Plan helped to place Western Europe back on its feet and prevent it from going Communist...⁷⁷⁹ However, the Plan was leaked, and “as a result German resistance was strengthened. The Nazi radio was shouting day and night that the Germans would become starving peasants if they surrendered. General Marshall complained to Morgenthau that the leakage to the press was disastrous to the war effort, for nothing could have been greater in its psychological impact upon Germany than the news of Morgenthau’s coup at Quebec in September 1944. Until then there was a fair chance, according to intelligence reports, that the Germans might discontinue resistance to American and British forces while holding the Russians at bay in the east in order to avoid the frightful fate of a Soviet occupation. This could have shortened the war by months and could have averted the spawning of a malignant Communism in East Germany which has plagued Europe for the past twenty years. According to Lt.-Col. Boettiger, the President’s son-in-law, the Morgenthau Plan was worth ‘thirty divisions to the Germans’.”⁷⁸⁰

The decisions of the Yalta Conference, with Morgenthau in attendance, turned out to be quite compatible with his Plan. However, there was still strong resistance from the Departments of State and War. And so, on March 21, the Jews wheeled in their biggest gun – the New York financier and close friend of the President, Bernard Baruch.

In a meeting with the War Cabinet, he “was asked where he stood on the German problem. According to Morgenthau’s report to his staff, Baruch replied that his recent

⁷⁷⁸ Hull, in De Poncins, *op. cit.*, pp. 113, 114.

⁷⁷⁹ See Jan Fleischhauer, “The Thirty Years’ War: How Peace Kept WW1 Alive”, *Spiegel Online International*, February 7, 2014.

⁷⁸⁰ De Poncins, *op. cit.*, p. 115.

trip to Europe had made him much stronger for the decentralization of Germany than when he left. The Treasury Plan was much too soft, Baruch said, and its author practically 'a sissy'. He would 'cut his (Clayton's) heart out if he doesn't behave himself', the financial wizard declared, adding ominously: 'he won't be able to stay around Washington after I get through with him.' Clayton had either to get 'right' on this German 'thing' or 'leave town'. Baruch was adamant. 'All I have got to live for now,' he said, 'is to see that Germany is de-industrialized and that it's done the right way, and I won't let anybody get in my way'. He became so emotional that tears came to his eyes. 'I have never heard a man talk so strongly as he did,' exulted Morgenthau, adding that he 'got the feeling from Baruch that he realizes the importance of being friendly with Russia...'⁷⁸¹

Indeed, the Jews around Roosevelt were now working hand-in-glove with the Soviets (and their numerous spies in the administration), determined to dismember, deindustrialize and communize Germany, extract huge reparations and make her workforce virtual slaves of the victors. This was a Carthaginian peace to make the "Carthaginian peace" of 1918 look like a picnic... However, in April Roosevelt died, and the new president, though a 33-degree Mason, did not like the Jewish plan. When Morgenthau asked to be joined to the delegation to Potsdam, and threatened to resign if he was not, Truman accepted his resignation. Jewish vengeance stalled...

However, there were still 140 of "Morgenthau's boys" from the Treasury in the military government in Germany, and during the surrender negotiations in May, the Allied Commander Eisenhower showed where his true sympathies lay ...

Admiral Doenitz, Hitler's successor, was desperate that as many Germans soldiers and civilians as possible should escape to the British and American zones of occupation - he knew about the Morgenthau Plan, but still considered the Anglo-Saxons a safer bet than the rampaging Bolsheviks in the east. However, the Morgenthau-influenced order of Joint Chiefs of Staff JCS 1067 ordered Eisenhower to stop at the Elbe, leaving the whole area to the east, including Berlin and Prague, to the Red Army. Doenitz's conclusion, as he proclaimed on the radio on May 1, was that "as from this moment, the British and the Americans are no longer fighting for their own countries, but for the extension of Bolshevism in Europe".

It is hard to quarrel with this conclusion - even though this was certainly not the conscious intention of any British or American commander on the ground.

In his *Memoirs* Doenitz explained that "the latest operations which [Eisenhower] had ordered showed that he was not in the least aware of the turn taken by world politics at that moment. After his troops had crossed the Rhine at Remagen, America had achieved her strategic object of conquering Germany. From this moment the paramount objective should have become political, namely, the occupation of the largest possible area of Germany before the arrival of the Russians. Thus it would have been judicious for the American commander to have pushed rapidly east in order to be the first to seize Berlin. But Eisenhower did not do this. He kept to the military plan

⁷⁸¹ De Poncins, *op. cit.*, p. 123.

which had been drawn up for the destruction of Germany and its occupation in collaboration with the Red Army, and so he stopped at the Elbe. Thus the Russians were enabled to take Berlin and conquer whatever they could of eastern Germany. Perhaps this policy had been dictated by Washington, but he did not understand how radically the world situation was to be transformed from this moment..."⁷⁸²

On May 5 Doenitz succeeded in negotiating a partial capitulation with the British General Montgomery. However, when his envoy flew on to see Eisenhower, the latter demanded immediate, unconditional surrender *on all fronts, including the Russian*. But the Germans were terrified to fall into Russian captivity, and Doenitz knew that his men would simply refuse to do it. Fortunately, however, General Jodl found a more understanding attitude in General Bedell Smith, Eisenhower's Chief of Staff, who extracted a delay of 48 hours.

And so "between 5th of May, the date of the armistice concluded with the British, and 9th May, the date of the general capitulation, Admiral Doenitz, by means of all the resources at his disposal, succeeded in rescuing three million German soldiers and civilians, who thus escaped Russian slavery owing to the understanding of Field-Marshal Montgomery."⁷⁸³

But many were left behind to be captured by the Russians... And so "obviously," Eisenhower was to write in his *Memoirs*, "the Germans sought to gain time in order to bring back into and behind our lines the maximum number of men who were still fighting in the East. I began to have had enough. I ordered Bedell Smith to tell Jodl that if he did not immediately stop dragging out the negotiations, we would go so far as to use force in order to prevent the refugees from crossing."⁷⁸⁴

"This," writes De Poncins, "in fact is just what the Americans did. [Most of Schroeder's army, for example, were not allowed to cross the American lines.] Thus by his obstinate intransigence, Eisenhower handed over hundreds of thousands, and perhaps even millions, of innocent Germans to the appalling Bolshevik tyranny - which, for the majority, meant either death or the concentration camps and, for the women, the prospect of certain violation."⁷⁸⁵

Civilians were the biggest losers in the war. Hastings writes: "Combatants fared better than civilians: around three-quarters of all those who perished were unarmed victims rather than active participants in the struggle."⁷⁸⁶ And so, as St. Cyprian of Carthage put it in the third century: "The whole world is wet with mutual blood. And murder, which in the case of an individual is admitted to be a crime, is called a virtue when it is committed wholesale. Impunity is claimed for the wicked deeds, not on the plea that they are guiltless, but because the cruelty is perpetrated on a grand scale."⁷⁸⁷

⁷⁸² De Poncins, *op. cit.*, p. 69.

⁷⁸³ De Poncins, *op. cit.*, p. 72.

⁷⁸⁴ De Poncins, *op. cit.*, p. 72.

⁷⁸⁵ De Poncins, *op. cit.*, p. 72.

⁷⁸⁶ Hastings, *op. cit.*, p. 670.

⁷⁸⁷ St. Cyprian, *Epistle 1.6*.

“What all this reminds us,” writes Ferguson, “is that in order to defeat an enemy they routinely denounced as barbarian the Western powers had made common cause with an ally that was morally little better [in fact worse] – but ultimately more effective at waging total war. ‘The choice before human beings,’ George Orwell observed in 1941, ‘is not... between good and evil but between two evils. You can let the Nazis rule the world: that is evil; or you can overthrow them by war, which is also evil... Whichever you choose, you will not come out with clean hands.’ Orwell’s *Animal Farm* is nowadays revered as a critique of the Russian Revolution’s descent into Stalinism; people forget that it was written during the Second World War and turned down by no fewer than four publishers (including T.S. Eliot, on behalf of Faber & Faber) for its anti-Soviet sentiments. Nothing better symbolized the blind eye that the Western powers now turned to Stalin’s crimes than the American Vice-President Henry Wallace’s visit to the Kolyma Gulag in May 1944. ‘No other two countries are more alike than the Soviet Union and the United States,’ he told his hosts. ‘The vast expanses of your country, her virgin forests, wide rivers and large lakes, all kinds of climate – from tropical to polar – her inexhaustible wealth, [all] remind me of my homeland... Both the Russians and the Americans, in their different ways, are groping for a way of life that will enable the common man everywhere in the world to get the most good out of modern technology. There is nothing irreconcilable in our aims and purposes.’ All were now totalitarians...”⁷⁸⁸

What all this demonstrates is that this, the most evil of all wars, defiled everybody who was involved in it at the political level and very, very many who were involved in it at other levels. Apart from the well-documented atrocities of the Axis powers, the Soviets enormously extended their utterly evil empire at the expense especially of God’s people, the peoples of the Orthodox Church – Russian, Ukrainian, Belorussian, Serbian, Romanian and Bulgarian. Even the western democracies, which came into the war in order to defend themselves against the undoubted evil of Nazism, were defiled by their alliance with the still greater evil of Communism and imitated the God-haters in their evil. They forgot the apostolic word: “Be ye not unequally yoked with unbelievers” (II Corinthians 6.14). And they forgot the last recorded words of Tsar Nicholas II (passed on through his daughter, Grand-Duchess Olga), that evil is not overcome by evil, but only by good...

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The other Axis power that was mightily punished in 1945 was, of course, Japan, whose appalling treatment especially of the Chinese, who suffered fifteen million dead⁷⁸⁹, but also of Allied prisoners of war and Korean women, merited severe punishment. And they got it... But their repentance was more superficial than that of the Germans, perhaps because they lacked the Germans’ Christian heritage.

“In the aftermath of the war,” wrote Japanese writer Kazutoshi Hando in 2007, “blame was placed solely on the Japanese army and navy. This seemed just, because the civilian population had always been deceived by the armed forces about what was done. Civilian Japan felt no sense of collective guilt – and that was the way the

⁷⁸⁸ Ferguson, *op. cit.*, pp. 532-533.

⁷⁸⁹ Hastings, *op. cit.*, p. 669.

American victors and occupiers wanted it. In the same fashion, it was the Americans who urged that no modern Japanese history should be taught in schools. The consequence is that very few people under fifty have any knowledge of Japan's invasion of China or colonisation of Manchuria..."⁷⁹⁰

As regards Japanese war crimes trials, Sebestyen writes: "In the Asian countries that Japan had occupied during the war, 984 Japanese had already been executed, many without proper trials, including 236 by the Dutch, 223 by the British, 153 by the Australians, 140 by the Americans. Nearly all were Japanese soldiers who had mistreated and killed prisoners of war. The trials of the Japanese leaders charged with 'waging a war of aggression' were an altogether more complex matter. The primary issue, as two of the judges noted, was that the greatest war criminal was not in the dock. The Australian judge Sir William Webb said: 'The leader of the crime, though available for trial, was granted immunity. The Emperor's authority was required for war. If he did not want war, he should have withheld his authority.'

"The French judge Henri Bernard stated that the entire proceedings were flawed and he couldn't pass judgement at all. The absence of the Emperor in court was 'a glaring inequity... Japan's crimes against peace had a principal author who escaped all prosecution. Measuring the Emperor by different standards undermines the cause of justice.'

"Many of the Americans who organised the trial later said that it backfired. MacArthur was doubtful about the hearings in the first place. He told Truman that it was 'comparatively simple' where the Nazis were concerned to prove genocidal intent and apportion guilt, but in Japan 'no such line of demarcation has been fixed.' One of the officers who interrogated the defendants to decide who should face trial, Brigadier-General Elliot Thorpe, told MacArthur that the entire proceedings were 'mumbo-jumbo... we made up the rules as we went along.' Later, Thorpe wrote that 'we wanted blood and by God we got blood'.

"For many others, the trials were not only victor's justice; they were white man's justice. People in the occupied countries had suffered the most, but not one was represented on the panel of judges. A British judge represented the Malays, a French judge acted for the Vietnamese and the Cambodians. Korea had been colonised with brutal rapacity by Japan for nearly fifty years; there was no Korean judge. Among the charges faced by the two dozen defendants was that they 'engaged in a plan or conspiracy to regain their colony in Vietnam against an independence movement led by Ho Chi Minh; the Dutch fought the nationalists in an attempt to repossess their Indonesian territories, and the British fought guerrillas seeking independence in Malaya.

"Only one of the judges, the Indian Radhabinod Pal, pointed out the double standard involved. He agreed that the Japanese had committed vile crimes during their invasion and occupation of various countries but, he argued, they were neither unique nor without precedent. 'It would be pertinent to recall... that the majority of

⁷⁹⁰ Hando, in Hastings, *op. cit.*, p. 673.

the interests claimed by the Western prosecuting powers in the Eastern hemisphere were acquired by such aggressive methods.' They claimed 'national honour' or 'the protection of vital interests' or concepts of 'manifest destiny' similar to the Japanese. The Japanese conquerors were guilty of crimes, but those crimes should be set in context. For much of Asia, the end of the Pacific war was only the beginning of the process of liberation, not the end. The trials opened up the entire question of how long the old European powers could maintain their empires. This was not the message the Allies wanted to hear – or to send to the world – when, in 1948, they executed seven military chiefs of the former Japanese empire, including the Prime Minister Hideki Tojo, who had earlier tried, and failed, to commit suicide..."⁷⁹¹

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And then there were the victors' crimes... Early in 1945 the American General MacArthur "liberated" Manila in the Philippines at the cost of 100,000 civilian dead, together with 1000 Americans and 16,000 Japanese. And yet after the Marianas, the Japanese could have been starved into submission with no further bombing. That would have been bad enough; but at least it would have given them the option to end the war at a time of their choosing without the horrors that came now. "'The Philippines campaign was a mistake,' says Hando, who lived through the war. 'MacArthur did it for his own reasons. Japan had lost the war since the Marianas were gone.' The Filipino people whom MacArthur professed to love paid the price for his egomania in lost lives – something approaching half a million perished by combat, massacre, famine and disease – and wrecked homes."⁷⁹²

"On March 9, 1945," writes Ferguson, "Tokyo suffered the first of a succession of raids that claimed the lives of between 80,000 and 100,000 people, 'scorched and boiled and baked to death', as [the American commander] LeMay frankly put it. Within five months, roughly two fifths of the built-up areas of nearly every major city had been laid waste, killing nearly a quarter of a million people, injuring more than 300,000 and turning eight million into refugees. Besides Tokyo, sixty-three cities were incinerated. Japan's economy was almost entirely crippled..."

"Why, then, was it necessary to go further – to drop two atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki? LeMay could quite easily have hit both these targets with conventional bombs. As if to make that point, Tokyo was scourged with incendiaries one last time on August 14 by a horde of more than a thousand aircraft; it was the following day that the Emperor's decision to capitulate was broadcast, not the day after Hiroshima. In all probability, it was the Soviet decision to dash Japanese hopes of mediation and to attack Japan that convinced all but the most incorrigible diehards that the war was over. Defeat in the Pacific mattered less to the Japanese generals than the collapse of their much longer-held position in Manchuria and Korea. Indeed, it was the Soviet landing on Shikotan, not far from Japan's main northern island of Hokkaido, that forced the military finally to sign the instrument of surrender. Historians have sometimes interpreted Harry Truman's decision to use the Bomb

⁷⁹¹ Victor Sebestyen, 1946: *The Making of the Modern World*, London: Pan, 2014, pp. 363-365.

⁷⁹² Hastings, *op. cit.*, p. 575.

against Japan as a kind of warning shot intended to intimidate the Soviet Union; an explosive overture to the Cold War. Others have argued that, having seen \$2 billion spent on the Manhattan Project, Truman felt compelled to get a large bang for so many bucks. Yet if one leaves aside the technology that distinguished the bombs dropped on August 6 and August 9 – and the radiation they left in their wakes – the destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki was simply the culmination of five years of Allied strategic bombing. Roughly as many people were killed immediately when the bomb nicknamed ‘Little Boy’ exploded 1,189 feet above central Hiroshima on the morning of August 6 as had been killed in Dresden six months before, though by the end of 1945 the Japanese death toll had risen much higher, to as many as 140,000 in Hiroshima and 70,000 in Nagasaki... ”⁷⁹³

It has been argued that the Bomb saved many lives that would have been lost in an invasion of the Japanese mainland. “What Truman did not know,” writes Antony Beevor, “and which has only been established quite recently, is that the Imperial Japanese Army could never contemplate surrender, having forced all their men to fight to the death since the start of the war. All civilians were to be mobilised and forced to fight with bamboo spears and satchel charges to act as suicide bombers against Allied tanks. Japanese documents apparently indicate that their army was prepared to accept up to 28 million deaths.”⁷⁹⁴

Again, Richard Frank writes: “The fact is that there was no historical record over the past 2,600 years of Japanese surrendering, nor any examples of a Japanese unit surrendering during the war. This was where the great American fear lay.”⁷⁹⁵

However, we now know that the Japanese were on the verge of surrender long before the bombs were dropped. Thus MacArthur told Roosevelt as early as January, 1945 that the Japanese were ready to surrender on terms very similar to those eventually accepted. Some flexibility in the terms offered to the Japanese *then* would have saved hundreds of thousands of American and Japanese lives *later*. Moreover, it would have obviated the need to ask the Soviets to intervene in the north – with massive consequences for the future of the Far East. For, as John J. McLaughlin asks: “Was Roosevelt's curt dismissal of MacArthur's warning the ‘nail’ that cost us the loss of not only thousands of soldiers and sailors at Iwo Jima and Okinawa, but also the Communist victory in the Chinese Civil War, the Korean War, and Vietnam?..”⁷⁹⁶

Daniel Goldhagen writes: “Supreme Allied commander of the forces in Europe and soon to be American president, Dwight Eisenhower explained: ‘During his [Secretary of War Henry Stimson’s] recitation of the relevant facts [about the plan for using the atomic bomb], I had been conscious of a feeling of depression and so I voiced to him my grave misgivings, first on the basis of my belief that Japan was already defeated and that dropping the bomb was completely unnecessary, and secondly because I

⁷⁹³ Ferguson, *op. cit.*, pp. 573-574.

⁷⁹⁴ Beevor, “Yes, Truman had little choice”, *BBC History Magazine*, August, 2015, p. 58.

⁷⁹⁵ Frank, “Yes. It saved millions of lives in Japan and Asia”, *BBC History Magazine*, August, 2015, p. 59.

⁷⁹⁶ McLaughlin, “The Bomb was not Necessary”, *History News Network*, <http://historynewsnetwork.org/article/129964>.

thought that our country should avoid shocking world opinion by the use of a weapon whose employment was, I thought, no longer mandatory as a measure to save American lives. It was my belief that Japan was, at that very moment, seeking some way to surrender with a minimum loss of 'face'..."⁷⁹⁷

Again, as A.N. Wilson points out, "in May, the first of the war crimes tribunals had begun in Germany, and there was talk of hanging the Japanese emperor. This rumour undoubtedly encouraged many Japanese troops to continue fighting. It was [Secretary of State James] Byrnes, at the Potsdam Conference of 17 July to 2 August 1945, who insisted upon removing any assurance about the future of the emperor. After the Russians invaded Manchuria, the Japanese knew that their war was over, and they privately approached the Russians, asking for a negotiated peace. This was rejected by America. Byrnes was effectually the architect of the Cold War. He wanted no cooperation with Russia. And he did not want a messy negotiation with Japan which would lead to Versailles-style repercussions. An outright Japanese surrender, without condition; a Russian government left in no doubt that America was if necessary prepared to kill tens, hundreds of thousands of civilians if it did not get its way. This was the lure for Truman and Byrnes as they reached their decision.

"In the light of all that we now know about the decision, we can safely lay aside the myth fed to, and believed in by, generations of Americans and British: namely that the Bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in order to shorten the war (it was more or less over anyway); to save the lives of American troops; or to force the Japanese warriors to lay down their arms. (If that argument is used, why was it necessary to bomb two cities, and add the incinerated and radiated corpses of 70,000 more people, those of the citizens of Nagasaki, to the obscene death figures of the Second World War?)

"There is a strong element of racialism in the beliefs of many of those involved in the decision-making process, a sense that the Japanese were somehow 'different' from Americans or Europeans; or that their culture made them impermeable to reason. This perhaps flavoured the atmosphere of the crucial meeting at the Pentagon on 31 May 1945 when Secretary of State Byrnes – did ever a politician have a more horribly apt 'Happy Families' nomenclature? – met Robert Oppenheimer, James B. Conant and Secretary for War Henry Stimson, and they all agreed, having heard the scientific evidence, that 'we could not give the Japanese any warning'.

"Albert Einstein, as early as 1946, stated the true reason for dropping the Bomb, namely that it was 'precipitated by a desire to end the war in the Pacific by any means before Russia's participation...'"⁷⁹⁸

The invasion of the Japanese mainland was *not* the only alternative to dropping the bombs.⁷⁹⁹ Another, less costly alternative, as we have seen, was a blockade by sea that

⁷⁹⁷ Goldhagen, *Worse than War: Genocide, Eliminationism, and the Ongoing Assault on Humanity*, London: Abacus, 2012, pp. 3-4.

⁷⁹⁸ Wilson, *op. cit.*, pp. 471-472.

⁷⁹⁹ A powerful argument against the invasion of Japan not known to decision-makers at that time was that "the Japanese had sent out an instruction to all prison commanders that in the event of an Allied

would very likely have starved the Japanese into surrender quite quickly. A third alternative was a combination of a Soviet invasion of Manchuria combined with a formula amounting to slightly less than unconditional surrender that enabled the Emperor to remain as the formal head of the Japanese government. His retention as the figurehead was necessary since the Army would have surrendered only at his command. These were the factors that eventually *did* elicit surrender – and the evidence, as we have seen, is that the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, played no significant part in the Japanese decision to surrender when they did.

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So was justice done at the end of the Second World War? Could the savage vengeance carried out on the Germans by the Soviets, with the connivance of the Americans and the British, or on the Japanese by the Americans with the connivance of the British and the Soviets, be justified on the basis of the defeated states' undoubted criminality? By no means. If this was justice, it was terribly partial and flawed: some of the criminals were condemned, many went scot-free (like the Emperor of Japan).

Still more important, it was also grossly hypocritical: almost every crime that the Germans committed, except the wholesale slaughter of Jews, was imitated by the Soviets and the Anglo-Americans. For, as Niall Ferguson writes, "the charges against the Japanese leaders who stood trial in Tokyo included 'the wholesale destruction of human lives, not alone on the field of battle... but in the homes, hospitals, and orphanages, in factories and fields'. But what else had the Allies perpetrated in Germany and Japan in the last months of the war?"⁸⁰⁰ However, the victors were the judges, and so could not be brought to justice; they were above the law. True justice for the atrocities of the war was not done in 1945...

Schiller said: "World history is the World's court (of judgement)" (Die Weltgeschichte ist Weltegericht). But this cannot be true unless history includes the very last moment of history, the Last Judgement. True justice will have to wait until then, until the verdict of the only Just Judge...

Pascha, 2015.

landing on the home islands, all PoWs were to be killed. A copy was found in a vault in Taiwan (then Formosa) after the war and the original is now in an American archive." (C.E.C. Lowry, letter to *The Daily Mail*, August 10, 2015, p. 58). The existence of such an order was confirmed in a book published in 1970 by Laurens van der Post, *The Night of the New Moon*. It would seem to indicate that the bomb saved perhaps a million lives of Allied PoWs in South-East Asia (Christopher Booker, "The terrible Bomb really saved millions of lives", *The Sunday Telegraph*, August 9, 2015, p. 20).

⁸⁰⁰ Ferguson, *The War of the World*, p. 579.

35. PUTIN'S REVOLUTION

Orthodox monarchist writers, such as Archbishop Averky (Taushev) and Archimandrite Konstantin (Zaitsev) often said that the only hope for mankind in its rapid descent into Satanism was the overthrow of the Russian revolution and the return to power of the Orthodox Autocracy. Let us therefore look more closely at the latest, Putinist phase of the revolution, and the prospects of its final overthrow.

Putin began his reign as he was destined to continue it – by covering up massive corruption on the part of him and those close to him. “On 31 December 1999,” we read in *Wikipedia*, “Yeltsin unexpectedly resigned and, according to the Constitution of Russia, Putin became Acting President of the Russian Federation. On assuming this role, Putin went on a previously scheduled visit to Russian troops in Chechnya.

“The first Presidential Decree that Putin signed, on 31 December 1999, was titled ‘On guarantees for former president of the Russian Federation and members of his family’. This ensured that ‘corruption charges against the outgoing President and his relatives’ would not be pursued. This was most notably targeted at Mabetex bribery case in which Yeltsin's family members were involved. On 30 August 2000, a criminal investigation (number 18/238278-95) was dropped in which Putin himself was one of suspects as a member of the Saint Petersburg city government. On 30 December 2000 yet another case against the prosecutor general was dropped ‘for lack of evidence’, in spite of thousands of documents passed by Swiss prosecutors... The case of Putin's alleged corruption in metal exports from 1992 was brought back by Marina Salye, but she was silenced and forced to leave Saint Petersburg.

“While his opponents had been preparing for an election in June 2000, Yeltsin's resignation resulted in the Presidential elections being held within three months, on 26 March 2000; Putin won in the first round with 53% of the vote.

“The inauguration of President Putin occurred on 7 May 2000...”⁸⁰¹

Thus in order to understand Putin's revolution, we need to begin with his economics, which can be reduced to: “Loot the loot”, in Lenin's words. For Putin's motivation is not only power, but first of all money – and power for the sake of money. Ideological considerations, and re-establishing Russia's national “greatness” after the supposed “geopolitical tragedy” of the fall of the Soviet Union, have played a part. But in the long term all of these have played a secondary role by comparison with the nub of the matter – greed and theft on the most shocking scale.

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The Russian economy had declined disastrously in the 1990s - and at huge human cost.⁸⁰² Nevertheless, by 2000, as Garry Kasparov writes, “growth was over 10 percent, even higher than the typically high rate of the former Soviet Bloc nations undergoing

⁸⁰¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vladimir_Putin.

⁸⁰² For details, see Naomi Klein, *The Shock Doctrine*, London: Penguin, 2007, pp. 218-239.

he transition to market economies.”⁸⁰³So the supposed “economic miracle” of Putin’s first two terms as president was already beginning before he came to power. Moreover, his predecessor did not have the advantage of a high oil price, which had fallen to as low as \$13 per barrel in 1999.⁸⁰⁴ Furthermore, the benefits of the growing economy in the early 2000s did not spread to the whole country, but passed to a small group of “oligarchs” surrounding Putin, who became fabulously rich. The guiding principle of Putin’s revolution remained the same as that of Lenin: “Loot the looters” (Grab’ nagrablyennoe).

In the 1990s the growth of organized crime in Russia penetrated and overwhelmed not only the elected government, but even the mighty KGB; the boundaries between business, law enforcement and the Russian mafia became hard to make out; and the power of the Russia mafia spread also to places like Israel and Hungary. Putin made great electoral capital out of his claims to control these oligarchs and mafiosi. And indeed, some of the oligarchs of the 1990s – those who refused to buckle under to Putin, like Berezovsky and Gusev – were indeed tamed (or, more usually, expelled). Thus Glenny writes: “In the 1990s, the oligarchs and gangsters clearly controlled the Kremlin. Under Vladimir Putin, who systematically used popular hostility to the oligarchs to strengthen his political position as President, the situation was reversed: criminal and oligarch interests were subordinate to state interests. It does not follow that Putin and friends persecuted criminals or dispensed with corrupt practices. On the contrary, they flourished as before but they are now much more carefully controlled. Of course, it is often difficult to tell who is truly running the show – the chicken or the egg!”⁸⁰⁵

Kasparov writes: “The oligarchs of the 1990s may have been robbing Russia blind, but at least we could find out about it in the news. Those days are over [he was writing in 2015] and the elite circle of oligarchs around Putin have power and riches beyond the dreams of Yeltsin’s entourage. In 2000, when Putin took charge, there were no Russians on the *Forbes* magazine list of the world’s billionaires. By 2005 there were thirty-six. In 2008 there were eighty-seven, more than Germany and Japan combined, in a country where 13 percent of our citizens were under a national poverty line of \$150 a month. Putin and his defenders abroad bragged about Russia’s rising GDP, but it was like taking the average temperatures of all the patients in a hospital.

“According to the 2015 numbers, even after a year of Western sanctions and plunging oil prices, there are still eight-eight Russian billionaires on the *Forbes* list, which still doesn’t list Putin or several of his closest cronies. I find it impossible to believe that a man like Putin who holds the power of life and death over eighty-eight billionaires is not the richest of them all. The occasional leaks about mysterious Black Sea mansions and enormous bank transfers to nowhere add more circumstantial evidence to the case that by now Putin likely the richest man in the world...”⁸⁰⁶

⁸⁰³ Kasparov, *Winter is Coming*, London: Atlantic Books, 2015, p. 179.

⁸⁰⁴ Kasparov, *op. cit.*, p. 179.

⁸⁰⁵ Glenny, *McMafia*, pp. 98-99.

⁸⁰⁶ Kasparov, *op. cit.*, p. 185.

Rob Wile writes: “Figuring out the Russian president’s net worth has long been the holy grail of spooks and hacks around the world. But the personal wealth of Putin – a former KGB agent – is nearly impossible to decipher, and is likely distributed across a secret web of company holdings, real estate, and other people’s accounts. In fact, at a time when his political motivations are under scrutiny across the world, the struggle to pin down Putin’s riches reveals something about the covert ways in which he wields his authority over Russia.

“Here’s what we know.

“The most often cited estimate comes from a former mid-level Kremlin adviser named Stanislav Belkovsky. In 2007, he claimed Putin had a fortune worth at least \$40 billion – a figure that would put him in the top 10 of *Forbes* magazine’s ranking of billionaires.

“(Forbes, the premier chronicler of the world’s wealthiest, doesn’t include Putin on its list of billionaires. In 2015, the magazine said it couldn’t verify enough assets.)

“The Kremlin source based his estimate on Putin’s alleged stakes in several companies, mostly in the oil sector. He said the Russian president controlled 37% of the oil company Surgutneftegaz, 4.5% of natural gas company Gazprom, and had substantial holdings in a commodities trader called Gunvor.

“‘At least \$40 billion,’ Belkovsky told the *Guardian* at the time. ‘Maximum we cannot know. I suspect there are some businesses I know nothing about.’

“The American government has linked Putin to Gunvor, too. ‘Putin has investments in Gunvor and may have access to Gunvor funds,’ the U.S. Treasury said in a statement in 2014 as it announced sanctions.

“Gunvor – which reportedly made \$93 billion in revenue in 2012 – denies Putin has ever had any ownership in the company.

“Later, in 2012, Belkovsky upped his estimate to \$70 billion, based on new information from ‘confidential sources around the corporations,’ according to an interview with non-profit journalism outlet The Bureau of Investigative Journalism.

“That’d put Putin within striking distance of Bill Gates, who according to Bloomberg is the world’s richest man with an estimated net worth of \$84 billion.”⁸⁰⁷

The latest estimate, by Bill Browder, author and a former fund manager in Russia, is that Putin is worth \$200 billion, with 58 planes and helicopters and 20 palaces and country retreats.⁸⁰⁸

⁸⁰⁷ Wile, “Is Vladimir Putin secretly the Richest Man in the World?” *Money*, January 23, 2107, <https://uk.news.yahoo.com/vladimir-putin-secretly-richest-man-171217146.html>.

⁸⁰⁸ “Is Putin the world’s real richest man? After 17 years in power, Russian leader has a \$200 billion fortune, 58 planes and helicopters and 20 palaces and country retreats” *Daily Mail*, February 20, 2017,

Anton Grigoriev writes: “Few are those who take account of the fact that criminality in the 2000s was not conquered, but *integrated*. In Putin’s time, not only have the Chechens become the greatest patriots of the Russian Federation, but also the Russian ‘thieves in law’. Who, let us say, will now fail to call Joseph Kobzon, not only Russian, and a member of ‘One Russia’ [Putin’s political party] but also a loyal patriot loyal to the authorities? But in the 1990s Kobzon was one of the deputies who did not enter into any of the deputies’ groupings, was not a member of the party of power of that time, and was forbidden entry into the USA, with which the Russian Federation at that time entertained the best official relations. Since 1995 he had been forbidden entry because of suspicions that he was linked with organized crime. Several attempts to get an American visa, including with the help of diplomatic channels, let to nothing. But in the 2000s Kobzon became a political figure of pan-national reputation – the president of the Culture Committee of the State Duma from ‘One Russia’, and deputy-president of the Committee for Information Politics. That is, he became one of the authorities.

“In the 1990s there was unorganized crime. In the 2000s this turned into the vertically integrated backbone of the new order.”⁸⁰⁹

This has involved exchanging one criminal oligarchy for another. Joshua Yaffa writes: “a political and economic restructuring has taken place during Putin’s seventeen years in office: the de-fanging of one oligarchic class and the creation of another. In the nineties, a coterie of business figures built corporate empires that had little loyalty to the state. Under Putin, they were co-opted, marginalized, or strong-armed into obedience. The 2003 arrest, and subsequent conviction, of Mikhail Khodorkovsky, the head of the Yukos oil company, brought home the point. At the same time, a new caste of oligarchs emerged, many with close personal ties to Putin. These oligarchs have been allowed to extract vast wealth from the state, often through lucrative government contracts, while understanding that their ultimate duty is to serve the President and shore up the system over which he rules.”⁸¹⁰

In his book *McMafia*, Misha Glenny has shown that the growth of trade liberalization and globalization in the 1990s engendered an enormous explosion in organized crime throughout the world. It now constitutes not only a significant part of total world economic output, but also a distinct threat to the sovereignty of nations. Whether we are speaking about drug-trafficking (Colombia, Mexico), people-trafficking (China), counterfeiting (North Korea), gold (India), protection rackets (Japan), guns and bombs (North Korea), banking fraud (Brazil), oil (Nigeria, Libya) or diamonds (South Africa), in each sphere we see both enormous profits and penetration of governments and security forces. The cost not only in taxes but in ruined lives has been horrendous, especially in the case of drug-trafficking, where the criminals have consistently

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-4242718/Vladimir-Putin-200-billion-fortune.html#ixzz4ZKELKhAz>.

⁸⁰⁹ Grigoriev, “Banditizm 1990-kh godov i novij poriadok pri Putine” (Banditry in the 1990s and the new order under Putin), October 16, 2016, http://anton-grigoriev.livejournal.com/1684413.html?utm_source=fbsharing&utm_medium=social.

⁸¹⁰ Yaffa, “Why the President’s Childhood Judo Partner is Leading the Country’s Most Ambitious Construction Project”, *The New Yorker*, May 29, 2017.

triumphed over the governments. Even the war on drugs waged by the United States is judged by experts to have been a total failure, to the extent that decriminalisation – i.e. surrender – is being seriously put forward as the only “solution”.

Being the “boss of Russian bosses” and the biggest mafia criminal in the world, Putin subordinates his government and its domestic and foreign policies to his business interests.. Thus the new American National Security Adviser, General McMaster, said in May, 2016 that “Russia invaded Ukraine without being punished, established dominance over this territory and then turned the situation in such a way as to pretend that we and our allies are escalating matters.” The general drew attention to the complex strategy employed by Moscow, which was based on a combination of two factors – ‘the usual forces’ and, under their cover, ‘the much more complex campaign bound up with the use of criminality and organized crime.’”⁸¹¹

Indeed, the long post-Soviet campaign of the KGB to undermine Ukrainian independence, which involved attempts to assassinate pro-western politicians, appears to have owed as much to “turf wars” between Russian and Ukrainian oligarchs as to anything else.⁸¹²

Of course, the purely political desire to restore the Soviet empire to its pre-1992 boundaries, was another very important motive. But it is very difficult to disentangle such supposedly “pure” political motives from financial ones. Thus there can be little doubt that the oligarchs that control such monstrous State-mafia companies as Gazprom and Rosneft are vitally interested in acquiring complete control over the oil and gas pipelines that pass through Ukraine. Other wars that Putin has conducted – in Chechnya, in Georgia and in Syria – also “coincidentally” happen to have important pipelines passing through them. If the United States is sometimes accused of conducting wars in the Middle East for the sake of oil interests, the same can be said with still greater confidence about Russia.

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But if Putin undoubtedly turned the tables on the mafia, or integrated himself with them to such an extent that he became “the boss of bosses” and the richest of them all, whose interests (apart from his own) did he ultimately represent?

There can be only one possible answer to that question: the KGB/FSB. As Martin Sixsmith writes, “In December 1999,... Vladimir Putin went to celebrate his election victory with his old comrades at the FSB. When the toasts came round and Putin proposed they should drink ‘To Comrade Stalin’ there was a shocked silence followed by a loud cheer. Putin opened his celebratory speech by jokingly telling his former

⁸¹¹ “Sovietnikom Trumpa po natsbezopasnosti stal ideologom vojny s Rossiej” (Trump’s counselor on security has become an ideologue of war with Russia), *Kavkaztsentr*, February 21, 2017, <http://www.kavkazcenter.com/russ/content/2017/02/21/114276/sovetsnikom-trampa-po-natsbezopasnosti-stal-ideolog-vojny-s-rossiej.shtml>.

⁸¹² Andrei Illarionov, “Boevoj put’ FSB v Ukraine” (The martial path of the FSB in Ukraine), *Online Kiev*, June 10, 2014, <http://kiev-online.net.ua/politika/andrei-illarionov-boevoi-put-fsb-v-ukrai.html>.

colleagues: 'The agent group charged with taking the government under control has completed the first stage of its assignment.' ..."⁸¹³

"The agent group" now moved on very quickly to the next stage: the re-establishment of the former USSR's military power. Thus, as Masha Gessen writes, only his second decree "established a new Russian military doctrine, abandoning the old no-first-strike policy regarding nuclear weapons and emphasizing a right to use them against aggressors 'if other means of conflict resolution have been exhausted or deemed ineffective'. Soon another decree re-established mandatory training exercises for reservists (all Russian able-bodied men were considered reservists) – something that had been abolished, to the relief of Russian wives and mothers, after the country withdrew from Afghanistan. Two of the decree's six paragraphs were classified as secret, suggesting they might shed light on whether reservists should expect to be sent to Chechnya. A few days later, Putin issued an order granting forty government ministers and other officials to classify information as secret, in direct violation of the constitution. He also re-established mandatory military training in secondary schools, both public and private; this subject, which for boys involved taking apart, cleaning, and putting back together a Kalashnikov, had been abolished during perestroika. In all, six of the eleven decrees Putin issued in his first two months as acting president concerning the military. On January 27 [Prime Minister] Kasyanov announced that defense spending would be increased by 50 percent – this in a country that was still failing to meet its international debt obligations and was seeing most of its population sink further and further into poverty..."⁸¹⁴

Such an order could only mean one thing: that having returned to power after its temporary eclipse in the 1990s, the KGB was returning to the perennial expansionist goals of Soviet politics. Of course, Russia in 2000 was incomparably weaker than it had been even as recently as 1990. But the train was now back on the rails leading to the same goals as Lenin and Stalin had put before themselves.

There were other signs pointing in the same direction. Thus from 2003 Putin began to reverse the main gains of the liberal 1990s – religious freedom, and a more open and honest attitude to the Soviet past. Churches were seized from True Orthodox Christians and their websites hacked; elections were rigged, independent journalists were killed; independent businessmen were imprisoned on trumped-up charges; new history books justifying Stalinism were introduced into the classrooms; the red flag and hammer and sickle were restored to the armed services, as well as the melody (if not the words) of the Soviet national anthem; youth organizations similar to the Hitler Youth were created.⁸¹⁵

However, certain changes in tactics and methods were now deemed necessary in order to "modernize" the revolution. First, the old ideology of Marxism-Leninism had to be ditched. It was out-of-date and obviously false. Of course, telling lies had never

⁸¹³ Sixsmith, *The Litvinenko File*, London: Macmillan, 2007, p. 302.

⁸¹⁴ Gessen, *The Man without a Face. The Unlikely Rise of Vladimir Putin*, London: Granta, 2013, pp. 153-154.

⁸¹⁵ Edward Lucas, *The New Cold War*, London: Bloomsbury, 2008, p. 102.

been a problem for Soviet leaders and propagandists; but if the whole world saw that the Emperor had no clothes, it was time to discard the Emperor – or give him some new clothes. This was not to say, however, that old methods of the control of the press and other media were to be abandoned. Nor was the population, still saturated in Soviet modes of thinking, necessarily against such methods. According to a 2005 survey, 42% of the Russian people, and 60% of those over sixty, wanted the return of “a leader like Stalin.”⁸¹⁶ Their wish had been granted... Thus in July, 2006, the Duma passed two laws allowing the secret services to eliminate “extremists” in Russia and on foreign territory, and defining “extremism” to include anyone “libellously critical of the Russian authorities”.

Again, old friends still stuck in the old Marxist ways were not discarded. So Zyuganov’s Russian Communist Party, as well as Zhirinovskiy’s nationalist “Liberal Democrats”, would be given cosy and honoured places in the new order – so long as they did not present a serious threat to Putin’s “One Russia”, but remained a loyal (extremely loyal) “opposition”. (In fact, these opposition parties have been extremely useful to Putin. The Communists have kept the poor old pensioners onside, while Zhirinovskiy has been used to air outrageous opinions and policies which Putin adheres to but which he does not want to espouse publicly.) Moreover, old comrades abroad such as the North Koreans and Cubans, and especially the Chinese, would remain comrades, of course.

But if the old Soviet ideology would be discarded, Soviet patriotism remained a compulsory element of the new order. Hence the return of the melody of the Soviet hymn, the red flag in the armed forces, the resurrection of the pioneers, etc. And, especially, the mythology of the “Great Patriotic War”, which has been pumped as never before (not even Stalin used it, because of its nationalist connotations).

Indeed, any doubting of that mythology would now become a criminal offence. Thus Dmitri Volchek writes: “‘One Russia’ proposes imprisonment for people who spread false information about the activity of the USSR during the war.

“A final version of a bill forbidding the rehabilitation of Nazism is ready. It was worked out by the ‘One Russia’ fraction in the Duma. The coordinator of the patriotic platform of OR, the president of the Committee for Security Irina Yarovaia, considers it necessary to punish people for ‘denial of fact and approval of crimes established by a sentence of the International Military Tribunal, as well as the distribution of knowingly false information about the activity of the USSR during the Second world war connected with accusing people of committing crimes established by the publicly determined sentences of the International Military Tribunal.

“Yarovaia proposes punishing such crimes with a fine of up to 300,000 roubles or imprisonment up to three years. It is proposed that the same actions carried out with the use of one’s service status or of the media should be punished with a fine of up to 100,000 – 500,000 rubles or a prison term of up to five years. In previous editions of the bill there was no mention of the USSR; it was a matter only of banning the declaration

⁸¹⁶ Orlando Figes, “Vlad the Great”, *New Statesman*, 3 December, 2007, p. 34.

of the actions of the anti-Hitler forces as criminal. 'Criticism of the USSR is threatened with prison,' warns the newspaper *Vedomosti*. 'If the bill is passed, will not historians occupied with the investigation of the crimes of Stalinism find themselves on the bench of the accused?'"⁸¹⁷

Secondly, since the merging of the government, the bureaucracy, the KGB and the mafia was steadily advancing, there could be no question of cutting Russia off from the world economy; for the mafia derived most of its ill-gotten gains from outside Russia, and had invested heavily there in houses, yachts, football clubs, newspapers, companies, their children's education, etc. Of course, this also made the new regime vulnerable to sanctions and to simple operations such as the cutting off of links with western banks. And the recent sharp decline in the Russian economy as a result of sanctions applied after the invasion of Ukraine has been a serious worry for Putin, however much he tries to shrug it off; it has knocked several percentage points off Russia's GDP.

However, it was precisely the New Russians' openness to the West that allowed them to infiltrate it to a degree Soviet spies could only have dreamed of. Already in the liberal 1990s an increase in KGB activity in Britain was reported as compared with the Soviet period – and this at a time when so many people thought that the KGB no longer existed! In the 2000s and 2010s the spying and the propaganda barrage increased exponentially; foreign-language TV channels such as "Russia Today" beamed into millions of western homes, and began to bear significant fruits. Thus in Germany it was reported that as a result of Russian propaganda the populace had begun to move away from seeing Washington as the main friend of the country, and that Moscow was moving close to taking Washington's place in the ratings. Again, polls show that four NATO countries – Greece, Turkey, Bulgaria and Slovenia – would prefer that Russia come to their aid in time of war than the US.⁸¹⁸ Only China rivals Russia's ability to infiltrate state institutions, corporations and major infrastructure (nuclear power stations, for example) through *cyber warfare*. Belatedly, NATO has decided to pour more money into combatting this deadly threat, which could give victory to Russia in any future war. Western Europe is particularly vulnerable to Russian hacking and cyber-spying; only Britain's GCHQ at Cheltenham provides significant defence capacity against this new type of warfare.

But old-fashioned types of spying remained effective. Indeed, perhaps the most spectacular coup in this field, with incalculable consequences for the future, took place in 2013, when, as is now credibly argued by historians and experts, the present president of the United State, Donald Trump, was caught in a classic honeytrap and probably blackmailed into serving the Russians. Thus the Russian-American historian Yury Felshtinsky wrote on the eve of Trump's electoral victory in 2016: "The behavior of Trump in relation to Russia fits into the schema of an agent's behavior. I shall

⁸¹⁷ Volchek, "Kvazireligia Velikoj Pobedy" (The Quasi-religion of the Great Victory), *Radio Svoboda*, February 7, 2014, <http://www.svoboda.org/a/25255849.html>.

⁸¹⁸ Khorasan, "Chetyre strany NATO predpochli by Soedinennym Shtatam" (Four Countries of NATO would prefer Russia to the United State), *Ortodoksiya*, February 21, 2017, <http://www.ortodoksiya.ru/single-post/opros-instituta-Gallup>.

immediately qualify myself: I have no proofs that he is an agent of Putin. But the whole of his behavior points exclusively to this schema. Agent Trump is not allowed to criticise Putin; he is not allowed to criticise the foreign policy of Russia; he is not allowed to raise the question of the Russian invasion of the Ukraine and the annexation of Crimea; he is not allowed to encourage the strengthening of NATO and opposition to Russian aggression in Europe; he is not allowed to criticise Russian interference in the civil war in Syria.

“Trump is allowed to criticise American policy in relation to Syria and Iraq; to call for the weakening of NATO and the American withdrawal from Europe, Japan and the Muslim East; to call for the smoothing of relations with Russia and the restructuring (in reality, the worsening) of relations with Mexico, on the one hand, and with China, on the other.

“There remains only one winner from the foreign policy programme written for Trump in the Kremlin (which I also cannot prove): Putin.

“I don’t know how Trump was recruited (perhaps during his visit to Moscow in 2013 to conduct a beauty contest.¹) But I know for certain that he was recruited...”¹

If this hypothesis proves to be true, then it points to the deepest and highest penetration yet into the fortress of the West by the Russian revolution, and the possible fulfilment of the prophecy of Elder Ignaty of Harbin (+1958): “*What began in Russia will end in America.*”

Trump and Putin are both essentially crooked businessmen turned politicians. Trump is a real-estate businessman (with several bankruptcies to his name); Putin is in the same business (he owns a fabulous number of palaces), but with a finger in the pie of almost every other form of organized crime and state construction project from the Winter Olympics at Sochi to the Crimea Bridge.⁸¹⁹ They unite through their common worship of Mammon – but with Putin as the senior partner controlling the Russian-American organized crime syndicate – and most of the world’s nuclear weapons...⁸²⁰

A third major change necessitated by Putin’s revolution is in relation to religion... We must first inquire into Putin’s personal religion... When Putin became president, he presented himself as “all things to all men”: a communist to the communists, a

⁸¹⁹ Yaffa, *op. cit.*

⁸²⁰ It may also be the fulfilment of George Orwell’s quasi-prophetic allegory, *Animal Farm*, which describes the conflict between the Communists (the pigs) and the Capitalists (the humans) – and their final reconciliation. In the novel’s final scene, a deputation of neighboring farmers are given a tour of the farm, after which they meet in the dining-room of the farmhouse with Napoleon (a type of Stalin) and the other pigs. Mr. Pilkington makes a toast to Animal Farm and its efficiency. Napoleon then offers a speech in which he outlines his new policies: The word “comrade” will be suppressed, there will be no more Sunday meetings, the skull of *old Major* has been buried, and the farm flag will be changed to a simple field of green. His greatest change in policy, however, is his announcement that Animal Farm will again be called Manor Farm. Soon after Napoleon’s speech, the men and pigs begin playing cards, but a loud quarrel erupts when both Napoleon and Pilkington each try to play the ace of spades. As Clover and the other animals watch the arguments through the dining-room window, they are unable to discriminate between the humans and the pigs...

capitalist to the capitalists, a democrat to the democrats, a nationalist to the nationalists, and an Orthodox to the Orthodox. And yet Putin is no believer. On September 8, 2000, when asked by a American television journalist whether he believed in God, he replied: "I believe in people..."

This refusal to confess a faith in God is not surprising. It should be remembered, as Preobrazhensky points out, that Putin "began his career not in the intelligence ranks but in the 'Fifth Branch' of the Leningrad Regional KGB, which also fought religion and the Church. Putin carefully hides this fact from foreign church leaders, and you will not find it in any of his official biographies... The myth of Putin's religiosity is important for proponents of 'the union'. It allows Putin to be characterized as some Orthodox Emperor Constantine, accepting the perishing Church Abroad under his regal wing. For his kindness we should be stretching out our arms to him with tears of gratitude..."⁸²¹

"For those who claim," writes Professor Olga Ackerly, "that the 'CIS is different from the USSR' and Putin is a 'practising Orthodox Christian', here are some sobering facts. The first days and months Putin's presidency were highlighted by the reestablishment of a memorial plaque on Kutuzovsky Prospect where Andropov used to live. The plaque was a symbol of communist despotism missing since the 1991 putsch, bearing Andropov's name - a former head of the KGB, especially known for his viciousness in the use of force and psychiatric clinics for dissidents. On May 9, 2000, Putin proposed a toast to the 'genius commander' Iosif Stalin and promoted many former KGB officers to the highest state positions..."

"Important to note is that the Eurasian movement, with ties to occultism, ecumenism, etc. was recently revived by Putin, and a Congress entitled 'The All-Russian Political Social Movement', held in Moscow in April of 2001, was 'created on the basis of the Eurasist ideology and *inter-confessional* [sic!] harmony in support of the reforms of President Vladimir Putin.' The movement is led by Alexander Dugin, a sexual mystic, National Bolshevik Party member, son of a Cheka cadre, personally familiar with the so-called 'Black International', advisor to the State Duma, and participant in Putin's 'Unity' movement."⁸²²

Again, while claiming to be a devout Orthodox Christian, as George Sprukts writes,

"1) he lights menorahs when he worships at his local synagogue;

"2) he has worshipped the mortal remains of Kin Il Sung in North Korea;

"3) he has worshipped the mortal remains of Mahatma Gandhi;

"4) he 'believes not in God, but in Man' (as he himself has stated);

⁸²¹ Preobrazhensky, *KGB/FSB's New Trojan Horse: Americans of Russian Descent*, North Billerica, Ma.: Gerard Group Publishing, 2008, p. 97; *KGB v russkoj emigratsii*, p. 102.

⁸²² Ackerly, "High Treason in ROCOR: The Rapprochement with Moscow", pp. 21, 25.

"5) he was initiated into an especially occult form of 'knighthood' in Germany;

"6) he has restored the communist anthem;

"7) he has restored the bloody red rag as the RF's military banner;

"8) he has not removed the satanic pentagram from public buildings (including cathedrals);

"9) he has plans of restoring the monument to 'Butcher' Dzerzhinsky;

"10) he has not removed the satanic mausoleum in Red Square nor its filthy contents."⁸²³

Although Putin is clearly not an Orthodox Christian, he has many reasons for pretending to be one and for protecting the official Orthodox church. First, the MP hierarchs are his partners in organized crime and fellow agents in the KGB. This is illustrated by the activities of "the tobacco metropolitan", now Patriarch Cyril Gundiaev, KGB Agent "Mikhailov", who imports tobacco and alcohol duty-free and is now one of the richest men in Russia.⁸²⁴

The MP's enormous property portfolio, the manifest corruption of its hierarchs, and the power it wields in many other spheres (for example, in education) is beginning to elicit unfavourable comment in the country. However, Putin is not yet ready to throw his colleagues to the wolves; besides, they are useful to him in important ways. Thus Patriarch Cyril is useful, first, as a diplomat serving the interests of Putin. He does a considerable amount of external diplomacy, mainly among church leaders, both Orthodox and heterodox, but also with State leaders.

Thus he has always maintained cordial relations with the Communist revolutionary Fidel Castro, and in 2016 he chose to meet the Pope in Cuba! A French comment on this meeting: "Cuba is at the same time a Catholic and a Communist land. Thus neither side had the feeling of going to Canossa." Indeed, this is the essence of the matter. Patriarch Cyril did not come to the meeting as a representative of Orthodoxy, but as a representative of Putin. This was a meeting of states, not of Churches.

Still more important is Cyril's role as cheerleader for Putinism. Although the continuance in power of the heretical and deeply corrupt MP is a matter of deep sorrow for all truly Orthodox Christians, nevertheless there can be no denying that there has

⁸²³ Sprukts, "Re: [paradosis] A Russian Conversation in English", orthodoxtradition@yahoo.com, 24 June, 2004. In 2013 Putin went to Israel, put on a Jewish skull-cap and prayed at the Wailing Wall. It seems that he approved of the idea of rebuilding the Jewish Temple...

⁸²⁴ "In 1995, the Nikolo-Ugreshky Monastery, which is directly subordinated to the patriarchate, earned \$350 million from the sale of alcohol. The patriarchate's department of foreign church relations, which Cyril ran, earned \$75 million from the sale of tobacco. But the patriarchate reported an annual budget in 1995-1996 of only \$2 million. Cyril's personal wealth was estimated by the *Moscow News* in 2006 to be \$4 billion." (<http://news-nftu.blogspot.com>, February, 2009)

been a sharp growth in Orthodox religiosity in Russia since 1991. So millions of sincere if deluded people are ready to follow their leader wherever he points – whether it is in condemning the Ukrainian “schismatics” who reject the authority of the MP, or in hypocritically condemning the West for its lack of Christian values, or in praising the “holy wars” in Georgia, Ukraine and Syria, or in hailing the All-Holy Putin as the Saviour of Orthodoxy, the new St. Constantine.

For Putin’s regime claims to be the successor not only of the RSFSR and the USSR but also of the pre-revolutionary Russian Orthodox Empire. It may be described as neo-Soviet and neo-Fascist, without Marxism but with “Orthodoxy”. It draws support from a heady mixture of conflicting constituencies: nationalists and democrats and monarchists, conservative Orthodox and pagan mystics and dyed-in-the-wool atheists, westerners and capitalists, mafiosi and Slavophiles. Putin aims to find a place in his grasping heart for all the Russias of the last century. Only one condition is attached: that Putin’s regime is accepted as the lawful successor of all previous Russian regimes. This is a condition that no truly Orthodox Christian can accept; but Cyril accepts it with enthusiasm, and thereby provides an inestimable support to the new “Tsar”, the new Emperor of the supposedly resurrected Third Rome...

The inclusiveness of Putin’s regime even included some of the most irreconcilable enemies of Soviet power. Thus probably his greatest coup was his enticement of the fiercely anti-communist Russian Church Abroad (ROCOR) under Metropolitan Lavr into union with the MP. Here a sharp division emerged between the great majority of ROCOR’s flock inside Russia, also known as the Catacomb or True Orthodox Church, and the majority of her flock outside Russia. Inside Russia, the believers did not trust the changes that had taken place since perestroika; for them, the leopard had not changed its spots (Jeremiah 13.23), the communists had merely assumed the mask of “democrats”, the wolves had simply put on sheep’s clothing while remaining inwardly as ravenous as before (Matthew 7.15). Outside Russia, on the other hand, most believers were displaying signs of “war weariness”; they wanted to believe that the Soviet Union had miraculously changed into a normal State overnight, that the KGB had disappeared, that the communists had repented, etc. When Putin came to power in 2000, this attitude intensified as nationalist feelings became mixed up with the dogmatic and canonical issues; and in 2007 ROCOR threw in the towel and was united with the MP, acknowledging the legitimacy of the Russian State.

Already three years before the unia, on May 28 / June 10, 2004, the Holy Synod of the True Orthodox Church of Russia under Archbishop Lazarus (Zhurbenko) had declared:

“The Union of ROCOR with the MP is taking place through the political leadership of the Russian Federation and special services, and is the result of the New York Synod’s loss of freedom. This neo-sergianist act subjects the Church to antichristian powers and is an ecclesiastical crime analogous with the action of Metropolitan Sergius, and even more serious [than that] since it was committed voluntarily, and not under compulsion. The words of Hieromartyr Pachomy of Chernigov, spoken by him concerning Metropolitan Sergius and his Synod, apply completely to the Synod of Metropolitan Lavr: ‘Metropolitan Sergius is a complete slave, an obedient weapon in

the hands of Soviet institutions... well-known to us, and it has completely lost its moral-ecclesiastical authority... In a word, the Holy Church has never before experienced such humiliation and abuse’.

‘The union of ROCOR and the MP is being accomplished on the orders of the world’s behind-the-scenes government, being a necessary part of the accomplishment of the plan for the world’s antichristian globalization. This union strengthens the post-Soviet regime of the Russian Federation, gives it a church blessing. The regime which is carrying out the dechristianization of the Russian people, a campaign for its moral corruption, and is encouraging its physical dying-out, is declared by the Synod of ROCOR-L to be Christian and Orthodox. Here are only a few of the facts confirming the antichristian essence of the present regime of the Russian Federation: ‘In Russian society catastrophic phenomena are taking place whose causes are concealed in its spiritual failure. On the basis of statistical data from Russian and foreign sources: a man is killed in Russia every minute, and every 10 minutes one or two suicides take place. The number of homeless children in Russia almost corresponds to the post-war level. 30% of youth use narcotics. On average practically every Russian woman has two to four abortions per year. The mortality rate is 70% higher than the birthrate – within 15 years Russia will have 22 million fewer people. That is more than we lost in the Second World War. Today we can say definitively: Russia is perishing not only spiritually, but also physically’ (I.A. Kunitsyn, member of the Historico-Judicial Commission of the Moscow Patriarchate attached to the State Duma of the Russian Federation, *Nezavisimaia Gazeta*, 2 June, 2004). Thus ROCOR-L is consciously taking part in a fake regeneration of Russia and the Russian Church. The New York Synod, having blessed this regime and declared it to be ‘helping the spiritual regeneration of Russia’, has committed a terrible crime against the Christian conscience.”⁸²⁵

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We have seen that the essence of Putin’s regime is the legitimization of organized crime on a scale never seen before in world history. In this connection, we should recall that Leninism and banditism have existed in the closest symbiosis ever since Stalin robbed the Tbilisi bank and the Sochi post office to provide Lenin with funds for revolutionary terror in the early 1900s. The victims in the 1920s were the nobles, the industrialists and the Church, in the 1930s - the peasants, the generals and the Old Bolsheviks, in the 1940s - the Germans, the Crimean Tatars and other conquered peoples, and in the 1990s - all small-time investors and account-holders. In the 2000s it was the oligarchs’ turn: in true Leninist style, Putin “expropriated the expropriators”.

The gap between the richest and the poorest in Russia became the highest in the world except in some Caribbean islands. State institutions and services, such as education and health, were starved of funds. The only notable exceptions were the armed forces and the security services, which received vast increases reminiscent of Hitler’s rearming in the 1930s. Moreover, he increased the numbers of bureaucrats,

⁸²⁵ <http://www.catacomb.org.ua/modules.php?name=Pages&go=page&pid=2069>.

78% of whom are now KGB⁸²⁶, and increased their pay. In this way he guaranteed their support, a tactic he borrowed from the Bolsheviks in the Civil War period...

Like all Soviet leaders, Putin shows a marked antipathy to the West, and a steadfast conviction (or feigned conviction) that his country is morally superior to it; probably the main reason why so many Orthodox Christians – and not only Orthodox Christians⁸²⁷ – support him, is his claim to be restoring “Christian values” to Russia by contrast with “Eurosodom” and the decadent West... “We have to give him a chance,” is the view. “And if he succeeds, then Christianity as a whole is the winner...” His holier-than-thou propaganda campaign began in about 2006, at just the time, as we now know, that he was preparing his invasion of fellow Orthodox Georgia. It intensified during the Kievan counter-revolution in 2013...

Of course, the West has only itself to blame for this. Thus its decision to join the civil war in Syria on the side of the Sunni rebels has enabled Putin to put himself forward as the champion, not only of the Shiites, but also of those Christians who have suffered at the hands of the rebels. Again, the West’s mindless pursuit of the LGBT agenda that has enabled Putin to portray himself as the champion of traditional Christianity. Of course, the irony is mind-boggling: the KGB, the biggest killer of Christians in history, which has regularly used well-trained heterosexual and homosexual prostitute-spies to pursue its ends, is now hailed as the champion of traditional Christian values!... But the level of historical knowledge in the West is now so low that younger generations in America, for example, scarcely have the first idea of what the Russian revolution and the KGB was.

“‘Russia has been using this issue to develop a constituency in Muslim and African countries,’ says Mark Gevisser, an Open Society fellow who is writing a book on the global debate on gay rights. ‘This brand of ideological moral conservatism was originally minted in the US. It is highly ironic that these countries are mounting an anti-western crusade using a western tool. Moscow plays on opposition to gay rights most effectively closer to home. Last November, when it looked like the Ukrainian Viktor Yanukovich was close to signing an Association Agreement with the European Union, billboards appeared across the country warning that the ‘EU means legislating same-sex marriage’ [‘EURO=HOMO’]. The campaign was paid for by Ukraine’s Choice, a group associated with the Kremlin-connected politician and businessman Viktor Medvedchuk.’”⁸²⁸

Putin’s problem here is: the extreme moral degradation of contemporary Russian society is plain for all to see. For under the watch of Putin and Gurdiaev, these profoundly immoral moralists and, self-styled guardians of Christian morality, Russia’s already shocking statistics on a wide variety of social indices – social equality, corruption, alcoholism, drug-taking, child mortality, suicide – have got worse, making

⁸²⁶ Alexander Podrabinek, “Chekisty na marshe. Vlast’ i Tserkov’”, *Radio Svoboda*, May 29, 2015.

⁸²⁷ See the American conservative evangelical Pat Buchanan, “Whose Side is God on Now?”, <http://buchanan.org/blog/whose-side-god-now-6337>, April 4, 2014.

⁸²⁸ Owen Matthews, “Putin’s Masterplan”, *The Spectator*, 22 February, 2014, pp. 12-13.

her comparable only to some of the poorest and most corrupt nations of the Third World.

Thus according to United Nations statistics cited by Vladimir Ruscher, occupies the following positions in the world league tables:

- 1st in suicides of adults, children and adolescents;
- 1st in numbers of children born out of wedlock;
- 1st in children abandoned by parents;
- 1st in absolute decline in population;
- 1st in consumption of spirits and spirit-based drinks;
- 1st in consumption of strong alcohol;
- 1st in tobacco sales;
- 1st in deaths from alcohol and tobacco;
- 1st in deaths from cardiovascular diseases;
- 2nd in fake medicine sales;
- 1st in heroin consumption (21st in world production).

Some say that Russia is finally getting a grip on abortion and child mortality. Even this is so, these statistics show that Russia, far from leading the world in virtue, is perhaps the most corrupt country of all. As regards general criminality, theft, corruption and murder (including abortion), Russia is very near the top of the league, and this not least because the government itself has taken the lead in these activities, making Russia into a mafia state run by and for a small clique of fantastically rich criminals. Thus the general picture is one of *extreme moral degradation*.

The most obvious explanation for this is that during Soviet rule religious faith was persecuted and the only accepted morality was the anti-Christian revolutionary morality. However, Putin deals with this problem by putting the blame exclusively on the Yeltsin period (because that was the most westernizing). Before Yeltsin, as he argued in 2012 in a speech to the Federal Assembly, Soviet society had been distinguished by “charity, compassion and sympathy” (!) “Today,” however, “Russian society has an obvious deficit in spiritual bonds, a deficit in everything that made us at all times stronger, more powerful, in which we always prided ourselves – that is, such phenomena as charity, compassion and sympathy... The situation that has been created is a consequence of the fact that some 15 to 20 years ago ‘the ideological stamps of the former epoch’ were rejected... Unfortunately, at that time many moral signposts were lost...”

However, at the Valdai forum in 2013 Putin said that “many Euro-Atlantic countries have de facto gone down the path of the rejection of... Christian values. Moral principles are being denied... What could be a greater witness of the moral crisis of the human socium than the loss of the capacity for self-reproduction. But today practically all developed countries can no longer reproduce themselves. Without the values laid down in Christianity and other world religions, without the

norms of ethics and morality formed in the course of millennia, people inevitably lose their human dignity. And we consider it natural and right to defend these values.”⁸²⁹

The strange thing about this statement is that Putin seems entirely unconscious of the fact that with regard to the “Christian value” that he cites here, “self-reproduction”, Russia performs worse than any western country. Thus even after taking migration into account, the twenty-eight countries of the European Union have a natural growth in population that is twice as high as Russia’s! And if he is referring not to the balance between the birth rate and the death rate, but to *homosexuality* as a factor that by definition inhibits reproduction, then the situation is little better in Russia than in the West. For in spite of Putin’s much-vaunted ban on pro-gay propaganda to minors, the vice remains legal among adults. Thus many in Putin’s entourage are homosexual; during the Winter Olympiad there were two openly gay bars in Sochi; while a marriage between two women was recently registered officially in Moscow.⁸³⁰ Homosexuality even flourishes in places from which it should have been banished first of all. Thus among the three hundred bishops of the Moscow Patriarchate, 50 according to one estimate (Fr. Andrei Kuraiev) and 250 according to another (Fr. Gleb Yakunin) are homosexuals. It is even claimed that promotion up the hierarchical ladder of the MP is possible only by serving the sexual needs of a bishop higher up the ladder...

The fall in the population of the Russian Federation has been catastrophic, even worse than in the late Soviet period and unprecedented for peace-time conditions. But its causes are mysterious: after all, while Putin has regularly disposed of journalists and dissidents, he has not (yet) resorted to mass murder on a Stalinist scale...

Of course, the fact that supposedly Orthodox Russia is first in the world, according to United Nations figures, in child mortality, alcoholism, abortion, narcotics-consumption, etc., accounts for part of the figures. But even when these factors are taken account of, much still remains to be explained. Nicholas Eberstadt writes that “as of 1980, the Russian population may well have been suffering the very highest incidence of mortality from diseases of the circulatory system that had ever been visited on a national population in the entire course of human history – up to that point in time. Over the subsequent decades, unfortunately, the level of CVD mortality in the Russian Federation veered further upward.... By 2006... Russia’s mortality levels from CVD alone were some 30% higher than deaths in Western Europe from all causes combined.” But what is the cause of this huge level of CVD mortality? The usual physical factors – poverty, over-eating, drinking, smoking – do not explain it. The real cause, concludes Masha Gessen, is *psychological and spiritual. Russia is dying of a broken heart:-*

“Another major clue to the psychological nature of the Russian disease is the fact that the two brief breaks in the downward spiral coincided not with periods of greater

⁸²⁹ Andrei Movchan, “Rossia i Zapad: kto moral’nee?” (Russia and the West: who is more moral?), http://slon.ru/russia/rossiya_i_zapad_kto_moralnee-1114248.xhtml, June 17, 2014.

⁸³⁰ “V Moskve pozhenili dvukh nevest” (In Moscow two brides were married), <http://www.kp.ru/daily/26270/3148680/>

prosperity but with periods, for lack of a more data-driven description, of greater hope. The Khrushchev era, with its post-Stalin political liberalization and intensive housing construction, inspired Russians to go on living. The Gorbachev period of glasnost and revival inspired them to have babies as well. The hope might have persisted after the Soviet Union collapsed – for a brief moment it seemed that this was when the truly glorious future would materialize – but the upheaval of the 1990s dashed it so quickly and so decisively that death and birth statistics appear to reflect nothing but despair during that decade.

“If this is true – if Russians are dying for lack of hope, as they seem to be – then the question that is still looking for its researcher is, Why haven’t Russians experienced hope in the last quarter century? Or, more precisely in light of the grim continuity of Russian death, What happened to Russians over the course of the Soviet century that has rendered them incapable of hope? In *The Origins of Totalitarianism* Hannah Arendt argues that totalitarian rule is truly possible only in countries that are large enough to be able to afford depopulation. The Soviet Union proved itself to be just such a country on at least three occasions in the twentieth century – teaching its citizens in the process that their lives are worthless. Is it possible that this knowledge has been passed from generation to generation enough times that most Russians are now born with it and this is why they are born with a Bangladesh-level life expectancy? Is it also possible that other post-Soviet states, by breaking off from Moscow, have reclaimed some of their ability to hope, and this is why even Russia’s closest cultural and geographic cousins, such as Belarus and Ukraine, aren’t dying off as fast? If so, Russia is dying of a broken heart – also known as cardiovascular disease.”⁸³¹

The Lord said: “Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy” (Luke 12.1). Pharisaism is bad enough in the individual, alienating him completely from the life in Christ. It is even more dangerous when it seizes hold upon a whole people that has, or once had, the knowledge of God, and which then, in combination with the passions of hatred, resentment, wounded pride and xenophobic nationalism, exposes Orthodoxy – for we are not talking only about Russian Orthodoxy here, but also to the other “Orthodox” nations who like to lambast the West – to ridicule or disgust among the non-Orthodox nations. “The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you”, said the Prophet to the Jews when they were still the people of God (Ezekiel 16.27); and these words were echoed by the Apostle Paul in reference to the Jews of his time, when they had already fallen away (Romans 2.21). Again, the apostle said that “if we would judge ourselves we would not be judged” (I Corinthians 11.31) – but honest self-criticism is very rarely found among the Orthodox nations today...

February 17 / March 2, 2017; revised June 15/28, 2017.

⁸³¹ Masha Gessen, “The Dying Russians”, *The New York Review of Books*, September 2, 2014, <http://www.nybooks.com/blogs/nyrblog/2014/sep/02/dying-russians>.

36. APOCALYPSE NOW

The final warning bell for western civilization sounded on September 11, 2001, when the World Trade Twin Towers in New York were destroyed in a terrorist attack. It is still not known for certain who perpetrated the catastrophe. But that question is less important than the disaster's symbolical – indeed, eschatological – significance.

For New York today is the city that most closely symbolizes the Babylon of the Apocalypse, not only in its nature, but also in its final destruction. Not only is it the true capital of modern Jewish-Masonic civilization: as Denis Geoffroy points out, it "so resembles the description of Babylon in the Apocalypse of St. John that it is hard to believe that this is a simple coincidence." As for its destruction, the destruction of New York's twin towers both looks back to God's destruction of the Towers of Babel and forward to the coming destruction of the whole of contemporary western civilization.

The date of this tragedy, September 11 – August 29, according to the Orthodox calendar – highly significant. It is the feast/fastday of the Beheading of St. John the Forerunner. St. John is the prophet of repentance, and his beheading signified the attempt by Herod to cut off his preaching of repentance. And so the time of repentance for the apostate Herodian West is near to being cut off...

*

In his magisterial work, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order*⁸³², Samuel P. Huntington showed that since the end of the Cold War the underlying structure of World Order has changed from being bipolar and ideological to being multipolar and civilizational. In his view, which he backs up with a very impressive array of data and argumentation, the ideological liberalism vs. communism struggle was a comparatively superficial "blip" in the tide of history. After all, both liberalism and communism are products of western civilization, and the Cold War can be seen as a civil war between two outcomes or stages of the eighteenth-century Enlightenment. Both systems offer a utopian vision for mankind based on rationalism, science and education, in which religious belief has no place. Liberalism is relatively more individualistic than Communism, gives more place to individual initiative in economic and social life, and is more tolerant of individual differences and idiosyncracies, such as religion. But the similarities between them are more striking than their differences. And from the point of view of traditional Christianity, the main difference is that while the one destroys faith slowly, the other does it relatively quickly. Thus Stuart Reed writes: "In the Cold War, an unworkable revolutionary creed, communism, yielded to a workable revolutionary creed, liberal capitalism. Now liberal capitalism has replaced communism as the chief threat to the customs, traditions and decencies of Christendom..."⁸³³ World politics, argued Huntington, has now reverted to the more traditional, long-term pattern of struggles between civilizational blocs based on profound differences in values and religion.

⁸³² London: Touchstone Books, 1996.

⁸³³ Reed, "Confessions of a Fellow-Traveller", *The Spectator*, 23 September, 2000, p. 45.

Huntingdon identified the following main contemporary civilizations: Western, Orthodox (Russian), Islamic, Sinic (Chinese), Japanese, Buddhist, Hindu, Latin American and African. Of these the most powerful were, in his opinion, the Western, Islamic and Sinic civilizations.

Accepting the thesis on the clash of civilizations in principle, and agreeing that the ultimate aim of the western globalists is evil, we may ask: to what extent are they succeeding in coming close to their goal? Or are they in fact being thwarted by the revival of older, clashing civilizations? And the surprising answer is: since the end of the Cold War, in spite of some tactical successes, the goal of the globalists appears to be receding away from them; three rival centres of power that explicitly reject western ideology and the West's NWO are rapidly growing in power and influence: China, the Islamic world and Russia. Like the horsemen of the Apocalypse, these four civilizations are set to clash and set the world ablaze...

1. The West

But let us begin with the West, the common "bogey" of the other three... As the world turned into the third millennium AD, it was clear that to speak of "the End of History" in the shape of the complete, global triumph of democracy and free trade was premature to say the least, and that opposite tendencies were developing fast. True, there were more nominally democratic countries than ever before, - "by 2000, 60 per cent of the world's population lived in democracies, a far higher share than in 1974,"⁸³⁴ - and the Chicago-school-style liberalization of the financial and commodity markets had proceeded apace. But on the horizon, like clouds that gradually draw nearer, becoming larger and darker all the time, several distinct threats to the New World Order, some old and some relatively new, were emerging. America's emphatic but pyrrhic and costly victory over Saddam Hussein's Iraq in 2003 was a turning point; thereafter, her prestige has plummeted...

Moreover, the western way of life as a whole does not seem to be making people significantly happier; it is no longer something that people from other countries strive for - if we exclude the higher income levels and security, which are still envied. Thus "one well publicized finding," writes Peter Watson, "is that although the developed Western nations have become better off in a financial and material sense, they are not any happier than they were decades ago. In fact, in *The Age of Absurdity: Why Modern Life Makes It Hard to Be Happy* (2010), Michael Foley argues that modern life has made things worse, 'deepening our cravings and at the same time heightening our delusions of importance as individuals. Not only are we rabid in our unsustainable demands for gourmet living, eternal youth, fame and a hundred varieties of sex, we have been encouraged - by a post-1970s "rights" culture that has created a zero-tolerance sensitivity to any perceived inequality, slight or grievance - into believing that to want something is to deserve it.' Moreover, 'the things we have are devalued by the things we want next'..."⁸³⁵ Of course, this begs the question whether

⁸³⁴ Brendan Simms, *Europe: The Struggle for Supremacy*, London: Allen Lane, 2013, p. 505.

⁸³⁵ Watson, *The Age of Atheists*, London: Simon & Schuster, 2014, p. 20.

“happiness” should be the aim of life. The right to happiness is enshrined in the American Constitution, but western civilization before the Masonic eighteenth century had a far higher ideal: *eternal life in Christ*, which is as much higher than “happiness” as heaven is higher than the earth. But even if we judge the West by its present, base and purely secular ideals, it has obviously failed.

The sins of the West in relation to the peoples it once colonized are generally recognized – which is not to say, forgiven. Among the most serious death-tolls were those of the Indians of North America at the hands of the White Americans, and the Mayans and Incas of Central and South America at the hands of the Spaniards. Several western nations had a hand in the slave trade from Africa to America. In Africa itself, the Congolese suffered horrific genocide at the hands of the Belgians, and the Hereros of South-West Africa at the hands of the Germans. Later slaughters in Africa included the Ethiopians at the hands of the Italians, the Mau-Mau of Kenya at the hands of the British and the Algerians at the hands of the French. The British killed millions indirectly: through neglect of the Irish famine, through the destruction of the native Indian textile industry, and through the imposition of the opium trade on China at the Treaty of Nanking in 1842. The Europeans were supposed to bring Christianity to the pagans. But the reality was that the non-European civilizations were sacrificed on the altar of European profit. It was not so much Christianity as revolutionary teachings such as socialism and nationalism that the West instilled into its colonies – which, by the Justice of God, would later be turned against them.

The West reached its peak just before the First World War; Oswald Spengler’s *The Decline of the West* was published in 1918. Though disguised and to some extent reversed by the dominance of America from 1945 to 1991, this decline is now a fact that cannot be denied. The tired, aging and debt-ridden populations of North America and Europe still retain a lead over the rest of the world in military and economic terms. But the gap is narrowing very fast, especially in relation to China, but also in relation to Russia. Thus “NATO defence spending is falling fast, but Russia’s military budget rose by 26% this year [2013]”.⁸³⁶ Just recently President Trump has raised American military spending, but the Europeans, with the partial exception of the British, remain mired in apathy and appeasement, preferring to blame the Americans – while relying on their blood and money – than defend themselves...

Let us look more closely at the figure of the whore of Babylon in the Book of Revelation: “The ten horns which you saw are ten kings who have received no kingdom as yet, but they receive authority for one hour as kings with the beast. These are of one mind, and they will give their power and authority to the beast... The ten horns which you saw on the beast, these will hate the harlot, make her desolate and naked, eat her flesh and burn her with fire” (17.12-13, 16). In the next, eighteenth chapter there follows a detailed description of the fall of Babylon, hailed by the inhabitants of heaven but bewailed by the merchants of the earth because the enormous possibilities for enrichment that she had provided have now vanished...

⁸³⁶ Drawsko Pomorskie, “Back to Basics”, *The Economist*, November 16-22, 2013, p. 65. However, for a pessimistic assessment of Russia’s military potential, see <http://vasiliy-smirnof.livejournal.com/3831.html>.

One vivid detail immediately strikes us: "Every shipmaster, all who travel by ship, sailors, and as many as trade on the sea, stood at a distance and cried out when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, What is like this great city?" (Revelation 18.17-18). Evidently, insofar as Babylon can be identified with a geographical place or city, it is situated *on the sea*. The hypothesis, therefore, is that Babylon is *western civilization as a whole*, and that what we see here described in the Sacred Scripture is the destruction of its most potent symbol, the Twin Towers of New York, which, of course, is situated on the sea... That the West in general and New York in particular should be identified with Babylon is confirmed by several facts. First, New York's street-plan is modeled on that of ancient Babylon.⁸³⁷ Secondly, it is in New York that the United Nations is situated with its declared purpose of uniting all nations in one world government, a cardinal aim of which is a reduction and "leveling" down of all religions to a lowest common denominator. And thirdly, New York, together with other great cities of the West - Amsterdam, Paris, Geneva, London and Chicago - has taken the lead in hosting and promoting the ecumenical movement in such institutions as the World Council of Parliaments (first meeting: Chicago in 1893) and the World Council of Churches (first meeting: Amsterdam in 1948).

St. John Maximovich said that America was a great nation, but was threatened by the sins of greed and sensuality. These are the "Babylonian" sins of a society that permits every kind of abomination. Of course, America is not alone in this: her parent-civilization of Western Europe is no less debauched. However, the popular imagination - and especially the imagination of non-western peoples - has seized on America in particular because of her size, wealth, and military and technological superiority over every other nation. America for many around the world *is* the Antichrist.

The effect of 9/11 was electrifying. On the one hand, it reinforced the trend of American governments to intervene pre-emptively in any region of the world where democracy was under threat - President Bush's scepticism about overseas interventions changed overnight into a "global war on Terror". But on the other hand, those interventions became increasingly pyrrhic and counter-productive. Thus the Second Iraq war in 2003, while overthrowing a real tyrant, brought to the surface Sunni/Shiite divisions that the tyrant had suppressed. Again, the intervention in Libya to overthrow Gaddafi's regime exposed divisions in NATO and does not appear to have united Libya itself. Again, while the "Arab Spring" appeared to promise a new wave of pro-western democratization, it also produced an Islamist president in Egypt, the biggest country in the Arab world, and instability in America's monarchical allies in the Persian Gulf, while the governments of America's main enemies in the region, Iran and Syria, remain in power in spite of the pressure of sanctions and war...

As for "soft power", the West's lead here is also declining. Even in the field of Human Rights, in which it always took the lead, it has surrendered influence to the most illiberal of countries. Thus the Human Rights Council of the United Nations is

⁸³⁷ Werner Keller writes that "the town plan of Babylon is reminiscent of the blueprints for large American cities", especially New York (*The Bible as History*, New York: Bantam Books, 1982, p. 316).

chaired by a Saudi Arab, and has representatives from China, Cuba and Russia – none of them countries noted for their championship of Human Rights! “The ‘Washington consensus’ of democracy and free markets has given way to the Beijing consensus of authoritarian modernisation. America’s self-confidence has been battered first by George Bush’s clumsy war on terror, which gave democracy a bad name, then by the economic crisis of 2008, which did the same for Western finance, and finally by the dysfunctionality of Congress, which shut down the American government in 2013 [and 2018]. China become bolder about asserting its rights in Asia, Russia began rearming and reconquering parts of the former Soviet Union, while Barack Obama has seemed a defensive president, retreating from Iraq and Afghanistan, unwilling to guide the Arab awakening and keen to ‘outsource’ responsibility in other regions to local powers.”⁸³⁸

Although a resurgence of the West cannot be ruled out, it looks increasingly unlikely that it can survive the next global financial crisis, let alone a war with either Russia or China. Moreover, when the fall comes it is likely to be rapid.⁸³⁹ Japanese philosopher Takeshi Umehara might well be right when he says: “The total failure of Marxism... and the dramatic break-up of the Soviet Union are only the precursors to the collapse of Western liberalism, the main current of modernity. Far from being the alternative to Marxism and the reigning ideology at the end of history, liberalism will be the next domino to fall...”⁸⁴⁰

2. China

Huntingdon believed that China was the country most likely to challenge the West in the role of global hegemon...⁸⁴¹ China acquired both cultural and political unity at about the same time as Rome – in the late third century BC. In spite of changes of dynasty, Chinese despotism lasted for another 2100 years and more! Between the Treaty of Nanking in 1842 and Tiananmen Square in 1989, it looked as if western civilization in one or another of its forms might overcome the older Chinese civilization.

First came the Taiping rebellion led by a man claiming to be the younger brother of Jesus Christ, which caused between 20 and 40 million deaths and ended with the fall of the Taiping capital of Nanking in 1864. Then came the long period of western capitalist dominance, beginning with the sack of Peking by an Anglo-French force in 1860 and punctuated by failed rebellions such as that of the Boxers in 1900 and the intervention of other civilizations such as that of the Japanese in the 1930s. Finally, from 1949 China adopted another variant of western civilization, communism, which seemed on the verge of falling to the worldwide wave of democratization that began in 1989.

⁸³⁸ “Your chance, Mr. Obama”, *The Economist*, October 30, 2013, p. 19.

⁸³⁹ Niall Ferguson, “Complexity and Collapse”, *Foreign Affairs*, March/April, 2010, pp. 18-32.

⁸⁴⁰ Ushemara, in Huntingdon, *op. cit.* p. 306.

⁸⁴¹ Huntingdon, *op. cit.*, p. 83.

But in 1989 the Chinese communist leaders, unlike their colleagues in Russia, held their nerve and held on to power. However, the result was not a return to old-style Marxist communism, nor liberalization in any but the economic sphere. Rather, China seems to be returning in essence to the old empire-civilization, the Confucian Middle Kingdom, an intensely nationalist and despotic civilization that extends its power over neighbouring lands not so much by war as by sheer demographic and economic dominance. Thus the Far Eastern province of Russia is already overrun by Chinese, with little resistance from Putin (in fact he has given huge concessions and grants of territory to the Chinese), while Chinese entrepreneurs are outshining their Russian colleagues. In almost every other economy in the Far East, with the exception of South Korea and Japan, a small Chinese elite seems to hold the economic cards. Chinese investment in Africa is already huge. As for the West, large chunks of western industry, commerce and real estate are being taken over by the Chinese, and European governments go cap in hand to the Chinese asking for loans and investment.

This increasing influence of China abroad sometimes causes resentment among the indigenous populations (for example, in Indonesia). But the Chinese overseas have always stressed their dutiful obedience to their adopted countries. The Chinese are extending their influence by “soft” rather than “hard” power – for the time being, at any rate...

“China’s soft power,” predicted Jonathan Friedland in 2014, “will make itself felt in every aspect of Western lives. Business may slow during late January, thanks to the Chinese new year. The seasonal habit of hanging lanterns from the trees may cross the Pacific, the way Halloween masks travelled back to Europe across the Atlantic. The Olympic games and football World Cup will have to adjust their timetables to accommodate the world’s largest television audience.

“The classiest hotels will have signs in English and Mandarin, welcoming the new rich. Western politicians will all but beg for Chinese investment. And American Lord Granthams, eminent men without money, will marry Chinese Cobras, women without lineage but with plenty of spare cash.

“American and European elites will pride themselves on knowing the names of the rising stars of Chinese politics, the way they used to know the early field for Iowa and New Hampshire. They will follow China for the same reason Willie Sutton said he robbed banks: ‘Because that’s where the money is’.”⁸⁴²

And if this seems very superficial and short-term, we must remember that fashions in important ideas, too, tend to follow the money. Societies that are perceived to be powerful and successful in material terms are usually imitated in more profound matters. So the growth in Chinese soft power, backed up as it is by increasing hard power, will most likely continue to erode the prestige of western democracy and humanrightism throughout the world. The greater emphasis of the Chinese on the collective as opposed to the individual appeals to many who see the absurdities of the selfish, individualistic western obsession with human rights. And if Chinese

⁸⁴² Friedland, “The China Question”, *The Economist*, October 30, 2013, p. 58.

civilization seems at first too China-centred to have a truly universal appeal, we could have said that with even greater conviction of western civilization in the nineteenth century with its barely-concealed racism.

In view of the exponential growth of its economy, it is sometimes thought that China is a truly modern state in the making and must eventually become a member of the New World Order (NWO), if it is not one already. But only a fantasist could think that the globalists control China as they control the West! Moreover, it must not be forgotten that, while modernizing its economy, China has not modernized its political system: while jettisoning Marxism, it is still despotic and therefore part of the Old World Order (OWO), that old order of anti-Christian despotism. Nor has this changed under China's new leader, Xi Jinping (even if his wife is a pop star). As Jonathan Fenby writes, "there is no doubting his complete attachment to the party state he heads. This year [2013] has seen a toughening of the clampdown on dissent and an insistence by Mr. Xi on the need for absolute loyalty to the regime. He has resurrected Maoist ideology on party power. Western ideas of plurality and democracy have no place in his people's republic..."⁸⁴³

This strengthening of the despotic power of the Great Leader was reinforced at the Party Congress in 2017... Now, while overt repression is far less than in Mao's time, covert surveillance and the control of all forms of information (especially about Mao's time) has reached record heights.⁸⁴⁴ Unlike the Soviet Union under Gorbachev, glasnost has been decoupled from perestroika in China. The authorities retain a formidable power over the people, and China remains one of the few major countries that have made determined efforts to control even the internet. But western media and politicians, usually so quick to seize on human rights violations in weaker countries, turn a blind eye to the far greater threat from still-Communist China.

China's main weaknesses are the instability and corruption inevitably created by rapid economic growth and the monopoly power of the party over that growth. The party's corruption and the increasing gap between rich and poor are causing increasing tension. Thus "the show trial of Mr. Xi's erstwhile rival, Bo Xilai, opened many Chinese eyes to the opulence of the country's princelings. Americans may moan about money politics, but the wealth of the richest 50 members of Congress is \$1.6 billion, compared with \$95 billion for the richest 50 members of China's People's Congress. More such revelations will surely come."⁸⁴⁵

Riots and strikes are common in China today - contrary to the common opinion, there *is* a tradition of protest in Chinese history. Thus "in the last five years," wrote Misha Glenny in 2009, "the number of peasant riots has risen spectacularly to roughly 80,000 per year and they continue to proliferate. These outbursts of discontent can be serious, involving the wrecking of local government offices and the lynching of officials."⁸⁴⁶ Thus a "Chinese Maidan" remains a real possibility.

⁸⁴³ Fenby, "Princeling tightens his hold over China", *Sunday Telegraph*, November 17, 2013, p. 40.

⁸⁴⁴ Orville Schell, "China's Cover-Up", *Foreign Affairs*, January/February, 2018.

⁸⁴⁵ "Your chance, Mr. Obama", *The Economist*, October 30, 2013, pp. 19-20.

⁸⁴⁶ Glenny, op. cit., p. 363.

Another weakness of China is the possibility that events in neighbouring North Korea, with its megalomaniac nuclear ambitions, could get out of control. By July, 2017, North Korea had developed nuclear missiles capable of reaching the United States. And President Kim Il-Jun had repeatedly threatened to use them against America, thereby bringing the world to the brink of nuclear catastrophe. In September, the country exploded a hydrogen bomb 17 times as powerful as the one dropped on Hiroshima.⁸⁴⁷ This is the price of the failure finally to defeat communism in the twentieth century – never-ending and ever-escalating evil in the twenty-first...

Paradoxically, China may be in greater danger from North Korea than the United States. Even without nuclear war, the collapse of the regime there for whatever reason could lead to a major exodus of refugees over the border into China – with serious destabilizing consequences. “In the event of an escalation,” writes Oriana Skylar Mastro, “China will likely attempt to seize control of key terrain, including North Korea’s nuclear sites. The large-scale presence of both American and Chinese troops on the Korean peninsula would raise the risk of a full-blown war between China and the United States.”⁸⁴⁸ As for Russia, North Korea’s main ally and provider of technology, she could hardly keep out of the conflict...

Another weakness of China is her aging population, which was caused by the communist government’s one-child policy. This is now in the process of being abandoned, but it still leaves a disastrous legacy: a vast excess of males over females. Now masculine energy that cannot be directed towards employment or the building of families can easily be redirected towards another traditional occupation of young males – war.

This brings us to the question of China’s “hard” power, her military, into which very large resources have been poured of late. How is China likely to use her enormous military power, second only to that of the United States?

In Revelation the army of “the kings of the East” numbers 200 million (9.12-19, 16.12), and marches to the River Euphrates. By “coincidence”, the Chinese military is reported to be able to put 200 million men into the field...⁸⁴⁹ Their heading for the River Euphrates, the heart of the Islamic world, points to a phenomenon that is already clearly evident: the *aggiornamento* of China and Islam, especially Pakistan and Iran, which, though not a natural partnership since they constitute different civilizations, nevertheless makes sense as an alliance against American hegemony. Such an alliance can also count on two other resources that could bring America to her knees even without a shot being fired: Arab oil and Chinese purchases of

⁸⁴⁷ Oriana Skylar Mastro, “Why China Won’t Rescue North Korea”, *Foreign Affairs*, January/February, 2018, p. 59.

⁸⁴⁸ Mastro, *op. cit.*, p. 59.

⁸⁴⁹ “Ekspert: veroiatnost’ aggressii Kitaia protiv Rossii 95%” (Expert: probability of aggression of China against Russia is 95%), <http://newsland.com/news/detail/id/1256448/>, October 3, 2013; “China’s Military Rise”, *The Economist*, April 7-April 13, 2012, pp. 25-30.

American bonds.⁸⁵⁰ And although America's "fracking" revolution has lessened her dependence on Arabic oil, and the symbiosis between the Chinese and American economies – Niall Ferguson has called it "Chimerica"⁸⁵¹ – means that the Chinese would suffer almost as much as the Americans if they sold American bonds, the fact remains that western civilization is uniquely vulnerable to these two threats.

A third threat related to the first two is that oil and gas will begin to be paid for in euros or some other currency rather than the dollar – which might well bring down the dollar. Iran, with the support of Russia and China, has suggested creating a petroeuro market. It has been suggested that this threat, rather than that of the building of a nuclear bomb, is the real reason why America has been trying to bring about regime change in Iran and in its close ally, Syria...⁸⁵² Be that as it may, a Eurasian bloc consisting of Russia, China and Iran – among others – would be a huge threat to NATO and the West. Russia supplies Iran with nuclear technology and S-300 surface-to-air missiles. At the time of writing, Aleppo has just fallen to Russian, Syrian and Iranian forces; this may not be the last victory of the bloc.

All political and economic analysts predict that China will overtake America as the world's most powerful nation in the near future. This is the country that combines the cruelty and atheism of communism with the luxuriousness and immorality of capitalism.⁸⁵³ In spite of that, most political and business leaders appear to contemplate this prediction with equanimity, having resolved to appease the new Führer, come what may...

3. The Islamic World

If the main difference between the western and Chinese civilizations is that China places the rights of the collective over the rights of the individual, thereby giving the state a despotic power and discouraging freedom of thought, whereas the West gives the individual the right to rebel against both the collective and against Christian civilized norms, the main difference between the Islamic civilization and the other two is that it places religion above the state, and religious (*sharia*) law above state law. Having this essentially negative attitude to politics, the Muslims have had difficulty in establishing stable, loyal attitudes to political authorities, whether Islamic or western. Since the fall of the Ottoman empire in 1918, no political regime, whether nationalist or secularist (Baathist or Kemalist), has arisen in the Middle East that commands the loyalty of all the Islamic peoples. And yet there is no doubt that the Muslims long for a Caliph that will unite them and crush the infidel...

⁸⁵⁰ Oil has, of course, made parts of the Arab world fabulously rich. But some parts, such as Dubai, have prospered independently of oil. See Daniel Pipes, "The Dubai Miracle has Become Real", *Washington Times*, December 7, 2017, <http://www.danielpipes.org/18081/dubai-miracle>.

⁸⁵¹ Ferguson, *The Ascent of Money*, London: Penguin Press, 2008, chapter 6.

⁸⁵² <http://www.dailypaul.com/297562/stormcloudsgathering-could-be-the-most-important-video-you-will-ever-watch>

⁸⁵³ For a grotesque yet eloquent photographic symbol of the demonic evil of Chinese communism, see <http://www.metro.co.uk/weird/820684-devil-horns-grandmother-now-quite-enjoying-her-horns>.

The Islamic religious resurgence can be said to have started with the overthrow of the Shah of Iran in 1979. But in accordance with its religious nature, the revolution in Iran did not remain like Stalin's "socialism in one country", with its cruel, but cool-headed political calculation. It was much closer to Trotsky's wildly fanatical concept of world revolution. Thus in December, 1984 Ayatollah Khomeini said in a speech: "If one allows the infidels to continue playing their role of corrupters on Earth, their eventual moral punishment will be all the stronger. Thus, if we kill the infidels in order to put a stop to their [corrupting] activities, we have indeed done them a service. For their eventual punishment will be less. To allow the infidels to stay alive means to let them do more corrupting. [To kill them] is a surgical operation commanded by Allah the Creator... Those who follow the rules of the Koran are aware that we have to apply the laws of *qisas* [retribution] and that we have to kill... War is a blessing for the world and for every nation. It is Allah himself who commands men to wage war and kill."

After citing these words, Roger Scruton writes: "The element of insanity in these words should not blind us to the fact that they adequately convey a mood, a legacy, and a goal that inspire young people all over the Islamic world. Moreover,... there is no doubt that Khomeini's interpretation of the Prophet's message is capable of textual support, and that it reflects the very confiscation of the political that has been the principal feature of Islamic revolutions in the modern world..."

"... Even while enjoying the peace, prosperity, and freedom that issue from a secular rule of law, a person who regards the *shari'a* as the unique path to salvation may see these things only as the signs of a spiritual emptiness or corruption. For someone like Khomeini, human rights and secular governments display the decadence of Western civilization, which has failed to arm itself against those who intend to destroy it and hopes to appease them instead. The message is that there can be no compromise, and systems that make compromise and conciliation into their ruling principles are merely aspects of the Devil's work.

"Khomeini is a figure of great historic importance for three reasons. First, he showed that Islamic government is a viable option in the modern world, so destroying the belief that Westernization and secularization are inevitable. Second, through the activities of the Hizbullah (Party of Allah) in Lebanon, he made the exportation of the Islamic Revolution the cornerstone of his foreign policy. Third, he endowed the Islamic revival with a Shi'ite physiognomy, so making martyrdom a central part of its strategy."⁸⁵⁴

The Islamic Revolution gathered strength during the successful war to drive the Soviets out of Afghanistan in 1979-89. Many of the Mujaheddin who fought against the Russians in Afghanistan then went on to fight the Croats and the Serbs in Bosnia in the early 1990s. And then NATO in Afghanistan...

⁸⁵⁴ Scruton, *The West and the Rest: Globalization and the Terrorist Threat*, London: Continuum, 2002, pp. 118-120.

The Revolution suffered an apparent setback in the First Iraq War of 1990. However, the result of that war in military terms proved to be less important than its effect in galvanizing Muslim opinion throughout the world against the western “crusaders”, who had once again intervened on sacred Muslim soil for purely selfish reasons (oil).

These feelings were greatly exacerbated by the Second Iraq War, and by the NATO intervention in Afghanistan. It was not that most Muslims could not see the evil of Saddam Hussein or the Taliban. But such notions as political freedom and human rights mean little to the Muslim mind. Much more important to them is the principle that the followers of the true faith should be able to sort out their own problems by themselves without the help of the corrupt infidels. True, in the Kosovan war of 1998-99 the West overcame its internal differences and hesitations to intervene decisively on the side of the Albanian Muslims against the Serbs. But this also annoyed the Muslims, who would have preferred that Muslim interests should have been defended by Muslims...

The Islamist threat was brought into vivid and terrifying relief by 9/11. However, the essential failure of the West’s military response in Iraq and Afghanistan has reinforced its traditional (in recent times) defeatist attitude towards the threat. Thus so frightened was Rowan Williams, archbishop of Canterbury, by Islamism in Britain that he suggested the introduction of *sharia* law in parallel with British common law...

The chaos created by the Syrian war pushed millions of Muslim refugees towards “Christian” Europe. However, while many of these are like the traditional kind of cowed and grateful refugees Europeans have been familiar since the post-1945 period, many others were quite different. Overwhelmingly young and male, infiltrated by ISIS terror cells and egged on by the KGB, they were aggressive and contemptuous of the civilization giving them shelter, ready to defecate in public and rape white women. Large parts of urban Scandinavia are now no-go areas for white women, while honest reporting on this evil is more or less banned.

Meanwhile, Turkey threatens to invade a fellow NATO member, Greece – but receives no fitting rebuke or counter-threat from the West...⁸⁵⁵ In fact, Turkey is increasingly turning into a liability, rather than an asset for the West. Just recently, it has sent troops into Northern Syria to attack the Kurds – the West’s most effective ally in the struggle against ISIS.

In spite of this, and her own previous assertion that multiculturalism was not working, German Chancellor Angela Merkel opened the floodgates to them in 2015, causing great ructions among other European governments and providing a major stimulus to Britain’s decision to leave the European Union. Now there is a clear schism between the “old” Europe of France and Germany and the “new” Europe of Poland, Czechia, Slovakia, Hungary and even Austria on how to deal with the Muslim migrant. Not only is there no real resistance to the Islamist threat from most

⁸⁵⁵ Philip Chrysopoulos, “Turkish FM: We’ll Take Back Aegean Islands through Diplomacy or War”, *Greek Reporter*, December 20, 2017.

western governments: the liberals' fear of offending Islamists has become so strong that open platforms are given to the preaching of the most illiberal Islamism. Thus "Islamic Studies professor Jonathan Brown recently lectured at the International Institute of Islamic Thought, where he shared his alarming beliefs with students in attendance in his lecture, 'Islam and the Problem of Slavery.' Freelance writer Umar Lee expressed his shock over the 90-minute lecture, which included explicit endorsements of rape and slavery."⁸⁵⁶

Whether the liberal elite will ever be able to solve the ideological challenge posed by the Islamic Revolution seems unlikely – liberalism is powerless in the face of real religious zeal, whether true or false. now a reaction to the Islamic threat appears to be developing in Europe, not from the liberals, but from grass-roots anti-liberal forces, as is witnessed by the rapid rise of anti-immigrant parties such as UKIP in Britain. So the near civil war that we see between Islamists and secularists in Egypt in the midst of an officially Muslim culture may be reflected in similar civil war conditions in several countries of the officially secularist West. Western leaders, while offering no solutions to the largely justified Muslim condemnation of western decadence and its devastating effects on family life and social solidarity, have similarly offered no solutions to the no less justified complaints against Muslim migrant aggression against the native population. They speciously argue that the "real" Islam is peaceful, and that it is only contemporary Islamic "fundamentalists" who commit terrorist acts. However, a reading of the Koran and of early Islamic history proves the opposite. As Huntingdon showed, *most* inter-civilizational conflicts today involve Islamists on one side.

The greatest weakness of Islamism lies in the bitter division at its centre between the Sunnis (Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Egypt) and the Shiites (Iran). Proxy wars between the Sunnis and Shias are taking place in Syria and Yemen. Russia and China appear to have lined up on the side of the Shias, while the West supports the Sunnis.

4. Russia

Traditional Russian civilization stands equidistant from European civilization to the west, Chinese civilization to the east and Islamic civilization to the south. Russia inherited her Orthodox Christianity and Romanity from Byzantium in the tenth century after St. Vladimir quite consciously rejected the western, Jewish and Islamic religions. In spite of two hundred years under the Mongol yoke (the same Mongols who conquered China), Russia remained relatively uncontaminated by foreign civilizational influences until towards the end of the seventeenth century. In this period she retained the classically Byzantine "symphony of powers" between Church and State that distinguished her both from the engulfment of religion by politics that was common in the West and China, and from the engulfment of politics by religion that was common in the Islamic world.

⁸⁵⁶ "Georgetown Islamic Studies Professor: Slavery OK, so is Non-Consensual Sex", *Government Slaves*, February 11, 2017.

But then Peter the Great adopted western-style absolutism, opened “a window to the West”, and a century later the governing elite was only superficially Orthodox... At the same time the first peaceful contacts were being made with the Chinese empire, and the first warlike encounters with the Ottoman empire, as the Russians strove to liberate their fellow-Orthodox in the Balkans and the Middle East from the Muslim yoke and replace the crescent with the Cross on Hagia Sophia in Constantinople.

This noble aim came very close to being achieved in 1916 as Russian Orthodox armies defeated the Ottomans in the east and the Austrians in the south. But then came the revolution, and Russia fell under a yoke that was western in its ideological inspiration but thoroughly Asiatic in its despotic cruelty. Hardly less cruel, however, was the disappointment felt by all True Orthodox after the fall of communism in 1991, when True Orthodoxy was not restored to Russia. Instead, we witnessed a decade of anarchical democratism in the 1990s under Yeltsin, and then, from January 1, 2000, the “sovereign democracy” of the KGB under Putin.

In accordance with his anti-Americanism, and his fondness for the Eurasian ideology, Putin is seeking an alliance with China and selected Muslim countries in order to counter America’s hegemony. But this alliance is even more unnatural than one with the West, for Russia’s traditional enemies have included invaders from across the Eurasian steppe no less than from the Central European plain. Moreover, Russia has major problems with its large and growing Muslim minorities, which have already led to wars in Chechnya and Tadjikistan and may cause further conflicts if, for example, the Tatars seek independence. Again, Russia could easily get involved in war with Islamic countries just beyond her boundaries, particularly the traditional enemy of Turkey, with which she came into conflict over Armenia in 1992-93 and again just recently over Syria.⁸⁵⁷ As for China, we have seen that whatever pious words of friendship the two former communist allies may mouth, the Chinese already have vast demographic and commercial power in Siberia, over parts of which they have territorial claims, and which they must see as a critical part of their worldwide drive for reliable energy supplies. In view of this, Russia’s cheap sale of military technology and energy to the Chinese⁸⁵⁸ must be regarded as very short-sighted, ignoring as it does the fact that China’s very rapid military build-up is directed as much against Russia as against anyone else...

From an Orthodox point of view, the spiritual and physical health of Russia is a matter of the most vital concern. The Balkan countries are too wrapped up in their nationalist egoisms to take up the banner of Universal Orthodoxy, and are in any case too weak to have a wide influence – except insofar as a conflict in, say, Bosnia-Herzegovina, could start another world war... Only Russia, with her relatively recent imperial past and her hundreds of thousands of new martyrs, has the spiritual potential to unite the Orthodox and revive the Orthodox faith worldwide.

⁸⁵⁷ The KGB has been suspected of manipulating the abortive coup against Erdogan in July, 1916.

⁸⁵⁸ Stephen Kotkin, “The \$20-a-barrel price borders on the shocking”, *Foreign Affairs*, September-October, 2009, p. 133.

The root cause of the failure of Orthodox civilization to revive since 1991 has been the failure to repent of the sins of the Soviet period. In Russia there has been no desovietization process, no trials of communist leaders, and no true repentance in any but a few individuals. Moreover, the organ that might have been expected to lead the process of national repentance, the official church of the Moscow Patriarchate, has been adept only at justifying the crimes of the past.⁸⁵⁹

As a direct result, on almost every index of social health, from the level of material inequality (higher in Russia than in any other nation) to child mortality, drug abuse, organized crime and corruption, Russia figures among the most wretched countries in the world. The lack of repentance has led to a deeply depressing picture of moral and social degradation. And the picture is not dissimilar in the other "Orthodox", formerly communist countries of Eastern Europe.

It is possible to believe in a special messianic role for Russia only if she completely rejects the accursed Putin regime and all its works, both within and outside the country. Indeed, the complete rejection of the Russian revolution in all its phases and incarnations, including the present one, is an absolute condition of the resurrection of Russia as a truly Orthodox state. For in no other way can the curse of 1613 and the anathema of 1918 be lifted from the Russian people.

Before the revolution, St. John of Kronstadt said that Russia without a tsar would be "a stinking corpse". His prophecy has proved accurate, not only for the Soviet period, but also for the post-Soviet period, which should more precisely be called the neo-Soviet period. St. John's opinion was echoed by the last true elder of the Russian Church Abroad, Archimandrite Nektary of Eleon (+2000): "Everywhere and at all time he remained devoted to Tsarist Russia. The Russian autocracy was for him the only lawful and God-established power. All later governments in Russia after the overthrow of the Tsar on March 2, 1917 - whether the February-democratic government, the Bolshevik, or another - were enemies of God. He used to say that every republic and even every constitutional monarchy was clearing the path to the coming of the Antichrist. By contrast with certain Russian emigres, he was not deceived when, in the expression of Fr. Konstantin (Zaitsev), 'the communists put church gloves on their nails'. Later, Fr. Nektary 'did not swallow the bait' of the perestroika NEP. 'No,' said Fr. Nektary, "'perestroika' is a great trap of the dark powers. They are preparing something new, something more terrible. Russia is on the threshold of the Antichrist.' But in the last few years he more and more often began to say that, in spite of the clear signs of the end, and in spite of the fact that the rulers of Russia have already entered into the world government, the regeneration of Russia, according to the forecasts of St. Seraphim of Sarov, St. John of Kronstadt and Bishop Theophan of Poltava, is still possible, albeit for a short time..."⁸⁶⁰

Is it too much to hope that the stinking corpse of Lenin (which Putin has shockingly compared to the relics of the saints!) may finally be cast out of its mausoleum on Red

⁸⁵⁹ See V. Moss, "1945 and the Moscow Patriarchate's 'Theology of Victory'", www.orthodoxchristianbooks.com/articles/321/1945-moscow-patriarchate-s-.

⁸⁶⁰ Isaak Gindis, in Archimandrite Nektary (Chernobyl'), *Vospominania*, Jordanville, 2002, p. 7.

Square, as that of the false Dmitri was cast out (through the barrel of a gun) in 1612? Could a real regeneration then take place, as it did in 1613, so that the purified, renewed and reinvigorated body of Orthodox Russia will shine forth again in all its splendour, as the holy prophets of Russia said that it would? Could we be on the eve of that radical searching and repentance of Russian minds that, as the holy elders said, is the essential prerequisite of the resurrection of Holy Rus' - and through her of the whole world?

It is indeed possible, but only if we remember that cancer remains dangerous and life-threatening even when only a few cancerous cells remain in the body; it has to be thoroughly extirpated even at the cost of the thorough exhaustion of the rest of the body. In the same way, the present recomunization led by Putin has to be extirpated completely. "Do you now know," asks the Apostle Paul, "that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you are truly unleavened" (I Corinthians 5.6-7). For, as Metropolitan Anastasy (Gribanovsky), first-hierarch of the Russian Church Abroad, wrote in 1938: "There is nothing more dangerous than if Russia were to want to assimilate anything from the sad inheritance left by degenerate Bolshevism: everything that its corrupting atheist hand has touched threatens to infect us again with the old leprosy."

Conclusion

Military experts, they say, are too often obsessed with reliving the battles of the last great war, as a result of which they fail to predict the new strategies and new technologies that will be decisive in the future great war. Thus in the 1930s some were still thinking about cavalry attacks and trenches, when they should have been thinking about blitzkrieg tank offensives and carpet bombing... The opposite is the case in the spiritual war that is being waged today: we Orthodox are obsessed with fighting what we think is the war of the future without having drawn the lessons of the past. Worse than that: we have not even finished fighting the last war, but live under the wholly mistaken illusion that we were then the victors, when in fact the old enemy is alive and well and laughing at us for our naivety! Thus on innumerable forums and websites we talk a great deal and with great fervour about the New World Order, the evil of America and the Jews, globalization, 666, etc., while the Old World Order is preparing to deliver us a final, knock-out blow!

So what are the old unfinished wars? First of all, the war against Soviet communism. The old foe has changed his appearance and strategy so successfully that many Orthodox now think of Putin as a new St. Constantine or St. George come to deliver Orthodox civilization from the American dragon!

Putinist propaganda appears to have penetrated even into the most traditionalist corners of the Orthodox world, such as Mount Athos. An example is the DVD distributed by Esphigmenou monastery's journal, *Boanerges*, but made by the Moscow Patriarchate and presented by Fr. (now Bishop) Tikhon Shevkunov, Putin's reputed spiritual father. The subject is an analysis of the Fall of Constantinople in which much emphasis is laid on the roles of evil aristocrats within and western barbarians without. However, the real purpose of the DVD is not historical analysis, but contemporary

political allegory: for “the Fall of Constantinople, the Second Rome”, read “the possible Fall of Moscow, the Third Rome”; for evil Greek aristocrats then, read evil Jewish oligarchs now; for western barbarism then, read NATO expansion now; for the absolute need for a powerful and independent autocrat then, read the same need in Russia now...

The grim fact that almost the whole of the Orthodox world appears to ignore is that Soviet communism was not destroyed in 1991: it suffered a defeat which allowed it to *reculer pour mieux sauter* – that is, change form in order to deceive its adversaries and successfully re-establish its grip over the heartland of Orthodoxy. The final defeat of communism is still in the future. According to the prophecies of the Russian elders, this will take place, not through some kind of peaceful evolution, but *in war*, and the final knock-out blow will be administered, paradoxically, by – China...

Secondly, there is the war against Islam. Many hundreds of years, and many millions of martyrs later, some Orthodox appear ready to forgive or at least condone the sins of the Islamic world simply because it opposes Israel, America and the West! As if the martyrs of Islam hate the Christianity of the East any less than that of the West! But Islam is still a formidable enemy, and its final defeat is also still in the future. Again, this will take place *in war*, a “general [world] war”, according to St. Cosmas of Aitolia, after which “the Hagarenes [Muslims] will learn the mysteries [of the faith] three times faster than the Christians”.

Thirdly, there is the war against paganism. Paganism was, after Judaism, the earliest enemy of the Church, and we see it today in three forms. First, the traditional old-style paganism of Hinduism, which is still dominant in the increasingly powerful state of India. Secondly, the new-style paganism evident in the West’s evolutionism and the LGBT revolution. And thirdly, Chinese paganism, which flourishes in both its ancient and modern forms. The Chinese empire represents the latest and by far the most powerful representative of pagan culture to survive in the modern world, even if western technology and to some extent western ideology have disguised its pagan essence. Some Orthodox seem prepared to respect China if only for its opposition to America. But the Chinese, too, will be finally defeated *in war*. They will be destroyed, according to the elders, during the same war in which the Chinese conquer Siberia and destroy the old power structures in Russia...

The revival of old threats to Orthodox Christianity does not mean that the New World Order, Western civilization headed by America, is not an evil, soul-destroying reality that must be combatted. At the same time this evil must be combatted *intelligently*. Which means, first of all, that we must not attempt to combat the evil of the NWO by supporting the no less evil evil of the OWO – evil is not overcome by evil, but by good. Neither Putin nor Xi Jinping nor any sheikh or ayatollah is going to save Orthodoxy. Nor, unfortunately, will loyalty to any of the patriarchs of World Orthodoxy; for they are as much in thrall to the NWO or OWO as any politician.

We should follow the path of the early Christians, who, while living under a corrupt and anti-Christian despotism, engaged in no political activism or agitation of any sort (apart from occasional calls on the emperors to be merciful to the Christians),

but obeyed the authorities to the limit that their conscience allowed them, sincerely praying for all their enemies. The reward of their patience and love was the final overthrow of the pagan Roman system through civil war and its replacement by Christian Romanity under St. Constantine. If we imitate their patience and faith, then we shall witness, first, the division of the whore of Babylon, western civilization, “into three parts” (Revelation 16.19) (America, Europe and Japan?), then her destruction by a coalition of ten states headed by the beast (Russia? China?) who “will burn her with fire... in one day” (Revelation 17.17, 18.8). But that will not be the end; for then the beast will be destroyed by the Word of God Himself (Revelation 19.20-21), making possible the resurrection of Orthodoxy (Revelation 20). For as the Lord Himself declared in a prophecy that, as St. John Maximovich pointed out, has not yet been fulfilled: “This Gospel of the Kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, *and then* the end will come...” (Matthew 24.14).

*January 9/22, 2018.
Hieromartyr Philip, Metropolitan of Moscow.*

37. TSAR NICHOLAS II AND THE AUTOCRATIC IDEAL

Tsar Alexander III died peacefully and in full consciousness on October 20, 1894, his head cradled by the greatest saint of the age, Fr. John of Kronstadt. Although some of his policies, such as Russification, could be said to have been counter-productive, his reign had been peaceful and prosperous, in some ways a model of autocratic government. The revolutionary-turned-monarchist Lev Alexandrovich Tikhomirov well summarized the autocratic ideal he represented as follows:-

“How much confusion falls away with one look at this grand reign! How many forgotten truths it reveals! Monarchy is not dictatorship, not simple absolutism. Dictatorship is the personified fulfillment of the people’s imminent will, and absolutism is its negation. Monarchy – in its autocratic ideal – can sometimes do that which dictatorship does, and can, if necessary, act by rejecting popular will. But in itself it stands higher than whatever will of the people there might be. Monarchy is the idea of subordination of interests and desires to *higher truth*.

“In monarchy the nation seeks sanctification of all the manifestations of its complex life through subordination to the truth. Personal authority is needed for this, as *only a man has a conscience, and only a man answers before God*. Unlimited authority is needed, for any restriction on the power of the Tsar by people would free him from answering to his conscience and to God. Surrounded by restrictions, he would already be subject not to truth, but certain interests, one or another earthly power.

“However, the unlimited and individual nature of decision are not the essence of monarchy, but only a necessary condition so that all social interests, their conflicts and their struggles, may be brought to agreement before an authority of the same *truth* that is above them all.

“This is why the bearer of the ideal came into the world, according to the conviction expressed by all the world in recent days, as a Tsar of truth and peace. He should have been namely such, *for the essence of monarchy is in the reconciling power of higher truth*.

“The monarch does not break the social structure of life; he neither destroys any differences created by its diversity, nor does he dismantle the great or the small, but everything he directs so that the development of all classes, all groups and all institutions should in no way violate truth. And thereby he gives the nation that unity which was vainly sought in “representation” and now is to be achieved in suicidal equalization.

“The monarch does not destroy self-initiative, advice, the work of popular thought, and he doesn’t negate the popular will when it exists. He is *higher* than all this. He is given not for destruction, but for *direction*. For him there is neither the wise man nor the fool, neither the strong nor the powerless, neither the majority nor the minority. For him there is only *conscience* and *truth*. He should see everything, but will support only that in which there is truth.

“Emperor Alexander III showed that monarchy in its true essence is not anything transitional, obsolete or compatible only with one phase of cultural development, but is an *eternal* principle, always possible, always necessary, and the highest of all political principles. If at any time this principle becomes impossible for some nation, then it is not because of the condition of its culture, but because of the moral degeneration of the nation itself. Where people want to live according to *truth*, autocracy is necessary and always possible under any degree of culture.

“Being the authority of *truth*, monarchy is impossible without religion. Outside of religion, personal authority gives only dictatorship or absolutism, but not monarchy. Only as the instrument of God’s will does the autocrat possess his personal and unlimited authority. Religion in monarchy is needed not only for the people. The people should believe in God so they may desire to subject themselves to truth – yet the autocrat needs faith all the more so, for in matters of state power, he is the intermediary between God and the people. The autocrat is limited neither by human authority nor popular will, but he does not have *his* will and *his* desires. His autocracy is not a privilege, but a simple concentration of human authority, and it is a grave struggle, a great service, the height of human selflessness and a cross, not a pleasure. Therefore monarchy receives its full meaning only in *heredity*. There is no future autocrat if there is no will, no wish to choose between the lot of the Tsar and the plough-man, but it is already appointed him to deny himself and assume the cross of authority. Not according to desire or the calling of one’s capabilities, but according to God’s purpose does he stand at his post. And he should not ask himself whether he has the strength, but rather he should only believe that if God chose him, the hesitations of man have no place.

“It is in the greatness of subordination to the will of God that sanctification of our political life is given in the ideal of monarchy.

“In those epochs when this ideal is alive and universal, one does not need to be a great man for the dignified passage of the autocrat’s vocation. Not all warriors are heroes, but in a well-organized army even the ordinary man finds the strength to heroically conquer and heroically die. And so it is in everything else. But with the advance of the age of demoralization and the neglect of the ideal, only a great chosen one may resurrect it in human hearts. There is nowhere for him to learn, for everything about him does not help him, but only hinders. He must draw upon everything from within himself, and not just in that measure necessary for the execution of his duty, but in that which is needed to enlighten all his surroundings. Indeed, what help would it be to the world if Alexander III confined himself only to giving Russia thirteen years of prosperity? The bearer of the ideal is sent not so that we would enjoy prosperity, remaining unworthy of it, but to awaken within us the aspiration to be worthy of the ideal.”⁸⁶¹

The liberals tried to destroy the autocratic ideal by claiming that the government should be responsible, *not to God, but to themselves*. It followed that there was no idea

⁸⁶¹ Tikhomirov, in Mark Hackard, “Autocrator”, *The Soul of the East*, February 14, 2016, <http://souloftheeast.org/2014/02/14/autocrator>.

of subordination to a higher truth: truth did not come into the matter. Logically, therefore, the liberal destruction of the autocratic ideal led to *atheism*, as in 1917...

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All this became abundantly clear during the reign of Alexander's successor, Tsar Nicholas II. He became the ruler of the largest and most variegated empire in world history, extending from the Baltic Sea to the Pacific Ocean, from the Arctic tundra to the sands of Central Asia. It included within its borders a great number of races and religions. It had the largest army in the world and perhaps the fastest-growing economy, with all the complex social problems that invariably attend rapid economic growth. And its influence extended well beyond its borders. The Orthodox Christians of Eastern Europe and the Middle East looked to it for protection, as did the Orthodox missions in Persia, China, Japan, Alaska and the United States, while its potential to become the world's most powerful nation was generally recognized.

Since Tsar Nicholas has probably been more slandered and misunderstood than any ruler in history, it is necessary to begin with a characterization of him. "Nicholas Alexandrovich," writes Archpriest Lev Lebedev, "was born on May 6/19, 1868 on the day of the memorial of Job the Much-Suffering. Later he used to say that it was not *by chance* that his reign and his suffering would become much-suffering. In complete accordance with the will of his father, Nicholas Alexandrovich grew up 'as a normal, healthy Russian person'... From childhood he was able first of all 'to pray well to God'. His biographer would unanimously note that faith in God was the living condition of his soul. He did not make a single important decision without fervent prayer! At the same time, being a young man and not yet Tsar, Nicholas Alexandrovich externally lived in the same way that almost all worldly young people of his time and his level of education. He loved sport, games, military activities, and acquired a fashionable for that time habit of smoking. He had an affair with the ballerina Kshesinskaya - which, however, he decisively cut short after an open and firm explanation with his father. He read a great deal, both spiritual and scientific and artistic literature (he loved L. Tolstoy's *War and Peace*), he loved amateur dramatics and various 'shows' in the circle of his family and friends, he was keen on amusing tricks. But all this was *to a degree*, without extremes, and never going to the service of the passions. He had a strong will, and with the help of God and his parents he was able to control and rule himself. In sum, he preserved a wonderful clarity, integrity and purity of soul. The direct gaze of his deep, grey-blue eyes, which often flashed with welcoming humour, penetrated into the very soul of his interlocuters, completely captivating people who had not yet lost the good, but he was unendurable for the evil. Later, when his relations with the Tsar were already hostile, Count S.Yu. Witte wrote: 'I have never met a more educated person in my life than the presently reigning Emperor Nicholas II'. Nicholas Alexandrovich was distinguished by a noble combination of a feeling of dignity with meekness (at times even shyness), extreme delicacy and attentiveness in talking with people. He was sincerely and unhypocritically *simple* in his relations with everybody, from the courtier to the peasant. He was organically repelled by any self-advertisement, loud phrases or put-on poses. He could not endure artificiality, theatricality and the desire 'to make an impression'. He never considered it possible for him to show to any but the very

closest people his experiences, sorrows and griefs. It was not cunning, calculated concealment, but precisely humility and the loftiest feeling of personal responsibility before God for his decisions and acts that led him to share his thoughts with almost nobody until they had matured to a point close to decision. Moreover, like his father, he put these decisions into effect in a quiet, unnoticed manner, through his ministers and courtiers, so that it *seemed* as if they were not his decisions... Later only his wife, Tsarina Alexandra Fyodorovna, knew the hidden life of his soul, knew him to the end. But for others, and especially for 'society', Nicholas Alexandrovich, like his crown-bearing forbear, Alexander I, was and remained an *enigma*, 'a sphinx'. It would not have been difficult to decipher this enigma if there had been the desire, if people had looked at his deeds and judged him from them. But 'educated' society did not have this desire... However, there was a great desire to represent him as 'the all-Russian despot', 'the tyrant' in the most unflattering light. And so sometimes spontaneously, at other times *deliberately*, a slanderous, completely distorted image of Tsar Nicholas II was created, in which by no means the least important place was occupied by malicious talk of the 'weakness' of his will, his submission to influences, his 'limitations', 'greyness', etc. One could test the Russian intelligentsia, as if by litmus paper, by their attitude to the personality of Nicholas Alexandrovich. And the testing almost always confirmed the already clearly established truth that in the whole world it was impossible to find a more despicable 'cultural intelligentsia' in its poverty and primitiveness than the Russian!... However, the personality of Nicholas II was not badly seen and understood by those representatives of the West who were *duty-bound* to understand it! The German chargé in Russia, Count Rechs, reported to his government in 1893: '... I consider Emperor Nicholas to be a spiritually gifted man, with a noble turn of mind, circumspect and tactful. His manners are so meek, and he displays so little *external* decisiveness, that one could easily come to the conclusion that he does not have a strong will, but the people around him assure me that he has a very definite will, which he is able to effect in life in *the quietest* manner.' The report was accurate. Later the West would more than once become convinced that the Tsar had an exceptionally strong will. President Emile Lube of France witnessed in 1910: 'They say about the Russian Tsar that he is accessible to various influences. This is profoundly untrue. The Russian Emperor himself puts his ideas into effect. His plans are maturely conceived and thoroughly worked out. He works unceasingly on their realization.' Winston Churchill, who knew what he was talking about when it came to rulers, had a very high opinion of the statesmanship abilities of Nicholas II. The Tsar received a very broad higher juridical and military education. His teachers were outstanding university professors... and the most eminent generals of the Russian army. Nicholas Alexandrovich took systematic part in State affairs, and was president of various committees (including the Great Siberian railway), sitting in the State Council and the Committee of Ministers. He spoke English, French and German fluently. He had an adequate knowledge of Orthodox theology..."⁸⁶²

Under the Tsar's leadership Russia made vast strides in economic and social development. He changed the passport system introduced by Peter I and thus facilitated the free movement of the people, including travel abroad. The poll tax was abolished and a voluntary programme of hospitalisation insurance was introduced,

⁸⁶² Lebedev, *Velikorossia* (Great Russia), St. Petersburg, 1997, pp. 377-379.

under which, for a payment of one rouble per year, a person was entitled to free hospitalisation. The parity of the rouble was increased greatly on the international markets during his reign. In 1897, a law was enacted to limit work hours; night work was forbidden for women and minors under seventeen years of age, and this at a time when the majority of the countries in the West had almost no labour legislation at all. As William Taft commented in 1913, "the Russian Emperor has enacted labour legislation which not a single democratic state could boast of". In only twelve years, from 1900 to 1912, infant mortality (infants under one year) went down in Russia from 252 per 1000 live births to 216.⁸⁶³

General V.N. Voeikov writes: "In order to understand how Russia flourished in the last twenty years before the war, we must turn to statistics. From 1892 to 1913 the harvest of breads increased by 78%; the quantity of horned cattle increased between 1896 and 1914 by 63.5%; the mining of coal increased from 1891 to 1914 by 300%; oil industrialization – by 65%. At the same time the state budget provided the possibility of increasing its contribution to popular education to the Ministry of Popular Education alone by 628% from 1894 to 1914; while the railway network increased in length from 1895 to 1915 by 103%, etc."⁸⁶⁴

The Tsar was unparalleled in Russian history for his mercifulness. He pardoned criminals, even revolutionaries, and gave away vast quantities of his own land and money to alleviate the plight of the peasants. It is believed that he gave away the last of his personal wealth during the Great War, to support the war effort. Even as a child he often wore patched clothing while spending his personal allowance to help poor students to pay for their tuition.

The reign of Tsar Nicholas II gave an unparalleled opportunity to tens of millions of people both within and outside the Russian empire to come to a knowledge of the truth of Orthodoxy and be saved thereby. Moreover, the strength of the Russian Empire protected and sustained Orthodoxy in other parts of the world, such as the Balkans and the Middle East, as well as the missionary territories of Japan, China, Alaska and Persia.

During the reign of Nicholas II, the Church reached her fullest development and power. "By the outbreak of revolution in 1917... it had between 115 and 125 million adherents (about 70 per cent of the population), around 120,000 priests, deacons and other clergy, 130 bishops, 78,000 churches [up by 10,000], 1,253 monasteries [up by 250], 57 seminaries and four ecclesiastical academies."⁸⁶⁵

⁸⁶³ Robert Tombs, *The English and their History*, London: Alfred A. Knopf, 2014, p. 485.

⁸⁶⁴ Voeikov, *So Tsarem i Bez Tsaria* (With and Without the Tsar), Moscow, 1995, p. 271. For more statistics, see Arsène de Goulevitch, *Czarism and Revolution*, Hawthorne, Ca., 1962.

⁸⁶⁵ Mikhail V. Shkarovskii, "The Russian Orthodox Church", in Edward Action, Vladimir Cherniaev, William Rosenberg (eds.), *A Critical Companion to the Russian Revolution, 1914-1921*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997, p. 416. On December 1, 1901 the Tsar decreed that every military unit having its own clergy should have its own church in the form of a separate building (A.S. Fedotov, "Khramy vo imia svyatogo blagovernago velikago kniazia Aleksandra Nevskago v XIX-XX vv.", *Pravoslavnaia Rus'*, N 5 (1818), March 1/14, 2007, p. 13).

The Tsar considered it his sacred duty to restore to Russia her ancient traditional culture, which had been abandoned by many of the "educated" classes in favour of modern, Western styles. He encouraged the building of churches and the painting of icons in the traditional Byzantine and Old Russian styles. Traditional church arts were encouraged, and old churches were renovated. The Emperor himself took part in the laying of the first cornerstones and the consecration of many churches.

Moreover, he took a very active part in the glorification of new saints, sometimes urging on an unwilling Holy Synod. Among those glorified during his reign were: St. Theodosius of Chernigov (in 1896), St. Isidore of Yuriev (1897), St. Seraphim of Sarov (1903), St. Euphrosyne of Polotsk (1909), St. Anna of Kashin (1910), St. Joasaph of Belgorod (1911), St. Hermogenes of Moscow (1913), St. Pitirim of Tambov (1914), St. John (Maximovich) of Tobolsk (1916) and St. Paul of Tobolsk (1917).

The Emperor followed his father in promoting the education of children within the framework of church and parish. There they were taught the faith, unlike in the state, *zemstvo* schools, where they were infected with western influences. As a result, the number of parish schools, which were more popular among the peasants than the state schools, grew to 37,000.

By contrast, the radical schoolteachers of the *zemstvo* schools raised a whole generation of children in radicalism. Their influence was undoubtedly one of the main causes of the revolution. They had the advantage of having more money than the church school, and not all the church-parish schools were of the highest quality in view of the fact that some Church teachers had also been infected by liberal ideas.

Overall, "enrolment in rural schools increased fourfold between 1881 and 1914 while the number of teachers from peasant families grew from 7,369 to 44,607 between 1880 and 1911. The census of 1897 found that 20.1 per cent of the population of European Russia was literate, but the gender gap was significant, with only 13.1 per cent of women being able to read and write compared with 29.3 per cent of men. Urban literacy stood at 45.3 per cent while rural literacy stood at 17.4 per cent, though both rose steadily in the years up to 1914. In that year only one-fifth of children of school age were actually in school. Doubtless this was because many peasants considered that schooling was not needed beyond the point when sons became functionally literate. As far as daughters were concerned, a widespread attitude was articulated by a villager in 1893: 'If you send her to school, she costs money; if you keep her at home, she makes money.' Nevertheless, by 1911 girls comprised just under a third of primary school pupils and the spread of schooling meant that by 1920 42 per cent of men and 25.5 per cent of women were literate..."⁸⁶⁶

Christian literature flourished under Tsar Nicholas; excellent journals were published, such as *Soul-Profiting Reading*, *Soul-Profiting Converser*, *The Wanderer*, *The Rudder*, *The Russian Monk*, *The Trinity Leaflets* and the ever-popular *Russian Pilgrim*. The Russian people were surrounded by spiritual nourishment as never before. And so Archpriest Michael Polsky put it, "In the person of the Emperor Nicholas II the

⁸⁶⁶ S.A. Smith, *Russia and the Revolution*, Oxford University Press, p. 33.

believers had the best and most worthy representative of the Church, truly 'The Most Pious' as he was referred to in church services. He was a true patron of the Church, and a solicitor of all her blessings."⁸⁶⁷

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The pressures on the tsar from the right and the left were impossible to reconcile. The liberals ultimately wanted him to hand over his power to them. The conservatives, on the other hand, as Lieven writes, expected him "to be pope, king, and dictator rolled into one... No human being could fulfil those expectations..."⁸⁶⁸

Sebastian Sebag Montefiore confirms this judgement: "It is unlikely that even Peter or Catherine could have solved the predicaments of revolution and world war faced by Nicholas II in the early twentieth century."⁸⁶⁹ And yet he came much closer to doing just that than is generally recognized: if he had been allowed to reign just two months longer, then the planned Spring Offensive of 1917, in the opinion of many, would have brought him victory in the world war and averted the revolution that eventually killed him.

Now it has been argued by many historians that Tsar Nicholas II was a weak man, pushed around by circumstances and the people closest to him. A close study of his reign does not confirm his estimate; nor was it shared by several of the politicians and statesmen who knew him well. Moreover, it must be remembered that although he was an autocrat, he lived in an era when monarchy was already falling out of fashion and it was no longer possible, as it had been (almost) in the time of Louis XIV or Peter the Great, for one man to impose his will on a whole nation.

In this connection the words of Catherine the Great are worth remembering: "It is not as easy as you think... In the first place my orders would not be carried out unless they were the kind of orders which could be carried out; you know with what prudence and circumspection I act in the promulgation of my laws. I examine the circumstances, I take advice, I consult the enlightened part of the people, and in this way I find out what sort of effect my law will have. And when I am already convinced in advance of general approval, then I issue my orders, and have the pleasure of observing what you call blind obedience. *And that is the foundation of unlimited power.* But believe me, they will not obey blindly when orders are not adapted to the customs, to the opinion of the people, and if I were to follow only my own wishes not thinking of the consequences..."⁸⁷⁰

If it was difficult even for the great Catherine to obtain obedience to her commands, it was much more difficult for her successor a century later, when the poison of English liberalism and French radicalism had penetrated everywhere. Europe was still a continent of monarchies (France was the only major exception), and the pomp and

⁸⁶⁷ Polsky, *The New Martyrs of Russia*, Wildwood, Alberta: Monastery Press, 2000, p. 117.

⁸⁶⁸ Lieven *Towards the Flame: Empire, War and the End of Tsarist Russia*, London: Allen Lane, 2015, p. 93.

⁸⁶⁹ Montefiore, *The Romanovs*, London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 2016, p. xxvii.

⁸⁷⁰ Isabel de Madariaga, *Russia in the Age of Catherine the Great*, London: Phoenix, 2002, p. 580.

circumstance of monarchy was developed as never before. But the heart of true monarchism – sincere, heartfelt deference and obedience to the will of the monarch so long as the anointed of God – was hard to find. There were many “monarchists” but few real believers in monarchy, who demonstrated their faith in their works. Even the ministers of the monarch often forged their own policies that deviated from the policy of the monarch. Hence the need the monarch often felt to carry through his policies in other ways, circumventing his ministers. In such cases, the minister in question might well feel offended and even offer his resignation. Even after the abortive revolution of 1905, Tsar Nicholas still had the power to sack his ministers and often exercised that power. But such acts could have harmful consequences: the sacked minister might not go quietly, but would continue to oppose the will of his sovereign “from the back benches”, as it were. Of course, government in the late nineteenth century was an exceedingly complex task, and no monarch could govern efficiently without extensive consultation and delegation of power to ministers and permanent officials who knew more than he did on almost all matters. However, as government became more complex, so the need to have a single head coordinating and unifying all its branches became greater. In constitutional monarchies, this could be an appointed or elected Prime Minister. But in an Orthodox autocracy it could only be the autocrat himself; the final responsibility rested with him alone...

The great internal issues of Nicholas’ reign, as of the reigns of all the tsars since at least 1801, were twofold. The first was the peasants’ demand for land, *all* the land, which in accordance with their “peasant socialism” they considered theirs by right. Tsar Nicholas went a long way, in his agrarian reforms, to satisfying the peasants’ land hunger; but as a believer in private property, he could not accept the peasants’ and the Cadet Party’s demand that he simply acquiesce in the seizure of what was left of the landowners’ land. This cost him dear in the abortive revolution of 1905.

The second was the demand by the liberals – who included the great majority of the educated classes – for a constitution that logically meant transferring power from the tsar to the liberals. Although the liberals insisted that they could do a much better job of governing the country than the hated autocracy, the evidence of 1917, when they had their chance and “blew” it, proves the opposite... As early as January 17, 1895 the tsar had directly addressed this issue in an address to representatives of the nobility, of the *zemstva* and other city groups. “I shall maintain the principle of autocracy,” he said, “just as firmly and unflinchingly as it was preserved by my unforgettable reposed father.” And he called the desire for constitutionalism “senseless dreams”. But the issue would not go away; as support for the autocracy ebbed away in all classes in 1905, a semi-constitutional order was created, and when the Tsar courageously persisted in defending what power he had left, the autocracy itself was swept away, leading to the worst of all possible outcomes for Russia and the world in 1917: defeat in the Great War and the nightmare of Soviet power...

The dangers of constitutionalism had been explained many years before by Nicholas’ grandfather, Tsar Alexander II. As Lieven writes, Alexander “explained to Otto von Bismarck, who was then Prussian minister in Petersburg, that ‘the idea of taking counsel of subjects other than officials was not in itself objectionable and that great participation by respectable notables in official business could only be

advantageous. The difficulty, if not impossibility, of putting this principle into effect lay only in the experience of history that it had never been possible to stop a country's liberal development at the point beyond which it should not go. This would be particularly difficult in Russia, where the necessary political culture, thoughtfulness and circumspection were only to be found in relatively small circles. Russia must not be judged by Petersburg, of all the empire's towns the least Russian one... The revolutionary party would not find it easy to corrupt the people's convictions and make the masses conceive their interests to be divorced from those of the dynasty. The Emperor continued that 'throughout the interior of the empire the people still see the monarch as the paternal and absolute Lord set by God over the land; this belief, which has almost the force of a religious sentiment, is completely independent of any personal loyalty of which I could be the object. I like to think that it will not be lacking too in the future. To abdicate the absolute power with which my crown is invested would be to undermine the aura of that authority which has dominion over the nation. The deep respect, based on innate sentiment, with which right up to now the Russian people surrounds the throne of its Emperor cannot be parcelled out. I would diminish without any compensation the authority of the government if I wanted to allow representatives of the nobility or the nation to participate in it. Above all, God knows what would become of relations between the peasants and the lords if the authority of the Emperor was not still sufficiently intact to exercise the dominating influence.' ...

"... After listening to Alexander's words Bismarck commented that if the masses lost faith in the crown's absolute power the risk of a murderous peasant war would become very great. He concluded that 'His Majesty can still rely on the common man both in the army and among the civilian masses but the "educated classes", with the exception of the older generation, are stoking the fires of a revolution which, if it comes to power, would immediately turn against themselves.' Events were to show that this prophecy was as relevant in Nicholas II's era as it had been during the reign of his grandfather..."⁸⁷¹

It is impossible to understand the superiority of Orthodox autocracy to all other systems of government, especially at moments of crisis, unless we adopt a religious point of view. For the question here is not: what is the will of the king, or of the ruling class, or even of the people as whole, but what is in accordance with truth and conscience - in other words, what is *the will of God*, Whose mercy and justice encompasses all human beings everywhere, and takes into account the consequences of present events far into the future, and Whose will is not necessarily that we should have peace and prosperity in this life but rather salvation and eternal joy in the age to come. When put in that way, it is obvious that no individual human being or human collective has anything like the far-seeing wisdom needed to answer such a question. The only hope, therefore, is that God will communicate His will to a king directly - or indirectly through another man (say, a prophet or priest).

This does not mean that the will of God cannot be expressed through a democratic election. But it seems intuitively more likely - and this is certainly what Holy Scripture and Tradition lead us to believe - that He will communicate His will more clearly and

⁸⁷¹ Lieven, *Nicholas II*, London: Pimlico, 1993, pp. 142, 143.

decisively through one man chosen by Him and anointed for that very purpose than through millions of voters who do not know their right hand from their left and have no special training or knowledge of politics. *Vox populi*, contrary to the popular saying, is not (usually) *Vox Dei*.

As Tikhomirov put it: "The monarch does not destroy self-initiative, advice, the work of popular thought, and he doesn't negate the popular will when it exists. He is *higher* than all this. He is given not for destruction, but for *direction*. For him there is neither the wise man nor the fool, neither the strong nor the powerless, neither the majority nor the minority. For him there is only *conscience* and *truth*. He should see everything, but will support only that in which there is truth."

And if it is objected that the anointed king may be evil or blind to the truth for some reason or other, then we reply: Of course, where men are involved, there is sin, and therefore the possibility of error. But the possibility of error is surely increased many times if the masses make the decision – which they may then weaken by their divisions or overthrow at the next election. Solomon asked wisdom from God and was granted it, in spite of the fact that he did not live a spotless life. But when do the teeming masses ask for wisdom from God?

In any case, if the king defies the will of God, God can remove him as He removed Saul – unless, of course, He judges that the people are not worthy of having a better king. But if they are worthy, then He can and will provide them with such a king, a king "after My own heart" a king like David or Tsar Nicholas II, who, though sinful like all men, still loved God and strove to know and do His will, putting *truth* and *conscience* above all things. The question then becomes: will the people continue to be worthy of such a king? And will they honour and obey him?

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Not the least of Tsar Nicholas' achievements was his irreproachable family life. In an age when family life was being undermined by immorality, not least in the wider Romanov family itself, the inner family of Tsar Nicholas presented an icon, as it were, of what it could and should be. Love, obedience and humility were at the root of all their relations. It was fitting, therefore, that the family should receive the crown of martyrdom precisely *as a family* in 1918...

In conclusion, if we take into account the extraordinarily difficult circumstances of his reign, the multitude of his enemies both internal and external, and the paucity of his real friends and allies, we must conclude that Tsar Nicholas accomplished much, very much, and that he crowned a righteous life with a truly martyric death, fully deserving to be considered as, in the words of Blessed Pasha of Sarov, "the greatest of the Tsars"...

December 18/31, 2019.

38. 1945: THE AMERICAN NEW WORLD ORDER

The outlines of the American new world order, writes Paul Kennedy, “were already being described by American military planners even as the conflict was at its height. As one of their policy papers expressed it: ‘The successful termination of the war against our present enemies will find a world profoundly changed in respect of relative national military strengths, a change more comparable indeed with that occasioned by the fall of Rome than with any other change occurring during the succeeding fifteen hundred years... After the defeat of Japan, the United States and the Soviet Union will be the only military powers of the first magnitude. This is due in each case to a combination of geographical position and extent, and vast munitioning potential.’”⁸⁷²

If by “the fall of Rome” we understand the fall of all three of the Romes of history – the Old Rome of the pagan Caesars, which fell in 476, the New Rome of St. Constantine the Great and the Christian Roman emperors, which fell in 1453, and the Third Rome of Russia and the Russian Orthodox tsars, which fell in 1917 – we may agree with this assessment. In 1945 the Third Reich of Nazi Germany fell to two powers that both claimed, in different ways, to be heirs of the fallen Romes: the United States, whose capital’s classical architecture recalled nothing more than the Capitol of Old Rome, and the Soviet Union, which had destroyed the Third Rome of Tsarist Russia, and now claimed the whole of its patrimony and sphere of influence while fiercely persecuting the remnants of its Orthodox Christian faith. So now the prophecy of Alexis de Tocqueville in 1835 had come true: the Christian heartland of Europe had been divided up between the two “outlying” (and, to many Europeans, “barbarian”) nations of America and (Soviet) Russia.

Among the world’s powers, continues Kennedy, “Only the United States and the USSR counted, so it seemed; and of the two, the American ‘superpower’ was vastly superior.

“Simply because much of the rest of the world was either exhausted by the war or still in a stage of colonial ‘underdevelopment’. American power in 1945 was, for want of another term, *artificially* high, like, say, Britain’s in 1815. Nonetheless, the actual dimensions of its might were unprecedented in absolute terms. Stimulated by the vast surge in war expenditures, the country’s GNP measured in constant 1939 dollars rose from \$88.6 billion (1939) to \$145 billion (1945), and much higher (\$220 billion) in current dollars. At last, the ‘slack’ in the economy which the New Deal had failed to eradicate was fully taken up, and underutilized resources and manpower properly exploited: ‘During the war the size of the productive plant within the country grew by nearly 50 per cent and the physical output of goods by more than 50 per cent. Indeed, in the years 1940 to 1944, industrial expansion in the United States rose at a faster pace – over 15 per cent a year – than at any period before or since. Although the greater part of this growth was caused by war production (which soared from 2 per cent of total output in 1939 to 40 per cent in 1943), nonwar goods also increased, so that the civilian sector of the economy was not encroached upon as in the other

⁸⁷² Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers*, London: William Collins, 1988, pp. 459-460.

combatant nations. Its standard of living was higher than any other country's, but so was its per capita productivity. Among the Great Powers, the United States was the only country which became richer – in fact, much richer – rather than poorer because of the war. At its conclusion, Washington possessed gold reserves of £20 billion, almost two-thirds of the world's total of \$35 billion. Again, '... more than half the total manufacturing production of the world took place within the USA, which, in fact, turned out a third of the world production of goods of all types. This also made it by far the greatest exporter at the war's end, and even a few years later it supplied one-third of the world's exports. Because of the massive expansion of its shipbuilding facilities, it now owned half of the world supply of shipping. Economically, the world was its oyster.

"This economic power was reflected in the military strength of the United States, which at the end of the war controlled 12.5 million service personnel, including 7.5 million overseas. Although this total was naturally going to shrink in peacetime (by 1948, the army's personnel was only one-ninth what it had been four years earlier), that merely reflected political choices, not real military potential. Given the early postwar assumptions about the limited overseas roles of the United States, a better indication of its strength lay in the tallies of its modern weaponry. By this stage, the US Navy was unquestionably 'second to none'; its fleet of 1,200 major warships (centred upon dozens of aircraft carriers rather than battleships) now being considerably larger than the Royal Navy's, with no other significant maritime force existing. In both its carrier task forces and its Marine Corps divisions, the United States had simply demonstrated its capacity to project its power across the globe to any region accessible from the sea. Even more imposing was the American 'command of the air': the 2000-plus heavy bombers which had pounded Hitler's Europe and the 1,000 ultra-long-range B-29s which had reduced many Japanese cities to ashes were to be supplemented by even more powerful jet-propelled strategic bombers like the B-36. Above all, the United States possessed a monopoly of atomic bombs, which promised to unleash a devastation upon any future enemy as horrific as that which had occurred at Hiroshima and Nagasaki. As later analyses have pointed out, American military power may actually have been less than it seemed (there were very few A-bombs in stock, and dropping them had large political implications), and it was difficult to sue it to influence the conduct of a country as distant, inscrutable, and suspicious as the USSR; but the image of ineffable superiority remained undisturbed until the Korean War, and was reinforced by the pleas of many nations for American loans, weapons, and promises of military support..."⁸⁷³

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The biggest question arising, therefore, in 1945 was: how would the United States use its enormous power, unprecedented in human history? Would it use it to create a new despotic hegemony, or for the good of the whole world?

⁸⁷³ Kennedy, *op. cit.*, pp. 460-462.

Already before the end of the Second World War the western leaders were planning new economic and political institutions that would be appropriate channels for American power in the new world order...

1. Economics. America came out of the war, writes Yanis Varoufakis, "as the major (indeed, if one excludes Switzerland, the only) creditor nation. For the first time since the rise of capitalism, all of the world's trade relied on a single currency (the dollar) and was financed from a single epicenter (Wall Street). While half of Europe was under the control of the Red Army and its system, the New Dealers who had been running Washington since 1932 realized that history had presented them with a remarkable opportunity: to erect a post-war global order that would cast American hegemony in stainless steel. It was an opportunity that they seized upon with glee.

"Their audacious scheme sprang from the two sources that lie behind every great [secular] achievement – fear and power. The war endowed the United States with unprecedented military and economic might. But, at the same time, it acted as a constant reminder of America's failure properly to come to terms with the legacy of 1929 before the Japanese navy unleashed its bombs and torpedoes on Pearl Harbor. The New Dealers never forgot the unexpectedness of the Great Depression and its resistance to 'treatment'. The more power they felt they had in their hands, the greater was their fear that a new 1929 could turn it into ash that trickled through their fingers.

"Even before the guns had fallen silent in Europe, and even before the Soviet Union emerged as a dragon to be slain, the United States understood that it had inherited the historic role of reconstructing, in its own image, the world of global capitalism. For if 1929 nearly ended the dominion of capital at a time of multiple capitalist centres, what would a new 1929 do when the larger game, global capitalism, revolved around a single axis, the dollar?

"In 1944, the New Dealers' anxieties led to the famous Bretton Woods conference. The idea of designing a new global order was not so much grandiose as essential. At Bretton Woods a new monetary framework was designed, acknowledging the dollar's centrality but also taking steps to create international shock absorbers in case the US economy wavered. It took fifteen years before the agreement could be fully implemented. During the preparatory phase, the United States had to put together the essential pieces of the jigsaw puzzle of the Global Plan, of which Bretton Woods was an important piece.

"While the war was still raging in Europe and the Pacific, in July 1944, 730 delegates converged on the plush Mount Washington Hotel located in the New Hampshire town of Bretton Woods. Over three weeks of intensive negotiations, they hammered out the nature and institutions of the post-war global monetary order.

"They did not come to Bretton Woods spontaneously, but at the behest of President Roosevelt, whose New Deal administration was determined to win the peace, after having almost lost the war against the Great Depression. The one lesson the New Dealers had learned was that capitalism cannot be managed effectively at the national level. In his opening speech, Roosevelt made that point with commendable clarity:

‘The economic health of every country is a proper matter of concern to all its neighbours, near and far.’

“The two issues that were ostensibly central to the conference were the design of the post-war monetary system and the reconstruction of the war-torn economies of Europe and Japan. However, under the surface, the real questions concerned (a) the institutional framework that would keep a new Great Depression at bay, and (b) who would be in control of that framework. Both questions created specific tensions, especially between the two great allies represented, in the US corner, by Harry Dexter White⁸⁷⁴ and, in the British corner, by none other than John Maynard Keynes. In the aftermath of the conference, Keynes remarked: ‘We have had to perform at one and the same time the tasks appropriate to the economist, to the financier, to the politician, to the journalist, to the propagandist, to the lawyer, to the statesman – even, I think, to the prophet and to the soothsayer.’

“Two of the institutions that were designed at Bretton Woods are still with us and still in the news. One is the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the other the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), today known simply as the World Bank. The IMF was to be global capitalist system’s ‘fire brigade’ – an institution that would rush to the assistance of any country whose house caught (fiscal) fire, handing out loans on strict conditions that would ensure that any balance of payments deficit would be fixed and the loans repaid. As for the World Bank, its role would be that of an international investment bank, with a remit to channel productive investments to regions of the world devastated by the war.”⁸⁷⁵

The Bretton Woods system is “a system of fixed exchange rates, with the dollar at its heart. The main idea was that each currency would be locked to the dollar at a given exchange rate. Fluctuations would be allowed only within a narrow band of plus or minus 1 per cent, and governments would strive to stay within this band by buying or selling their own dollar reserves. A renegotiation of the exchange rate of a particular country was only allowed if it could be demonstrated that its balance of trade and its balance of capital flows could not be maintained, given its dollar reserves. As for the United States, to create the requisite confidence in the international system, it committed itself to pegging the dollar to gold at the fixed exchange rate of \$35 per ounce of gold and to guarantee full gold convertibility for anyone, American or non-American, who wanted to swap their dollars for gold.”⁸⁷⁶

The essence of the Bretton Woods system was a mechanism for the recycling of surpluses that would keep trade going and prevent the loss of confidence and “freezing up” that had led to the Great Depression.

“Keynes’ blueprint for the surplus recycling,” writes Varoufakis, “was wonderfully grandiose. It included the creation of a new world currency, a system of fixed

⁸⁷⁴ White was exposed in 1948 as a Soviet agent (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harry_Dexter_White).

⁸⁷⁵ Varoufakis, *The Global Minotaur*, London: Zed Books, 2013, pp. 57-59.

⁸⁷⁶ Varoufakis, *op. cit.*, p. 60.

exchange rates between the world currency and the national currencies, and a world central bank that would run the whole system.

“The purpose of this system would be to maintain monetary stability everywhere, to keep both surpluses and deficits in check throughout the Western world and, at the first sign of a crisis in a troubled nation, speedily recycle surpluses into it so as to prevent the crisis spreading. An international fund would be created to play the role of the world’s central bank and issue its currency – the bancor, as Keynes provisionally named it. The bancor would not be printed, just as the digital crypto-currency bitcoin does not exist in material form today, only as numbers on some spreadsheets or digital device. But it would function as the world’s currency nevertheless. Every country would have a bancor account with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), from which to draw when it bought goods from other countries, and into which other nations would deposit bancors when their citizens or corporations bought goods and services from it. All international trade would thus be denominated in the global currency, with the national currencies continuing to oil the cogs of the national economies.

“Crucial to this system was a fixed exchange rate between each national currency and the bancor, and thus between all participating national currencies. The board of the IMF, on which all nations would be represented, would decide these rates centrally and by negotiation. They would be adjusted whenever necessary, so that countries with stubborn surpluses would see their currencies buying increasingly more bancors (to make their exports more expensive and their imports cheaper), and vice-versa for nations in persistent deficit.

“Even more radically, Keynes’s IMF, recognizing that one nation’s deficit is another’s surplus, would levy a tax on a nation’s bancor account if its imports and exports diverged too much. The idea was to penalize both types of imbalance (excessive surpluses as well as excessive deficits; the Germanys of the world as well as the Greeces) and in the process build up a war chest of bancors at the IMF so that, when some crisis hit, deficit nations in trouble could be propped up and prevented from falling into a black hole of debt and recession that might spread throughout the Bretton Woods system.

“White certainly understood the importance of political surplus recycling within the global system they were setting up, but Keynes’s proposals sounded ludicrous to his American ears. Is this wily Englishman, he might have asked, seriously proposing that the Europeans have a majority say in how our surpluses are recycled? Is he for real?

“As a good Keynesian, White agreed that Bretton Woods should do more than merely dollarize the Western world. He recognized the need for a politically administered (extra-market) surplus recycling mechanism, which of course meant the recycling of America’s surpluses to Europe. Nevertheless, the idea that bankrupt Europeans who had put the world through the wringer of two world wars in less than three decades and still yearned for the reconstruction of their repulsive empires would now control America’s surplus was anathema to an anti-imperialist patriotic New

Dealer like White. Quite understandably, he was going to have none of it. America was the only surplus nation, and America alone would decide how, when and to whom it would recycle it.

“White listened respectfully while Keynes presented his grandiose scheme but then immediately rejected two of its key features. First on the chopping block was the idea of a new shadow global currency (the *bancor*) to be managed by an IMF governing committee in which the United States would be one of many. The second idea White vetoed was that of taxing the surplus nations – namely the United States. For White, the die had already been cast. Europe was to be dollarized and the dollar would be the world currency. The *bancor* was a great idea in the multilateral world but a joke in one where the dollar had already been crowned king and queen. Moreover, the idea that the IMF’s governing committee, with the Europeans in the majority, would tax America’s surpluses seemed to him too ludicrous for words. America owned its surpluses and would recycle them herself, without petitioning a group of bankrupt Europeans for their permission to do so.

“By the end of the Bretton Woods conference, White had cherry-picked Keynes’s proposal so eclectically that its multilateralist spirit had vanished. Yes, the IMF would be created, but its purpose would not be to issue a new world currency. The loss of the *bancor* and the official elevation of the dollar to world currency status meant that the IMF could not function as the world’s central bank. That role was now assigned *de facto* to America’s central bank, the Fed...”⁸⁷⁷

The success of the “Bretton Woods system”, writes Liam Halligan, has meant that the world since then “has traded relatively freely, with the short-term protectionist instincts of politicians being kept in check by WTO [World Trade Organization] rules”, with the result that there was “a 12-fold expansion in global trade between 1950 and 2010 – and a huge increase in global prosperity”.⁸⁷⁸ As we shall see, there was an important change in the Bretton Woods system in 1973. Nevertheless, the “spirit of Bretton Woods” survived into the twenty-first century.

⁸⁷⁷ Varoufakis, *And the Weak Suffer What They Must?* London: Vintage, 2017, pp. 25-27. Richard Horowitz writes: “The US assumed that a formal identification of their own currency as the official world reserve would be too aggressive a position diplomatically... The US proposed instead a vague euphemism: ‘gold-convertible currency’. It fooled no sophisticated observer and Keynes called it ‘idiocy’. Given its uniquely vast gold holdings, the US had the only currency realistically convertible into bullion. But the US delegation feared diplomatic disaster by trying to codify this fact.

“Handling the issue at the conference for Britain would be Dennis Robertson, the Cambridge economist to whom Keynes delegated many key negotiations, admiring his intellectual subtlety and patience of mind and tenacity of character to grasp and hold on to all details and fight them through. Robertson was present during the final discussion of the IMF’s charter when the delegation representing British India demanded that the US define exactly what ‘gold-convertible currency’ meant. To the amazement and delight of the Americans, Robertson rose to propose its replacement with ‘gold and United States dollars’, effectively crowning the dollar supreme. A giddy White stayed up until three o’clock in the morning incorporating Robertson’s proposal into the draft articles. The rest is monetary history...” (“How a Briton Created the Almighty Dollar”, *History Today*, January, 2017, p. 6)

⁸⁷⁸ Halligan, “We should be tearing down barriers, not putting them up”, *The Sunday Telegraph*, Business section, September 4, 2016, p. 4.

Varoufakis appears to favour Keynes' truly globalist and internationalist solution to the solution proposed by White which eventually triumphed, preserving the hegemony of one country, the United States, in the post-war period. From a purely economic point of view, he may well be right. But economics is never entirely divorced from politics and even religion; and we may be grateful that Keynes did not prevail and that the spectre of single world government was put off for several generations. For there is no doubt about it: as the head of the Fed, Alan Greenspan, said many years later in the context of the creation of the euro, a single currency area can only be effectively governed by a single government. It was largely the hegemonic political and economic power of the United States that kept the world free, not only from that other globalist project, Soviet Communism, but also from the project of world rule by the IMF that was first proposed at Bretton Woods in 1944...

2. Politics. The Second World War ended in a most paradoxical way. The two major victors were, on the one hand, the United States, which had fought, supposedly, "to save democracy", and on the other, the Soviet Union, which had from the beginning of the revolution sought to destroy democracy and replace it with its own despotism. So who won? Democracy or Despotism? Since both had won, and since democracy and despotism were ideologically incompatible with each other, war had to break out between the unnatural allies, albeit in another, less open and "hot" form. Hence the Cold War of the period 1946-1991 (and, in the longer term, the semi-democratic and semi-despotic European Union, which claimed to be a "Third Way" between East and West). But before that war could begin, a seemingly final attempt had to be made to ensure peace, albeit between nations which from an ideological point of view had to be enemies. Hence the United Nations...

World War Two destroyed more lives and property than any conflict in history. This fact convinced many that the only way to have peace on earth was to create a supra-national government that would restrain national rivalries and impose its will on aggressive states. Such an ideal goes back at least to Dante's *De Monarchia* in the early fourteenth century. However, the origin of its modern, secular expression must be sought in the eighteenth-century Enlightenment, and Immanuel Kant's *Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch* (1795), which contained the following axiom: "The law of nations shall be founded on a federation of free states".⁸⁷⁹

The first attempt at incarnating such a federation was the Congress System erected by Tsar Alexander I and the monarchs of Prussia and Austria after the defeat of Napoleon in 1815. This came to a bloody end during the Crimean War of 1854-56. The idea was revived in a limited form by Tsar Nicholas II when he founded the International Court of Arbitration at The Hague in 1899. This Court had very little practical impact and did not prevent the outbreak of World War One in 1914. However, the unparalleled destruction wrought by the war that was supposed to end all wars forced the politicians to return to such ideas...

"The first outline of the United Nations," writes S.M. Plokhy, "was drafted by Undersecretary of State Sumner Welles on the basis of the covenant of the League of

⁸⁷⁹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Perpetual_Peace:_A_Philosophical_Sketch.

Nations. A creation of the Paris Peace Conference [of 1919], the League convened its first general assembly in Geneva in November 1920 and its last in April 1946, when representatives of its member nations voted to dissolve it. The League's activities had in fact come to a virtual halt in 1939, the first year of the war that it had failed to prevent and for whose outbreak it was universally blamed. The problem was that the League could neither adopt nor enforce its decisions: all resolutions had to be passed with the unanimous approval of its council, an executive body that included great powers as permanent members and smaller powers as temporary ones, as well as its assembly. The principle of unanimity was enshrined in the League's covenant, whose fifth chapter stated that 'decisions at any meeting of the Assembly or of the Council shall require the agreement of all the Members of the League represented at the meeting.' This was virtually impossible to achieve, especially when matters under discussion involved the great powers.

"The United States did not join the League. Woodrow Wilson received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1919 for his role in its creation, but he failed to overcome Republican opposition and persuade an increasingly isolationist Congress to ratify the Treaty of Versailles, which would have led to American membership in the League. The American drafters of the United Nations Charter were mindful of the inevitable opposition that any international organization whose decisions would be binding on the United States would encounter in Congress. They also had to overcome a baleful precedent – the League's inability to influence the conduct of Germany and Japan after their departure from the organization in 1933. Italy would follow suit in 1937. The formation of the Axis by these three countries in 1940 met with no effective response.

"If the new organization was to do better, it would have to learn from its predecessor's mistakes. The drafters of its charter had the daunting task of reconciling what struck many as irreconcilable. Since August 1943, the principal drafter of the document at the State Department had been Leo Pasvolsky, the head of the department's Informal Agenda Group and Hull's former personal assistant. A fifty-year-old Jewish émigré from Ukraine, Pasvolsky was no stranger to the subject of international peace organizations. Back in 1919 he had covered the Paris Peace Conference for the New York Tribune, and later he had campaigned for the admission of the Soviet Union, whose brand of socialism he rejected, to the League of Nations.

"Pasvolsky's appointment as principal drafter of the charter was a testament of the triumph of Secretary of State Cordell Hull's vision over an alternative model championed by Sumner Welles. Hull favoured a centralized structure, while Welles wanted the great powers to bear primary responsibility for security in their respective regions. Welles's model followed FDR's thinking of the role of the 'four policemen' – the United States, Britain, the Soviet Union, China – in the postwar peace arrangement. By the fall of 1943, with Welles resigning in the midst of a homosexual scandal, Roosevelt had opted for the centralized model. FDR's decision was guided by the fact that his 'four policemen' would be permanent members of the UN Security Council..."⁸⁸⁰

⁸⁸⁰ Plokhy, *Yalta: The Price of Peace*, London: Penguin, 2010, pp. 118-119.

After much argument with both the Russians and the British, Roosevelt finally achieved his principal goal at Yalta, the founding of the United Nations. He had been forced to concede to the Soviets that Ukraine and Belorussia should have seats in the General Assembly alongside Soviet Russia, which violated the principle that only sovereign states should sit there. But he more or less got his way with the most important of the six major organs of the United Nations, the Security Council. It was composed of fifteen members with five permanent members - the Big Three, China and France, - any of which could veto decisions of the Security Council, although unanimous decisions of the "Big Five" were deemed to be binding on other members. In this way Victor's Justice continued to operate in the adjudication of international disputes in the post-war era.

The Security Council convened for the first time on January 17, 1946. However, in the atmosphere of the Cold War that developed very soon thereafter (Churchill's famous "iron curtain" speech was delivered on March 5, 1946), it showed its virtual impotence to achieve justice and peace when the interests of one of the Great Powers was affected. The old politics continued; the world was divided into two vast spheres of influence, the Communist East and the Capitalist West; and with the explosion of two atomic bombs over Japan in the summer of 1945 the very real prospect beckoned of world war between the two blocs leading to the annihilation of mankind. Never before in the history of mankind had it been so urgently necessary to find a solution to the problems of international relations, peace and justice. But clearly the plan of locking the most evil power in history into a quasi-world government in which it had the power of veto not only did not solve the problem, but made the task of taming and neutralizing that power far more difficult..

This potential strangle-hold exerted over the United Nations by the Soviets was revealed right as early as May, 1945, when the foreign ministers of the victor powers gathered in San Francisco to establish the organization's ground rules. Molotov, as Martin Gilbert writes, "told his American and British opposite numbers - Edward Stettinius and Anthony Eden - that sixteen members of the all-Party Polish Government in Warsaw, who had gone to Moscow at the request of the American and British governments to negotiate a peace treaty, were all in prison. In the *Daily Herald* a future leader of the British Labour Party, Michael Foot, who was in San Francisco as a journalist, described the impact on the conference of Molotov's announcement. The distressing news, wrote Foot, came 'almost casually' towards the end of an otherwise cordial dinner, Molotov 'could hardly have cause a greater sensation if he had upset the whole table and thrown the soup in Mr. Stettinius's smiling face.'"⁸⁸¹

Truman telegraphed Churchill that if they did not hold the line against the Soviets, "the whole fruits of our victory may be cast away and none of the purposes of World Organization to prevent territorial aggression and future wars will be attained."⁸⁸² Churchill, of course, agreed...

⁸⁸¹ Gilbert, *A History of the Twentieth Century*, vol. 2: 1933-1951, London: HarperCollins, 1998, pp. 682-683.

⁸⁸² Gilbert, *op. cit.*, p. 686.

“In San Francisco, on June 26, the United Nations Charter was signed. Even as bloody battles were being fought in the Pacific and the Far East, a blueprint for avoiding future war had been agreed upon by the victorious powers. But the power of the gun and the tank was still determining territorial change. Three days after the Charter was signed the new Czechoslovak government signed a treaty with the Soviet Union, ceding its eastern province of Ruthenia. The citizens of Ruthenia, having been annexed by Hungary during the war, became Soviet citizens, subjected overnight to the harsh panoply of Soviet Communism...”⁸⁸³

The United Nations did much valuable humanitarian work for many decades after the war. Particularly important for its work in Europe after VE Day was UNRRA (the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration). In fact, as Tony Judt writes, “there are actually many UNs, of which the political and military branches (General Assembly, Security Council, Peacekeeping Operations) are only the best known. To name but a few: UNESCO (the Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, founded in 1945); UNICEF (the International Children’s Emergency Fund, 1946); WHO (World Health Organization, 1948); UNRWA (the Relief and Works Agency, 1949); UNHCR (the High Commission for Refugees, 195), UNCTAD (the Conference on Trade and Development, 1963), and ICTY (the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, 1993). Such international units don’t include intergovernmental programs under the UN’s aegis; nor do they cover the many field agencies established to address particular crises. These include UNGOMAP (the Good Offices Mission to Afghanistan and Pakistan that successfully oversaw the Soviet withdrawal there), UNAMSHIL (the Mission in Sierra Leone, 1999), UNMIK (the Mission in Kosovo, 1999) and many others before and since.

“Much of the work done by these units is routine. And the ‘soft’ tasks of the UN – addressing health and environmental problems, assisting women and children in crisis, educating farmers, training teachers, providing small loans, monitoring rights abuse – are sometimes performed just as well by national or nongovernmental agencies, though in most cases only at UN prompting or in the wake of a UN-sponsored initiative. But in a world where states are losing the initiative to such nonstate actors as the EU or multinational corporations, there are many things that would not happen at all if they were not undertaken by the United Nations or its representatives – the UNICEF-sponsored Convention of the Rights of the Child is a case in point. And while these organizations cost money, we should recall that UNICEF, for example, has a budget considerably smaller than that of many international businesses.

“The United Nations works best when everyone acknowledges the legitimacy of its role. When monitoring or overseeing elections or truces, for example, the UN is often the only external interlocutor whose good intentions and rightful authority are acknowledged by all the contending parties. Where this is not the case – at Srebrenica in 1995, for example – disaster ensues, since the UN troops can neither use force to defend themselves nor intervene to protect others. The reputation of the UN for evenhandedness and good faith is thus its most important long-term asset. Without it

⁸⁸³ Gilbert, *op. cit.*, p. 694.

the organization becomes just another tool of one or more powerful states and resented as such.”⁸⁸⁴

3. Ideology. The Americans’ reorganization of global economics at Bretton Woods and of international relations at the United Nations was incomplete without a *global ideology*.

Such an ideology was expounded by the United Nations in its *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, which was approved on December 9, 1948. It provided in essence a new moral code for the world, a code that has no religious base - unless atheism is considered to be a religion. However, this has not prevented the pseudo-Christian West from embracing it enthusiastically, considering it to be the culmination of Christian Capitalist culture in spite of the fact that its spiritual ancestor was clearly the anti-Christian *Declaration of Human Rights* of the French Revolution...

According to Martin Gilbert, “the voice of the individual as enshrined in 1948 in the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights, became the voice of dissent. The scrutiny carried out by organizations like Amnesty International brought the focus on human rights to a global public. Meeting in Geneva, the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, and the Non-Governmental Organizations which represent specific minority interests at the Commission, cast a strong spotlight on human rights abuse. Two areas in which it was particularly active in the 1970s and 1980s were the inequalities and indignities of apartheid in South Africa, and the struggle of the Jews to emigrate from the Soviet Union without harassment or imprisonment...”⁸⁸⁵

The philosophy of human rights goes back a long way in western history - at least to Grotius in the seventeenth century and perhaps as far as the medieval scholastics. The French *Declaration of Human Rights* of 1789 located the source of human rights in the sovereign power of the nation. However, most human rights are universal, that is, they are framed in perfectly general terms that apply to all men and women; so to locate their obligatoriness, not in some supra-national or metaphysical sphere, but in particular nations or states that may, and often do, disagree with each other, would seem illogical.

The problem, of course, is that if we pursue this argument to its logical conclusion, it would seem to entail that all national states must give up their rights and hand them over to a world government, which alone can impartially formulate human rights and see that they are observed. This logic was reinforced by the first two World Wars, which discredited nationalism and led to the first international organizations with legal powers, albeit embryonic, over nation-states - the League of Nations and the United Nations.

One of the first to formulate this development was the Viennese Jew and professor of law, Hans Kelsen, in his work, *A Pure Theory of Law*. “The essence of his theory,”

⁸⁸⁴ Judt, “Is the UN Doomed?”, in *When the Facts Change*, London: Vintage, 2015, pp. 257-258.

⁸⁸⁵ Gilbert, *Challenge to Civilization: A History of the Twentieth Century, 1952-1999*, London: HarperCollins, 1999, p. 924.

according to Michael Pinto-Duschinsky, “was that an obligation to obey the law does not stem from national sovereignty but from a fundamental norm. In practical terms, this led after the First World War to his advocacy of an Austrian constitutional court as part of the Austrian constitution and, after the Second World War, to support for the idea of an international court with compulsory jurisdiction as a key part of the framework of the United Nations.”⁸⁸⁶

Another Austrian Jewish academic, Hersch Lauterpacht In his dissertation “combined his interests in jurisprudence and Zionism with an argument about mandates granted by the League of Nations which implied that the mandate given to Britain to govern Palestine did not give Britain sovereignty. Rather, this rested, argued Lauterpacht, with the League of Nations...

“Despite the failure of the League of Nations to prevent Nazi aggression, the Second World War and the murder of his family in the Holocaust, Lauterpacht remained attached to notions of an international legal order. Before his early death in 1960, he served as a judge on the International Court at the Hague. Lauterpacht was devoted to the view that fundamental human rights were superior to the laws of international states and were protected by international criminal sanctions even if the violations had been committed in accordance with existing national laws. He advised the British prosecutors at Nuremburg to this effect. Together with another Jewish lawyer from the Lviv area, Raphael Lemkin, Lauterpacht had a major role in the passage by the United Nations General Assembly of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. Lauterpacht’s publication in 1945, *An International Bill of Rights*, also had a formative influence on the European Convention of Human Rights drawn up in 1949 and ratified in 1953.

“Lauterpacht’s public philosophy was based on the conviction that individuals have rights which do not stem from nation states. He was an internationalist who had a lifelong mistrust of state sovereignty which, to him, reflected the aggression and injustices committed by nation states and the disasters of the two world wars.”⁸⁸⁷

However, as Pinto-Duschinsky rightly points out, while “international arbitration may be a practical and peaceful way to resolve disputes between countries,... international courts which claim jurisdiction over individual countries do not coexist comfortably with notions of national sovereignty...”⁸⁸⁸

In spite of that, and in spite of the terrible destruction and blood-letting caused by the idea of positive freedom in the period 1917 to 1945, in 1948 the Universal

⁸⁸⁶ Pinto-Duschinsky, “The Highjacking of the Human Rights Debate”, *Standpoint*, May, 2012, p. 36. “Central to the Pure Theory of Law is the notion of a 'basic norm (Grundnorm)' - a hypothetical norm, presupposed by the jurist, from which in a hierarchy all 'lower' norms in a legal system, beginning with constitutional law, are understood to derive their authority or 'bindingness'. In this way, Kelsen contends, the bindingness of legal norms, their specifically 'legal' character, can be understood without tracing it ultimately to some suprahuman source such as God, personified Nature or a personified State or Nation” (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hans_Kelsen).

⁸⁸⁷ Pinto-Duschinsky, *op. cit.*, pp. 36-37.

⁸⁸⁸ Pinto-Duschinsky, *op. cit.*, p. 37.

Declaration of Human Rights declared: "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood... Recognition of the inherent dignity and equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world". While this is anodyne enough, even a superficial reading of history since 1789 should have convinced those who drew up the Declaration to be more specific about the meaning of the words "freedom" and "rights" here. They should have known that very similar statements had served as the foundation of the French revolution, and almost every other bloody revolution right up to and including the Russian revolution, which at that very moment was still destroying millions of souls in the name of "the spirit of brotherhood"... In any case, the Communists interpreted human rights in a very different way from the Capitalists. They saw in the theory merely a means of imposing the capitalist world-view. And there was some justification for this: the United Nations was, after all, the child of Roosevelt and his very American (but also leftist) world-view.

As John Gray writes, speaking of human rights in the context of global capitalism: "The philosophical foundations of these rights are flimsy and jerry-built. There is no credible theory in which the particular freedoms of deregulated capitalism have the standing of universal rights. The most plausible conceptions of rights are not founded on seventeenth-century ideas of property but on modern notions of autonomy. Even these are not universally applicable; they capture the experience only of those cultures and individuals for whom the exercise of personal choice is more important than social cohesion, the control of economic risk or any other collective good.

"In truth, rights are never the bottom line in moral or political theory - or practice. They are conclusions, end-results of long chains of reasoning from commonly accepted principles. Rights have little authority or content in the absence of a common ethical life. They are conventions that are durable only when they express a moral consensus. When ethical disagreement is deep a wide appeal to rights cannot resolve it. Indeed, it may make such conflict dangerously unmanageable.

"Looking to rights to arbitrate deep conflicts - rather than seeking to moderate them through the compromises of politics - is a recipe for a low-intensity civil war..."⁸⁸⁹

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More fundamentally, profound ethical questions cannot be resolved without reference to the ultimate arbiter and judge - Almighty God. But the knowledge of the will of God belongs only to those who know Him in the true faith. In other words, these questions are ultimately religious in nature. But by the middle of the twentieth century religion in both East and West had been wholly subordinated to secular concepts such as "human rights". Therefore for the men of this age they were and are insoluble...

⁸⁸⁹ Gray, *False Dawn: The Delusions of Global Capitalism*, London: Granta Books, 1999, pp. 108-109.

The attempt to satisfy all desires on the basis of some kind of overarching “right to happiness” must lead in the end, not just to Sodom and Gomorrah, but to the collapse of all civilization. For “we then advance,” writes C.S. Lewis, “towards a state of society in which not only each man but every impulse in each man claims *carte blanche*. And then, though our technological skill may help us survive a little longer, our civilization will have died at heart, and will – one dare not even add ‘unfortunately’ – be swept away...”

But, as Nicholas Berdiaev pointed out: "Neither 'human rights' nor 'the will of the people', nor both together can be the foundation of human society. For the one contradicts the other: 'the rights of the human personality', understood as the final foundations of society, deny the primacy of social unity; 'the will of the people', as an absolute social basis, denies the principle of personality. There can be, and in fact is, only some kind of eclectic, unprincipled compromise between the two principles, which witnesses to the fact that neither is the primary principle of society. If one genuinely believes in the one or the other, then one has to choose between the unlimited despotism of social unity, which annihilates the personality - and boundless anarchy, which annihilates social order and together with it every personal human existence."

In spite of the manifest failures of these extremes, modern man continues to search for some such foundation for his life. For although He does not believe in God, he does believe in morality. Even when committing heinous crimes he takes care to try and justify himself. But what he really wants is to be free to pursue the life he wants to lead, - the life which brings him the maximum of pleasure and the minimum of pain, - without being interfered with by anybody else, whether God, or the State, or some other individual or group of individuals. However, he knows that in a society without laws, in which *everybody* is free to pursue the life he wants the life he wants to lead without any kind of restriction, he will not achieve his personal goal. For if everybody were completely free in this way, there would be anarchy, and life would be “nasty, brutish and short” - for everybody. So a compromise must be found.

The compromise is a kind of religionless morality. Let some powerful body - preferably the post-revolutionary State, certainly not God or the Church, because God is unpredictably and unpleasantly demanding - impose certain limits on everybody. But let those limits be as restricted and unrestrictive as possible.

And let there be a set of rules accepted by all States - preferably enforced by some World Government - that puts limits on the limits that States can place on their citizens. These rules we can then call “human rights”, and they can be our morality. Thus “human rights” include *civil and political rights*, such as the right to *life and liberty, freedom of expression*, and *equality before the law*; *judicial rights*, like the right to a free trial, and freedom from torture and the death penalty; *sexual rights*, like the rights to have sex of any kind with any consenting adult, reproduce a child by any means, and then destroy it if necessary; and *economic, social and cultural rights*, like the right to participate in culture, to have food and water and healthcare, the *right to work*, and the *right to education*. This morality will be permissive in the sense that it will permit very many things previous, more religious ages considered unlawful. But it will not

permit everything; it will not permit others to interfere with my life of pleasure so long as I don't interfere with theirs...

There will be another important advantage to this system: for those who believe in, and champion, "human rights", it will be a source of great pride and self-satisfaction. They will be able to preach it to others, even impose it on others, with the sweet knowledge that they are doing good and serving mankind - no, rather, *saving* mankind. After all, the 1993 Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action declares: "All human rights are universal, indivisible and interdependent and related. The international community must treat human rights globally in a fair and equal manner, on the same footing, and with the same emphasis". So the belief in, and justification and implementation of, "human rights" will turn out to be a new kind of universal religion, with a new kind of god, a new kind of sanctity and a new kind of paradise - a kingdom of gods on earth that is so much more conducive to the needs of modern man than the old kind that was too far away in "heaven", too distant from, and opposed to, his material preoccupations!

February 4/17, 2020.

39. 1945: ANARCHY IN EUROPE

As the Second World War came to an end, writes Professor Richard J. Evans, “millions of former Nazis hid or burned their uniforms, and in the final days of the war, the Gestapo set fire to incriminating records all over the country. Many of the most fanatical Nazis did not survive: they either perished in the final conflagration or killed themselves, along with Hitler, Joseph Goebbels, Heinrich Himmler, and many others, in one of the greatest waves of mass suicide in history, unable to imagine anything beyond the all-encompassing world of the Third Reich, the only thing that gave their lives purpose and meaning.

“In stark contrast to the countries the Nazis had conquered during the war, Germany saw no resistance to the Allied occupation. As wartime gravestones frequently testified, many Germans had fought and died ‘for Führer and Fatherland’. But with the führer gone and the fatherland under enemy occupation, there seemed no point in fighting on. German cities had been reduced to rubble, and millions of Germans had died; as a result, everyone could see what Nazism had ultimately led to. The Allied occupation was vigilant and comprehensive, and it quickly suppressed even the slightest act of resistance. The Allies put in place an elaborate program of ‘denazification’, war crimes trials, and ‘reeducation’ measures that targeted not only former Nazi activists and fellow travelers but also the militaristic beliefs and values that the Allies believed had allowed the Hitler regime gain support and come to power in the first place. In 1947, to symbolize this forced reinvention of German political culture, the Allied Control Council, which governed Germany at the time, formally abolished the state of Prussia, which ‘from early days had been a bearer of militarism and reaction in Germany’, the council claimed.

“Germans by and large wanted to focus on the gigantic task of rebuilding and reconstruction and to forget the Nazi past and the crimes in which, to a greater or lesser extent, the vast majority of them had been involved. The year 1945, many of them declared, was ‘zero hour’ – time for a fresh start. However, politicians and intellectuals also reached back to older values in their quest to construct a new Germany...

“Yet post-war German efforts to forge a new identity could not just leap across the Third Reich as if it had not existed. Germans ultimately had to confront what the Hitler regime had done in their name. The process of doing so was halting and complicated by the country’s division during the Cold War...

“There was a limit, as well, to what the Allies could achieve in encouraging or forcing the Germans to come to terms with what they had done. West Germans, the vast majority of the formerly united country’s population, seemed to suffer from a generalized historical and moral amnesia in the postwar years; on the rare occasions when they spoke about the Nazi dictatorship, it was usually to insist that they had known nothing of its crimes and to complain that they had been unfairly victimized and humiliated by the denazification programs and the ‘victors’ justice’ of the war crimes trials. Many still seethed with anger at the Allies’ carpet-bombing of German towns and resented the expulsion of 11 million ethnic Germans by the postwar

governments of Hungary, Poland, Romania, and other eastern European countries. An opinion poll carried out in West Germany in 1949 revealed that half the population considered Nazism to be 'a good idea, badly carried out'. In the East, the country's new Stalinist leaders wanted the public to identify with the memory of the communist resistance to Nazism, which had been real enough, but which the authorities massively exaggerated. As a result, East Germans were not really forced to face up to their involvement in the crimes of Nazism at all.

"In the 1960s, however, things began to change"⁸⁹⁰ as prosperity returned...

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The general condition of Europe after 1945 was *anarchy*... In France, many Vichy collaborators were murdered, and women who had slept with Nazis were humiliated. The bitter debate over who was responsible for France's defeat and - with the honourable exception of De Gaulle's Free French - collaboration with Germany, continued for many years.

But the changes were greater further east. "With the exception of Germany," writes Tony Judt, "and the heartland of the Soviet Union, every continental European state involved in World War Two was occupied at least twice: first by its enemies, then by the armies of liberation. Some countries - Poland, the Baltic states, Greece, Yugoslavia - were occupied three times in five years. With each succeeding invasion the previous regime was destroyed, its authority dismantled, its elites reduced. The result in some places was a clean slate, with all the old hierarchies discredited and their representatives compromised. In Greece, for example, the pre-war dictator Metaxakas had swept aside the old parliamentary class. The Germans removed Metaxakas. Then the Germans too were pushed out in their turn, and those who had collaborated with them stood vulnerable and disgraced.

"The liquidation of old social and economic elites was perhaps the most dramatic change. The Nazis' extermination of Europe's Jews was not only devastating in its own right. It had significant social consequences for those many towns and cities of central Europe where Jews had constituted the local professional class: doctors, lawyers, businessmen, professors. Later, often in the very same towns, another important part of the bourgeoisie - the Germans - was also removed, as we have seen. The outcome was a radical transformation of the social landscape - and an opportunity for Poles, Ukrainians, Slovaks, Hungarians and others to move up into the jobs (and homes) of the departed.

"This leveling process, whereby the native populations of central and eastern Europe took the place of the banished minorities, was Hitler's most enduring contribution to European social history. The German plan had been to destroy the Jews and the educated local intelligentsia in Poland and the western Soviet Union, reduce the rest of the Slav peoples to neo-serfdom and place the land and the government in the hands of resettled Germans. But with the arrival of the Red Army

⁸⁹⁰ Evans, *The Third Reich at War*, London: Penguin Books, 2009. ,

and the expulsion of the Germans the new situation proved uniquely well adapted to the more truly radicalizing projects of the Soviets.

“One reason for this was that the occupation years had seen not just rapid and bloodily enforced upward social mobility but also the utter collapse of law and the habits of life in a legal state. It is misleading to think of the German occupation of continental Europe as a time of pacification and order under the eye of an omniscient and ubiquitous power. Even in Poland, the most comprehensively policed and repressed of all the occupied territories, society continued to function in defiance of the new rulers: the Poles constituted for themselves a parallel underground world of newspapers, schools, cultural activities, welfare services, economic change and even an army – all of them forbidden by the Germans and carried on outside the law and at great personal risk.

“But that was precisely the point. To live normally in occupied Europe meant breaking the law: in the first place the laws of the occupiers (curfews, travel regulations, race laws, etc.) but also conventional laws and norms as well. Most common people who did not have access to farm produce were obliged, for example, to resort to the black market or illegal barter just to feed their families. Theft – whether from the state, from a fellow citizen or from a looted Jewish store – was so widespread that in the eyes of many people it ceased to be a crime. Indeed, with gendarmes, policemen and local mayors representing and serving the occupier, and with the occupying forces themselves practicing organized criminality at the expense of selected civilian populations, common felonies were transmuted into acts of resistance (albeit often in post-liberation retrospect).

“Above all, violence became part of daily life. The ultimate authority of the modern state has always rested *in extremis* on its monopoly of violence and its willingness to deploy force if necessary. But in occupied Europe authority was a function of force alone, deployed without inhibition. Curiously enough, it was precisely in these circumstances that the state lost its monopoly of violence. Partisan groups and armies competed for a legitimacy determined by their capacity to enforce their will in a given territory. This was obviously true in the most remote regions of Greece, Montenegro and the eastern marches of Poland where the authority of modern states had never been very firm. But by the end of World War Two it also applied in parts of France and Italy.

“Violence bred cynicism. As occupying forces, both Nazis and Soviets precipitated a war of all against all. They discouraged not just allegiance to the defunct authority of the previous regime or state, but any sense of civility or bond between individuals, and on the whole they were successful. If the ruling power behaved brutally and lawlessly to your neighbour – because he was a Jew, or a member of an educated elite or ethnic minority – then why should you show any more respect for him yourself? Indeed, it was often prudent to go further and curry pre-emptive favour with the authorities by getting your neighbour in trouble.”⁸⁹¹

⁸⁹¹ Judt, *Postwar: A History of Europe since 1945*, London: Pimlico, 2007, pp. 36-37. Cf. Anne Applebaum, *Iron Curtain: The Crushing of Eastern Europe*, London: Penguin, 2013, pp. 13-17.

“The Ukraine,” writes Niall Ferguson, “was perhaps the most blood-soaked place of all. In Volhynia and Eastern Galicia, members of the Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists (OUN), egged on by the Germans, massacred between 60,000 and 80,000 Poles. Whole villages were wiped out, men beaten to death, women raped and mutilated, babies bayoneted... The internecine war in the Ukraine only grew more ferocious as the war progressed, with some Ukrainians fighting for the Axis, some for the Allies and others for an independent Ukraine.

“In the Balkans, too, there were multiple civil wars along ethnic, religious and ideological lines... Of the million or so people who died in Yugoslavia during the war, most were killed by other Yugoslavs. This included nearly all of Bosnia’s 14,000 Jews. In Greece the German occupation was the cue for bitter conflict. There, as in Yugoslavia, a three-cornered war raged – between the foreign invaders and nationalists, but also between nationalists and indigenous Communists. When Bulgaria annexed northern Dobruja from Romania, tens of thousands of people were expelled from their homes on either side of the new border.

“Most empires purport to bring peace and order. They may divide in order to rule, but they generally rule in pursuit of stability. The Nazi empire divided the peoples of Europe as it ruled them – though, ironically, the divisions that opened up in Central and Eastern Europe had as much to do with religion as with race (most obviously in the conflicts between Poles and Ukrainians or between Croats and Serbs). But the ‘skifful utilization of inter-ethnic rivalry’ the Germans consciously practiced did not lead (in the words of one German officer) to the ‘total political and economic pacification’ of occupied territory. On the contrary, in many places their rule soon degenerated into little more than the sponsorship of local feuds, the institutionalization of civil war as a mode of governance...”⁸⁹²

“At the conclusion of the First World War, it was borders that were invented and adjusted, while people were on the whole left in peace. After 1945 what happened was rather the opposite: with one major exception [Poland] boundaries stayed broadly intact and people were moved instead. There was a feeling among Western policymakers that the League of Nations, and the minority clauses in the Versailles Treaties, had failed and that it would be a mistake even to try and resurrect them. For this reason they acquiesced readily enough in the population transfers.”⁸⁹³ Thus in its Article XIII the Potsdam Conference authorized the transfer of vast numbers of Germans from Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland (which, while losing its eastern provinces to the Soviets, took over the former German provinces of Pomerania, Silesia and East Prussia). This “ethnic cleansing” extended even further east – 700,000 Germans, for example, were expelled from Romania. It was accompanied by mass murder, torture and rape. As Victor Sebestyen writes: “The Germans were not wanted anywhere outside Germany. Vast populations had been forced to uproot in the biggest refugee crisis the world had ever seen. Hitler had dreamed of an ethnically pure

⁸⁹² Ferguson, *The War of the World*, London: Penguin, 2006, pp. 455, 456-457.

⁸⁹³ Judt, *op. cit.*, p. 27.

Europe. Paradoxically, Germany's defeat ensured that by the end of 1946 his dream was, to a great extent, a reality..."⁸⁹⁴

In all, some 12 million ethnic Germans were expelled and forced to travel back to their homeland, suffering half a million lost lives as starvation, disease and revenge attacks took their toll. Again, between 6 and 8 million former prisoners of war and slave labourers from the Nazi camps and factories were released to roam the German countryside, looting and taking revenge on civilians. At the same time in the East, hundreds of thousands took to the forests in the Baltic States to resist their "liberation" by the Red Army; tens of thousands died. Losses were still greater further south, as Ukrainian "Banderites" fought the Soviets and Poles fought Ukrainians⁸⁹⁵; there were large transfers of population in both directions across the Polish-Ukrainian border. In Belorussia an anti-Soviet resistance movement lasted from 1944 to 1956.⁸⁹⁶ In Yugoslavia Serbs massacred Croats in retaliation for the hundreds of thousands they had lost at the hands of the Ustashi in the war. In Greece, British soldiers and Greek monarchists killed communists and vice-versa. In many countries of Western Europe, especially Italy and France, collaborators were murdered, imprisoned or simply humiliated.⁸⁹⁷

Nor did survivors of the Holocaust, in spite of their terrible experiences during the war, feel much safer at the end of it. Much of Eastern Europe had been virulently anti-semitic in the 1930s, and the same disease broke out now in pogroms such as that in Kielce in Poland in July, 1946. There was a particular new motive for this fresh outburst: the property of the Jews had been appropriated by new Gentile owners, who did not want to give it up. So Jews had to flee again. Ironically, many of them fled to the land of their former persecutors, Germany (63,387 between July and September, 1946⁸⁹⁸); others – to Palestine...

⁸⁹⁴ Sebestyen, 1946: *The Making of the Modern World*, London: Pan, 2014, p. 140.

⁸⁹⁵ In view of the massive propaganda directed by the modern Russian media against the "Banderites", it is worth heeding the words of Professor Andrei Zubov: "This was a national liberation movement, an anti-communist one.

"Stepan Andreyevich Bandera was born and lived in that part of the Ukraine which was part of Poland before 1939. And he saw all the Soviet horrors from peaceful and wealthy (by comparison with Soviet Ukraine) Galicia. He saw how, during the Great Ukrainian Famine [golodomor], people who were dying from hunger hurled themselves across the frontier onto Polish territory, how they were shot by Soviet border-guards. And for that he hated Soviet power.

"Any nationalism is a terrible thing, especially with weapons in its hands. But Bandera was a hundred times less cruel than the NKVD of Beria and Abakumov when they fought against the Banderites.

"Therefore any attempt to liberate them from this state was already an element of justice. And in this sense the Banderite movement was more justified from the point of view of morality than the Stalinist Soviet state." ("Banderovtsy – eto primer bol'shoj lzhi sovietskoj sistemy" (The Banderites are an example of the big lie of the Soviet system), *Nash Dom*, January 8, 2016, <http://www.nashdom.us/home/public/publikatsii/banderovtsy---eto-primer-bolshoj-lzhi-sovietskoj-sistemy>)

⁸⁹⁶ Erich Hartmann, "Antisovetskoe partizanskoe dvizhenie Belarusi v 1944-1956g.", <http://www.erich-hartmann.com/antisovetskoe-partizanskoe-dvizhenie>.

⁸⁹⁷ Keith Lowe, "The War Without An End", *BBC History Magazine*, July-August, 2015, pp. 50-55.

⁸⁹⁸ Judt, *op. cit.*, p. 24.

As Sebestyen writes, “Millions of Hungarians, Poles and Romanians had benefited from the Holocaust – an entirely new middle class had been created in just a few years. State direction of the economy in Eastern Europe did not begin with Soviet-style post-war communism; it had happened under the authoritarian regimes in the 1930s, and was given a boost by the Nazis. The popular Polish magazine *Odrodzenie* noticed ‘an entire social stratum – the new-born Polish bourgeoisie – which took the place of murdered Jews, often literally, and because it smelled blood on its hands, it hated Jews more strongly than ever.’ The returning Jews were resented by the majority. People cursed their luck that of all the Jews who had ‘disappeared’ during the war, *their* Jews had to be the ones who came back...”⁸⁹⁹

Some of the continuing conflicts in post-war Europe had an ideological character, such as the Greek civil war between the monarchists and the communists. Others were “wars of liberation” from the new totalitarian conquerors, the Red Army, mixed with nationalist motives, as in the Baltic states and Ukraine. But most of them were simply wars of vengeance against those who had collaborated, or the continuation of pre-war racial tensions.

Thus Sebestyen describes the Czech vengeance on the Germans, supervised by their impeccably democratic and civilized President Edvard Beneš:- “In the two years after the war Beneš expelled more than two and a half million Germans from Czechoslovakia, often with no notice of any kind. Nor did he seem to care how many died in the process. He expropriated the property of the ethnic ‘Sudeten’ Germans, the majority of whom were from families who had lived in Czechoslovakia for generations. It was payback – not only for the barbaric Nazi years, but also because they had been of the ruling caste before independence in 1918. In 1943, while still in exile, Beneš had issued a chilling decree: ‘We have decided to eliminate the German problem in our republic once and for all. The entire German nation deserves the limitless contempt of all mankind. Woe, woe, thrice woe to the Germans. We will liquidate you.’

“Later, back home in Prague, he called not only for a ‘definitive clearance of the Germans from our country, but also a clearance of German influence.’ At no point did the Allied powers express any disapproval. Churchill’s Cabinet accepted the expulsions as ‘inevitable... even desirable’, and in December, 1944 the Prime Minister told the House of Commons, ‘Expulsion is the method which as far as we have been able to tell will be the most satisfactory and lasting. A clean sweep will be made. I am not alarmed at the prospect of the disentanglement of the people, nor am I alarmed by these large transfers.’ Stalin encouraged Beneš, telling him, ‘This time the Germans will be destroyed so that they can never again attack the Slavs.’”⁹⁰⁰

The Western Allies did little to extinguish this flame of war that erupted over much of Western and Central Europe. They had too little sympathy for the mainly German victims, and were too occupied in providing minimal living conditions for those living in their zones of occupation and “denazifying” them. For food was scarce, especially

⁸⁹⁹ Sebestyen, *op. cit.*, p. 287.

⁹⁰⁰ Sebestyen, *op. cit.*, pp. 129-130.

in the British zone of occupation; rations in Britain itself had to be reduced in order to keep the Germans from starving.⁹⁰¹

In the Soviet zone of occupation the East Germans had more food. But that was their only advantage. In Eastern Prussia, Pomerania and Silesia, 1.4 million German women had been raped by Soviet soldiers, most of them several times⁹⁰², and most industrial plant was transported eastwards by the Red Army, together with luxury goods destined for the Soviet generals and millions of soldiers and former prisoners of war destined for the Gulag.

American diplomat George Kennan wrote that “the disaster which befell this area with the entry of the Soviet forces has no parallel in modern European experience. There were considerable sections of it where, to judge by all existing evidence, scarcely a man, woman or child of the indigenous population was left alive after the initial passage of Soviet forces... The Russians... swept the native population clean in a manner that had no parallel since the days of the Asiatic hordes.”⁹⁰³

Judt continues: “The situation in the newly liberated states of western Europe, then, was bad enough. But in central Europe, in the words of John McCloy of the US Control Commission in Germany, there was ‘complete economic, social and political collapse... the extent of which is unparalleled in history, unless one goes back to the collapse of the Roman Empire.’⁹⁰⁴ McCloy was speaking especially of Germany, where the Allied Military Commission had to build everything from scratch: laws, order, services, communications, administration. But at least they had resources. In the east, things were worse...

“Thus it was Hitler, at least as much as Stalin, who drove a wedge into the continent and divided it. The history of central Europe – of the lands of the German and Habsburg Empires, the northern parts of the old Ottoman Empire and even the westernmost territories of the Russian Czars – had always been different in degree from that of the nation states of the West. But it had not necessarily differed in kind. Before 1939 Hungarians, Romanians, Czechs, Poles, Croats and Balts might look enviously upon the more fortunate inhabitants of France or the Low Countries. But they saw no reason not to aspire to similar prosperity and stability in their own right. Romanians dreamed of Paris. The Czech economy in 1937 outperformed its Austrian neighbour and was competitive with Belgium.

⁹⁰¹ Judt writes: “The British were extracting at most \$29 million in reparations from Germany; but the occupation was costing London \$80 million a year, leaving the British taxpayer to foot the bill for the difference even as the British government was forced to impose bread rationing at home (an expedient that had been avoided throughout the war). In the opinion of the British Chancellor of the Exchequer, Hugh Dalton, the British were ‘paying reparations to the Germans’” (*op. cit.*, p. 123).

⁹⁰² Evans, *op. cit.*, pp. 710-711. Ferguson has a higher estimate of rapes: two million German women. “This should be compared with the 925 sentences for rape passed by US Army court martials in all theatres of war between 1942 and 1946” (*op. cit.*, p. 581).

⁹⁰³ Kennan, in Judt, *op. cit.*, p. 19.

⁹⁰⁴ In reality, it was probably much worse than in antiquity.

“The war changed everything. East of the Elbe, the Soviets and their local representatives inherited a sub-continent where a radical break with the past had already taken place. What was not utterly discredited was irretrievably damaged. Exiled governments from Oslo, Brussels or The Hague could return from London and hope to take up the legitimate authority they had been forced to relinquish in 1940.⁹⁰⁵ But the old rulers of Bucharest and Sofia, Warsaw, Budapest and even Prague had no future: their world had been swept aside by the Nazis’ transformative violence. It remained only to decide the political shape of the new order that must now replace the unrecoverable past...”⁹⁰⁶

In his book *Black Earth: The Holocaust as History and Warning*, Timothy Snyder argues that the Holocaust took place, not so much because an evil state organized it, but because very many of the Jews who were killed were in effect stateless, and “one could do what one wanted with stateless people”. So the real destroyer was not states but the absence of statehood, *anarchy*. Whatever the merits of this thesis with regard to the Holocaust⁹⁰⁷, it certainly has merit in relation to the immediate post-war years in Europe, when the main fact for very many was simply anarchy, the destruction of all signposts from the past, all institutions, ideals and morality.

Moreover, this is equally applicable to the whole catastrophic period from the First World War to the death of Stalin (1914-53), with its vast Jewish and Gentile (especially Orthodox Christian) Holocausts covering most of Central and Eastern Europe. These were the results of the fall of the last multi-national empires of the Habsburgs and the Romanovs, which held back the tide of anarchy, but were then swept away by the anti-states of Hitler and Stalin, together with many millions of their former subjects...

It all points back to the first cause of the miseries of the twentieth century: the Russian revolution. Vladimir Putin called the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991 “the greatest geopolitical tragedy of the twentieth century”. But only one who knows no history, or who secretly or not so secretly believes in communism could believe such a thing...

Certainly, most European intellectuals of the time seemed to have learned nothing from history; the real nature of the Soviet regime was hidden from them...

Thus the Soviet Union is usually described as “totalitarian” – the same term that Mussolini had applied to his own regime in the 1920s. As Anne Applebaum writes, it was “Hannah Arendt, who defined totalitarianism in her 1949 book, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, as a ‘novel form of government’ made possible by the onset of

⁹⁰⁵ However, the Prime Minister of Norway from 1945-49 and 1955-65, Einar Gerhardsen, was a KGB agent. He was the first western leader to visit the Soviet Union after the war. “Norvegi v shoke: ‘otets natsii’, 15 let vozglavliauschi kabinet, byl agentom KGB” (Norwegians in shock: ‘the father of the nation’, who led the cabinet for 15 years, was an agent of the KGB), December 25, 2015, 9, <http://9tv.co.il/news/2015/12/25/219244.html>.

⁹⁰⁶ Judt, *op. cit.*, pp. 39-40.

⁹⁰⁷ In favour of Snyder’s thesis is Victor Sebestyen, “The brutal mask of anarchy”, *The Spectator*, 12 September, 2015, p. 47. Against it is Michael Pinto-Duschinsky, “Hitler’s ‘ecological panic’ didn’t cause the Holocaust”, *Standpoint*, September, 2015, pp. 44-49.

modernity. The destruction of traditional societies and ways of life had, she argued, created the conditions for the evolution of the 'totalitarian personality', men and women whose identities were entirely dependent on the state. Famously, Arendt argued that Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union were both totalitarian regimes, and as such were more similar than different. Carl J. Friedrich and Zbigniew Brzezinski pushed that argument further in *Totalitarian Dictatorship and Autocracy*, published in 1946, and also sought a more operational definition. Totalitarian regimes, they declared, all had at least five things in common: a dominant ideology, a single ruling party, a secret police force prepared to use terror, a monopoly on information and a planned economy. By those criteria, the Soviet and Nazi regimes were not the only totalitarian states. Others – Mao's China, for example – qualified too."⁹⁰⁸

Now the application of the term "totalitarian" to the Soviet Union pointed – correctly – to the close kinship between Communism and Fascism. But this kinship was vehemently denied by most Western European intellectuals, which were pro-communist – or at any rate, anti-fascist and therefore, in the twisted logic of the time, necessarily anti-anti-communist. This was especially the case in France, whose communist party was second in size only to Italy's, and where the beginning of the shameful Stalinist show-trials elicited only the denial of obvious facts and frantic defence of the totalitarian dictator. This pro-communism went with a despising of all things American, in spite of the fact that the Americans had liberated France and France's survival as an independent country depended entirely on them.

As Judt writes, "Communism excited intellectuals in a way that neither Hitler nor (especially) liberal democracy could hope to match. Communism was exotic in locale and heroic in scale. Raymond Aron in 1950 remarked upon 'the ludicrous surprise – that the European Left has taken a pyramid-builder for its God.' But was it really so surprising? Jean-Paul Sartre, for one, was most attracted to the Communists at precisely the moment when the 'pyramid-builder' was embarking upon his final, crazed projects. The idea that the Soviet was engaged upon a momentous quest whose very ambition justified and excused its shortcomings was uniquely attractive to rationalist intellectuals. The besetting sin of Fascism had been its parochial objectives. But Communism was directed towards impeccably universal and transcendent goals. *Its* crimes were excused by many non-Communist observers as the cost, so to speak, of doing business with History.

"But even so, in the early years of the Cold War there were many in Western Europe who might have been more openly critical of Stalin, of the Soviet Union and of their local Communists had they not been inhibited by the fear of giving aid and comfort to their political opponents. This, too, was a legacy of 'anti-Fascism', the insistence that there were 'no enemies on the Left' (a rule to which Stalin himself, it must be said, paid little attention). As the progressive Abbé Boulier explained to François Fejtó, when trying to prevent him from writing about the Rajk trial: drawing attention to Communist sins is 'to play the imperialists' game'.

⁹⁰⁸ Applebaum, *Iron Curtain*, London: Penguin, 2013, pp. xxiii-xxiv.

“This fear of serving anti-Soviet interests was not new. But by the early fifties it was a major calculation in European intellectual debates, above all in France. Even after the East European show trials finally led Emmanuel Mounier and many in his *Esprit* group to distance themselves from the French Communist Party, they took special care to deny any suggestion that they had become ‘anti-Communist’ – or worse, that they had ceased to be ‘anti-American’. Anti-anti-Communism was becoming a political and cultural end in itself...”⁹⁰⁹

February 5/18, 2020.

⁹⁰⁹ Judt, *op. cit.*, pp. 216-217.

40. 1945: THE SOVIET NEW WORLD ORDER

“Even before the Third Reich had collapsed,” writes Paul Kennedy, “Stalin was switching dozens of divisions to the Far East, ready to unleash them upon Japan’s denuded Kwantung Army in Manchuria when the time was ripe; which turned out to be, perhaps unsurprisingly, three days after Hiroshima. The extended campaign on the western front more than reversed the disastrous post-1917 slump in Russia’s position in Europe... Russian territorial boundaries expanded, in the north at the expense of Finland, in the centre at the expense of Poland; and in the south, recovering Bessarabia, at the expense of Rumania. The Baltic states of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania were incorporated into Russia. Part of East Prussia [around Königsberg, now Kaliningrad] was taken, and a slice of Eastern Czechoslovakia (Ruthenia, or Subcarpathian Ukraine) was also thoughtfully added, so that there was direct access to Hungary. To the west and southwest of this enhanced Russia lay a new *cordon sanitaire* of satellite states, Poland, East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Rumania, Bulgaria, and (until they wriggled free) Yugoslavia and Albania. Between them and the West, the proverbial ‘iron curtain’ was falling; behind that curtain, Communist party cadres and secret police were determining that the entire region would operate under principles totally at variance with [American Secretary of State] Cordell Hull’s hopes. The same was true in the Far East, where the swift occupation of Manchuria, North Korea, and Sakhalin not only avenged the war of 1904-05, but allowed a link-up with Mao’s Chinese Communists, who were also unlikely to swallow the gospel of laissez-faire capitalism.”⁹¹⁰

However, there is little evidence that Stalin was planning to extend his conquests westwards, beyond East Germany, in 1945; he was not ready (yet) for world war, especially while he did not have his own atomic bomb⁹¹¹, and needed time to digest his newly-acquired empire in Central and Eastern Europe. His only sign of renewed aggression outside the Far East was in creating an Azerbaijani puppet state in Iran, which the West vigorously – and successfully – resisted. His demands for Turkish territory and control of the Black Sea Straits were also foiled. Stalin even hesitated to impose communism fully and immediately on his European conquests – although it was already clear that he had no intention of fulfilling the promises he had made at Yalta to introduce democracy there.

But this was only a transitional phase: Stalin’s ultimate aim of destroying the West remained unchanged, as was made clear in a speech by Beria’s deputy, Minister of

⁹¹⁰ Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers*, London: William Collins, 1988, pp. 465-466.

⁹¹¹ “As early as June 1942 the NKVD instructed its agents in New York and London to ‘take whatever measures you think fit to obtain information on the theoretical and practical aspects of the atomic bomb projects, on the design of the atomic bomb, nuclear fuel components, and on the trigger mechanism’. In short order, Soviet agents succeeded in penetrating the Manhattan Project. By the spring of 1945 there were three Soviet agents inside the Los Alamos complex in New Mexico where the first bomb was built, each unaware that the others were spies. It only heightened the subsequent security panic that the scientist in charge of the Manhattan Project, J. Robert Oppenheimer, was a fellow-travelling Communist, if not actually a Party member. In February 1943 Stalin authorized work to begin on a Soviet bomb. But in the end the first Soviet bomb was a carbon copy of the US bomb tested at Alamogordo on July 16, 1945; an achievement of espionage as much as of science” (Ferguson, *op. cit.*, pp. 575-576).

State Security Victor Abakumov, to an audience of SMERSH officers at NKVD Headquarters in occupied Europe near Vienna in the summer of 1945: "Comrade Stalin once said that if we don't manage to do all these things very quickly the British and Americans will crush us. After all they have the atom bomb, and an enormous technical and industrial advantage over us. They are rich countries, which not been destroyed by the war. But we will rebuild everything, with our army and our industry, regardless of the cost. We Chekists are not to be frightened by problems and sacrifices. It is our good fortune... that the British and Americans in their attitudes towards us, have still not emerged from the post-war state of calf-love. They dream of lasting peace and building a democratic world for all men. They don't seem to realize that we are the ones who are going to build a new world, and that we shall do it without their liberal-democratic recipes. All their slobber plays right into our hands, and we shall thank them for this, in the next world, with coals of fire. We shall drive them into such dead ends as they've never dreamed of. We shall disrupt them and corrupt them from within. We shall lull them to sleep, sap their will to fight. The whole 'free western' world will burst apart like a fat squashed toad. This won't happen tomorrow. To achieve it will require great efforts on our part, great sacrifices, and total renunciation of all that is trivial and personal. Our aim justifies all this. Our aim is a grand one, the destruction of the old, vile world."⁹¹²

This speech demonstrates two things. On the one hand, the old satanic hatred of the Leninist-Bakuninite revolution for the whole of "the old, vile world" continued unabated. That meant that no "normal" relations would be possible with the Soviet Union; for it was in fact an anti-state determined to destroy all normal statehood throughout the world. Two possibilities were therefore open to the West: war, or "containment", to use the phrase of the venerable American diplomat John Kennan in his famous "Long Telegram" of February 22, 1946. The West contemplated war, but in the end chose containment; that is, the Soviets were to be contained within the boundaries of their WWII conquests, as sanctioned at Yalta and Potsdam.

On the other hand, Stalin was a cautious man⁹¹³, and not yet ready for further military expansion. Denis Healey asserted that "all that the Red Army needed in order to reach the North Sea was boots." But it was not quite as simple as that. As Eric Hobsbawm writes, "Except in the Balkan guerilla strongholds, the communists made no attempt to establish revolutionary regimes. It is true that they were in no position to do so anywhere west of Trieste even had they wanted to make a bid for power, but also that the USSR, to which their parties were utterly loyal, strongly discouraged such unilateral bids for power. The communist revolutions actually made (Yugoslavia, Albania, later China) were made *against* Stalin's advice. The Soviet view was that, both internationally and within each country, post-war politics should continue within the framework of the all-embracing anti-fascist alliance, i.e. it looked forward to a long-term coexistence, or rather symbiosis, of capitalist and communist systems, and further social and political change, presumably occurring by shifts within the

⁹¹² Abakumov, in Nikolai Tolstoy, *Stalin's Secret War*, London: Jonathan Cape, 1981, p. 329.

⁹¹³ As Boris Souvarin put it in a 1948 article: "Stalin's policy is made up of caution, patience, intrigue, infiltration, corruption, terrorism, exploitation of human weaknesses. It only moves to frontal attack when it cannot lose, against an adversary of its choice who is defeated in advance" (in Revel, *op. cit.*, p. 97). (V.M.)

'democracies of a new type' which would emerge out of the wartime coalitions. This optimistic scenario soon disappeared into the night of the Cold War, so completely that few remember that Stalin urged the Yugoslav communists to keep the monarchy or that in 1945 British communists were opposed to the break-up of the Churchill wartime coalition, i.e. to the electoral campaign which was to bring the Labour government in power. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that Stalin meant all this seriously, and tried to prove it by dissolving the Comintern in 1943, and the Communist Party of the USA in 1944.

"Stalin's decision, expressed in the words of an American communist leader 'that we will not raise the issue of socialism in such a form and manner as to endanger or weaken... unity' made his intentions clear. For practical purposes, as dissident revolutionaries recognized, it was a permanent goodbye to world revolution. Socialism would be confined to the USSR and the area assigned by diplomatic negotiation as its zone of influence, i.e. basically that occupied by the Red Army at the end of the war..."⁹¹⁴

Why this (temporary) abdication from Lenin's dream? Because, for all its massive power, the Soviet Union was vulnerable in many ways... "In the West," writes Nikolai Tolstoy, "Russian heroism and wartime propaganda had combined to exaggerate the formidable strength of the Red Army. A prescient few already saw it as a potent threat to Western Europe. To Stalin matters appeared in a rather different light. True, his armies had, with unheard-of gallantry and sacrifices, hunted down 'the Nazi beast in his lair'. But he also knew better than most how very near at times they had been to defeat, and also how much his conquests had owed to lend-lease supplies and American and British strategic bombing. Now the United States, with an industrial capacity and military resources dwarfing those of Germany at the height of her power, faced him in the heart of Europe...."

"In 1945 the USSR still possessed no strategic air force, and there can be no doubt that Stalin regarded the awesome striking power under Eisenhower's command with apprehension. In April 1944 he had warned his Chiefs of Staff against any idea that the defeat of Germany would be the end of their problems. There would be other dangers, equally great; notably the exposure of the Red Army to populations hostile to Communism, and stiffening relations with the Allies in the West. Meanwhile, in the Ukraine, Byelorussia and the Baltic States, nationalist partisans were fighting the Red Army and NKVD units on a scale recalling the bitterest days of the Civil War. Stalin was clearly fearful that the Western Allies would have the wit to play that card the purblind Germans had thrown away: the opposition of the Russian people to the regime. The extent of his fear may be gauged by his absolute refusal to consent to British arming of Russian sentries in prisoner-of-war camps or even enrolling them in a purely nominal 'armed Allied unit'. He feared this might provide cover for the levying of a new 'Vlasov' army.

⁹¹⁴ Hobsbawm, *Age of Extremes: The Short Twentieth Century (1914-1991)*, London: Abacus, 1994, pp. 168-169.

“Fear of military confrontation with the Anglo-Americans, revolt inside the Soviet Union⁹¹⁵, or contamination of the Red Army in occupied Europe effectively inhibited Stalin from any rash ventures in 1945. There were points on which he would not give way, but they were points on which the Anglo-Americans had no effective means of bringing pressure to bear. The new Soviet-Polish frontier, the annexation of the Baltic States, the refusal to implement Churchill’s illusory ‘percentages’ agreement: all these moves took place safely behind Red Army lines, and the worst the democracies could do was affect not to recognize their legitimacy.

“Caution was everything. It was still hard to believe that the West was sincere in its belief in the possibility of genuine post-war cooperation between the two irreconcilable systems. The results of the Teheran Conference had seemed almost too good to be true (Stalin returned to the Kremlin ‘in a particularly good frame of mind’) and after Potsdam a Soviet official noted that ‘the Soviet diplomats won concessions from the Western Allies to an extent that even the diplomats themselves had not expected’. After the defeat of Germany Stalin had been fearful that the Americans might not pull back to the demarcation line, and remained convinced that Eisenhower could, had he chosen, have taken Berlin. Still, the Allies were co-operating, for whatever reason, and as Roosevelt had irresponsibly announced at Yalta that the United States forces would withdraw from Europe within two years of victory, there was every incentive for a policy of ‘softly, softly, catchee monkey’.

“Despite the overwhelming Soviet military presence in Eastern Europe, Stalin was careful for some time to maintain the pretense and even, to a limited, fast diminishing extent, the reality of tolerating non-Communist institutions and political parties. In Romania it was announced that there was no intention of altering the country’s frontiers or social system. It was more than two years before King Michael was obliged to leave the country. Similarly, in Poland, Bulgaria and Hungary the shades of independent institutions were permitted to linger on until election results proved that the most extreme efforts of intimidation and propaganda could not induce populations voluntarily to accept Communist domination. Czechoslovak ‘independence’ survived a little longer, as a result of Stalin’s confidence in the pliability of Dr. Beneš and his colleagues.

“Postponement of the full establishment of the Soviet ‘New Order’ in Eastern Europe was clearly due to several factors. If the new regimes could gain power by constitutional and legal means, this would facilitate the task of Communist Parties in Western Europe, and it was essential, too, not to jettison chances of securing a settlement in Germany favourable to Soviet expansion.

“In any case, Stalin was by no means so confident as hindsight would suggest. In Poland the carefully-planned abduction and trial of sixteen leaders of the Home Army resistance movement in March 1945 suggest that in his view effective Polish armed

⁹¹⁵ “Banderites” were still waging a guerilla war in Western Ukraine. And in 1948 “a revolt of camp inmates at Igarka was suppressed. As many as 2,666 escaped towards the Urals. They were bombed from the air and nearly all were killed or captured” (Martin Gilbert, *The Dent Atlas of Russian History*, London: Dent, 1993, p. 111). (V.M.)

resistance to the imposition of Soviet rule posed sufficient threat to make it worth risking the inevitable outcry that would arise in the West.

“All over Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, the NKVD and SMERSH stretched their enormous resources to cauterize resistance. Soviet propaganda had tended for ideological reasons to exaggerate the role played by partisan and ‘people’s’ armies in defeating Nazism, and they clearly were now taking no chances. Suspect elements of occupied countries were dispatched in an unceasing shuttle of trainloads to the GULAG camps, which continued to underpin Soviet economic production until after Stalin’s death.

“About five and a quarter million Soviet citizens were recovered from Western and Central Europe. All had to be elaborately screened, after which the majority were assigned to forced labour in GULAG camps and elsewhere. At the same time deportations from the Caucasus, the Crimea, the Ukraine, the Baltic States and other regions of the USSR continued unabated. As if this were not enough, the hard-pressed NKVD apparatus had to absorb millions of Germans, Japanese, Romanian and Hungarian prisoners-of-war.

“The eight years between VE Day and Stalin’s death saw the dictator become increasingly jealous, vengeful and vindictive. Fear of the Soviet and Soviet-dominated people, mistrust of the power of the United States, apprehension at the onset of old age with all its dangerous frailties, and recurring bouts of paranoid suspicion concurred to cause him to double and redouble precautions deemed necessary for his survival and that of the regime.

“Danger loomed everywhere. The USSR was sealed in a quarantine more hermetic even than before the war. The tentacles of the NKVD uncoiled to crush incipient dissent even before its practitioners were aware of their own intentions. Jews, heretical biologists, bourgeois composers, critics of Lysenko’s eccentric genetic theories, supporters of Marr’s still odder philological speculations... all, all were engaged in conspiracies so dark that only the Leader could penetrate the Arcanum... But Stalin was not mad, not even at the end when death interrupted the unfolding of the notorious ‘doctors’ plot’. As Adam Ulam writes, ‘the madness lay in the system that gave absolute power to one man and allowed him to appease every suspicion and whim with blood.’ His formative years had been spent in an entirely conspiratorial atmosphere. Roman Malinovsky, one of Lenin’s ablest colleagues, had proved to be a Tsarist spy. And now NKVD records contained the names of innumerable highly-placed men and women in capitalist countries who had outwitted the formidable British and American security services in order to betray their class and country. As Stalin chuckled at the blindness of his enemies, the uncomfortable corollary must have recurred as frequently: how many of *his* people were secreted leagued with ‘the gentlemen from the Thames’? What if one of his closest cronies – Molotov, Mikoyan or Voroshilov – for example – were an English spy or assassin?

“It is clear that the Soviet Union for internal reasons sought to put a distance between itself and the West. The absurd and cruel policy of refusing to allow Soviet war brides of US and British servicemen to leave the country betrayed the extent of

Stalin's fears. War had stretched the resources of the police-state to their limits - limits now being tested further by the herculean task of reimposing totalitarian controls within the USSR, and extending them to the conquered territories beyond. The military power of the Western Allies was daunting enough, but the danger to Soviet morale seemed still greater."⁹¹⁶

Whatever Stalin's military plans, and whatever his problems at home, he never abandoned espionage in the West. The "Cambridge five" of British spies were the most famous and damaging, but there were also spies in the US government. This was the subject of Senator McCarthy's famous "Communist witchhunt" in the early 1950s.

T.J. Roberts writes: "From Isadora Duncan, Lincoln Steffens, John Dewey, Jane Addams, to a vast conglomerate of labor unions, Communist Sympathizers were everywhere. But perhaps the most egregious story was of one of the most trusted newspapers of the time, *The New York Times*, intentionally covering up Stalin's genocide against the Ukrainians. Walter Duranty was the Moscow Bureau Chief from 1922 to 1936 for the *New York Times*. He was assigned with the task of reporting on the inner workings of the Soviet Union, and went on to receive a Pulitzer Prize for his reporting.

"But of course his reporting was not honest. Despite the clear evidence, Duranty reported 'no famine or actual starvation nor is there likely to be' in the Soviet Union in November of 1932. At this point, millions had been deliberately starved in Ukraine by Stalin. This reporting only continued for the remaining four years Duranty spent in the Soviet Union. Years later, there were calls to revoke Duranty's Pulitzer Prize. Those calls were, of course, ignored. Perhaps Duranty knew that no one would ever consider socialism as an option were the atrocious acts of the communists exposed.

"Things get worse when one considers the fact that the communists had successfully become a part of the US Government... With the revealing of these cases, one could see the immense power of the war McCarthy waged to keep communists and agents of the Soviet Union out of the US Government. Much of the information provided here is readily accessible through the 1995 declassified Venona Project files.

"The Venona files are Soviet messages US intelligence intercepted throughout the 1940s. As of now, it is confirmed that at least 350 Americans played an active role in Soviet espionage. This is an extremely conservative estimate since only about one in ten messages have been decoded. With this in mind, we could assume that more names are listed in the still encrypted messages. In addition, no one knows how many messages the US government failed to intercept. Ultimately, no one knows how many American communist sympathizers actively worked with the Soviet Union to bring about Communism in the US, but we can be certain that at least 350 were. But here are the stories of a few of the communists who managed to infiltrate the US Federal Government and impose policies that brought America closer to Communism.

⁹¹⁶ Tolstoy, op. cit., pp. 351, 352-355.

“Harry Dexter White, Assistant Secretary of Treasury, was a Soviet agent who used the code name ‘Jurist.’ Not only was White the Assistant Secretary of Treasury, but he was instrumental in founding the World Bank, and was the first director of the International Monetary Fund (IMF). White brought the Soviets one step closer to the establishment of world-wide communism through globalist central planning.

“Alger Hiss, attendant of the Yalta Convention and legal assistant to the Nye Committee, was also convicted of perjury in connection to acts of espionage on behalf of the Soviet Union. The Nye Committee was another organization that was fully dedicated to the establishment of international governing organizations upon the end of WWII. Hiss ultimately played an instrumental role in the establishment of entities such as the UN.

“Laurence Duggan, code named ‘Frank’ and ‘19,’ was in charge of US relations with South America during WWII and was the president of the Institute for International Education. Duggan was a Soviet spy from the 30s until his death.”⁹¹⁷

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Even without the western threat, Soviet morale was low enough. In spite of stripping Eastern and Central Europe of vast resources – reparations far greater than had been agreed at Yalta – the country was still desperately poor.⁹¹⁸ As John Darwin writes, “Harvest failure in 1946 brought large-scale famine... Ferocious work discipline, conscripted labour, and the heavy reliance on slave or semi-slave labour were used even more widely than before the war against a cowed, ill-fed and exhausted population. Perhaps 10 per cent of industrial output came from the Gulag...”⁹¹⁹

What resources there were were spent on the army, the secret services and building the atom bomb, while millions starved – quietly and without protest. For only in the concentration camps was there a measure of protest. There Christians of many kinds together with writers like Solzhenitsyn (who was imprisoned for criticizing Stalin in 1945) nurtured their internal freedom in conditions of total slavery, where they had nothing but their chains to lose. Besides, open rebellion continued in the west of the country: according to Kirill Alexandrov, “The famine of 1947 and the armed struggle with the rebels in the western provinces of the USSR took away no less than one million lives.”⁹²⁰

As Martin Gilbert writes, “an element of lawlessness also perturbed the apparently settled routine of Soviet life. In 1946 Stalin was told that the security police had arrested 10, 563 pupils who had run away from Factory Training Schools, as well as

⁹¹⁷ Roberts, “McCarthy Was Right: There Were Communist Infiltrators in America!”, *Liberty Hangout*, May 30, 2017.

⁹¹⁸ Between 1947 and 1953 prices on basic foodstuffs dropped between 1.3 and 3 times.

⁹¹⁹ Darwin, *After Tamerlane. The Rise & Fall of Global Empires, 1400-2000*, London: Penguin, 2007, p. 473.

⁹²⁰ Alexandrov, “Stalin i sovremennaiia Rossia: vybor istoricheskikh otsenik ili vybor budushego?” (Stalin and contemporary Russia: a choice of historical estimates or a choice of the future?), report read at the Russian Centre, San Francisco, February 3, 2017.

from trade and railway schools. According to a report from the Minister of the Interior, S.N. Kruglov, 'Many crimes had been committed, including robbery and gangsterism', by students from the schools. Kruglov also gave Stalin the reason. 'The living conditions in the schools are unsatisfactory,' he explained. 'They are unsanitary and cold, and often without electric light.'

"It was not only the discipline of trainees that Stalin sought to tighten. Disciplining the intelligentsia was another task that he set himself. The instrument of his will was A.A. Zhdanov, his lieutenant on the ideological front, who called a special conference of writers, artists and composers – including Shostakovich, Prokofiev, and Khachaturian – to warn them of the folly of independent thought, in music as much as in writing and art. The Soviet Writers' Union met with Stalin's particular anger for what he saw as repeated attempts at independent expression of opinion. The poet Anna Akhmatova was described by Zhdanov a "half nun, half whore", and was among those expelled from the Union in 1946. Such expulsion meant an end to the right to publish – a writer's means of livelihood."⁹²¹

In February, 1948, "the Central Committee of the Communist Party issued a decree on music, accusing Shostakovich, Prokofiev and Khachaturian of 'losing touch with the masses' and of falling victims to 'decadent bourgeois influences'. The three made an immediate confession of their 'errors' and promised to mend their ways – and amend their music – in future. Newspapers also fell under the displeasure of the most rigorous ideological scrutiny. The satirical magazine *Krokodil* was censured by the Central Committee for its 'lack of militancy' in portraying the evil ways of capitalism. The Academy of Social Sciences, which had been established after the war, was reorganized to provide a more rigorous ideological training for Party and State officials.

"With Stalin's personal sanction, a ferocious newspaper campaign was launched against two declared enemies of Soviet Communism, 'bourgeois nationalism' and the 'survival of religious prejudice'. Some indication of how deeply religious feeling must have survived after thirty-one years of Communist rule was seen in the calls in *Pravda* for a more vigorous anti-religious propaganda..."⁹²²

Science also suffered.

"In the research institutes 'cosmopolitan' tendencies were rooted out. In the Institute of Linguistics, N.Ia. Marr was dismissed for teaching that all human languages had a common root and would one day reintegrate in the proletarian internationalist society. Stalin had decided that only Russian was worthy to be the international language of the future: he implied that language was a permanent feature of a nation's culture, more or less impervious to social change. In short, for

⁹²¹ Gilbert, *A History of the Twentieth Century*, vol. 2: 1933-1951, London: HarperCollins, 1998, pp. 769-770. See also Sir Isaiah Berlin, "Conversations with Akhmatova and Pasternak", in *The Proper Study of Mankind*, London: Pimlico, 1998, pp. 525-552.

⁹²² Gilbert, *op. cit.*, pp. 821-822.

Stalin proletarian internationalism and Russian imperialism had finally become indistinguishable.

“In genetics a ‘barefoot scientist’, Trofim Lysenko, with party support, gained the ascendancy over established and reputable scientists. Contrary to accepted biological theory, he taught that in living organisms characteristics derived from the environment could be passed on genetically. He deduced from his theory proposals on how plant-breeding could be improved. The academic establishment mostly resisted his ideas as poorly attested hypotheses, but he was able to gain control of the Institute of Plant Breeding, and from there to dominate genetics and much of biology for more than a decade.

“in all these cases, party stooges in the institutes and creative unions were testing their control of the nomenklatura personnel lists to promote their own candidates and eliminate their opponents. This was a form of clientelism against which there was no appeal. The penalty for resisting was no longer arrest and execution, as it would have been in the 1930s, but usually dismissal, with its accompanying demotion into the ranks of the unprivileged, living in communal apartments and queuing up in poorly stocked state shops. It was a price which few were prepared to pay. Most scholars and scientists reoriented their work along the lines which their bosses and ideologists expected of them, or retreated into fields free of any ideological implications. Shostakovich, for example, seriously contemplated suicide, but then withdrew into an ideologically neutral zone and composed a complete set of preludes and fugues on the model of Bach...”⁹²³

*February 6/19, 2020.
St. Theophan of Poltava.*

⁹²³ Hosking, *Russia and the Russians*, London: Penguin, 2012, pp. 527-529.

41. IS THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION A LAWFUL STATE?

A very interesting and important debate has arisen on the first Russian television channel. Konstantin Aranovsky, a judge of the Constitutional Court of Russia has declared that the Soviet Union was “an unlawful state” – a statement, of course, completely in accord with the judgement of the truly Orthodox Church of Russia since 1918, and of all truly Russian (as opposed to Soviet) patriots. But Konstantin Malofeev, founder of the television channel *Tsargrad* and deputy head of the Universal Council of the Russian People, said that the judge had to clarify his position. “As a lawyer, what he said was completely absurd. Because if he asserts that the Soviet Union was an unlawfully created state, then we must say that we must restore the Russian Empire in our long-lasting illegitimacy.”

In Malofeev’s opinion, insofar as Aranovsky did not indicate this, it means that he believes that contemporary Russia “came out of the cosmos”. “So it has no right of succession from the Soviet Union. Either we must recognize that we are the successors of the Soviet Union. Or we must recognize that we are the successors of the Russian Empire, without any Soviet Union. He says neither the one thing nor the other. But that means that, by contrast with the East Europeans, who have joyfully returned and say: ‘Look, we lived for 20 years in the Baltic region, that was a real state, but in the last 50 years – that was not real.’ But we are in a different situation: for the last one thousand years we have had one and the same state, which ended with the Russian Empire. He does not recognize that.”

Malofeev suggests returning to the juridical aspect of the question. Russia, he notes, is without question the successor in law of the Soviet Union, and it is impossible to deny this because we were all born in the Soviet Union.

“We have Soviet passports, and accounts in the Sberbank, our membership in the Soviet Union has been confirmed by the United nation – all that has been confirmed for us...”

The only other alternative for the judge, says Malofeev, “is that Russia is a young state that was born in 1991...”

“I consider, and I think, that our state has lasted for a thousand years. And, whether happily or unfortunately, we had both the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union. This is our history. There were bloody episodes in it, and heroic episodes. And we shall allow nobody – neither a judge of the Constitutional Court, nor any enemy from abroad – to cut out one of these episodes,” says Malofeev.⁹²⁴

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⁹²⁴ <https://rusorel.info/malofeev-zadal-glavnyj-vopros-sude-nazvavshemu-sssr-nezakonnym-gosudarstvom-skazali-a-govorite-b/?fbclid=IwAR19FXykz-KZyejhZUCxoqT0CCRxeMEN4jnh4MCeHKOxvwGR38IDcqjTDDw>

This issue is indeed the existential issue confronting contemporary Russia, the “to be or not to be” question. Is the contemporary Russian Federation the lawful successor of the Soviet Union or of the pre-revolutionary Russian Empire? If the former, then it is unlawful, because in 1918 the Russian Orthodox Church anathematized it (what any other body, even the United Nations, declares is irrelevant). If the latter, then it is lawful.

Putin has characteristically tried to muddy the waters by declaring the contemporary Russian Federation to be the successor of *both* states – both the lawful Russian Empire and the unlawful Soviet Union. But that is impossible. Not only because the True Church has upheld the first and anathematized the second (while the false church did the opposite), but also because the two states did not recognize each other. For the pre-revolutionary Russian state, the Bolsheviks were antichristian rebels, accursed by God and abhorred by all right-thinking men. For the post-revolutionary Soviet state, the tsars were blood-sucking tyrants whose overthrow and murder was both lawful and absolutely necessary. But Putin tries to have it both ways. He pretends to be the Tsar of *all* the Russias, both the Christian and the anti-Christian.

“Patriarch” Cyril Gundiaev’s concept of “the Russian world” fits well into this programme. Putin’s concept of the succession of the contemporary Russian Federation extends back in time through the Soviet period and into the pre-revolutionary period to the beginning of Russian history. Gundiaev’s concept of the Russian world extends laterally in space to include not only all the former republics of the Soviet Union, but also the whole Slavic Orthodox world and even all Russians living in the West. Even non-Russians and non-Christians are given honorary membership of this “Russian world” so long as they bow down to the myth of the legitimacy of the Soviet Union and its lawful successor, the Russian Federation. All others are cast into the outer darkness where “Russophobes” dwell...

But no amount of ecumenist blurring and widening of boundaries can resolve an outright contradiction, and there is no more blatant and irreconcilable contradiction in the history of the world since Christ than that between the Orthodox Christian Russian empire and the state that destroyed it, the anti-Christian Soviet empire. The fact is that all Russians, whatever passport they were born with or state to which they belong, will have to choose which set of ancestors they venerate and declare their loyalty to: the right-believing tsars or the God-hating commissars and general secretaries. As for Putin, he long ago made his choice: brought up as a Soviet patriot, he has never renounced his allegiance to that state, whose downfall he calls “the greatest geopolitical tragedy of the twentieth century”; he claims he never renounced the Communist Party, having simply put his Soviet passport into a desk drawer; he refuses to denounce Stalin and allows Lenin to remain in the mausoleum, to the continual shame and defilement of his state.

The resemblance of Putin’s Russian Federation to its progenitor, the Soviet Union, was not obvious at first (apart from the revival of the music of the Soviet national anthem and the return of the red flag to the armed forces), as Putin tried to curry contacts with the West for the sake of his and his comrades’ global business interests. But now, some twenty years since his accession to power, the family resemblance of

the Russian Federation to the pre-*perestroika* Soviet Union is unmistakable. In marked contrast to the Ukraine, where the statues of Lenin have been falling everywhere, and where Soviet propaganda and symbolism is banned, in Russia there has been a revival of the Leninist cult. In the church, meanwhile, “ecclesiastical Stalinism” has flourished. Cyril Gundiaiev has even given an award to the head of the Russian Communist Party, Gennady Ziuganov, and in 2016 he had a cordial meeting with that long-time friend of the Soviet Union, Fidel Castro...

Recently a Moscow Patriarch protopriest, Fr. Dmitri Smirnov, incurred much abuse and even the wrath of the second most powerful metropolitan in the Soviet church, Hilarion Alfeyev, for urging Russian women to repent of their civil (“ZAGS”) marriages and seek a lawful marriage in the Church. Until then, he says, they are living in sin. Something similar needs to take place in the life of the nation as a whole. There will be no salvation for the Russian Federation and its citizens until they clearly and openly recognize that the state in which they live is the bastard offspring of an unlawful union, the Soviet Union, which is Russian neither in name nor in deed.

Before the revolution, St. John of Kronstadt said that Russia without a tsar would be “a stinking corpse”. His prophecy has proved accurate, not only for the Soviet period, but also for the post-Soviet period, which should more precisely be called the neo-Soviet period. St. John’s opinion was echoed by the last true elder of the Russian Church Abroad, Archimandrite Nektary of Eleon (+2000): “For him, all governments in Russia after the overthrow of the Tsar on March 2, 1917 – whether the February-democratic government, the Bolshevik, or another – were enemies of God.” And it was confirmed again by the Holy Synod of the True Orthodox Church of Russia under Archbishop Lazarus (Zhurbenko), which as early as May 28 / June 10, 2004 called the Russian Federation “a regime that carries out the dechristianization of the Russian people, waging a campaign of moral corruption and encouraging its physical dying out”. To bless such a regime, the Synod concluded, would be “a grave crime against the Christian conscience”.

*February 9/22, 2020.
Saturday of the Dead.*

42. KINGS SAUL, DAVID AND SOLOMON

Under Moses we see the beginning of a separation of Church and State in Israel. However, it is important to realize that there was no radical separation of powers in the modern sense. Israel was a theocratic state ruled directly by God, Who revealed His will through His chosen servants Moses and Aaron.

Early Israel had rulers, called "Judges". But these rulers were neither hereditary monarchs nor were they elected to serve the will of the people. They were charismatic leaders, who were elected because they served the will of God alone. They were elected by God, not the people, who simply had to follow the man God had elected, as when He said to Gideon: "Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel from the Midianites: have I not sent thee?" (Judges 6.14). That is why, when the people offered to make Gideon and his descendants kings in a kind of hereditary dynasty, he refused, saying: "I shall not rule over you, neither shall my son rule over you: the Lord shall rule over you" (Judges 8.23). Thus the Judges were truly God-fearing, charismatic leaders, like Joshua, Jephtha and Gideon. However, when each of them died, his authority died with him; for there was no hereditary succession.

The unity and continuity of Israel was therefore religious, not political - or rather, it was religio-political. It was created by the history of deliverance from the satanocracy of Egypt and maintained by a continuing allegiance and obedience to God - the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God Who appeared to Moses and Joshua and the Judges. He was their only King.

Neither Abraham nor Moses was a king. Rather it was said to Abraham by God: "Kings will come *from* you" (Genesis 17.6; cf. 17.16, 35.2). Moses was a lawgiver, a priest from the tribe of Levi and prophet, rather than a king. Early Israel was therefore not a kingdom - or rather, it was a kingdom whose king was God alone. As Tikhomirov writes: "According to the law of Moses, no State was established at that time, but the nation was just organized on tribal principles, with a common worship of God. The Lord was recognized as the Master of Israel in a moral sense, as of a spiritual union, that is, as a Church."⁹²⁵ Or rather, as indissoluble union of Church and State, the religious and the political principles. Ancient Israel, in other words, was a Theocracy, ruled not by a king or priest, but by God Himself. And strictly speaking the People of God remained a Theocracy, without a formal State structure, until the time of the Prophet Samuel, who anointed the first King of Israel, Saul. In Israel, the Church, the State and the People were not three different entities or organizations, but three different aspects of a single organism, the whole of which was subject to God alone. That is why it was so important that the leader should be chosen by God.

In the time of the Judges, this seems always to have been the case; for when an emergency arose God sent His Spirit upon a man chosen by Him (cf. Judges 6.34), and the people, recognizing this, then elected him as their Judge (cf. Judges 11.11). And if there was no emergency, or if the people were not worthy of a God-chosen leader, then God did not send His Spirit and no Judge was elected. In those circumstances

⁹²⁵ Tikhomirov, *Monarkhicheskaia Gosudarstvennost'* (Monarchical Statehood), Moscow, 1997, p. 126.

"every man did that which was right in his own eyes" (Judges 21.25) - in other words, there was anarchy. The lesson was clear: if theocracy is removed, then sooner or later there will be anarchy - that is, no government at all.

Not only was there was no king of Israel: there was also no *land* of Israel. And this was important; for "a king is an advantage to a *land with cultivated fields*" (Ecclesiastes 5.8). Therefore Israelite kingship did not emerge until the Israelites had *permanently settled in a land* - that is, until the conquest of Canaan.

By the end of the period of the Judges, the need for a king was evident. For since "there was no king in Israel, everyone did what seemed right to him" (Judges 21.25), and barbaric acts, such as that which almost led to the extermination of the tribe of Benjamin, are recorded. In their desperation at the mounting anarchy, the people called on God through the Prophet Samuel to give them a king. God fulfilled their request, but to ensure that the Israelite king would be a true autocrat, and not a pagan-style despot, He laid down certain conditions to the people through Moses: "When thou shalt come unto the land which the Lord thy God shall choose, and shalt possess it, and shalt dwell therein, and shalt say, 'I will set a king over me, like as all the nations that are about me', thou shalt surely set a king over thee whom the Lord thy God shall choose: one from among thy brethren shalt thou set king over thee: thou mayest not set a stranger over thee, which is not thy brother... And it shall be, when he sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write him a copy of this law in a book out of that which is before the priests, the Levites. And it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life: that he may learn to fear the Lord his God, to keep all the words of this law and these statutes, to do them: that his heart be not lifted up above his brethren, and that he turn not aside from the commandment, to the right hand, or to the left: to the end that he may prolong his days in his kingdom, he, and his children, in the midst of Israel" (Deuteronomy 17.14-15,18-20). Thus God blessed the institution of the monarchy, but stipulated three conditions if His blessing was to rest on it. First, the people must itself desire to have a king placed over it. Secondly, the king must be someone "whom the Lord thy God shall choose"; a true king is chosen by God, not by man. Such a man will always be a "brother", that is a member of the People of God, of the Church: if he is not, then God has not chosen him. Thirdly, he will govern in accordance with the Law of God, which he will strive to fulfil in all its parts.

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Some democrats have argued that the Holy Scriptures do not approve of kingship. This is not true: kingship as such is never condemned in Holy Scripture. Rather, it is considered the norm of political leadership, as we see in the following passages: "Blessed are thou, O land, when thou hast a king from a noble family" (Ecclesiastes 10.17); "The heart of the king is in the hand of God: He turns it wherever He wills" (Proverbs 21.1); "He sends kings upon thrones, and girds their loins with a girdle" (Job 12.18); "He appoints kings and removes them" (Daniel 2.21); "Thou, O king, art a king of kings, to whom the God of heaven has given a powerful and honourable and strong kingdom in every place where the children of men dwell" (Daniel 2.37-38); "Listen,

therefore, O kings, and understand...; for your dominion was given you from the Lord, and your sovereignty from the Most High" (Wisdom 6.1,3).

The tragedy of the story of the first Israelite king, Saul, did not consist in the fact that the Israelites sought a king for themselves - as we have seen, God did not condemn kingship as such. After all, the sacrament of kingly anointing, which was performed for the first time by the Prophet Samuel on Saul, gave the earthly king the grace to serve the Heavenly King as his true Sovereign. As the Scripture says, "God gave him another heart" (I Samuel (I Kings) 10.9)... The tragedy consisted in the fact that the Israelites sought a king "like [those of] the other nations around" them (Deuteronomy 17.14), - in other words, a pagan-style despot who would satisfy the people's notions of kingship rather than God's. For in fallen human nature there exists a desire to submit to a despot, sharing vicariously in his power and glory - there are many examples in human history - until, of course, submission to the despot brings intolerable suffering...

This fallen desire for a pagan-style despot amounted to apostasy in the eyes of the Lord, the only true King of Israel. So the Lord said to Samuel: "Listen to the voice of the people in all that they say to you; for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me, that I should rule over them... Now therefore listen to their voice. However, protest solemnly to them, and show them the manner of the king that shall reign over them" (I Kings (I Samuel) 8.4-9). And then Samuel painted for them the image of a harsh, totalitarian ruler of the kind that was common in the Ancient World. These kings, as well as having total political control over their subjects, were often worshipped by them as gods; so that "kingship" as understood in the Ancient World meant both the loss of political freedom and alienation from the true and living God. God allowed the introduction of this despotic kind of kingship into Israel because the religious principle had grown weak. For the history of the kings begins with the corruption of the priests, the sons of Eli, who were in possession of the ark at the time of its capture. Thus for the kings' subsequent oppression of the people both the priests and the people bore responsibility.

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Since the people's motivation in seeking a king was not pure, God gave them at first a king who brought them more harm than good. For while Saul was a mighty man of war and temporarily expanded the frontiers of Israel, he persecuted true piety, as represented by the future King David and the prophet Gad, and he disobeyed the Church, as represented by the Judge and Prophet Samuel and the high priests Abiathar and Ahimelech.

God in His mercy did not always send such totalitarian rulers upon His people, and the best of the kings, such as David, Josiah and Hezekiah, were in obedience to the King of kings and Lord of lords. Nevertheless, since kingship was introduced into Israel from a desire to imitate the pagans, it was a retrograde step. It represented the introduction of a second, worldly principle of allegiance into what had been a society bound together by religious bonds alone, a schism in the soul of

the nation which, although seemingly inevitable in the context of the times, meant the loss for ever of that pristine simplicity which had characterised Israel up to then.

And yet everything seemed to go well at first. Samuel anointed Saul, saying: "The Lord anoints thee as ruler of His inheritance of Israel, and you will rule over the people of the Lord and save them from out of the hand of their enemies" (I Kings 10.1). Filled with the Spirit of the Lord, Saul defeated the enemies of Israel, the Ammonites and the Philistines. But the schism which had been introduced into the life of the nation began to express itself also in the life of their king, with tragic consequences.

First, before a major battle with the Philistines, the king grew impatient when Samuel the priest delayed his coming to perform a sacrifice. So he performed the sacrifice himself without waiting for Samuel. For this sin, the sin of the invasion of the Church's sphere by the State, Samuel prophesied that the kingdom would be taken away from Saul and given to a man after God's heart. "For now the Lord would have established your kingdom over Israel forever. But now your kingdom shall not continue. The Lord has sought for Himself a man after His own heart" (I Kings 13.13-14). That man, of course, was David, who, by becoming the ancestor of Christ, would become the founder of an eternal Kingdom.

The example of Saul was quoted by Patriarch Nikon of Moscow: "Listen to what happened to Saul, the first king of Israel. The Word of God said to Samuel: 'I have repented that I sent Saul to the kingdom, for he has ceased to follow Me.' What did Saul do that God should reject him? He, it is said, 'did not follow My counsels' (I Kings 15.10-28)... This is the Word of God, and not the word of man: 'I made you ruler over the tribes of Israel and anointed you to the kingdom of Israel, and not to offer sacrifices and whole-burnt offerings,' teaching for all future times that the priesthood is higher than the kingdom, and that he who wishes for more loses that which is his own."⁹²⁶

Saul's second sin was to spare Agag, the king of the Amalekites, instead of killing them all, as God had commanded. His excuse was: "because I listened to the voice of the people" (I Kings 15.20). In other words, he abdicated his God-given authority and became, *spiritually speaking, a democrat*, listening to the people rather than to God. And so Samuel said: "Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, the Lord also shall reject thee from being king over Israel" (I Kings 15.23)...

It was no accident therefore, that it was an Amalekite who killed Saul at Mount Gilboa and brought his crown to David...

To modern readers Saul's sin might seem small. However, it must be understood in the context of the previous history of Israel, in which neither Moses nor any of the judges (except, perhaps, Samson), had disobeyed the Lord. That is why Samuel said to Saul: "To obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness as iniquity and idolatry" (I Kings 15.22-23). For even a king can rebel, even a king is in obedience - to the King of kings. Only the absolutist despot feels that there is nobody above him, that there is no law

⁹²⁶ M.V. Zyzykin, *Patriarch Nikon*, Warsaw : Synodal Press, 1931, part II, p. 17.

that he, too, must obey. His power is absolute; whereas the power of the autocrat is limited, if not by man and the laws of men, at any rate by the law of God, whose independent guardian and teacher is the priesthood of the Church.

To emphasize the truth that disobedience to God “is as the sin of witchcraft”, Saul then falls into the most serious sin of consulting a witch on the eve of his last battle against the Philistines. Thus he asked the witch of Endor to summon the soul of Samuel from Hades, although he himself had passed laws condemning necromancy. It did him no good: the next day, at Gilboa, he lost the battle and his life...⁹²⁷ “So Saul died,” according to the chronicler, “because of his transgression which he committed against the Lord... by seeking advice from a ghost... Therefore He slew him and gave the kingdom to David...” (I Chronicles 10.13, 14).

The falling away of Saul led directly to the first major schism in the history of the State of Israel. For after Saul's death, the northern tribes (Ephraim, first of all) supported the claim of Saul's surviving son to the throne, while the southern tribes (Judah and Benjamin) supported David. Although David suppressed this rebellion, and although, for David's sake, the Lord did not allow a schism during the reign of his son Solomon, it erupted again and became permanent after Solomon's death...

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David was anointed for the first time at the command of the Lord by the Prophet Samuel when he was still a young man: “Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers and the Spirit of the Lord came upon David from that day forward” (I Samuel 16.13). Immediately after this, it is said that “the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and a distressing spirit from the Lord troubled him” (I Samuel 16.14). For there cannot be two true kings over a kingdom, but the false king or tyrant or usurper will persecute the true one, as Saul persecuted David...

But David had to prove himself as a great warrior and faithful to the will of God over many years in disgrace and in exile before the people finally saw in him God's choice: “Then came all the tribes of Israel to David unto Hebron and spake, saying, Behold, we are thy bone and thy flesh. Also in time past, when Saul was king over us, thou wast he that leddest out and brightest in Israel, and the Lord said to thee, ‘Thou shalt feed My people Israel, and thou shalt be a captain over Israel. So all the elders of Israel came to the king to Hebron before the Lord, and they anointed David king over Israel” (II Samuel 5.1-3).

The greatness of David lay in the fact that he was the first true autocrat, who both closed the political schism that had opened up between north and south, and closed the schism that was just beginning to open up between the sacred and the profane, the Church and the State. Indeed, according to the author of the two books of Chronicles, it was David's solicitude for the Church and her liturgical worship that was the most important fact about him. As Patrick Henry Reardon points out, nineteen chapters are

⁹²⁷ See St. Gregory of Nyssa, *On the Witch of Endor: A Letter to Bishop Theodosius*, translated in *Living Orthodoxy*, #124, vol. XXI, N 4, July-August, 2000, pp. 24-26.

devoted to David, and of these nineteen “the Chronicler allotted no fewer than 11 – over half – to describe the king’s solicitude for Israel’s proper worship (I Chronicles 13; 15-16 and 22-29). This material includes the transfer of the ark of the covenant to Jerusalem, the organization of the priestly and Levitical ministries, preparations for the sacred music, and David’s lengthy instructions to Solomon with respect to the temple.

“According to the Chronicler, David not only made all the arrangements for the consecration of the temple and the organization of the worship (I Chronicles 28.19), he did so by the Lord’s own command (II Chronicles 29.15). Even the musical instruments used in the worship are credited to David (II Chronicles 29.17; cf. Nehemiah 12.36).”⁹²⁸ Thus when the Lord tells David to “feed My people Israel”, this feeding is spiritual as well as material – a responsibility accepted by all later Christian autocrats.

“Like Gideon,” notes Paul Johnson, David “grasped that [Israel] was indeed a theocracy and not a normal state. Hence the king could never be an absolute ruler on the usual oriental pattern. Nor, indeed, could the state, however governed, be absolute either. It was inherent in Israelite law even at this stage that, although everyone had responsibilities and duties to society as a whole, society – or its representative, the king, or the state – could under no circumstances possess unlimited authority over the individual. Only God could do that. The Jews, unlike the Greeks and later the Romans, did not recognize such concepts as city, state, community as abstracts with legal personalities and rights and privileges. You could commit sins against man, and of course against God; and these sins were crimes; but there was no such thing as a crime/sin against the state.

“This raises a central dilemma about Israelite, later Judaic, religion and its relationship with temporal power. The dilemma can be stated quite simply: could the two institutions coexist, without one fatally weakening the other?”⁹²⁹

The reign of David proved that State and Church could not only coexist, but also strengthen each other. In a certain sense, the anointed king in the Israelite kingdom could be said to have had the primacy over the priesthood. Thus David appears to have ordered the building of the temple without any prompting from a priest, and Solomon removed the High Priest Abiathar for political rebellion (I Kings 2.26-27).

Thus there were two spheres, “the king’s matters” and “the Lord’s matters”. If the king ventured to enter “the Lord’s matters”, that is, the sphere of Divine worship in the temple, he would be punished. We see this clearly in the case of King Uzziah, who was punished with leprosy for presuming to burn incense before the Lord... Nevertheless, the king was central to, and pre-eminent in, the life of the nation in a way that even the high priest could not be. Thus Moses was higher than his brother Aaron, even though Aaron was the head of the priesthood; and David was higher than the high-priests Zadok and Ahimelech. The autocrat must not encroach on the

⁹²⁸ Reardon, *Chronicles of History and Worship*, Ben Lomond, Ca.: Conciliar Press, 2006, p. 12.

⁹²⁹ Johnson, *A History of the Jews*, London: Phoenix, 1995, 1998, p. 57.

priesthood – that was the sin of Saul and Uzziah; he cannot carry out the sacramental functions of the priest. But the *organization* of the priesthood is the task of the autocrat. He is a shepherd of souls just as the priest is; for “Thou leddest Thy people as sheep by the hand of Moses [the autocrat] and Aaron [the high priest]” (Psalm 76.20). And he is a teacher of the people, as is the priest; for “I was established as king by Him, upon Sion His holy mountain, proclaiming the commandment of the Lord” (Psalm 2.6). Here we see a foreshadowing of the leading role of the Orthodox autocrats of New Testament times, whose pre-eminence in the life of the nation is commonly mistaken for “caesaopapism”. The autocrat who does not attempt to change the dogmas of the Church or carry out any sacramental functions is not a “caesaropapist”. But he can and must serve as the focus of unity and organizational hub of the whole life of the nation.

The uniqueness of David’s dynasty was that, whatever the sins of its members, it was to be *eternal*, in accordance with God’s promise: “*I have raised up one chosen out of My people. I have found David My servant, with My holy oil have I anointed him... And as for Me, I shall make him higher than the kings of the earth. For ever shall I keep for him My mercy, and My covenant shall be faithful unto him. And I will establish his seed unto ages of ages, and his throne shall be as the days of heaven. If his sons forsake My law, and if they walk not in My judgements, If my statutes they profane and keep not My commandments, I will visit their iniquities with a rod, and their injustices with scourges. But My mercy will I not disperse away from them, nor will I wrong them in My truth. Nor will I profane My covenant, nor the things that proceed from My lips will I make void. Once have I sworn by My holiness that to David I will not lie; his seed for ever shall abide. And his throne shall be as the sun before Me, and as the moon that is established for ever*” (Psalm 88. 18-19, 26-35).

The eternity of David’s dynasty consisted in the fact that the last king of his line would be Jesus Christ, the eternal King and God, Whose Kingdom lasts forever...

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The central act of David’s reign was his conquest of Jerusalem and establishment of the city of David on Zion as the capital and heart of the Israelite kingdom. This was, on the one hand, an important political act, strengthening the centralizing power of the State; for as the last part of the Holy Land to be conquered, Jerusalem did not belong to any of the twelve tribes, which meant that its ruler, David, was elevated above all the tribes, and above all earthly and factional interests. But, on the other hand, it was also an important religious act; for by establishing his capital in Jerusalem, David linked his kingship with the mysterious figure of Melchizedek, both priest and king, who had blessed Abraham at Salem, that is, Jerusalem. Thus David could be seen as following in the footsteps of Abraham in receiving the blessing of the priest-king in his own city.

Moreover, by bringing the Ark of the Covenant, the chief sanctum of the priesthood, to a permanent resting-place in Zion, David showed that the Church and the priesthood would find rest and protection on earth only under the aegis of the Jewish autocracy. As John Bright writes: “The significance of this action cannot be overestimated. It was David’s aim to make Jerusalem the religious as well as the

political capital of the realm. Through the Ark he sought to link the newly created state to Israel's ancient order as its legitimate successor, and to advertise the state as the patron and protector of the sacral institutions of the past. David showed himself far wiser than Saul. Where Saul had neglected the Ark and driven its priesthood from him, David established both Ark and priesthood in the official national shrine."⁹³⁰

The Ark was a symbol of the Church; and it is significant that the birth of the Church, at Pentecost, took place on Zion, beside David's tomb (Acts 2). For David prefigured Christ not only in His role as anointed King of the Jews, Who inherited "the throne of His father David" and made it eternal (Luke 1.32-33), but also as Sender of the Spirit and establisher of the New Testament Church. For just as David brought the wanderings of the Ark to an end by giving it a permanent resting-place in Zion, so Christ sent the Spirit into the upper room in Zion, giving the Church a firm, visible beginning on earth.

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The reigns of David and Solomon are especially important for the history of the people of God for three main reasons.⁹³¹

First, in them the Israelite kingdom attained its greatest strength, subduing its enemies and almost reaching its geographical integrity as that had been promised to Abraham: "from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates" (Genesis 15.18). Secondly, the covenant which the Lord had sworn to the Family Church in the persons of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and to the Pilgrim Church in the persons of Moses and Joshua, He now renewed with the State Church in the persons of David and Solomon. The unconditional element of this covenant - the part which the Lord promised to fulfil whatever happened - was the promise of the Coming of Christ: the Seed seen by Abraham, the Prophet seen by Moses, and now the King seen by David; for "thine house and thy kingdom," He said to David, "shall be established for ever before thee; thy throne shall be established for ever" (II Samuel 7.16; cf. Luke 1.32-33). "Once have I sworn by My holiness: that to David I will not lie; his seed forever shall abide. And his throne shall be as the sun before Me, and as the moon that is established for ever" (Psalms 88. 34-35). And thirdly, the worship of the Old Testament Church reached its maturity and most magnificent development in the building of the Temple and the establishment of all the Temple services. Only this task was not entrusted to David in spite of his great zeal for the worship of God, because he was "a man of blood", having fought many wars, but to his son Solomon, who consecrated the Temple on the feast of Tabernacles, the feast signifying the end of the wanderings of the children of Israel in the desert and the ingathering of the harvest fruits.

⁹³⁰ Bright, *A History of Israel*, London: SCM Press, 1980, pp. 200-201.

⁹³¹ The archaeological remains from David's and Solomon's reigns have been meagre, which has led to a school of "biblical minimalists led by scholars from the University of Copenhagen considering them to be fictitious characters. However, writes Robert Draper, "the credibility of that position was undercut in 1993, when an excavation team in the northern Israel site of Tel Dan dug up a black basalt stela inscribed with the phrase 'House of David'." ("Kings of Controversy", *National Geographic*, December, 2010, p. 79).

The importance of Solomon's Temple as a figure of the New Testament Church can be seen in the many resemblances between the two, from the details of the priests' vestments and the use of the Psalter to the offering of incense and the frescoes on the walls. Even the structure of the Temple building, with its sanctuary, nave and narthex and two aisles, recalls the structure of the Christian basilica. But there is this very important difference, that whereas the nave of the Temple was entered only by the priests, and the sanctuary only by the high-priest once a year, while all the services were conducted in the courtyard, the New Testament Church allows all Christians to enter the Church, inasmuch as they are "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people" (1 Peter 2.9), for whom Christ the Great High-Priest has made "a new and living way" into the holy of holies (Hebrews 10.19-22) - not the earthly sanctuary built by Solomon, but the Kingdom of Heaven.

The consecration of the Temple by Solomon may be seen as the high point of the Old Testament, from which the rest of the Old Testament is a long and uneven, but inexorable fall until the Coming of Christ at its lowest point. The union of the kingship with the priesthood in the only major city of Israel not belonging to any of the tribes - for Jerusalem had been a Jebusite city until David and his men conquered it, - represented that ideal symphony of Church and State which was not to be recovered in its full glory until the Emperor Justinian consecrated the Great Church of the Holy Wisdom (*Hagia Sophia*) in Constantinople over 1500 years later. And when the Jews looked forward to the Messiah-King who was to restore their fortunes and usher in the Kingdom of God on earth, the image they conceived was compounded of the warlike prowess of David and the peaceful splendour of Solomon.

Solomon's Temple was the only place on earth where the true worship of God could be offered; its rites were the only true rites; and its priests were the only true priests. The people had to come to worship in the Temple three times in the years: on the feasts of Pascha, Pentecost and Tabernacles. In this way the unity and uniqueness of the true worship of the one true God was emphasized. At the same time, this unique centre of the one and only true religion was to be open for all, "that all peoples of the earth may know Thy name and fear Thee, as do Thy people Israel" (III Kings 8.43). Only this did not mean any importing of foreign, pagan religions into the purity of the one true faith - a vice that Solomon tragically became addicted to in his later years.

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For in Solomon himself lay the seeds of that corruption which was to bring everything down in ruins. For this lover of wisdom whom God loved was not wise enough to heed the words inscribed in the Mosaic law about what kind of a person a true king of Israel should be: "When thou art come unto the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, and shalt possess it, and shalt dwell therein, and shalt say, I will set a king over me, like as all the nations that are about me; Thou shalt set him as king over thee, whom the Lord thy God shall choose: one from among thy brethren shalt thou set over thee; thou mayest not set a stranger over thee, which is not thy brother. But he shall not multiply horses to himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt, to the end that he should multiply horses: forasmuch as the Lord hath said unto you, Ye shall henceforth return no more that way. Neither shall he multiply wives to himself, that

his heart turn not away; neither shall he greatly multiply to himself silver and gold." (Deuteronomy 17.14-17).

Now Solomon was, of course, a legitimate king, a "brother" and not a "stranger" - that is, a member of the household of the faith. He was a king, moreover, whom God had chosen, giving him the great gift of wisdom. However, he "multiplied horses to himself", many of whom came from Egypt. (Archaeologists have discovered the remains of his huge stables at Megiddo and Hazor.) And he "multiplied wives to himself", many of whom again came from Egypt and "turned his heart away" from the living God to idolatry. Finally, he "multiplied to himself silver and gold" on a vast scale. Thus with uncanny precision did the prophecy pinpoint the weaknesses of Solomon.

It may be objected that David had many of these faults. He, too, had many wives - some, like Solomon's mother Bathsheba, acquired by unlawful means. And by the end of his reign he had amassed fabulous wealth. But David's wives, unlike Solomon's, did not draw him away from the True Faith; and his wealth was not amassed to be spent on his own pleasures, but was handed over *en masse* towards the building of the Temple. And therefore for his sake - here we see the great intercessory power of the saints - God promised that the kingdom would not be divided in the reign of his son (I Kings 11.12).

Whereas David prefigures Christ as the Founder of the Church in Zion, Solomon, through his relationship with foreign rulers in Egypt, Tyre and Sheba, and his expansion of Israel to its greatest geographical extent and splendour, prefigures the Lord's sending out of the apostles into the Gentile world and the expansion of the Church throughout the *oikoumene*. Thus David sang of his son as the type of Him Whom "all the kings of the earth shall worship, and all the nations shall serve" (Psalms 71.11). Moreover, at the very moment of the consecration of the Temple, the wise Solomon prays that foreign worshippers will also have their prayers heard (I Kings 8.41-43), looking forward to that time when the Jewish Temple-worship will be abrogated and the true worship of God will not be concentrated in Jerusalem or any single place, but the true worshippers will worship Him "in spirit and in truth" (John 4. 21-23): "for will God indeed dwell on earth? Behold, the heaven and heaven of heavens cannot contain Thee: how much less this house that I have built" (I Kings 8.27).

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As St. Philaret of Moscow demonstrates, the Israelite Autocracy is a model of God-given government for all nations in all times: "It is in the family that we must seek the beginnings and first model of authority and submission, which are later opened out in the large family which is the State. The father is... the first master... but since the authority of the father was not created by the father himself and was not given to him by the son, but came into being with man from Him Who created man, it is revealed that the deepest source and the highest principle of the first power, and consequently of every later power among men, is in God - the Creator of man. From Him 'every family in heaven and on earth is named' (Ephesians 3.15). Later, when sons of sons

became a people and peoples, and from the family there grew the State, which was too vast for the natural authority of a father, God gave this authority a new artificial image and a new name in the person of the King, and thus by His wisdom kings rule (Proverbs 8.15). In the times of ignorance, when people had forgotten their Creator... God, together with His other mysteries, also presented the mystery of the origin of the powers that be before the eyes of the world, even in a sensory image, in the form of the Hebrew people whom He had chosen for Himself; that is: in the Patriarch Abraham He miraculously renewed the ability to be a father and gradually produced from him a tribe, a people and a kingdom; He Himself guided the patriarchs of this tribe; He Himself raised judges and leaders for this people; He Himself ruled over this kingdom (I Kings 8.7). Finally, He Himself enthroned kings over them, continuing to work miraculous signs over the kings, too. The Highest rules over the kingdom of men and gives it to whom He wills. 'The Kingdom is the Lord's and He Himself is sovereign of the nations' (Psalms 21.29). 'The power of the earth is in the hand of the Lord, and in due time He will set over it one that is profitable' (Sirach 10.4).

"A non-Russian would perhaps ask me now: why do I look on that which was established by God for one people (the Hebrews) and promised to one King (David) as on a general law for Kings and peoples? I would have no difficulty in replying: because the law proceeding from the goodness and wisdom of God is without doubt the perfect law; and why not suggest the perfect law for all? Or are you thinking of inventing a law which would be more perfect than the law proceeding from the goodness and wisdom of God?"

"As heaven is indisputably better than the earth, and the heavenly than the earthly, it is similarly indisputable that the best on earth must be recognized to be that which was built on it in the image of the heavenly, as was said to the God-seer Moses: 'Look thou that thou make them after their pattern, which was showed thee in the mount' (Exodus 25.40). Accordingly God established a King on earth in accordance with the image of His single rule in the heavens; He arranged for an autocratic King on earth in the image of His heavenly omnipotence; and ... He placed an hereditary King on earth in the image of His royal immutability. Let us not go into the sphere of the speculations and controversies in which certain people - who trust in their own wisdom more than others - work on the invention... of better, as they suppose, principles for the transfiguration of human societies... But so far they have not in any place or time created such a quiet and peaceful life... They can shake ancient States, but they cannot create anything firm... They languish under the fatherly and reasonable authority of the King and introduce the blind and cruel power of the mob and the interminable disputes of those who seek power. They deceive people in affirming that they will lead them to liberty; in actual fact they are drawing them from lawful freedom to self-will, so as later to subject them to oppression with full right. Rather than their self-made theorizing they should study the royal truth from the history of the peoples and kingdoms... which was written, not out of human passion, but by the holy prophets of God, that is - from the history of the people of God which was from of old chosen and ruled by God. This history shows that the best and most useful for human societies is done not by people, but by a person, not by many, but by one. Thus: What government gave the Hebrew people statehood and the law? One man - Moses. What government dealt with the conquest of the promised land and the

distribution of the tribes of the Hebrew people on it? One man - Joshua the son of Nun. During the time of the Judges one man saved the whole people from enemies and evils. But since the power was not uninterrupted, but was cut off with the death of each judge, with each cutting off of one-man rule the people descended into chaos, piety diminished, and idol-worship and immorality spread; then there followed woes and enslavement to other peoples. And in explanation of these disorders and woes in the people the sacred chronicler says that 'in those days there was no king in Israel; every man did what was pleasing in his own eyes' (Judges 21.25). Again there appeared one man, Samuel, who was fully empowered by the strength of prayer and the prophetic gift; and the people was protected from enemies, the disorders ceased, and piety triumphed. Then, to establish uninterrupted one-man rule, God established a King in His people. And such kings as David, Joshaphat, Hezekiah and Josiah present images of how successfully an autocratic Majesty can and must serve for the glorification of the Heavenly King in the earthly kingdom of men, and together with that - for the strengthening and preservation of true prosperity in his people... And during the times of the new grace the All-seeing Providence of God deigned to call the one man Constantine, and in Russia the one man Vladimir, who in apostolic manner enlightened their pagan kingdoms with the light of the faith of Christ and thereby established unshakeable foundations for their might. Blessed is that people and State in which, in a single, universal, all-moving focus there stands, as the sun in the universe, a King, who freely limits his unlimited autocracy by the will of the Heavenly King, and by the wisdom that comes from God."⁹³²

*February 10/23, 2020.
Sunday of the Last Judgement.*

⁹³² St. Philaret, in S. Fomin & T. Fomina, *Rossia pered Vtorym Prishestvoiem* (Russia before the Second Coming), Moscow, 1994, vol. I, pp. 320-321.

43. GLOBALIZATION AND THE NEW WORLD ORDER: AN ORTHODOX PERSPECTIVE

“The real victor in 1989,” writes Mark Mazower, “was not democracy but capitalism.”⁹³³ But it was a new kind of capitalism – globalization, which is a communist kind of capitalism. Not that globalization was really new. As Peter Frankopan writes, “We think of globalization as a uniquely modern phenomenon; yet 2000 years ago too, it was a fact of life, one that presented opportunities, created problems and prompted technological advance...”

“Two millennia ago, silks made by hand in China were being worn by the rich and powerful in Carthage and other cities in the Mediterranean, while pottery manufactured in southern France could be found in England and in the Persian Gulf. Spices and condiments grown in India were being used in the kitchens of Xinjiang, as they were in those of Rome. Buildings in northern Afghanistan carried inscriptions in Greek, while horses from Central Asia were being ridden proudly thousands of miles away in the east.”⁹³⁴

What was new after 1989 was the width and depth of the new wave of globalization that had begun in the 1950s under the aegis of America, and became consolidated after the victory of America, the world’s only remaining superpower, in 1989-91, enabling Eastern Europe and other formerly communist regions to take part in its formerly forbidden delights.

During the Cold War, there had been two very different worlds, Capitalism and Communism, and a third world that swayed from one side to the other. By the end of the millennium there was essentially only *one world*, the world of globalization. Even Russia and China became partially globalized: only North Korea and to some extent Iran remained outside the new global civilization.

“I believe,” wrote Thomas L. Friedman, “that if you want to understand the post-Cold War world you have to start by understanding that a new international system has succeeded it – globalization. This is ‘The One Big Thing’ people should focus on. Globalization is not the only thing influencing events in the world today, but to the extent that there is a North Star and a worldwide shaping force, it is this system. What is new is the system. What is old is power politics, chaos, clashing civilizations and liberalism. And what is the drama of the post-Cold War world is the interaction between this new system and these old passions.”⁹³⁵

This was an exaggeration: the old world was by no means dead, neither its “passions” nor its political structures. But there can be no arguing about the importance of globalization. The question is: what is it?

⁹³³ Mazower, *Dark Continent. Europe’s Twentieth Century*, London: Penguin, 1999, p. 405.

⁹³⁴ Frankopan, *The Silk Roads*, London: Bloomsbury, 2016, pp. 12, 25.

⁹³⁵ Friedman, *The Lexus and the Olive Tree*; in M.J. Cohen and John Major, *History in Quotations*, London: Cassell, 2004, p. 944.

Investopedia defines globalization as “the tendency of investment funds and businesses to move beyond domestic and national markets to other markets around the globe, thereby increasing the interconnection of the world. Globalization has had the effect of markedly increasing international trade and cultural exchange.”⁹³⁶ But it has eroded the power of national governments and increased those of multi-national corporations (150 MNCs now control two-thirds of the world economy). If national governments do not cooperate with the MNCs and the globalization process, they risk seeing factories and jobs removed to other, lower-wage-paying countries. This causes unemployment in some industries and therefore social unrest.

Moreover, while *trade* liberalization may provide comparative advantage, especially in a period when tariffs are initially high (as in the post-war period), it is quite another matter with *financial* liberalization. For, as Mazower writes, “the globalization of financial makes it increasingly difficult for nation-states to preserve autonomy of action, yet markets – as a series of panics and crashes demonstrates – generate their own irrationalities and social tensions. The globalization of labour, too, challenges prevailing definitions of national citizenship, culture and tradition.”⁹³⁷

While true globalists welcome these tensions and disruptions as creating the perceived need for a world government, the shorter-term consequences are undoubtedly bad. Thus Dani Rodrik writes in 2018: “Perhaps the hyper-globalisers’ most egregious mistake after the 1990s was to promote financial globalization. They took the textbook argument and ran amok with it. Free flow of finance across the world would, it was confidently predicted, set money to work where it could do most good. With free-flowing capital, savings would be automatically channeled to countries with higher returns; with access to the world markets, economies and entrepreneurs would have access to more dependable finance; and, ordinary individual savers would benefit, too, as they’d no longer be compelled to put all their nest eggs in one national basket.

“These gains, by and large, simply never materialized; sometimes, the effect was the opposite of what was promised. China became an exporter of capital, rather than an importer of it, which is what the theory implied young and poor countries should be. Loosening the chains of finance produced a string of extremely costly financial crises, including that in East Asia in 1997. There is, at best, a weak correlation between opening up to foreign finance and economic growth. But there is a strong empirical association between financial globalization and financial crises over time, as there have been since the 19th century, when freely moving international capital would flow with gusto into the Argentinian railways or some far-flung corner of the British Empire one minute, only to flee away from it the next.

“Modern financial globalization went furthest in the Eurozone. Monetary unification aimed at complete financial integration, by removing all transaction costs associated with national borders. The introduction of the euro in 1999 did indeed drive down risk premiums in countries such as Greece, Spain, and Portugal, as borrowing

⁹³⁶ <http://www.investopedia.com/terms/g/globalization.asp#ixzz4ZuLDrfAT>.

⁹³⁷ Mazower, *op. cit.*, p. 405.

costs converged. But what was the effect? To enable borrowers to run large current account deficits, and accumulate problematic amounts of external debt. Money flowed into those parts of the debtor economies that couldn't be traded across borders – above all, construction – at the expense of tradable activities. Credit booms eventually turned into the inevitable busts, and sustained slumps in Greece, Spain, Portugal and Ireland followed amid the global credit crunch.

“Today, the economics profession's view on financial globalization is ambivalent at best. It is well understood that market and government failures – asymmetric information, bank runs, excess volatility, inadequate regulation – are endemic to the financial markets. Globalisation often accentuates these failures. Indeed, in the 1997 East Asian crisis those economies that kept more control of foreign capital survived with less damage. In sum, unconditional openness to foreign finance is hardly ever a good idea...”⁹³⁸

Globalization, then, has both pros and cons... Samuel Huntingdon made an important distinction between two different things that were becoming global: modernization and westernization.⁹³⁹ Globalization in the sense of the modernization and integration of the whole world is not evil in itself. It could even work to the furtherance of the good - and not only economic good - in certain circumstances. If, for example, the True Faith could be preached globally, using global means of communication, as it was in the time of the apostles. Thus would the Lord's prophecy be fulfilled: “This Gospel of the Kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come” (Matthew 24.14). What is evil is the globalization of *westernization*, the spreading of the apostate culture of the western world.⁹⁴⁰

It is easy to see that a global republic or kingdom would have no place in it for Orthodoxy except as a kind of cultural museum, an exhibition of East European folklore, and could very quickly turn the propaganda of freedom into the reality of a tyranny that could be worse than any that has gone before it.

Opinions on globalization are thus sharply divided. Indeed, the debate between the globalists and anti-globalists is probably the sharpest debate in the contemporary world. Christians tend to believe that since the Tower of Babel, different languages and nations have been created by God to *slow down* the spread of evil, and as refuges against it; but for atheist globalists individual, sovereign nations *are* the evil.

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Globalization leads logically to the demand for a world government that will regulate the process of globalization, facilitating it and removing the supposed obstacles to the prosperity of the global community, such as global warming or the spread of pandemics or over-population.

⁹³⁸ Rorik, “The Great Globalisation Lie”, *Prospect*, January, 2018, p. 33.

⁹³⁹ Huntingdon, *The Clash of Civilizations*, London: Touchstone, 1996.

⁹⁴⁰ Bandar bin Sultan: “We Saudis want to modernize, but not necessarily westernize”, *New York Times*, July 10, 1994.

There is no longer any secret about the fact that many of the world's richest and most powerful men are working towards a world government. This was being spoken about openly already by Bush and Gorbachev at the end of the Cold War; they saw it as a natural product of the new international situation brought about by perestroika and the end of the Cold War. Bush went further, using what for many was a code word for something more sinister: "the new world order". For Bush this appeared to refer to the rule of international law administered by the United Nations in close cooperation with the United States as the world's only surviving superpower and executed most successfully by the international alliance assembled for Operation Desert Storm against Saddam Hussein. It was based on several presuppositions that were fulfilled, briefly, under Bush senior, but not fulfilled under his son, Bush junior. These included:

1. The willingness of the non-democratic members of the Security Council – Russia and China – to cooperate with the consensus of the other nations and not apply their vetoes. As time passed, this willingness disappeared. By 2003 even western members of the Council, such as France, refused to cooperate.
2. The willingness of the United States never to take the initiative in overseas military operations without the agreement of the United Nations. This disappeared under Bush junior, whose neo-con government was openly contemptuous of the United Nations.
3. The willingness of the United States to act solely in the interests of "the international community", and of the populations of those countries subject to invasion, and not in order to promote its own interests, political, military or economic. This was not the case in 2003, when the interests of the Iraqi people as a whole were scarcely considered, while the interests of American big corporations, such as Halliburton, played a major role.
4. The willingness of the United States not to obey the wishes of the Israelis unconditionally. Thus Bush senior "enraged the Israel lobby during the Gulf war by pressuring Israel not to respond to Iraq's missile attacks, choosing not to occupy Baghdad and promising America's Arab allies that the US would push Israel on the Palestinian issue."⁹⁴¹

President Bush's reference to a "new world order" was rich in connotations for conspiracy theorists, who have seen in this phrase the code-name for an age-old conspiracy at world domination, going back to Weishaupt's *Illuminati* of the late eighteenth century.

Thus Mike Hanson writes: "Many believe that a powerful group of Illuminati Freemasons manipulated and won the War of Independence in 1776 and then took control of the new United States of America. They believe that this Secret Brotherhood has never conceded that control to this day. It is interesting to note the design for the Great Seal of the United States, which contains magical symbols dating to ancient Egypt and beyond, including the pyramid and all-seeing eye of Horus. Above and below this symbol are two Latin phrases, *Annuit Coeptis* and *Novus Ordo Seclorum*.

⁹⁴¹ Michael Lind, "The Israel Lobby", *Prospect*, April, 2002, p. 24.

These translate as ‘Announcing the birth, creation, or arrival’ of ‘A Secular [*Non-Religious*] New Order of Ages’. In other words, they were announcing the creation of the New World Order.

“The founding of the United States was a massive step in the plan for centralized global power. Today, this part of the Great Seal can be found on the back of every US dollar bill, which seems appropriate, given that the Secret Brotherhood controls the American economy. The decision to put the Pyramid and *Novus Ordo Seclorum* symbol on the dollar was made by the 33rd degree Freemason, Franklin D. Roosevelt, in 1935, with the full support and encouragement of his vice president, Henry Wallace, another 33rd degree Mason. The American flag was also designed to reflect Brotherhood symbolism, and the Statue of Liberty [representing Isis] was given to American Freemasons by a French Grand Orient (Illuminati) Masonic Order.

“Today, the Secret Brotherhood’s conspiratorial network includes the mysterious Bilderberg Group; Yale University’s prestigious Skull & Bones Society, the clandestine Black Lodges of Freemasonry, and the secretive Knights of Malta. Its diabolical influence reaches into the corridors of power at the White House, the CIA, the Federal Reserve, even the Vatican...”⁹⁴²

“According to Neil Wilgus in *The Illuminati*, George Washington had read [John Robinson’s] *Proofs [Proofs of a Conspiracy against All the Religions and Governments of Europe, carried out in the Secret Meetings of the Free Masons, Illuminati, and Reading Societies]* and felt that the allegations contained therein deserved further investigation. Washington’s own correspondence with fellow Masons clearly indicates that he was well aware of subversive forces at work within rival branches of masonic lodges in Europe, and expressed concern that the curse had spread to American lodges. Wilgus also writes that Thomas Jefferson was at least somewhat familiar with Weishaupt’s works and felt an admiration for him. It appears Jefferson disagreed with Washington’s point of view that the Illuminati had infiltrated American Freemasonry; Jefferson believed that such a thing could no possibly happen in America, since our freedom of speech would have made secrecy unnecessary. Obviously, Jefferson was either a member of the secret brotherhood, or else he was just painfully misguided in this belief, for the Illuminati continues to secretly guide American foreign and domestic policy to this very day...”⁹⁴³

Hanson’s argument is not convincing. It is highly unlikely that the Illuminati were numerous enough to engineer any revolution as early as 1776 and as far away as America... Moreover, there is no evidence for any continuity between the eighteenth-century Illuminati and any twentieth-century American government. Certainly, some American presidents, such as Franklin Roosevelt and Harry Truman, were high-ranking Masons, and Roosevelt may have influenced or even decreed the introduction of the Masonic symbols on the American dollar bill, including the inscription *Novus Ordo Seclorum*. And they may have identified this New World Order with the universal triumph of the American foreign policy aims of democracy, free trade and

⁹⁴² Hanson, *Bohemian Grove: Cult of Conspiracy*, Austin, Texas: RiverCrest Publishing, 2012, p. 44.

⁹⁴³ Hanson, *op. cit.*, p. 63.

universal human rights. But there was no secrecy or conspiracy about these aims: they were openly proclaimed from Woodrow Wilson in 1919 to George H. W. Bush in 1991. Conspiracy implies a certain malevolence that needs to be hidden from public view; and such a conspiracy in the highest reaches of American power in that period has yet to be demonstrated.

But this is not to say that some other organization, not directly descended from the *Illuminati*, and not necessarily governmental, but having essentially the same conspiratorial aims, may not exist. For conspiracies *do* exist; and it would be foolish to deny that there may be other non-governmental organizations or global cabals with serious dreams of world domination. The Rothschilds and the Rockefellers are astonishingly rich, as are other famous globalists such as Bill Gates and George Soros; and at the time of writing (2020) these men, all globalists, between them control a large number of the world's most powerful institutions.⁹⁴⁴

One of these institutions is the highly secretive Bilderbergers, founded by a Rothschild ally, Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands. In June, 1991, at the Bilderberger meeting in Baden-Baden, Germany, David Rockefeller said: "We are grateful to the *Washington Post*, the *New York Times*, *Time Magazine* and other great publications whose directors have attended our meetings and respected their promises of discretion for almost forty years. It would have been impossible for us to develop our plan for the world if we had been subjected to the lights of publicity during those years. But, the world is [now] more sophisticated and prepared to march towards a world government. The supranational sovereignty of an intellectual elite and world bankers is surely preferable to the national autodetermination practiced in past centuries."⁹⁴⁵ This was proof – by a man who should have known – that there did indeed exist a powerful plutocracy, “an intellectual elite and world bankers” striving to create a world government that would be at the expense of “national autodetermination”, that is, the sovereignty of individual national states. From Rockefeller's remarks, we can see that this plan for a world government had been in the making for nearly sixty-five years, that is, since the early 1950s. (It should be remembered that the plot of land in New York where the United Nations building was built was bought from the Rockefeller family.) We also see from his remarks that the promise of secrecy which the Bilderbergers had felt to be necessary in the early 1950s was now no longer believed to be so pressing at the time of Rockefeller's speech – presumably because that year, 1991, the year of the West's seemingly final victory in the Cold War, seemed to betoken “the End of History” and the final triumph of that system of political and economic governance – liberal democracy and the free market – which the Bilderbergers knew well how to manipulate. Again, at the Bilderberger meeting in May, 1992 Henry Kissinger said: "Today Americans would be outraged if U.N. troops entered Los Angeles to restore order; tomorrow they will be grateful! This is especially true if they were told there was an outside threat from beyond, whether real or promulgated, that threatened our very existence. It is then that all peoples of the world will pledge with

⁹⁴⁴ See the March, 2020 youtube film, “The Fall of the Cabal”, <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL18vrD9EPjAC7cQGB9flzJcziJg4xwZkT>

⁹⁴⁵ See also N. Rockefeller's speech in 1962: <http://streitcouncil.org/uploads/PDF/F&U-%201962-%20May-%20Rockefeller-%20federalism%20and%20free%20world%20order.pdf>.

world leaders to deliver them from this evil. The one thing every man fears is the unknown. When presented with this scenario, individual rights will be willingly relinquished for the guarantee of their well being granted to them by their world government."

President George H.W. Bush saw in a revamped United Nations the core of global unity: "I see a world of open borders, open trade and, most importantly, open minds; a world that celebrates the common heritage that belongs to all the world's people.... I see a world building on the emerging new model of European unity. ... The United Nations is the place to build international support and consensus for meeting the other challenges we face... the threats to the environment, terrorism... international drug trafficking... refugees.... We must join together in a new compact -- all of us -- to bring the United Nations into the 21st century."

The Americans under Truman had created the United Nations in 1945, so it was logical for Truman's successor to want to relaunch it in 1991.

However, all confederations of sovereign or quasi-sovereign states are extremely difficult to hold together, as the history of the last days of the Soviet Union and of Yugoslavia - and probably, in our generation, of the European Union after the departure of Britain - clearly shows. Moreover, the freer and more democratic the members of the confederation are, the more difficult it becomes to achieve consensus, and the greater the temptation to turn these free confederations into less free, more despotic federations. In the case of today's "international community", the difficulties are multiplied many times, while the temptation to form a world government that will *impose* its will on all the nations of the world - through technological means and/or technological created crises, such as the coronavirus - increases proportionately. Unless such a world government can be guaranteed to follow Christian rather than secular and atheist principles, it is likely that it will become the most despotic state in history. Hence we can see how the victory of even the most enlightened democracy can easily lead to the victory of the most evil and totalitarian despotism - the despotism of the Antichrist himself...

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We have seen how world leaders were already receptive of the argument for a world government in 1989-92. Let us now turn to the argument put forward by the Israeli philosopher Yuval Noah Harari, who writes: "Since around 200 BC, most humans have lived in empires. It seems likely that in the future, too, most humans will live in one. But this time the empire will be truly global. The imperial vision of dominion over the entire world could be imminent.

"As the twenty-first century unfolds, nationalism is fast losing ground. More and more people believe that all of humankind is the legitimate source of political authority, rather than the members of a particular nationality, and that safeguarding human rights and protecting the interests of the entire human species should be the guiding light of politics. If so, having close to 200 independent states is a hindrance

rather than a help. Since Swedes, Indonesians and Nigerians deserve the same human rights, wouldn't it be simpler for a single global government to safeguard them?

"The appearance of essentially global problems, such as melting ice caps, nibbles away at whatever legitimacy remains to the independent nation states. No sovereign state will be able to overcome global warming on its own. The Chinese Mandate of Heaven was given by Heaven to solve the problems of mankind. The modern Mandate of Heaven will be given to humankind to solve the problems of heaven, such as the hole in the ozone layer and the accumulation of greenhouse gases. The colour of the global empire may well be green.

"As of 2014, the world is still politically fragmented, but states are fast losing their independence. Not one of them is really able to execute independent economic policies, to declare and wage wars as it pleases, or even to run its own internal affairs as it sees fit. States are increasingly open to the machinations of global markets, to the interference of global companies and NGOs, and to the supervision of global public opinion and the international judicial system. States are obliged to conform to global standards of financial behavior, environmental policy and justice. Immensely powerful currents of capital, labour and information turn and shape the world, with a growing disregard for the borders and opinions of states.

"The global empire being forged before our eyes is not governed by any particular state or ethnic group. Much like the Late Roman Empire, it is ruled by a multi-ethnic elite, and is held together by a common culture and common interests. Throughout the world, more and more entrepreneurs, engineers, experts, scholars, lawyers and managers are called to join the empire. They must ponder whether to answer the imperial call or to remain loyal to their state and people. More and more choose the empire..."⁹⁴⁶

"The empire" ... Yes indeed; for one thing is clear: a world government or empire is highly unlikely to be democratic, however much lipservice may be paid to democracy. And if it is not democratic, then it will be despotic. This is the whole pathos of the position of the Brexiteers who led Britain out of the European Union in January, 2020. Although most of the arguments have been about economics, the true Brexiteers, as the historian Niall Ferguson, a former "Remainer", has ruefully come to recognize, are quite prepared for their country to take a "hit" in terms of economics so long as it retains true sovereignty, that is, real independence from the European Commission, that is, the despotic Politburo of the European Union. However, the "Remainers" retort that this is not so, that the admitted "democratic deficit" is being overcome, that the European parliament is – or, at any rate one day will be – the real sovereign power in Europe and the true expression of the democratic will of the European peoples.

The argument between globalists and anti-globalists in Europe is a vitally important one, which neither side can afford to lose. For the European Union is seen by many as a kind of microcosm of world government, and the acid test of its real feasibility. For if, it is argued, globalism can triumph on the European continent,

⁹⁴⁶ Harari, *Sapiens. A Brief History of Humankind*, London: Vintage, 2011, pp. 231-232.

which is a kaleidoscope of so many different languages, cultures and historical traditions whose lack of unity has engendered so many of the most destructive wars in human history, then it can triumph anywhere and everywhere. If, on the other hand, even such a modern country as Britain, which has been historically at the forefront of almost every modernist wave in politics, economics and culture, succeeds in her bid for freedom, then she will become a beacon for the so-called “populists” or anti-globalists everywhere. Moreover, it is argued, Europe *must* hold off the British challenge insofar as Europe is the original homeland of democracy, claims to promote democracy as one of its core values, and admits only democracies among its member-states (that is, democracies prepared to surrender their freedom to the new despotism).

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Globalism is certainly the main trend in geopolitics. But whether globalism is truly irresistible is another matter...

Martin Wolf points out that “globalization is not destined, it is chosen. It is a choice made to enhance a nation’s economic well being – indeed, experience suggests that the opening of trade and of most capital flows enriches most countries.”⁹⁴⁷ But if globalization is freely chosen, it can also be freely rejected. Suppose a nation decides to put other values above economic well-being? Is it free to do so? If the will of the people is strong enough to endure relative poverty, it is free, and it will retain its freedom so long as certain critical instruments – for example, control of its own currency and taxation and borders – remain within its power. But once it gives these up to a supra-national union, it loses that freedom.

Suppose a nation decides to put its religion above all, seeing it as threatened by the global religion of ecumenism or the various New Age cults that accompany it? This is what Putin’s Russia claims to be doing. It openly rejects western liberalism and LGBT-ism, is planning (with China and Iran) to introduce a new reserve currency to replace the dollar, and wants to create a Eurasian space to rival and eventually replace America’s global sphere of influence.

However, as more and more people both inside and outside of Russia are coming to realize, Putin’s plans are unrealistic and not succeeding. First, as Stephen Kotkin points out, while Putin may be dreaming of a Eurasian sphere of influence, it is China that is actually creating it; meanwhile, Russia becomes weaker and weaker by comparison with China and more dependent on it. Secondly, while opposing the global new order, Putin still wants to be part of it for the simple reason that he and his criminal Mafiosi colleagues depend on participation in it to make the huge ill-gotten gains they are now addicted to. Thirdly, in the moral-religious sphere Putin’s Russia is displaying gigantic hypocrisy. What is the use of opposing LGBT if most of your bishops are homosexuals? Or of denigrating western religions by comparison with Orthodoxy if you still belong to the World Council of Churches and the ecumenical movement, and hob-nob with the leaders of all the world’s false religions?

⁹⁴⁷ Wolf, “Will the Nation-State Survive Globalization?” *Foreign Affairs*, January/February, 2001, p. 182.

In principle, the attempt to escape the globalistic new world order is not only praiseworthy for an Orthodox nation but *absolutely necessary* if its people are to achieve salvation. However, for such an attempt to succeed, which is possible only with God's help, it is necessary that the confession of the nation and its leaders must be *truly Orthodox*, which it certainly is not now. Moreover, the Russian nation and Church must be prepared to undergo considerable material losses and deprivation; for economic autarchy, like political autocracy, comes at a price. Such a transformation - in effect, a second Russian revolution - is possible. With God all things are possible...

September 11/24, 2020.

44. THE RESTORATION OF THE AUTOCRACY

Thinkers and theologians of the Russian Church Abroad, such as Archbishop Theophan of Poltava, his disciple Archbishop Averky of Syracuse and Archimandrite Cyril Zaitsev, frequently expressed the thought that if Holy Russia were not resurrected then the Antichrist and the end of the world was near. But the resurrection of Russia, in their eyes, was inconceivable without *the restoration of the autocracy*, or the Orthodox tsardom in its traditional, pre-revolutionary form – that is, unpolluted by despotism, democratism or constitutionalism. So powerful was this faith and hope that the restoration of the autocracy not only became the main theme of the first All-Diaspora Council at Karlovtsy in 1921, but an important element in the 1981 canonization of the Holy New Martyrs and Confessors of Russia, with the Tsar-Martyr Nicholas at their head, and entered into the liturgical service to the Royal New Martyrs. Thus in that service we read: “According to the multitude of Thy compassions and Thine ineffable mercy cleanse the Orthodox land of the godless foe, raise up, O Compassionate One, Thine anointed tsar...” (Mattins canon, canticle eight, troparion). And again: “That He restore the throne of Orthodox kings and grant the remission of sins...” (Prayer to the Holy Martyred Tsar Nicholas).

And yet, since the fall of the Russian Church Abroad in 2007, and even before that, this theme was heard less and less. The prophecies of the saints concerning the return of the autocracy were quietly dropped as if they were no more than a comforting myth; and it was categorically asserted that the resurrection of Holy Russia cannot take place without the repentance of the people (which is true enough) and that such a repentance will not take place (how do they know?). In the opinion of the present writer, this loss of faith and hope in the restoration of the autocracy is the main cause of the fall of ROCOR into the arms of apostate World Orthodoxy and the consequent splintering of Russian True Orthodoxy that is such a lamentable feature of the present condition of the Orthodox Church.

However, if we are to return to a living faith in the restoration of the autocracy, so that we can pray the service to the Royal New Martyrs with conviction and genuine hope of our prayers being fulfilled, we must understand *what the autocracy is*. But this is not a simple matter in that outside Russian Orthodoxy the teaching on the autocracy seems to have been completely forgotten, while even within Russian Orthodoxy it is little understood. A short exposition of that teaching is the purpose of this article.

Archbishop Tikhon of Omsk, first hierarch of the Russian True Orthodox Church, writes: “The Biblical teaching about sovereigns, about kings remains unchanged in our time. The king is the soul of the nation. The monarch is the banner of his people. The monarch is the one who is the father to all classes of society. We are not talking about the Western monarchy, much less the Eastern despotism, but about the Orthodox Autocracy of the Byzantine or Russian model. A monarch is one who, like a father, rising above all estates and having received from the Lord God the gift of the Holy Spirit to govern the country, guided by the eternal and unchanging moral law of love and righteousness, the Gospel commandments, is personally accountable to the King of Kings and Lord of Lords for the leadership of the country. A monarch is one who, becoming an object of the people’s love, unites the entire people, so that he

himself and his loyal subjects are a single organism, animated by the grace of the Holy Spirit. Through the person of the monarch, the Orthodox Tsar, God's grace flows abundantly and overshadows all state institutions and offices, creating in the hearts of loyal subjects a special dispensation, about which the Righteous Seraphim of Sarov used to say: 'After the love of the Lord God, the fulfilment of the commandment of love for one's neighbour is above all the duty of the loyal subject to his Sovereign. The anointed of God is the neighbour in whose service a Christian learns to serve the King of Heaven.'"⁹⁴⁸

This is a good short exposition of the Orthodox Church's teaching on the autocracy. However, since there are those who consider that there is *no* "Biblical teaching about sovereigns", let us look more closely at what the Bible actually says...

The first Biblical autocrats were, of course, the Israelite Kings Saul and David. But before the land of Israel had been conquered by the people of God, and while they were still wandering in the desert beyond Jordan, the Lord had already told the people through the Prophet and God-Seer Moses what were the criteria of true kingship: "When thou shalt come unto the land which the Lord thy God shall choose, and shalt possess it, and shalt dwell therein, and shalt say, 'I will set a king over me, like as all the nations that are about me', thou shalt surely set a king over thee whom the Lord thy God shall choose: one from among thy brethren shalt thou set king over thee: thou mayest not set a stranger over thee, which is not thy brother... And it shall be, when he sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write him a copy of this law in a book out of that which is before the priests, the Levites. And it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life: that he may learn to fear the Lord his God, to keep all the words of this law and these statutes, to do them: that his heart be not lifted up above his brethren, and that he turn not aside from the commandment, to the right hand, or to the left: to the end that he may prolong his days in his kingdom, he, and his children, in the midst of Israel" (Deuteronomy 17.14-15,18-20).

Thus God blessed the institution of the monarchy, but stipulated three conditions if His blessing was to remain on it. First, the people must itself desire to have a king placed over it. Secondly, the king must be someone "whom the Lord thy God shall choose"; a true king is chosen by God, not by man. Such a man will always be a "brother", that is a member of the People of God, of the Church: if he is not, then God has not chosen him. Thirdly, he will govern in accordance with the Law of God, which he will strive to fulfil in all its parts.

The first Israelite king, Saul, satisfied these criteria at first. So he was anointed by the Prophet Samuel at God's command. Later, however, he sinned in two important ways: first, *he interfered in the priesthood of the Church*, as represented by Samuel, and began a service without him; and secondly, *he heeded the voice of the people* rather than the voice of God in the matter of how to deal with Agag and the Amalekites. So God withdrew His blessing, and Samuel was ordered to anoint David in his stead.

⁹⁴⁸ Sermon on the Feast of the Holy Royal Martyrs, July 4/17, 2021, Omsk.

However, it should be noted what God did *not* do in relation to the apostate Saul. He did *not* order the people to rebel against him. For Saul was no longer a king appointed by God, but he was a king (of the despotic, pagan kind frequently found in the Middle East), and as the Lord said of the pagan kings of Rome, whom He recognized as legitimate (but not of course Orthodox) rulers: “Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s” (Matthew 22.21).

It may be argued that David was no less of a sinner than Saul insofar as he committed the sins of murder and adultery. This is true, but first of all, he repented of his sins in an exemplary manner, and never contested the true faith or morality revealed by God to His holy prophets. And secondly, his sins did not undermine the very nature of the kingship, as Saul’s did; for despotism, and the overruling of the Church by the State in its own domain (which western scholars call Erastianism or caesaropapism), distort the true relationship of God to His anointed kings; in fact, they encroach on God’s own kingship and sovereignty over His people.

This enables us to understand the phenomenon of bad, tyrannical Orthodox kings that has so scandalized many that they have rejected the institution itself. The best-known examples are perhaps the Russian tsars Ivan the Terrible and Peter the Great who not only killed and tortured many Orthodox Christians unjustly but also lorded it over the Church herself, even introducing blasphemous rites and parodies. In both cases the Church acted with pusillanimity, although there were pious and courageous exceptions, such as Saints Philip of Moscow and Mitrophan of Voronezh. And yet in neither case did the people of God rebel against their sovereign, treating him as Caesar to whom the things of Caesar should be given. Unfortunately, they also gave him some of the things of God, which is why, after the deaths of these tyrants, the people of Russia suffered perhaps the deepest nadirs in their history: the Time of Troubles in the early seventeenth century and the “Babylonian captivity” to heretical western culture in the later eighteenth century (and beyond).

However, at the beginning of the twentieth century the people did rebel – with catastrophic consequences. Tsar Nicholas II was one of the finest Orthodox kings who have ever ascended the throne of an Orthodox state – Blessed Pasha of Sarov called him “the greatest of the Orthodox tsars”. And yet the people, having patiently endured Ivan the Terrible and Peter the Great, rose up against this most merciful of kings who both raised Russia to the height of power and glory and considerably increased the material prosperity of the people, not to speak of his benevolence to the Church and support of Orthodoxy both within the empire and beyond it.

The wrath of God on the Russian people was ferocious. The land was delivered to unspeakable torments at the hands of the most evil regime in the history of mankind, Soviet power. This power could neither be called Orthodox (of course) nor even Caesar, that is, a legitimate authority, in any meaningful sense, insofar as the Bolshevik “authority” undermined all other authorities except its own. For if a God-established authority, to which obedience is due, is defined by St. Paul as “not a terror to good works, but to evil” (Romans 13.3), then Soviet power was the exact opposite. Understanding this, the Russian Orthodox Church anathematized it, and forbade the Orthodox people to obey these “outcasts of mankind” “in any way whatsoever”.

Unfortunately, the Russian people in their great majority disobeyed this command, with the exception of those heroic individuals, numbering in the hundreds of thousands, whom we call the Holy New Martyrs and Confessors of Russia. Even after Soviet power fell in 1991, there was a return, perhaps, to rule by Caesar, but not to a restoration of “the throne of the Orthodox kings”. The question is: why?

In order to answer that question we must return to Moses’ three criteria for true kingship, and turn them, as it were, from the criteria of who can be a true king to the criteria of who is worthy of being the subject of a true king.

The first criterion was: the people must itself desire to have a king placed over it. Do the Russian people desire a truly Orthodox tsar? As long as they are content with Putin, who sees himself as the successor of the Soviet commissars, then this is extremely doubtful. However, Putin’s popularity is falling sharply. Even if the numbers of those who want a true king, and really understand what that is, remain small, God may at some point turn his wrath to mercy. After all, in the time of St. Constantine the Great, only about 5-10% of the population of the Russian empire were Christian and therefore wanted a Christian king. For most of the period of the Time of Troubles, the Russian people did not want a true king, but imposters and usurpers. But they came to their senses. And the Russians can come to theirs.

The second criterion is: the king must be someone “whom the Lord thy God shall choose”, a true king is chosen by God, not by man, who will be a “brother”, that is a member of the People of God, of the Church: if he is not, then God has not chosen him. At the moment such a man is hard to find, and he certainly has not been declared by God yet. However, if the people really want such a man, and are prepared to submit to God’s choice, and not their own – in other words, if they cease to have democratic pretensions to choose their own ruler – then again God may turn His wrath into mercy. However, God’s choice is not always easy to discern. Michael Romanov was not an obvious choice. Again,: Saul was a very tall man, a warrior king, while David was young, a simple shepherd and smaller than any of his brothers. But Samuel chose David over his brothers; for he saw that David was a man after God’s own heart...

The third criterion is related to the second: the king must govern in accordance with the Law of God, which he will strive to fulfil in all its parts. In other words, he must work together with the Church, “the pillar and ground of the truth” (I Timothy 3.15), in a symphonic partnership which is the mark of all truly Orthodox kingdoms. The problem is that in Russia today the True Church is scarcely visible, while in its place there is the “Soviet church” of the Moscow Patriarchate, deeply heretical and corrupt and completely compromised by its being created, not by God, but by Soviet power, in order to serve the will, not of God, but of Stalin and of Stalin’s successors, of whom the present one is Vladimir Putin. The Russian people must shake off the yoke of this anti-church if it does not want to find itself forever the slave of an anti-tsar. May this liberation come to pass! Let us never lose faith that it will!...

July 8/21, 2021.

Kazan Icon of the Most Holy Mother of God.

