

**ESSAYS IN TRUE ORTHODOX CHRISTIANITY -**  
**VOLUME 9 (2021)**

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## 1. ON THE VACCINE, OR: ON OBEDIENCE TO THE AUTHORITIES

Fr. Thomas Marretta (GOC-K) has published on his website a sermon for St. Demetrius' day entitled "An Account of the Passion of the Holy Great Martyr, and About Our Sacred Duty of Obeying the Civil Authorities". We have no problem with the general principles expounded in this sermon. But we have serious misgivings about the way in which he appears to be applying these principles.

By comparison with the persecutors of pagan Rome, says Fr. Thomas, "most of our contemporary American politicians would seem to be paragons of uprightness. Yet, Saint Demetrius and the other early Christians submitted to the authority of such rulers and obeyed it, except when these men were specifically commanding something that indubitably contravened incontrovertible principles of faith. This is difficult to comprehend for many modern-day Christians, whose inclinations tend more to suspicions and insubordination, not to say fantastical political theories than to the devout spirit of subordination, cooperation, respect, and obedience. Yet the early Christians were acting precisely in accordance with the teaching of the Scriptures here, the Scriptures of both the Old and the New Testaments."

This would have been an appropriate response at any time from the end of the Second World War to approximately the end of the Cold War in 1991. Then, whatever the defects of the American government, it usually - not always, but usually - carried out the function and criterion of legitimate government, which is, in St. Paul's phrase, to be "a terror not to good works, but to evil", being "a minister of God for good" (Romans 13.3-4). And there were many Orthodox Christians "whose inclinations were more to suspicions and insubordination, not to say fantastical political theories" than to devout obedience to the authorities. Some even considered the Soviets to be better than the Americans, which is inexcusable if we consider how many millions of Orthodox Christians were murdered by the communists, and that the Bolsheviks were the only rulers in history to be directly anathematized by the Church. Few were those who followed the example of the Holy Synod of the Russian Church Abroad who openly supported the Americans in the Vietnam War.

However, the situation has subtly but significantly changed since the end of the Cold War, and especially in the last decade. Until recently, one could abhor the vices of western life, but was under no strong pressure to take part in them oneself. One didn't have to abort one's babies, or practice or approve of homosexuality. But then came the LGBT revolution. Gradually more and more people in more and more professions had to pay lip-service to the new gospel of transgenderism. You MUST agree that such-and-such a man is actually a woman, or else... Madness is rapidly becoming compulsory. And yet we are not being tortured to confess the ruling madness: we can still be fools-for-Christ if we want to.

However, the Covid-19 crisis has raised the stakes. There are now certain things that almost everybody is being forced to do, or will very shortly be forced to do - or else... One of those things is not attend church on Sundays. In many parts of the west

during 2020, people were being forced to transgress the commandment: “Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy” (Exodus 20.8), which the Church has always understood to mean that we must attend communal worship in church on Sundays and feastdays. (There is a canon decreeing that if anyone who does not attend Sunday services for three weeks consecutively is excommunicated.) Still more recently and more seriously, everybody is being encouraged to take a mRNA vaccine which involves a change in his DNA – that is, the code encapsulating the essence of his psycho-physical nature. In other words, they are being encouraged to practice gene therapy (if “therapy” is the right word) on themselves.

There are some indications in some places that the pressure on people to comply with these measures is weakening. In Britain, for example, while the lockdown and quarantine measures are stricter than ever, worship in church appears to be allowed under certain conditions. Again, increasing numbers of people, even in the medical services, are refusing to take the vaccine – and so far they have not been punished for it. But this may be a lull before the storm. There is absolutely no guarantee that disobeying the law in these matters will not entail more serious repression in the not-so-distant future.

The question is: are Orthodox Christians required to go to church, and refuse mRNA vaccination, whatever the law says and whatever punishment they may incur, or, as Fr. Thomas seems to be implying, is this all hysteria contrary to “the devout spirit of subordination, cooperation, respect, and obedience” that is expected of Orthodox Christians in relation to the secular authorities?...

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Let us take a step backwards and consider where we are in Church history. In 1917 “he who restrains” the coming of the Antichrist, the Orthodox Christian emperor, was removed, and we entered the last times. Almost immediately – and almost a year before the “Red Terror” began – the antichristian Soviet power was anathematized, and the holy Patriarch ordered over 100 million Orthodox Christians *not to obey it in any way whatsoever*. Now Soviet power has fallen, and yet there has been no significant revival of Orthodox Christianity or Orthodox Christian statehood. In fact, if we look at the whole 103-year period since the revolution, we see a steady spiritual decline that has accelerated in recent years. If, at the beginning of that period, the Church declared that it was impossible to cooperate with the secular authorities of the time, and anathematized those who did, is it likely that now, over 100 years later, when the situation of the world as a whole is much worse, we are likely to be able to cooperate with the authorities in that “devout spirit of subordination, cooperation, respect, and obedience” that Fr. Thomas so extols? Have we learned nothing from the experience of the Catacomb Church, from their holy disobedience, which produced the great majority of the holy martyrs and confessors of the twentieth century?!! Or was that period of Church history just a “blip”, an exception, and we can now go back to business as usual?!!

Of course, it is possible to panic, to exaggerate the threat, and to see the mark of the beast even when the personal Antichrist has not yet appeared. We must not forget

that many prophecies of the Holy Scriptures and the saints have yet to be fulfilled. We are not at the end yet (Matthew 24.14)... But that is no reason for complacency. One thing is certain: we live in apocalyptic times. So let us consider the following hypothesis: that the plague of antichristian statehood, far more virulent and death-dealing than any physical virus, that began in Russia in 1917 has now spread all around the world, and we have to react accordingly. Antichristian statehood, the collective Antichrist, first seized power in Russia, then, from 1945, in Eastern Europe, and then, during the Cold War, in many countries of Asia, Africa and South America (notably China). Finally, in 2021, it is establishing itself in the West, in fulfilment of the prophecies of Elder Ignaty of Harbin (+1958): "What began in Russia will end in America," and of Elder Aristocles of Moscow (+1918): "America will feed the world, but will finally collapse."

It is fitting that America should be the last bastion of legitimate government to fall, first because it has been the most consistent and powerful opponent of Soviet and neo-Soviet communism in the world, and because it has a large population of Orthodox Christians, who, if they wake up to the spiritual danger facing them, could both save their own souls and inspire soul-saving rebellion in Orthodox Christians in many other parts of the world.

Not that we have to stop paying our taxes and go into the hills with our shot-guns. But we must refuse to obey any order which involves transgression of the commandments or changes our human nature. This is what the best True Orthodox Churches, such as that of Russia under Archbishop Tikhon of Omsk, and of Romania under Metropolitan Vlasie, have already done and mandated to their flocks.

Some may argue that we cannot compare the God-hating "authorities" of the time of Diocletian or Stalin with those of Vladimir Putin or Joe Biden. Can we not? Is Fr. Thomas really right that our present authorities are "paragons of uprightness" compared with the ancient ones? I think not, or only superficially so... No doubt the modern authorities are less outwardly cruel than the older ones. This is through God's providence and mercy. For He knows that we are weak, probably weaker than any previous Christian generation, and He will not lead us into a temptation that is too strong for us, but will give us a way to escape from it.

But let us make no mistake about it: "the path to hell is paved with good intentions", they are killing us by their "kindness". If they succeed in saving our bodies through the vaccine (supposedly; although, as Archbishop Tikhon has written, "there are now disturbing news from medics from around the world with regard to the vaccination. We shall not ignore them" (private letter to the writer)), they would actually be killing our souls if they force us to accept a vaccine that stops us worshipping together in church or changes the genome that God gave us at our creation, the Divinely-implanted code that makes us who we are. For in essence any authority, whether kind or cruel, whether civilised or uncivilised, which forces us to disobey God is God-hating, God-accursed and must be resisted – at any cost.

For "whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you more than to God, you judge" (Acts 3.19).

*January 14/27, 2021.*



## 2. THE ANATHEMATIZATION OF SOVIET POWER

On this day 103 years ago, January 19 / February 1, 1918, Patriarch Tikhon of Moscow anathematized the Bolshevik government, an act that was confirmed a few days later by the Local Council of the Russian Orthodox Church then convened in Moscow. This, with the 1983 anathema on ecumenism, represents the most important act of the Russian Orthodox Church – arguably, of the whole Orthodox Church – since the foundation of the Romanov dynasty and the anathematization of all those opposing it in 1613. And yet it is little known, and its significance still less well understood, by Orthodox Christians today.

In order to understand its significance, we need to put it in historical context...

The leadership of the Orthodox Church had not distinguished itself when the last times began on March 2/15, 1917 with the abdication of “him that restraineth” the coming of the Antichrist, the Orthodox Christian Emperor or Tsar. The Holy Synod of the Russian Church had done nothing to support the tsardom, or the monarchical principle in general, or stood up in defence of the unjustly imprisoned (and later murdered) Tsar and his family. It had even welcomed the coming of the new Provisional Government, calling it “right-believing” when it was in fact heretical and Masonic.

But a new spirit began to prevail with the convening of the Moscow Council on August 15/28, 1917, and especially after the election of Patriarch Tikhon on November 21 / December 4, 1918. The second major decision of the Moscow Council after the restoration of the patriarchate was its refusal to recognize the legitimacy of Soviet power. It was as if the Church was emerging out of a deep sleep to take up arms with unexpected vigour.

Thus already on the day after the coup, when Lenin nationalized all land, making the Church’s and parish priests’ property illegal, the Council addressed a letter to the faithful on November 11, calling 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...”<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Nicholas Zernov, "The 1917 Council of the Russian Orthodox Church", *Religion in Communist Lands*, vol. 6, N 1, 1978.

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 went to meet 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 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."<sup>2</sup>

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? What about the oath of allegiance that the Russian people had made to the Romanov dynasty in 1613? Had the people fallen under the anathema-curse of the 1613 Council against all those who broke that allegiance?

A letter by a group of Orthodox Christians to the president of the Council declared: "Holy Fathers, Most Holy Synod, Apostles, Preachers of the Teaching of Christ. Do your actions correspond to your names? Alas, alas, alas! Have not all of you turned into Judases? He was one man who betrayed Christ and hanged himself, but are you not all in the place of Judas? Are you not all whitewashed sepulchres on the outside, with golden klobuks, but straw inside, in your brains? Are not you all hiding your disgusting pride in your silken mantias, are you not seeking the earthly kingdom of freedom? Your helpers, the sacred servers of the Altar, follow your example, and

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<sup>2</sup> [http://www.ispovednik.org/fullst.php?nid=31&binn\\_rubrik\\_pl\\_news=136](http://www.ispovednik.org/fullst.php?nid=31&binn_rubrik_pl_news=136).

inspire the Christian people with the ideas of freedom and equality. Alas, crucifiers, because of your freedom the throne of the Autocracy has been destroyed. Because of your unhappy freedom the Anointed of God, his Majesty the Emperor, is suffering: he is slandered, dishonoured, exiled. The innocent heir to the Throne is suffering. The Royal Family and the whole race is suffering.

“O Lord, by Thy Grace stand up for and save the Passion-Bearer of Christ the Lord, the all-innocent Tsar.

“Holy Fathers, the Orthodox people beseeches you: look at the Holy Bible. Come to your senses, take off your golden klobuks, scatter ashes on your heads, weep, repent. It is not you who are calling the Orthodox people to repentance, but the Russian people is beseeching you to seek justice and truth, and not demonic freedom. What were you bound by? The hellish monster, the Beast, has been unbound by freedom and has come out from the abyss. Who is your Kerensky? A *zhid* [Jew], an Antichrist, and you are his servants, whatever face you put on it. What has your diabolical freedom brought Russia, what joy? How has the Russian People met ‘freedom’? With songs, with dances, with murders. All Orthodox people beseech you: come to your senses, all you Judases. May at least one person be found like the Apostle Peter to weep over his guilt. You have sinned terribly, you have overthrown the innocent batiushka-Tsar...”<sup>3</sup>

The letter could be accused of being “over the top” insofar as several of the hierarchs it addressed became holy martyrs of Christ. And yet the general direction of the accusation was surely correct. The Church leadership had failed to defend the Tsar or the monarchy, and only the simple people understood, it would seem, what was really happening.

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...<sup>4</sup>

The Council’s decree of December 2, “On the Legal Status of the Russian Orthodox Church”, ruled, on the one hand, that the State could issue no law relating to the Church without prior consultation with and approval by her, and on the other hand, that any decree and by-laws issued by the Orthodox Church that did not directly contradict state laws were to be systematically recognized by the State as legally binding. Church holidays were to remain state holidays, blasphemy and attempts to lure members of the Church away from her were to remain illegal, and schools of all levels organized and run by the Church were to be recognised by the State on a par

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<sup>3</sup> ГАРФ. Ф. 3431. Оп. 1. Д. 522. Л. 444, 446–446 об. Рукопись. Подлинник.

<sup>4</sup> М. Babkin, “Pomestnij Sobor 1917-1918 gg.: ‘O Prisiage pravitel’stvu voobsche i byvshemu imperatoru Nikolaiu 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>.

with the secular schools. It is clear from this decree that the Church was determined to go Her own way in complete defiance of the so-called "authorities".

On December 11 Lenin decreed that all Church schools be transferred to the Council of People's Commissars. As a result, the Church was deprived of all its academies, seminaries, schools and all the property linked with them. Then, on December 18, ecclesiastical marriage was deprived of its legal status and civil marriage introduced in its place. The Church responded by declaring that civil marriages were sinful for Orthodox Christians...

As if to test the decree "On the Legal Status of the Russian Orthodox Church", on January 13, Alexandra Kollontai, the People's Commissar of Social Welfare (and Lenin's mistress), sent a detachment of sailors to occupy the Alexander Nevsky monastery and turn it into a sanctuary for war invalids. They were met by an angry crowd of worshippers and in the struggle which followed one priest, Fr. Peter Skipetrov, was shot dead.<sup>5</sup>

According to Orlando Figes, Lenin was not yet ready for a confrontation with the Church, but Kollontai's actions forced his hand.<sup>6</sup> On January 20 a law on freedom of conscience, later named the "Decree on the Separation of the Church from the State and of the School from the Church", was passed (it was published three days later in *Izvestia*). This was the Bolsheviks' fiercest attack yet on the Church. It forbade religious bodies from owning property (all property of religious organizations was declared to be the heritage of the people), from levying dues, from organizing into hierarchical organizations, and from teaching religion to persons under 18 years of age. Ecclesiastical and religious societies did not have the rights of a juridical person. The registering of marriages was to be done exclusively by the civil authorities. Thus, far from being a blow struck *for* freedom of conscience, it was, as the Council put it, a decree on freedom *from* conscience, and an excuse for large-scale pillaging of churches and murders, often in the most bestial manner.<sup>7</sup>

Fr. Alexander Mazyrin points out that this decree in effect deprived the Church of its rights as a legal person. "This meant that *de jure* the Church ceased to exist as a single organization. Only local religious communities could exist in legal terms, the authorities signing with them agreements on the use of Church property. The Eighth Department of the People's Commissariat of Justice, which was due to put into practice Lenin's decree, was officially dubbed the 'Liquidation' Department. It was

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<sup>5</sup> Richard Pipes, *Russia under the Bolshevik Regime, 1919-1924*, London: Fontana, 1995, p. 343. According to Regelson (*op. cit.*, p. 226), this took place on January 19.

<sup>6</sup> Figes, *A People's Tragedy*, London: Pimlico, 1997, p. 528; Archpriest Michael Polsky, *The New Martyrs of Russia*, new edition, Wildwood, Alberta: Monastery Press, 2000, pp. 91-92.

<sup>7</sup> Professor Ivan Andreyev, "The Catacomb Church in the Soviet Union", *Orthodox Life*, March-April, 1951. For details of the destruction wrought against the Church in these years, see Vladimir Rusak, *Pir Satany* (Satan's Feast), London, Canada: Zarya, 1991.

the elimination of the Church, not its legalization as a social institution, that was the aim pursued by the 'people's commissars' government."<sup>8</sup>

"The ending of financial subventions," writes S.A. Smith, "hit the central and diocesan administrations hard, but made little difference to parish clergy, who depended on parishioners for financial support. During the land redistribution even the pious took an active part in seizing church lands, but villagers provided local priests with an allotment of land and some financial support. The Bolshevik leadership was largely content to leave ecclesiastical institutions and the network of parish churches intact. The major exceptions were the monasteries. By late 1920, 673 monasteries in the RSFSR had been dissolved and their 1.2 million hectares of land confiscated."<sup>9</sup>

According to other sources, more than one thousand monasteries were "nationalized" ...

On January 19 / February 1, Patriarch Tikhon, anticipating the decree on the Separation of Church and State, and even before the Council had reconvened<sup>10</sup>, 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 (*izgoiami*) 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). This anathema against the collective Antichrist was appropriately recorded as Act 66.6...<sup>11</sup>

The significance of this anathema lies not so much in the casting out of the Bolsheviks themselves, as in the command to the faithful to have no communion with them. In other words, the government 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.<sup>12</sup> Coming so soon after the Bolsheviks' dissolution of the

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<sup>8</sup> Mazyrin, "Legalizing the Moscow Patriarchate in 1927: The Secret Aims of the Authorities", *Social Sciences: A Quarterly Journal of the Russian Academy of Sciences*, No 1, 2009, p. 28. This article was first published in Russian in *Otechestvennaia Istorija* (Fatherland History), N 4, 2008.

<sup>9</sup> Smith, *Russia in Revolution*, Oxford University Press, 2018, pp. 242-243.

<sup>10</sup> "When they asked the holy Patriarch why he had issued his epistle on the eve of the Council's Sitting, Vladyka replied that he did not want to put the Council under the hammer and preferred to take it on himself alone" (Andreyev, *op. cit.*, p. 9), a characteristic remark of this truly self-sacrificial man of God.

<sup>11</sup> Russian text in M.E. Gubonin, *Akty Sviatishhego Patriarkha Tikhona* (The Acts of His Holiness Patriarch Tikhon), Moscow: St. Tikhon's Theological Institute, 1994, pp. 82-85; *Deiania Svoiaschennogo 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.

<sup>12</sup> In a letter to Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) that was captured by the Bolsheviks, the Patriarch called the Bolsheviks "oprichniki" – that is, he compared them to the murderous henchmen of Ivan the Terrible (*Za Khrista Postradavshie* (They Suffered for Christ), Moscow, 1997, vol. 1, p. 426).

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...<sup>13</sup>

It has been argued that the Patriarch's decree did not anathematize Soviet power as such, but only those who were committing acts of violence and sacrilege against the Church. However, this argument fails to take into account several facts. First, the patriarch himself, in his declarations of June 16 and July 1, 1923, repented precisely of his "anathematization of Soviet power".<sup>14</sup> Secondly, even if it were true that the decree did not formally anathematize Soviet power as such, since Soviet power sanctioned and initiated the acts of violence against the Church and her servers, the faithful were in effect being exhorted to having nothing to do with it. And thirdly, in his Epistle to the Council of People's Commissars on the first anniversary of the revolution, November 7, 1918, the Patriarch obliquely but clearly confirmed his non-recognition of Soviet power, saying: "It is not our business to make judgments about earthly authorities. Every power allowed by God would attract to itself Our blessing if it were truly 'the servant of God', for the good of those subject to it, and were 'terrible not for good works, but for evil' (Romans 13.3,4). But now to you, who have used authority for the persecution of the innocent, We extend this Our word of exhortation..."<sup>15</sup>

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 the proclamation of the anathema, 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 Bolsheviks 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."<sup>16</sup>

On January 22 / February 4 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 [*preshchenia*] 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

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<sup>13</sup> 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 brothers and defiling our Fatherland" ([http://catacomb.org.ua/modules.php?name=Pages&go=print\\_page&pid=1775](http://catacomb.org.ua/modules.php?name=Pages&go=print_page&pid=1775))

<sup>14</sup> Gubonin, *op. cit.*, pp. 280, 296.

<sup>15</sup> Gubonin, *op. cit.*, p. 151.

<sup>16</sup> *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.

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).<sup>17</sup>

Another source quotes the following response of the Council to the patriarch's anathema: "The Patriarch of Moscow and all Russia in his epistle to the beloved in the Lord archpastors, pastors and all faithful children of the Orthodox Church of Christ has drawn the spiritual sword against the outcasts of the human race – the Bolsheviks, and anathematized them. The head of the Russian Orthodox Church adjures all her faithful children not to enter into any communion with these outcasts. For their satanic deeds they are cursed in this life and in the life to come. 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."<sup>18</sup>

One member of the Council said: "If the father, mother, brothers and sisters did not receive the returning evil-doer, but expelled him, saying: 'You are a scoundrel, your hands are covered in blood, you are not our son, nor our brother,' the disorders would cease."<sup>19</sup>

During the same session A.A. Vasiliev said: "We thank the Lord for giving us what we have been waiting for – that is, finally to hear the true Church voice of our Most Holy Father and Patriarch. For the first time in this year of disorder, a truly ecclesiastical word, a word spoken with regard to the events about which nothing has been said up to now. And a pastoral judgement delivered on all those who are guilty of these events... Our Christian conscience must suggest to each of us what concessions he can and cannot make, and when he must lay down his life for the truth. People are puzzled about precisely who is subject to this ban that his Holiness

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<sup>17</sup> *Deiania*, *op. cit.*, vol. 6, p. 36.

<sup>18</sup> "Iz sobrania Tsentral'nogo gosudarstvennogo arkhiva Oktiabr'skoj revoliutsii: listovka bez vykhodnykh dannyx, pod N 1011" (From the collection of the Central State Archive of the October Revolution: pamphlet without dates, under N 1011, *Nauka i Religia* (Science and Religion), 1989, N 4; partly translated in Arfed Gustavson, *The Catacomb Church*, Jordanville, N.Y.: Holy Trinity Monastery, 1960, p. 9.

<sup>19</sup> *Deiania*, *op. cit.*, vol. 6, p. 40.

the Patriarch speaks about in his epistle. After all, it is not just since yesterday, and not since the coming of the Bolsheviks, that we have been experiencing a real satanic attack on the Church of Christ, these fratricides, fights and mutual hatred. At the very beginning of the revolution the authorities carried out an act of apostasy from God (voices: "Right!"). Prayer was banned in the armies, banners with the cross of Christ were replaced by red rags. It is not only the present powers that be that are guilty of this, but also those who have already departed from the scene. We shall continue to hope that the present rulers also, who are now shedding blood, will depart from the scene."<sup>20</sup>

Then Fr. Vladimir Vostokov spoke: "In this hall too much has been said about the terrible things that have been suffered, and if we were to list and describe them all, this huge hall would be filled with books. So I am not going to speak about the horrors. I want to point to the root from which these horrors have been created. I understand this present assembly of ours as a spiritual council of doctors consulting over our dangerously ill mother, our homeland. When doctors come up to treat a sick person, they do not stop at the latest manifestations of the illness, but they look deeper, they investigate the root cause of the illness. So in the given case it is necessary to reveal the root of the illness that the homeland is suffering. From this platform, before the enlightener of Russia, the holy Prince Vladimir, I witness to my priestly conscience that the Russian people is being deceived, and that up to this time no-one has told them the whole truth. The moment has come when the Council, as the only gathering that is lawful and truly elected by the people must tell the people the holy truth, fearing nobody except God Himself...

"The derailing of the train of history took place at the end of February, 1917; it was aided first of all by the Jewish-Masonic global organization, which cast into the masses the slogans of socialism, the slogans of a mythical freedom... So much has been said here about the terrors brought upon the country by Bolshevism. But what is Bolshevism? – the natural and logical development of Socialism. And Socialism is – that antichristian movement which in the final analysis produces Bolshevism as its highest development and which engenders those phenomena completely contrary to the principles of Christian asceticism that we are living through now.

"Unfortunately, many of our professors and writers have arrayed Socialism in beautiful clothes, calling it similar to Christianity, and thereby they together with the agitators of revolution have led the uneducated people into error. Fathers and brothers! What fruits did we expect of Socialism, when we not only did not fight against it, but also defended it at times, or almost always were shyly silent before its contagion? We must serve the Church by faith, and save the country from destructive tendencies, and for that it is necessary to speak the truth to the people without delay, telling them what Socialism consists of and what it leads to.

"The Council must say that in February-March a violent coup took place which for the Orthodox Christian is oath-breaking and which requires purification through repentance. We all, beginning with Your Holiness and ending with myself, the last

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<sup>20</sup> *Deiania*, *op. cit.*, vol. 6, p. 40.



member of the Council, must bow the knee before God, and beseech Him to forgive us for allowing the growth in the country of evil teachings and violence. Only after sincere repentance by the whole people will the country be pacified and regenerated. And God will bestow upon us His mercy and grace. But if we continue only to anathematize without repenting, without declaring the truth to the people, then they will with just cause say to us: You, too, are guilty that the country has been reduced to this crime, for which the anathema now sounds out; you by your pusillanimity have allowed the development of evil and have been slow to call the facts and phenomena of state life by their real names!

“Pastors of the Church, search out the soul of the people! If we do not tell the people the whole truth, if we do not call on them now to offer nationwide repentance for definite sins, we will leave this conciliar chamber as turncoats and traitors of the Church and the Homeland. I am so unshakeably convinced of what I say now that I would not hesitate to repeat it even if I were on the verge of death. It is necessary to regenerate in the minds of people the idea of a pure central authority – the idea that has been darkened by the pan-Russian deception. We overthrew the Tsar and subjected ourselves to the Jews! [Voices of members of the Council: ‘True, true...’] The only salvation for the Russian people is a wise Russian Orthodox Tsar. Only through the election of a wise, Orthodox, Russian Tsar can Russia be placed on the good, historical path and re-establish good order. As long as we will not have a wise Orthodox tsar, there will be no order among us, and the people’s blood will continue to be shed, and the centrifugal forces will divide the one people into hostile pieces, until the train of history is completely destroyed or until foreign peoples enslave us as a crowd incapable of independent State life...

“We all must unite into one Christian family under the banner of the Holy and Life-Creating Cross and under the leadership of his Holiness the Patriarch, to say that Socialism, which calls people as if to brotherhood, is an openly antichristian and evil phenomenon, that the Russian people has become the plaything of the Jewish-Masonic organizations behind which the Antichrist is already visible in the form of an internationalist tsar, that by playing on false freedom, the people is forging for itself slavery to the Judaeo-Masons. If we say this openly and honestly, then I do not know what will happen to us, but I know that Russia will be alive!”<sup>21</sup>

On March 12, 1918 the Council reaffirmed the patriarch’s anathema, proclaiming: “To those who utter blasphemies and lies against our holy faith and Church, who rise up against the holy churches and monasteries, encroaching on the inheritance of the Church, while abusing and killing the priests of the Lord and zealots of the patristic faith: *Anathema*” (Act 94).

However, in 1918, the rite of the Triumph of Orthodoxy with the anathemas against the atheists, was omitted on the First Sunday in Great Lent. As Valery Shambarov writes: “The Bolsheviki were in power, and such a rite would have constituted an open challenge to on the part of the hierarchs of the Church. Nevertheless, one cannot find any decision on removing the traditional rite of the

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<sup>21</sup> *Deiania*, *op. cit.*, vol. 6, pp. 41-43.

celebration of the Sunday of the Triumph of Orthodoxy in the materials of the Local Council of 1917-1918.”<sup>22</sup>

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And so the implementation of the anathema on Soviet power was weak and inconsistent, and became more so as Soviet power consolidated its power. By 1922 and the end of the Civil War, physical opposition to the power had been abandoned. But there was nothing to prevent civil disobedience to the antichristian power, and there were still many who remained faithful to the spirit of the anathema by refusing to obey the authorities. Such were the thousands who suffered martyrdom through opposing the confiscation of church valuables. And such was Bishop Nicholas of Saratov, who immediately went into reclusion after the 1918 anathema in order not to sin against it, but still suffered martyrdom in 1939.

In 1923 Patriarch Tikhon anathematized the fake church of the renovationists created by the authorities, and declared that its sacraments were invalid. A second fake church, led by former renovationists and now known as “the Russian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate”, was created in 1927, and was anathematized by secret Catacomb Councils and by the Russian Church Abroad. In the 1930s there was a widespread movement of disobedience to the authorities through a refusal to support collectivization and entry into the new collective farms, leading to thousands of martyrdoms. In July, 1937 a secret Council of the Catacomb Church at Ust-Kut in Siberia upheld the validity of the 1918 anathema. During the Second World War there were several martyrdoms of Catacomb Christians who refused to join the Red Army because it meant fighting for the anathematized regime of the Bolsheviks...

After the Second World War, civil disobedience to the Soviets in obedience to the Church’s anathema was carried on by heroic groups of True Orthodox Christians. But they were getting fewer and weaker, and the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991 came as a very welcome relief to the beleaguered Church. Now, it was hoped, open church activity that was blessed by God could be resumed; and under the anti-communist Yeltsin and with the support of the Russian Church Abroad, a valid Church hierarchy inside Russia was restored.

However, in 2000 a former head of the KGB, Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin, became president. He not only did not repent of his KGB membership or membership of the Communist Party, but proclaimed the fall of the Soviet Union to have been “the greatest geopolitical tragedy of the twentieth century”. As a former member of the KGB’s Fifth Directorate that had been concerned with monitoring and persecuting church dissidents in the Soviet period, Putin took an interest in the Church, and in 2007, with the aid of traitors in the Russian Church Abroad, he engineered the union of that Church with the false, anathematized “church” of the Moscow Patriarchate. By now, there were few who remembered the 1918 anathema

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<sup>22</sup> Shambarov, “Vosstanovit’ prervannuiu pravoslavnuuu traditsiu!” (Restoring an interrupted Orthodox tradition), February 28, 1917, [http://zavtra.ru/blogs/vosstanovit\\_prervannuyu\\_ppravoslavnuyu\\_traditsiyu](http://zavtra.ru/blogs/vosstanovit_prervannuyu_ppravoslavnuyu_traditsiyu).

or pondered its significance, and there were few who paid much attention to the crimes of Putin's avaricious and murderous regime. Among those few were the last ROCOR elder, Nektary of Jerusalem (+2000), who declared that the only legitimate government that Russia could have was a True Orthodox tsardom, and the Synod of the True Orthodox Church of Russia under Archbishop Lazarus (Zhurbenko), which in May, 2004 fiercely condemned the Putinist regime.

In the second decade of the twenty-first century, resistance to Putin, as expressed in protests and demonstrations, began slowly to increase. The largest so far, over 200,000 people in all the major cities of Russia, took place in January, 2021. While there is no evidence that Putin's regime is on the verge of falling, the curse of the 1918 anathema still weighs heavily on all those who, like Putin and his supporters, continue to justify the Bolshevik revolution and hinder the restoration of the throne of the Orthodox tsars.

*January 19 / February 1, 2021.*

### 3. YALTA: DEMOCRACY'S GREATEST FAILURE

In the Second World War, both Britain and the Soviet Union depended critically on the industrial might of America's booming state capitalism to save them from the Nazis. But this was not possible while America remained neutral. Fortunately, this changed in December, 1941, when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbour, bringing the United States into the war on the side of the British and the Soviets. And after Hitler's foolish declaration of war on the United States a little later, Roosevelt made the decision to place the European theatre of war above the Pacific one – a remarkable decision considering that the United States was directly involved in the Pacific theatre, but not in the European one.

The American economy now accelerated production at an astonishing, unprecedented rate, becoming what Roosevelt called “the arsenal of democracy” – but it involved a control over Americans' lives that was far from typically democratic. As Andrew Roberts writes, “In the course of 1943, US government interference into the lives of Americans continued apace. The Roosevelt administration rationed meat, fat cheese, gas and canned food, and Americans discovered recycling, with waste rubber, metal, paper, silk (for parachutes), nylon, tin cans and fat all being re-used for the war effort. Civilians were banned from buying more than three pairs of shoes a year; the Marine Corps was authorized to establish a female unit; the US Manpower Commission prohibited twenty-seven million workers in essential services from quitting their jobs; Roosevelt appointed the former Supreme Court justice James F. Byrnes to preside over the Office of War Mobilisation, which co-ordinated the work of all the Government's many agencies; and in December he ordered that, in order to prevent a national strike, all railroads were to be seized by the federal government...”<sup>23</sup>

The alliance of the three allied nations was cemented when Churchill flew into Moscow in May, 1942. He made two further such trips in August, 1942 and October, 1944. It was an unequal relationship from the beginning. The Soviets insisted, often rudely and sarcastically, that the Anglo-Saxons should open a second front in the West in order to draw 30 to 40 German divisions away from the Eastern Front – something the British and the Americans were by no means strong enough to do as yet. (There was a premature attempt at Dieppe in 1942 which ended in disaster – more than 4000 Allied casualties, most of them Canadian.) Instead, they opened up another front in North Africa, and, 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 – although many convoys were intercepted and destroyed by the Germans. Meanwhile, the Americans kept the British afloat with Lend-lease supplies from across the Atlantic.

The North African campaign, though often considered a “sideshow” compared to the huge battles taking place in Russia, was nevertheless important in that the victor would gain access to the oil-fields of the Middle East – Hitler was desperately in need

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<sup>23</sup> Roberts, *A History of the English-Speaking Peoples since 1900*, London: Penguin, 2014, p. 330.

of oil. So both sides poured large forces into the North African struggle. At first, it looked as if the German Afrika Corps under Rommel would win. But he was stopped and then defeated in two battles at El Alamein in June-October, 1942 by British and Commonwealth forces under General Bernard Montgomery.

The saints of God also played a part in this victory. As John Sandopoulos explains, in the first battle of El - Alamein (which means "place of Menas"), where there was a ruined church of St. Menas, the saint appeared in front of the German army at the head of a troop of camels exactly as depicted on a fresco in his church and terrified the invaders.<sup>24</sup>

There could hardly have been a more paradoxical and contradictory alliance than that between the British aristocrat 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.<sup>25</sup> 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 righteous King Jehoshaphat of Judah, who was rebuked by God for allying himself with the wicked King Ahaziah, 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."<sup>26</sup> 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 the devil in the House of Commons".<sup>27</sup> 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.

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<sup>24</sup> Sandopoulos, "The Miracle of Saint Menas in El Alamein in 1942", <https://www.johnsanidopoulos.com/2010/11/miracle-of-saint-menas-in-el-alamein-in.html>.

<sup>25</sup> Jonathan Fenby, *Alliance*, London: Pocket Books, 2006, p. 160.

<sup>26</sup> Subdeacon Paul Inglesby, personal communication.

<sup>27</sup> Fenby, *op. cit.*, p. 65.

“‘And the devil is, naturally, on mine, and through our combined efforts we shall defeat the enemy,’ Stalin chuckled.”<sup>28</sup>

Very funny, no doubt, coming from 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 November, 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.’...”<sup>29</sup>

Nor were the Big Three averse to some straight lying and 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’”<sup>30</sup>

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. Moreover, he had a fatal pride in his ability to do business with the communist dictator, and win him over through charm alone. As he said to Churchill in 1942: “I know you will not mind my being brutally frank when I tell you that I think I can personally handle Stalin better than either your Foreign Office or my State Department. Stalin hates the guts of all your top people. He thinks he likes me better, and I hope he will continue to do so.”<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Fenby, op. cit., p. 152.

<sup>29</sup> Fenby, op. cit., p. 239. He repeated the point once more in Teheran. “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)

<sup>30</sup> Fenby, op. cit., pp. 331, 333; David Reynolds, “Confidence and Curve Balls”, *The New Statesman*, December 7, 2018, p. 55.

<sup>31</sup> Roosevelt, in Reynolds, op. cit., p. 376.

Jean-François Revel recounts how, during the Teheran Conference, Roosevelt “even went in for elaborate jokes that rubbed Winston Churchill’s prejudices the wrong way. After three days of talks during which Stalin remained icy, the President recounted that, at last, ‘Stalin smiled’. A great victory for the West! It became total when ‘Stalin broke out into a deep, heavy guffaw, and for the first time in three days I saw light. I kept it up until Stalin was laughing with me, and it was then that I called him Uncle Joe.’ Democracy was saved.”<sup>32</sup>

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 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, longer and more degrading influence on the behaviour of the western democracies...

Churchill was not unaware of the comparison with Munich. As he once said to his ministers: “Poor Neville Chamberlain believed he could trust Hitler. He was wrong, but I don’t think I’m wrong about Stalin.”<sup>33</sup> He was wrong, terribly wrong...

This abandonment of principle was especially striking in the case of Churchill – and not only in relation to Stalin’s Communism. A.N. Wilson writes perceptively: “Churchill suffered almost more than any character in British history from watching his most decisive acts have the very opposite effect of the ones intended. He who so deplored communism saw Eastern Europe go communist; he, who loved the British Empire, lost the Empire; and he who throughout his peacetime political career had lambasted socialism presided over an administration which was in many ways the most socialist government Britain ever had. While Churchill directed the war he left domestic policy to his socialist colleagues Attlee and Bevin. The controlled wartime economy, rationing, propaganda newsreels, austere ‘British restaurants’ for food, and the tightest government control over what could be bought, sold, said, publicly worn, produced what A.J.P. Taylor called [with some exaggeration] ‘a country more fully socialist than anything achieved by the conscious planners of Soviet Russia’.”<sup>34</sup>

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

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<sup>32</sup> Revel, *How Democracies Perish*, London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1985, p. 220.

<sup>33</sup> Reynolds, *op. cit.*, p. 57.

<sup>34</sup> Wilson, *After the Victorians*, p. 403.

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.<sup>35</sup>

The Soviets had no intention of granting self-determination to the countries they had first conquered during their alliance with the Nazis. As Norman Stone writes, "Churchill did not have the strength to resist Stalin, and the Americans did not have the will."<sup>36</sup> Already by the Teheran Conference in November, 1943 the Allies 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.*'"<sup>37</sup> Or, as Churchill put it in October, 1944: "[It's] all very one-sided. They get what they want by guile, flattery or force."<sup>38</sup>

An important factor on Roosevelt's thinking was American public opinion, whose volatility at this point vividly illustrated one of the main weaknesses of democracy. Polls revealed that as late as 1939, as Hugh Brogan writes, Americans, "if forced to choose, would have picked fascism rather than communism, since communism waged war on private property." However, "by 1942 the majority found no words too kind for Stalin and his armies. The switch was made easier by the comfortable delusion, assiduously propagated, that the USSR had abandoned communism. 'Marxian thinking in Soviet Russia,' said the *New York Times* in April 1944, 'is out. The capitalist system, better described as the competitive system, is back.' That granted, the architect of the Gulag archipelago, many of whose crimes had long ago been public knowledge, could be eulogized as the man who saved the capitalist world. 'A child,' it was said, 'would like to sit on his lap and a dog would sidle up to him.' The NKVD was 'a national police similar to the FBI and the Russians, 'one hell of a people', were remarkably like the Americans. Communism was like Christianity, being based on the brotherhood of man; and as Douglas MacArthur commented... from Corregidor in 1942, 'The hopes of civilization rest on the banners of the courageous Red Army.' Hollywood leaped onto the bandwagon by issuing a tedious, fellow-travelling movie, *Mission to Moscow*, which one day would get its makers into a lot of trouble..."<sup>39</sup>

Roosevelt himself, who had successfully fended off charges of being a socialist dictator in the 1930s, now seemed a full convert to Stalinism. Thus already on February 20, 1943, he 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

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<sup>35</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Atlantic\\_Charter](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Atlantic_Charter);

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Declaration\\_by\\_United\\_Nations](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Declaration_by_United_Nations).

<sup>36</sup> Stone, *The Atlantic and its Enemies*, London: Penguin, 2010, p. 5.

<sup>37</sup> Fenby, op. cit., p. 211. My italics (V.M.).

<sup>38</sup> Fenby, op. cit., p. 331.

<sup>39</sup> Brogan, *The Penguin History of the USA*, London: Penguin, 2019, p. 580.



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 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.”<sup>40</sup>

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.

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<sup>40</sup> Roosevelt, in Count Léon de Poncins, *State Secrets*, Chulmleigh: Britons Publishing Company, 1975, pp. 77, 78.

“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 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 probable 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...”<sup>41</sup>

The eventual post-war outcome in East and Central Europe, 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<sup>42</sup>), involuntarily makes one think that he was somehow bewitched by Stalin! What is certain is that, as the American ambassador to Moscow, Averill Harriman, said: “Roosevelt never understood communism. He viewed it as a sort of extension of the New Deal.”<sup>43</sup>

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 effort<sup>44</sup>, and they could have

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<sup>41</sup> Spellman, in de Poncins, op. cit., pp. 89-90.

<sup>42</sup> Roosevelt wanted Britain to give India her independence even before the end of the war, and to give Hong Kong to China. His officials also wanted Britain to give up the system of Imperial Preference, the tariff system which protected British exports to the Empire.

<sup>43</sup> Revel, op. cit., pp. 219-220.

<sup>44</sup> 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,

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...

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."<sup>45</sup>

But the British could not easily give up on the Poles, for whose sake they had entered the war in September, 1939, and who contributed 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 patriots and have them destroyed by the Germans (200,000 were).

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...'"<sup>46</sup>

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, rejecting the correct accusation of the Polish government-in-exile (and confirmed by Gorbachev decades later) and accepting the lie that the Germans had done it. This had the consequence that the Kremlin broke relations with the Poles, which in turn

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as they had in the early days of Magnitogorsk" (op. cit., p. 529). The general value of aid amounted to 12 billion dollars in 1941 prices, or 200 billion in contemporary terms. Russia repaid just 7% of this sum, and that only at the beginning of the 1990s. The rest of the debt was written off by the allies (<http://peaceinukraine.livejournal.com/2901882.html>).

"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)

<sup>45</sup> Fenby, op. cit., p. 208.

<sup>46</sup> Fenby, op. cit., p. 301.

“allowed Stalin in due course to create a rival government-in-exile loyal to Moscow”.<sup>47</sup>

Again, when Foreign Minister Sir Anthony Eden visited Stalin in October, 1943, he “carried a note by Churchill recognizing 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’”.<sup>48</sup> In other words, Germany’s conquests in Poland after the shameful Molotov-Ribbentrop pact were not to be recognized, 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 in October, 1944 he obtained the famous percentages agreement with Stalin over spheres of influence in Eastern Europe: in Romania and Bulgaria the relative shares were 90% to the Soviets and 10% to the West; in Yugoslavia it was 50-50; and in Greece it was 90% to the West and 10% to the Soviets. This (very informal) agreement was, perhaps surprisingly, 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. “The British proposed marching on Vienna to pre-empt Stalin’s ambitions in Central Europe, but an increasingly frail Roosevelt seemed unmoved by Churchill’s warnings about ‘the rapid encroachment of the Russians into the Balkans and the consequent dangerous spread of Russian influence in the area’.”<sup>49</sup> In the next month, Italy surrendered just as the Yugoslav resistance movement was growing in strength; so the time was right. The implementation of such a plan would not only have saved the Balkans from communist domination: it would have shortened the war with Germany considerably. But the Americans were always irritated by the British insistence on the Mediterranean theatre of operations. Earlier in the war Churchill had concentrated British forces on North Africa and the defence of Egypt, because if the Germans had conquered the Suez Canal they would have cut off the British from the oil of the Persian Gulf, on which they were critically dependent, as well as from India and their Far Eastern colonies. Later, after the Germans had been expelled from North Africa, he favoured an attack on the “soft underbelly” of the Axis powers in Italy because he feared that an attack on the “hard snout” of the German defences in Northern France might lead to a disaster on the scale of Gallipoli or Dunkirk. In this he was probably right, as the disastrous Canadian assault on Dieppe in 1942 proved. However, the battle for Italy proved tougher than expected – more like the “tough guts” of the underbelly, as the American General Mark Clark put it. In July, 1943, two days after the Allies had landed in Sicily and captured Palermo, Mussolini was deposed by Italy’s great council. However, the Germans took over the defence of the peninsula, and the Allies

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<sup>47</sup> Reynolds, *op. cit.*, p. 54.

<sup>48</sup> Fenby, *op. cit.*, p. 207.

<sup>49</sup> Niall Ferguson, *Kissinger. 1923-1968: The Idealist*, New York: Penguin, 2016, p. 133.

did not conquer Rome until June 5, 1944, only one day before D-Day and the invasion of Normandy.<sup>50</sup>

Instead of accepting Churchill's idea, writes Misha Glenny, the Americans wanted to divert troops from Italy to the south of France. They insisted "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.'"<sup>51</sup>

Churchill again raised the idea of a joint Anglo-American thrust into the Balkans at the famous conference of the Big Three at Yalta in February, 1945. But neither Stalin nor Roosevelt responded. Stalin's resistance was understandable – he wanted the Red Army, not the Anglo-Americans, to dominate the Balkans. Roosevelt's resistance was less clear; probably he simply wanted to demonstrate to Churchill that he was very much the junior partner in the Anglo-American alliance now, and that "the Big Three" were now, as one American put it, "the Big Two-and-a-Half"...

In any case, the idea was dead...<sup>52</sup>

And so, as a direct result, would be millions of East Europeans...

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Although Yalta has been seen as the decisive meeting of the Allies, as Tony Judt rightly says, "nothing was decided at Yalta that had not already been agreed at Teheran and elsewhere".<sup>53</sup> 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 kilometers from Berlin while the Western Allies were 600 kilometers away). Through his listening devices at Yalta and his spies in the West – especially Guy Burgess in the British Foreign Office, Donald Maclean in the British Embassy in Washington, Alger Hiss in the State Department, Harry Dexter White at the US Treasury and Klaus Fuchs at the Manhattan Project in New Mexico – he knew exactly what the plans of the western leaders were, what they wanted in their

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<sup>50</sup> David Reynolds, "1942 and Hitler's Soft Underbelly", BBC4 documentary, September 18, 2016.

<sup>51</sup> Glenny, *The Balkans, 1804-1999*, London: Granta Books, 2000, p. 519. The Allies would have had even more casualties in Italy if the British, through a brilliant intelligence operation called "Operation Mincemeat", had not deceived the Germans into thinking that the invasion of July, 1943 would be into Greece, not Sicily.

<sup>52</sup> S.M. Plokhy, *Yalta: The Price of Peace*, London: Penguin, 2010, p. 85.

<sup>53</sup> Judt, *Postwar: A History of Europe since 1945*, London: Paladin, 2007, p. 101.

negotiations with him, what they wanted to hide from him (for example, the building of the atomic bomb) and what their disagreements amongst themselves were.<sup>54</sup>

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.<sup>55</sup> 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.

“Roosevelt was even forthcoming enough,” writes Jean-François Revel, “to tell Stalin he did not think American troops could remain in Europe for more than two years after Germany’s surrender. Besides, he said, he did not believe in maintaining strong American forces in Europe. He couldn’t have been more obliging. By informing Stalin in advance that American troops would be withdrawn and when, Roosevelt was behaving like a home owner who put up posters to tell local burglars when he planned to take his vacation and leave the apartment unguarded.

“Armed with this assurance, Stalin could calmly lay his postwar plans. First he demanded that the Allies grant him full control over the areas Germany had promised him in the 1939 Hitler-Stalin pact, the only real agreement to divide up territory signed in the twentieth century. He was instantly granted the Baltic states and chunks of Finland and Romania – in other words, everything Hitler had awarded him in 1939. But Poland... was not delivered over to Stalin in any of the accords reached in February, 1945. He took it by trickery and force...”<sup>56</sup>

Poland was the one question on which both the Americans and the British dug their heels in – for a time. They, like almost all Poles, recognized only the London government-in-exile, while the Soviets recognized only their puppets, the Lublin Committee. However, after Roosevelt had obtained two of his goals from Stalin – 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 smaller 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.

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<sup>54</sup> Plokhy, *op. cit.*, pp. 78-79.

<sup>55</sup> Plokhy, *op. cit.*, pp. 101, 35.

<sup>56</sup> Revel, *op. cit.*, pp. 270-271.

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, backed by his leading general, Sir Alan Brooke, who had vehemently opposed the Morgenthau plan (which demanded the complete de-industrialization of Germany) already in Quebec, on the grounds that Germany would be needed as an ally against 'the Russian threat of twenty-five years hence'<sup>57</sup>.

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 Morgenthau plan, but could easily return to some of its provisions in spirit if not in letter, to placate the Soviets."<sup>58</sup> 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 in resisting Stalin...

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, 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 and the Manchurian railroads, and that 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 over 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

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<sup>57</sup> Ferguson, *Kissinger*, p. 134.

<sup>58</sup> Plokhy, *op. cit.*, p. 259.

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..."<sup>59</sup>

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 the means they chose to their ends were completely different, and that Stalin's end was to strengthen the kingdom of Satan over these territories, whereas the Tsar's end had been precisely the opposite, to strengthen Orthodoxy. The Yalta conference took place in the Tsar's former villa in Livadia, with recollections of the murdered Royal Family all around, 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'. Yalta in 1945 was the direct product of Yekaterinburg in 1918...

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,<sup>60</sup> and Roosevelt expressed his firm faith in Stalin to Congress. He had seen through Hitler early on, even before he had embarked on his worst crimes. But he completely failed to understand Stalin and the essence of communism – even after he had proved himself the greatest murderer in history...

Only in the very last days of his life (he died on April 12, 1945) did Roosevelt express any distrust of Stalin ...<sup>61</sup>

As for Churchill, he was, as always, 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".<sup>62</sup> 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.<sup>63</sup> In public he joined in the general dithyrambs to the collective Antichrist.

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<sup>59</sup> Fenby, op. cit., p. 347.

<sup>60</sup> Fenby, op. cit., p. 381.

<sup>61</sup> Victor Sebestyen, *1946: The Making of the Modern World*, London: Pan, 2014, pp. 88-89.

<sup>62</sup> Fenby, op. cit., p. 379.

<sup>63</sup> Thus on March 8 he wrote to Roosevelt: "The Russians have succeeded in establishing [in Eastern Europe] the rule of a communist minority by force and misrepresentation... which is absolutely contrary to all democratic ideas... Stalin has subscribed on paper to the principles of Yalta which are certainly being trampled down." And again he wrote on March 13: "We are in the presence of a great failure and utter breakdown of what was agreed at Yalta" (Paul Ham, *Hiroshima Nagasaki*, London: Doubleday, 2010, p. 10).



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 the Russian Soviet Government. I decline absolutely to embark here on a discussion about Russian good faith..."<sup>64</sup>

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Perhaps the most important agreement at Yalta was the Declaration on Liberated Europe. Ferguson writes: "To foster the conditions in which the liberated peoples may exercise those [democratic] rights, all three governments will jointly assist the people in any European liberated state or former Axis satellite state in Europe" to form representative governments and facilitate free elections. But Stalin had no intention of keeping this pledge, as the western leaders soon discovered to their fury. However, 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..."<sup>65</sup>

And it immediately involved lying: lying, for example, about Stalin's slaughter of the Polish elite at Katyn, lying about the abandonment of Eastern Europe in general. For if "totalitarianism probably demands a disbelief in the very existence of objective truth" (George Orwell), those who cooperate with it are bound to become infected with its mendacity.

Max Hastings writes: "The Americans and British had delivered half Europe from one totalitarian tyranny, but lacked the political will and the military means to save ninety million people of the eastern nations from falling victim to a new, Soviet bondage that lasted almost half a century. The price of having joined with Stalin to destroy Hitler was high indeed..."<sup>66</sup>

The question is: 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

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<sup>64</sup> Plokhy, *op. cit.*, p. 335.

<sup>65</sup> Ferguson, *op. cit.*, p. 511.

<sup>66</sup> Hastings, *All Hell Let Loose*, London: Harper Press, 2011, pp. 654-654.

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.'"<sup>67</sup>

It is this last point that is the most important. Is democracy really incapable of making the most vital, most *moral* of choices? If so, then so much the worse for democracy...

"Valuable work was done at Yalta," writes Andrew Roberts, "on the creation of the United Nations, the de-Nazification of German society, war trials, and many other important areas of post-war policy, but over the issue with which the word 'Yalta' will always be connected in history - the condemnation of so many Eastern European people to Soviet communist domination for so long - the sad but unavoidable truth is that the United States and Great Britain simply had no choice but to accede to Stalin's *fait accompli*. Never since 1900 were Western statesmen's decisions more important, more long-lasting, more bitter to swallow and yet more impossible to escape..."

"... Western public opinion would simply not have understood, let alone accepted, any kind of aggressive stance against Stalin at that stage of the war. In the back of Western minds was also the fear that the Soviets might do another deal with the Germans, as they had in August 1939..."<sup>68</sup>

So Western democracy, at the moment of its greatest power and glory, failed its greatest test so far... "Western public opinion would simply not have understood..." Indeed, that is almost certainly true. But is that not the greatest condemnation of democracy: that its most important decisions have to be made, not in accordance with God's law, which always (this is a critical point) brings with it the help of God, "with Whom all things are possible", but in accordance with fickle and ignorant public opinion - vox populi, not vox Dei.

Nothing is ever absolutely inevitable (except God's judgement); there are *always* alternatives for political leaders, if they are truly leaders and not followers; kow-towing to Stalin was by no means inevitable in 1945 or at any other time. However, a successful war against apocalyptic evil - for that is what the war against the Soviet Antichrist was in reality - could only be undertaken by a leader who truly led his people and was not led by them, who could 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, with His almighty help, and for the sake, not of earthly survival only, but of salvation for eternity.

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<sup>67</sup> Ploky, op. cit., p. 399.

<sup>68</sup> Roberts, op. cit., pp. 360-61.

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 courage and personal self-sacrifice, as Roosevelt did America in 1933 and Churchill did Britain in 1940. But the aim remains earthly – in Roosevelt’s case, economic recovery, and in Churchill’s, national survival.<sup>69</sup> The point is that in a democracy, even an exceptional leader cannot run far in front of his people, by whom he is elected and to whom he remains answerable; and so far no democratic nation has voted for a leader that will sacrifice earthly survival for a heavenly ideal.

That is the lesson of Churchill’s extraordinary electoral defeat 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 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 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 – fear of men, not of God.

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. St. Lazar was an Orthodox Autocrat who inspired the Serbs to sacrifice everything for the Heavenly Kingdom on Kosovo field. Tsar Nicholas II was a man of comparable quality who also looked to heavenly rather than earthly crowns (the great mass of his people, tragically, did not). But by 1945 there were no more Orthodox Autocrats; Stalin’s victory in 1945 consolidated Lenin’s in 1917. Autocracy, the only truly God-pleasing form of political life, the only form that is capable to directing the life of the people to heavenly rather than earthly goals, was – temporarily - no more...

*January 20 / February 2, 2021.*

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<sup>69</sup> As he put it in parliament in May, 1940: “What is our aim?... Victory, victory at all costs, victory in spite of all terror; victory, however long and hard the road may be; for without victory, there is no survival.”

## 4. THE ABOLITION OF MAN

Now that the twentieth century has passed into the twenty-first, Cultural Marxism, magnified by globalization, has passed into a new phase so extreme as to appear almost unbelievable to members of the older generation, such as the present writer. The most important ideas of this new phase, which is continuing to develop at break-neck speed, are: *multiculturalism*, *transgenderism* and *infantilism*. Multiculturalism tries to destroy the last vestiges of Christian culture by submitting it to non-Christian, especially Islamic cultures. Transgenderism tries to destroy the most basic - biologically-based - differences between human beings. Infantilism tries to destroy human nature itself in its most fundamental aspect - the ability to act as rational, free adults.

However, the descent of Homo Sapiens into Homo Infantilis and Asexualis is only the first stage of the revolution. The second, more seductive stage, is the supposed ascent of Homo Sapiens (now already transformed into Homo Infantilis) to Homo Deus - the deification of man through purely atheist, mainly scientific means. Let us study the main aspects of this dual revolution as it has developed in the last quarter-century.

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The Norwegian blogger Hanne Nabintu Herland writes: "Multiculturalism - many cultures living side by side with none of them taking the lead - has in essence turned out quite differently than then utopian dreamers and naïve neo-Marxists initially hoped for when they started out implementing this theory in the 1960's. Instead, multiculturalism has slowly robbed ordinary Europeans of pride in their own culture, many now feeling discriminated against in their own countries. Today, we watch how the tensions are building up in Europe and clashes happening now on an almost daily basis.

"Over the past decade the opponents of multiculturalism have multiplied. Leading politicians like Angela Merkel, David Cameron and Nicolas Sarkozy have all condemned this neo-Marxist strategy of integration that equates the ideals of other cultures with European traditional values in Europe. The idea was that Europeans should not uphold their own cultural roots on their own soil, but instead listen humbly to new immigrants and accept their traditional norms and customs in the name of diversity. Whoever protested, has quickly, over the years been labelled 'racist' or 'intolerant', causing the person to quickly be silenced.

"The French philosopher, Jacques Derrida is often called the father of multiculturalism. He developed the theory of deconstruction, implying that power structures come in pair: one weak, the other strong. For example, the pair of man - woman, white - black, European - African/Asian. His desire to tone down the 'strong in the pair' was done by giving 'the weak' extra rights. Among the many mistakes that the neo-Marxist Derrida did, in his quest to tear down the traditional structures of the European society, was naively believing that 'Europeans' are always the strong part and 'Africans - Asians' always the weak part in the West. So, his

theories legitimized a discrimination against Europe's population, insinuating that their perspectives are uninteresting and that only the perspectives of 'the weak' – that is the non-Western foreigner – had the right to strongly voice his beliefs..."

Multiculturalism in Europe usually means the triumph of Islam over the indigenous Christian culture. The blame for this must lie, first of all, on Christian leaders, who, with very few exceptions, have shown a spineless defeatism in the face of the Muslim threat and a shameful surrender of their own professed faith. The invasion of Europe by Muslim immigrants, and the vast inroads they have made into the Christian population, is both a consequence of, and punishment of, this Christian spinelessness. Experience shows that when Muslims reach about 20% of any nation's population, they become uncontrollable, with no-go areas for whites (especially blonde female whites), sharia law operating in parallel with constitutional law, the take-over of schools and universities, the censoring of all anti-Muslim comment. It looks as if Sweden has already reached this stage – helped, of course, by the exceptionally liberal ideology of the Swedish state.

The growth of Muslim influence in the West is rapid and inevitable for one simple reason: the Muslims have large families, whereas westerners prefer to abort their children. Almost all the countries of Europe now have rapidly aging populations and demographic growth rates well below that which would sustain the dominance of white, non-Muslim populations. But the suicidal ideologies of abortion and gay rights, not to mention ecumenism, continue to hold sway in European minds... Essentially, the battle to stop the Muslims' *internal* take-over of the West has already been lost. There is no way western governments can now stop this short of resorting to civil war against the Muslim population – or building a wall between whites and Muslims on the model of Israel's wall along the West Bank. But this is not only not remotely practical: it is excluded by the human rights ideology adhered to by almost all western leaders.

In 2015 the German Chancellor Angela Merkel opened the gates of her country (and through that, of the rest of Europe) to massive, unprecedented and more-or-less uncontrolled migration – if "migration" is the right word, as opposed to "invasion" – from the Muslim Middle East. Already the government measures this has necessitated – such as turning German citizens out of their own properties in order to accommodate migrants – as well as the totally unacceptable behaviour of some migrants – such as defecating in public places, and demanding the services of prostitutes at government expense – has created bitter opposition to her policies, and she is beginning a small and hesitant retreat from them. But the game is up; the enemy is already within the gates; there is essentially nothing that the West European states can do except accept the inevitable. As the saying goes: "If you can't beat them, join them."

However, it is a little different in Eastern Europe. Hungary's President Orban has defied Germany's "moral imperialism", refusing to let the Muslims into his country. Slovakia has agreed to take migrants, but only if they are Christians. The Romanians say, quite reasonably, that if they cannot absorb their Gipsy Roma population, how can they be expected to take in untold numbers of anti-Christian Muslims?

Meanwhile, the Bulgarians, in a quiet but determined fashion, have built a wall along their frontier with Turkey...

Greece is in a different position again. Completely helpless to stop the flood of Muslims crossing the Aegean Sea by boat, but entirely dependent on the EU to sustain their vast debt, the Greeks can only look on hopelessly as their Orthodox culture is invaded and destroyed. The Marxist government of Tsipras has reneged on its promise to leave the EU if the Europeans did not release them from their debts. So a "Grexit" seems unlikely in the near future. In any case, the atheist socialist, quasi-totalitarian ideology of the EU is close to the heart of the atheist Marxist Greek government.

Multiculturalism usually goes together in the minds of liberals with ecumenism, LGBT fanaticism and Islamophilia. Paradoxically, the Muslims are far from multicultural or ecumenical, wishing to impose the exclusive truth of Islam and sharia law wherever they settle. Nor do they approve - in theory - of LGBT. But the LGBT fanatics turn a blind eye to that...

As Melanie Phillips writes, since 1991, the implementation of the gay rights and LGBT agenda has in effect destroyed the West "As communism slowly crumbled, those on the far Left who remained hostile towards western civilization found another way to realize their goal of bringing it down.

"This was what might be called 'cultural Marxism'. It was based on the understanding that what holds a society together are the pillars of its culture: the structures and institutions of education, family, law, media and religion. Transform the principles and you can thus destroy the society they have shaped.

"The key insight was developed in particular by an Italian Marxist philosopher called Antonio Gramsci. His thinking was taken up by Sixties radicals - who are, of course, the generation that holds power in the West today.

"Gramsci understood that the working class would never rise up to seize the levers of 'production, distribution and exchange' as communism had prophesied. Economics was not the path to revolution.

"He believed instead that society could be overthrown if the values underpinning it could be formed into their antithesis: if its core principles were replaced by those of groups who were considered to be outsiders or who actively transgressed the moral codes of that society.

"So he advocated a 'long march through the institutions' to capture the citadels of culture and turn them into a collective fifth column, undermining from within and turning all the core values of society upside-down.

"This strategy has been carried out to the letter.

“The nuclear family has been widely shattered. Illegitimacy was transformed from a stigma into a ‘right’. The tragic disadvantage of fatherlessness was redefined as a neutrally viewed ‘lifestyle choice’.

“Education was wrecked, with its core tenet of transmitting a culture to successive generations replaced by the idea that what children already knew was of superior value to anything the adult world might foist upon them.

“The outcome of this ‘child-centred’ approach has been widespread illiteracy and ignorance and an eroded capacity for independent thought.

“Law and order were similarly undermined, with criminals deemed to be beyond punishment since they were ‘victims’ of society and with illegal drug-taking tacitly encouraged by a campaign to denigrate anti-drugs laws.

“The ‘rights’ agenda – commonly known as ‘political correctness’ – turned morality inside out by excusing any misdeeds by self-designated ‘victim’ groups on the grounds that such ‘victims’ could never be held responsible for what they did.

“Feminism, anti-racism and gay rights thus turned... Christians into the enemies of decency who were forced to jump through hoops to prove their virtue.

“This *Through the Looking Glass* mind-set rests on the belief that the world is divided into the powerful (who are responsible for all bad things) and the oppressed (who are responsible for none of them).

“This is a Marxist doctrine. But the extent to which such Marxist thinking has been taken up unwittingly even by the Establishment was illustrated by the astounding observation made in 2005 by the then senior law lord, Lord Bingham, that human rights law was all about protecting ‘oppressed’ minorities from the majority...

“When the Berlin Wall fell, we told ourselves that this was the end of ideology. We could not have been more wrong.

“The Iron Curtain came down only to be replaced by a rainbow-hued knuckle duster, as our cultural commissars pulverised all forbidden attitudes in order to reshape western society into a post-democratic, post-Christian, post-moral universe. Lenin would have smiled...”

Or perhaps he would not have been so pleased... For, as Ryszard Legutko writes: “If the old communists had lived long enough to see the world of today, they would be devastated by the contrast between how little they themselves had managed to achieve in their antireligious war and how successful the liberal democrats have been. All the objectives the communists set for themselves, and which they pursued with savage brutality, were achieved by the liberal democrats who, almost without any effort and simply by allowing people to drift along with the flow of modernity, succeeded in converting churches into museums, restaurants, and public buildings, secularizing entire societies, making secularism the militant ideology, pushing

religions to the sidelines, pressing the clergy into docility, and inspiring powerful mass culture with a strong antireligious bias in which a priest must be either a liberal challenging the Church or a disgusting villain.”

“Consider the main enemy,” writes Codevilla: “religion. America’s mainline Protestant denominations have long since delivered their (diminishing) flocks to the ruling class’s progressive priorities. Pope Francis advertises his refusal to judge attacks on Western civilization, including the murder of priests. His commitment of the Catholic Church to the building of ‘a new humanity,’ as he put it at July’s World Youth Day in Krakow, opens the Catholic Church to redefining Christianity to progressive missions in progressive terms, a mission already accomplished at Georgetown University, Notre Dame, and other former bastions of American Catholicism now turned into bastions of American progressivism. Evangelical leaders seem eager not to be left behind. Gramsci would have advised that enlisting America’s religious establishments in the service of the ruling class’s larger priorities need not have cost nearly as much as Mussolini paid in 1929. Refraining from frontal challenges to essentials would be enough.

“Instead, America’s progressives add insult to injury by imposing same-sex marriage, homosexuality, ‘global warming,’ and other fashions because they really have no priorities beyond themselves. America’s progressive rulers, like France’s, act less as politicians gathering support than as conquerors who enjoy punishing captives without worry that the tables may turn...”

Tragically, America’s Orthodox Christians have not stood up against the LGBT movement. Thus Fr. Alexander Webster writes: “Prominent Orthodox clergy and theologians have advocated for various *avant-garde* causes of non-Orthodox provenance, ranging from women clergy (first, the ‘restoration’ of the obsolete order of “deaconess” and, for some, even the radical innovation of female ‘priests’) to a soft-sell of the ancient proscriptions against abortion to the latest trend, ‘transgenderism.’ But the granddaddy of them all is a mounting obsession with all things LGBT. Concerning the latter, the leftist elites are surprisingly not so far ahead of a majority of the regular church-going faithful. The 2016 Religious Landscape Study by the Pew Research Center disclosed that 64 percent of Orthodox Americans surveyed in 2014 thought that homosexuality ‘should be accepted,’ while only 31 percent thought it ‘should be discouraged.’ Similarly, 54 percent strongly favored or favored ‘same-sex marriage,’ while only 41 percent strongly opposed or opposed it. The ‘same-sex marriage’ percentages comport with those of Mainline Protestants and Catholics, but are inverted compared to Evangelical Protestants and Mormons.”

There is a dynamic in this movement which involves constantly pushing the boundaries of the permissible. Thus LGBT is soon to be followed by LBTP (the “P” is for Pedophilia). Again, the manifesto of a British political party declares: “Welcome to the LGBTIQ+ website of the Green Party of England & Wales. Our mission is to advance the rights of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Intersex, Queer and Asexual people.” Wesleyan University in Connecticut, goes further: “LGBTQQFAGPBD”, which stands for: “lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, transsexual, queer,



questioning, flexural, asexual, gender-f\*\*k polyamorous, bondable/discipline, dominance/submission and sadism/masochism”!

“Once upon a time,” writes Melanie Phillips, “‘binary’ was a mathematical term. Now it is an insult on a par with ‘racist’, ‘sexist’ or ‘homophobic’, to be deployed as a weapon in our culture wars. The enemy on this particular battleground is anyone who maintains that there are men and there are women, and that the difference between them is fundamental.

“This ‘binary’ distinction is accepted as a given by the vast majority of the human race. No matter. It is now being categorized as a form of bigotry. Utterly bizarre? Scoff at your peril. It’s fast becoming an enforceable orthodoxy, with children and young people particularly in the frame for attitude reassignment.

“Many didn’t know whether to be amused or bemused when the feminist ideologue Germaine Greer was attacked by other progressives for claiming that transgender men who became women after medical treatment were still men. What started as a baffling skirmish on the wilder shores of victim-culture has now turned into something more menacing.

“The Commons Women and Equalities Select Committee has produced a report saying transgender people are being failed. The issue is not just whether they really do change their sex. The crime being committed by society is to insist on any objective evidence for this at all. According to the committee, people should be able to change their gender at will merely by filling in a form. Instead of requiring evidence of sex-change treatment, Britain should adopt the ‘self-declaration’ model now used in Ireland, Malta, Argentina and Denmark. To paraphrase Descartes, ‘I think I am a man/woman/of no sex; therefore I am.’...

“If people want to identify with either gender or none, no one is allowed to gainsay it. Objective reality crumbles under the supremacy of subjective desire. Those who demur are damned as heartless.

“In fact, gender fluidity itself creates victims. Professor Paul McHugh is the former chief psychiatrist at John Hopkins hospital in the US. In the 1960s this pioneered sex-reassignment surgery – but subsequently abandoned it because of the problems it left in its wake. Most young boys and girls who see sex reassignment, McHugh has written, have psychosocial issues and presume that such treatment will resolve them. The grim fact is that most of these youngsters do not find therapists willing to assess and guide them in ways that permit them to work out their conflicts and correct their assumptions. Rather, they and their families find only ‘gender counsellors’ who encourage them in their sexual misassumptions.

“In two states, any doctor who looked into the psychological history of a ‘transgendered’ boy or girl in search of a resolvable problem could lose his or her licence to practice medicine...

“The intention is to break down children’s sense of what sex they are also wipe from their minds any notion of gender norms...”

Every civilization known to man before our own has recognized, following God’s clear word that man was created “male and female” (Genesis 1.26, 27), that there is a fundamental difference between men and women that cannot be extirpated and that this is the basis for certain important moral and cultural norms. The desire to change one’s sex from male to female, or from female to male, was once considered a psychiatric illness, gender dysphoria, but in recent decades has been restored to “normal” status. Moreover the LGBT fanatics have forced through various abhorrent changes in moral and cultural norms, such as allowing men who have supposedly become women to use female toilets, and encouraging children to choose their gender. Those who doubt that men can really, deeply become women, or vice-versa, are discriminated against in various ways; and traditionalists can only watch in horror as the attempt to create a new, sexless civilization proceeds apace.

However, just recently an authoritative decision by the American College of Pediatricians has given hope that this madness of our contemporary civilization may eventually be healed. Michael Dorstewitz writes: “The American College of Pediatricians issued a statement this week condemning gender reclassification in children by stating that transgenderism in children amounts to child abuse.

“The American College of Pediatricians urges educators and legislators to reject all policies that condition children to accept as normal a life of chemical and surgical impersonation of the opposite sex. Facts – not ideology – determine reality.”

“The policy statement, authored by Johns Hopkins Medical School Psychology Professor Paul McHugh, listed eight arguments on why gender reclassification is harmful.

“1. Human sexuality is an objective biological binary trait: “XY” and “XX” are genetic markers of health – not genetic markers of a disorder.

“2. No one is born with a gender. Everyone is born with a biological sex. Gender (an awareness and sense of oneself as male or female) is a sociological and psychological concept; not an objective biological one.

“3. A person’s belief that he or she is something they are not is, at best, a sign of confused thinking. When an otherwise healthy biological boy believes he is a girl, or an otherwise healthy biological girl believes she is a boy, an objective psychological problem exists that lies in the mind not the body, and it should be treated as such.

“4. Puberty is not a disease and puberty-blocking hormones can be dangerous. Reversible or not, puberty-blocking hormones induce a state of disease – the absence of puberty – and inhibit growth and fertility in a previously biologically healthy child.

'5. According to the DSM-V, as many as 98% of gender confused boys and 88% of gender confused girls eventually accept their biological sex after naturally passing through puberty.

"6. Children who use puberty blockers to impersonate the opposite sex will require cross-sex hormones in late adolescence. Cross-sex hormones (testosterone and estrogen) are associated with dangerous health risks including but not limited to high blood pressure, blood clots, stroke and cancer.

"7. Rates of suicide are twenty times greater among adults who use cross-sex hormones and undergo sex reassignment surgery, even in Sweden which is among the most LGBTQ - affirming countries.

"8. Conditioning children into believing a lifetime of chemical and surgical impersonation of the opposite sex is normal and healthful as child abuse.

"The left, as one might expect, reacted swiftly with claws fully extended.

"*Think Progress* described the American College of Pediatricians as a 'hate group masquerading as pediatricians.'

"*The Huffington Post* said that 'Once again, Paul McHugh has used the ever more tarnished name of Johns Hopkins to distort science and spread transphobic misinformation.'

"McHugh, who formerly served as Johns Hopkins' psychiatrist in chief, issued an opinion last year stating that transgenderism is a 'mental disorder' and sex change is a 'medical impossibility'.

"The statement was also signed by Drs. Michelle A. Cretella, M.D., president of the American College of Pediatricians, and Quentin Van Meter, M.D., the organization's vice president..."

The rebellion against God's nature, in essence an attempt literally to *recreate human nature*, has reached such a state of blasphemous pride that soon even those forms of sexual activity which are still considered beyond the pale by contemporary legislators will soon be found acceptable. Thus the gay actor George Takei has openly and without being punished expressed his delight in the joys of paedophilia. The only good aspect of this statement lies in the fact that it suggests (but does not, of course, prove) what many people have suspected, that homosexuality and paedophilia are closely related forms of sexual perversion...

Earlier it was pointed out that the essence of humanrightism consists in the assertion of *self-will*. Man *wants* something, so he asserts that he has the *right* to it. Moreover, if obtaining what he wants entails a change in identity, so be it: he will *re-identify* himself. And nobody has the right to deny his new identity. For "I want: therefore I am". So if a man wants to be a woman, he re-identifies himself as a woman. And anybody who denies this "fact" is "transphobic", "hate-filled", etc.

But then the traditionalists also have the right to label this man, much more accurately, as *narcissist and infantile*. For what is the difference between adults and children if not that while adults are expected to take at least some account of reality and not mistake what they want to be with what they in fact are, children are excused that responsibility?

Until, that is, they grow up! But our narcissistic generation does not seem to want to grow up. Its main occupation seems to be in taking “selfies”, delights in completely self-centred, infantile behavior – even to the extent of dressing up as children.

The narcissism of contemporary western civilization is reflected in what Professor Frank Furedi has called “therapy culture”. He argues, as Peter Watson writes, “that, by the beginning of the twenty-first century, the legacy of the therapeutic revolution is that ‘society is in the process of drawing up a radically new definition of what constitutes the human condition’. He has found that therapy, happiness and fulfilment can be damagingly intertwined.

“The core element in this new condition, he says, is that many experiences which have hitherto been interpreted as a normal part of everyday life have been redefined as injurious to people’s emotions. He quotes a wealth of figures to substantiate this, including the fact that children as far unhappier these days than ever before, that children as young as four are ‘legitimate targets for therapeutic intervention’, that there has been a ‘massive increase’ in depression ‘due to the difficulty that people have in dealing with disappointment and failure’.

“The number of mental health counsellors has snowballed, in both the UK and the USA. In Furedi’s critique, 53 percent of British students had ‘anxiety at pathological levels’, and a host of new ‘illnesses’ have been conceived, or created, by new profession[al]s who ‘invent the needs they claim to satisfy’. He explores many aspects of this ‘medicalization’ or ‘psychologicalization’ or ‘pathologicalization’ of life, arguing that there has been a ‘promiscuity’ in therapeutic diagnosis: counselling for job loss, for people who are ‘exercise addicts’ or ‘sex addicts’, for the recently divorced, for women who have just given birth, for athletes who retire from competition and face ‘the onset of post-sporting depression’. He describes self-help books to help people survive their twenties, claims that office politics has been redefined as ‘bullying’, caution as ‘inhibition’ and diffidence as ‘withholding’. In a survey carried out in the same place in 1985 and again in 1996, he reports, there was found to have been an increased of 155 percent among sixteen- to nineteen-year-olds who considered themselves disabled.

“His point is that, from birth to education to marriage and parenting, all the way through to bereavement, ‘people’s experience is interpreted through the medium of the therapeutic ethos’. Among all this, religion has been subordinated to therapy. ‘This subordination of religious doctrine to concern with people’s existential quest reflects a wider shift towards an orientation towards a preoccupation with the self. A study of ‘seeker churches’ in the United States argues that their ability to attract new

recruits is based on their ability to tap into the therapeutic understanding of Americans.

“Furedi believes, as Christopher Lasch does, that there has been a powerful shift away from the more traditional affirmation of communal purpose toward encouraging people to find ‘meaning through their individual selves’. And this is where the fundamental problem lies. It is a problem because it exaggerates people’s vulnerability. Some accounts of therapeutic culture associate it with the ‘selfish or at least self-centred’ quest for fulfilment, but, he argues, in fact therapy culture promotes self-limitation. ‘It posits the self in distinctly fragile and feeble form and insists that the management of life requires the continuous intervention of therapeutic expertise.’ He finds that in therapy culture, many emotions are depicted negatively ‘precisely because they disorient the individual from the search for self-fulfilment’.

“Even love, though portrayed as the supreme source of self-fulfilment, is depicted as potentially harmful ‘because it threatens to subordinate the self to another’. In books such as Anne Wilson Schaef’s *Escape from Intimacy* and *Women Who Love Too Much* by Robin Norwood, ‘Intense love towards another is regularly criticized for distracting individuals from fulfilling their own needs and from pursuing self-interest’. In a similar vein, ‘It has been suggested that people who have too much faith may be suffering from religious addiction’. Father Leo Booth in his *Where God Becomes a Drug* warns of becoming ‘addicted to the certainty, sureness or sense of security that our faith provides’.

“The rise of confessional novels and television programs, what Joyce Carol Oates has described as ‘pathography’, has eroded the sphere of private life, with the result that no shame now attaches to negative events and ‘mere survival is presented as a triumph’, as we sacralise self-absorption. From this it follows that we have redefined the meaning of responsibility: ‘This redefinition of responsibility as responsibility to oneself helps provide emotionalism with moral meaning’.

“What has happened, says Furedi, following Ernest Gellner, is that in our risky modern society the spiritual struggle of former times has been replaced by a personal struggle for ‘attention and acceptance’. The decline of tradition helps situated the demand for new ways of making sense of the world. The weakening of shared values fragments this quest for meaning, privatizes it and lends it an individual character. ‘Therapeutics promises to provide answers to the individual’s quest for the meaning of life.’ But this gives rise, he says, to a therapeutic ethos in which there are no values higher than the self. Therapy attempts to avoid the problem of how people can be bound to a shared view of the world (as with religions) by offering individuated solace.

“Furedi argues that the invasion of the therapeutic ethos into life has reached such proportions that ‘[b]eing ill can now constitute a defining feature of an individual’s identity’... Self-esteem has become paramount in our psychological lives: almost any action or policy can be justified by its effect on our self-esteem, almost any behavioural wrong or dereliction can be put down to lack of self-esteem. He scoffs at

the absurdities it can lead to, such as the case of Jennifer Hoes, a Dutch artist who was so much in love with herself, she said, that she decided marry herself. 'Self-esteem has acquired a free-floating character that can attach itself in any issue.'"

"Self-marriage" is indeed one of the most striking and characteristic examples of contemporary narcissism and infantilism. Abigail Pesta writes: "Self-marriage is a small but growing movement, with consultants and self-wedding planners popping up across the world. In Canada, a service called Marry Yourself Vancouver launched this past summer, offering consulting services and wedding photography. In Japan, a travel agency called Cerca Travel offers a two-day self-wedding package in Kyoto: You can choose a wedding gown, bouquet, and hairstyle, and pose for formal wedding portraits. On the website *I Married Me*, you can buy a DIY marriage kit: For \$50, you get a sterling silver ring, ceremony instructions, vows, and 24 'affirmation cards' to remind you of your vows over time. For \$230, you can get the kit with a 14-karat gold ring.

"It's not a legal process – you won't get any tax breaks for marrying yourself. It's more a 'rebuke' of tradition, says Rebecca Traister, author of *All the Single Ladies: Unmarried Women and the Rise of an Independent Nation*. 'For generations, if women wanted to have economic stability and a socially sanctioned sex life or children, there was enormous social and economic pressure to do that within marriage,' she says. 'Personally, as someone who lived for many years single and then did get married, I know that the kind of affirmation I got for getting married was unlike anything I'd ever had in any other part of my life.' That, she adds, is 'incredibly unjust.'"

Here we come back to that passion which unites all the Marxists – old and new, cultural and barbarian: the feeling of burning injustice, of resentment, of envy. This feeling, together with the desire to "rebuke" tradition, shows that Cultural Marxism is the old protest against God, only in a contemporary social and political mode. Only, in becoming "cultural", Marxism has now migrated from a social or political movement to pure individualism, narcissism, even infantilism, which can be described as a childish refusal to face up to reality, an insistence that what I want I must have and *will* have – and woe to anyone who stands in my way. So the poor man insists on being rich; the stupid man insists that he is clever; the boy insists that he is a girl, and the girl – that she is a boy. And anyone who thinks otherwise is an enemy of the people who must be exterminated – or, at a minimum, utterly ostracized.

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Where and when did this madness begin and where could it end?

Ultimately this is the same madness Adam and Eve succumbed to when they accepted the temptation of "becoming as gods" who "will not surely die". In its modern form, it began in the Renaissance, when man became intoxicated by his increasing knowledge, and was pierced again with the desire to eat of the Tree of the knowledge of good and evil. But now the Tree is called science...

However, the early modern age was still a religious age, and for all its fascination with humanism, believed in other forms of knowledge than science. Moreover, it believed in the supra-scientific mystery of man, born in the image of God and having an immaterial “quintessence” that could not be reduced to the four material elements. Thus to the probing but dim-witted Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Hamlet says:

*You would play upon me;  
You would seem to know my stops;  
You would pluck out the heart of my mystery;  
You would sound me from my lowest  
note to the top of my compass.  
And there is much music, excellent voice,  
in this little organ.  
Yet cannot you make it speak...*

However, the Enlightenment dispelled the aura of mystery, the idea of a certain unfathomability in the nature of man. In its stead came the conviction that nothing was beyond the bounds of human investigation and manipulation - including human nature itself. Hence the preoccupation with - and fear of - the figure of Frankenstein in the nineteenth century.

The real explosion in science, and in the numbers of scientists, came during the Cold War. Both of the superpowers were motivated by the desire to steal a march on the other in the arms race; both believed in science as the key to knowledge, which in turn was the key to power; both subjected even human beings to scientific manipulation, hoping to produce a new man - “Homo Sovieticus” or “Homo Occidentalis”. But this new man was seen as only a variant of the old man - more pliable, more obedient, and less religious; conditioned so as to be “beyond freedom and dignity” (B.F. Skinner), subhuman rather than superhuman, as befitted the totalitarian ideologies of both East and West. For the ideal in both countries was *control* rather than *recreation*, the reduction of man to a machine or an animal rather than a god.

What is new about the last quarter-century since the end of the Cold War is the desire to create *a new and superior species*, not a variant of *Homo Sapiens*, but something completely new - *Homo Deus!* Nor is there any Frankensteinian horror at this prospect. On the contrary, it is embraced with enthusiasm and even with a certain intoxicated, quasi-religious rapture.

The critical breakthrough event, according to the Israeli historian Yuval Noah Harari, is what he claims is “the replacement of natural selection by intelligent design”, when, instead of being the passive object of mindless natural selection, man takes active, intelligent, deliberate control of his own evolution. This “could happen in any of three ways: through biological engineering, cyborg engineering (cyborgs are beings that combine organic with non-organic parts) or the engineering of inorganic life.”

The most important of these methods is biological engineering, which is “deliberate intervention on the biological level (e.g. implanting a gene) aimed at modifying an organism’s shape, capabilities, needs or desires, in order to realize some preconceived cultural idea.”

After describing genetic experiments performed on voles and mice, and the possibility of resurrecting Siberian mammoths and Neanderthal ape-men, Harari continues with even more remarkable chutzpah (or hubris): “Why not go back to God’s drawing board and design a better Sapiens? The abilities, needs and desires of *Homo Sapiens* have a generic basis, and the Sapiens genome is no more complex than that of voles and mice. (The mouse genome contains about 2.5 billion nucleobases, the Sapiens genome about 2.9 billion bases – meaning the latter is only 14 per cent larger.) In the medium range – perhaps in a few decades – genetic engineering and other forms of biological engineering might enable us to make far-reaching alterations not only to our physiology, immune system and life expectancy, but also to our intellectual and emotional capacities. If genetic engineering can create genius mice, why not genius humans? If it can create monogamous voles, why not humans hard-wired to remain faithful to their partners?”

“The Cognitive Revolution that turned *Homo Sapiens* from an insignificant ape into the master of the world did not require any noticeable change in physiology or even in the size and external shape of the Sapiens brain. It apparently involved no more than a few small changes to internal brain structure. Perhaps another small change would be enough to ignite a Second Cognitive Revolution, create a completely new type of consciousness, and transform *Homo Sapiens* into something altogether different.

“True, we still don’t have the acumen to achieve this, but there seems to be no insurmountable technical barrier preventing us from producing superhumans. The main obstacles are the ethical and political objections that have slowed down research on humans. And no matter how convincing the ethical arguments may be, it is hard to see how they can hold back the next step for long, especially if what is at stake is the possibility of prolonging human life indefinitely, conquering incurable diseases and upgrading our cognitive and emotional abilities.

“What could happen, for example, if we developed a cure for Alzheimer’s disease that, as a side benefit, could dramatically improve the memories of healthy people? Would anyone be able to halt the relevant research? And when the cure is developed, could any law enforcement agency limit it to Alzheimer’s patients and prevent healthy people from using it to acquire super-memories?”

“It’s unclear whether bioengineering could really resurrect the Neanderthals, but it would very likely bring down the curtain on *Homo sapiens*. Tinkering with our genes won’t necessarily kill us. But we might fiddle with *Homo sapiens* to such an extent that we could no longer be *Homo sapiens*...”

“Recently, only a tiny fraction of these new opportunities have been realized. Yet the world of 2014 is already a world in which culture is releasing itself from the



shackles of biology. Our ability to engineer not merely the world around us, but above all the world inside our bodies and minds, is developing at breakneck speed. More and more spheres of activity are being shaken out of their complacent ways. Lawyers need to rethink issues of privacy and identity; governments are faced with rethinking matters of health care and equality; sports associations and educational institutions need to redefine fair play and achievement; pension funds and labour markets should readjust to a world in which sixty might be the new thirty. They must all deal with the conundrums of bioengineering, cyborgs and inorganic life.

“Mapping the first human genome required fifteen years and \$3 billion. Today you can map a person’s DNA within a few weeks and at the cost of a few hundred dollars. The era of personalized medicine – medicine that matches treatment to DNA – has begun. The family doctor could soon tell you with greater certainty that you face high risks of liver cancer, whereas you needn’t worry too much about heart attacks. She could determine that a popular medication that helps 91 per cent of people is useless to you, and you should instead take another pill, fatal to many people but just right for you. The road to near-perfect medicine stands before us.

“However, with improvements in medical technology will come new ethical conundrums. Ethicists and legal experts are already wrestling with the thorny issue of privacy as it relates to DNA. Would insurance companies be entitled to ask for our DNA scans and to raise premiums if they could discover a genetic tendency to reckless behavior. Would we be required to fax our DNA, rather than our CV, to potential employers? Could an employer favour a candidate because his DNA looks better? Or could we sue in such cases for ‘genetic discrimination’? Could a company that develops a new creature or a new organ register a patent on its DNA sequences? It is obvious that one can own a particular chicken, but can one own an entire species?

“Such dilemmas are dwarfed by the ethical, social and political implications of the Gilgamesh Project [the Project to achieve immortality] and of our potential new abilities to create superhumans. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, government medical programmes throughout the world, national health insurance programmes and national constitutions worldwide recognize that a humane society ought to give all its members fair medical treatment and keep them in relatively good health. That was all well and good as long as medicine was chiefly concerned with preventing illness and healing the sick. What might happen once medicare becomes preoccupied with enhancing human abilities? Would all humans be entitled to such enhanced abilities, or would there be a new superhuman elite?

“Our late modern world prides itself on recognizing, for the first time in history, the basic equality of all humans, yet it might be poised to create the most unequal of societies. Throughout history, the upper classes always claimed to be smarter, stronger and generally better than the underclass. They were usually deluding themselves. A baby born to a poor peasant family was likely to be as intelligent as the crown prince. With the help of new medical capabilities, the pretensions of the upper classes might soon become an objective reality.

“This is not science fiction. Most science-fiction plots describe a world in which Sapiens – identical to us – enjoy superior technology such as light-speed spaceships and laser guns. The ethical and political dilemmas central to these plots are taken from our own world, and they merely recreated our emotional and social tensions against a futuristic backdrop. Yet the real potential of future technologies is to change *Homo sapiens* itself, including our emotions and desires, and not merely our vehicles and weapons. What is a spaceship compared to an eternally young cyborg who does not breed and has no sexuality, who can share thoughts directly with other beings, whose abilities to focus and remember are a thousand times greater than our own, and who is never angry or sad, but has emotions and desires that we cannot begin to imagine?

“Science fiction rarely describes such a future, because an accurate description is by definition incomprehensible. Producing a film about the life of some super cyborg is akin to producing *Hamlet* for an audience of Neanderthals. Indeed, the future masters of the world will probably be more different from us than we are from Neanderthals. Whereas we and the Neanderthals are at least human, our inheritors will be godlike.

“Physicists define the Big Bang as a singularity. It is a point at which all the known laws of nature did not exist. Time did not exist. It is thus meaningless to say that anything existed ‘before’ the Big Bang. We may be fast approaching a new singularity, when all the concepts that give meaning to our world – me, you, men, women, love and hate – will become irrelevant. Anything happening beyond this point is meaningless to us...”

It would be foolish to deny the possibility of stunning scientific discoveries in the future that will enable scientists, if not radically to change the nature of man, at least modify it – within the limits placed on His creation by the Creator. However, Harari’s vision of the future depends on three rather large and definitely false assumptions: (1) that God does not exist, (2) that the origin of man is through the mindless process of Darwinian natural selection, and (3) that the nature of man is entirely material, wholly “wrapped up” in his genes. For believers in God, in creation (as opposed to evolution) and in the fixedness of human nature as made in the image and likeness of God, it would seem much more likely that the technological innovations he hails will lead to a kind of “superman” that Harari appears not to have envisaged at all, but which was definitely envisaged by the saints: the Nietzschean superman, “genius of geniuses”, world ruler and perdition that Church tradition knows as *the Antichrist*.

In 1953, DNA was discovered. As we have seen, properly understood this discovery disproved the foundation myth of western civilization – Darwinism. But at the same time it gave scientists in the image of Frankenstein the hope of changing human nature by shifting around its physical building blocks.

The discovery of DNA was followed by notable “advances” in reproductive technology with potentially enormous – and catastrophic - consequences for society. “First, contraception severed the connection between sex and reproduction. It became possible to have sex without having babies. Then modern technology severed

the connection between reproduction and sex. It became possible to have babies without having sex." Further developments from this included the cloning of animals, and the supposed creation of animal-human hybrids.

Again, since the 1960s surgeons and doctors have been attempting to heal diseases by transplanting organs from dead or even – horror of horrors! – living donors. Indeed, the "harvesting" of organs for transplant operations takes place while the patient is only "brain dead", which means, not real death, but a serious state of illness. Therefore it actually constitutes *murder*, according to a statement of the True Orthodox Church of Greece in 2013. This has led to a new form of organized crime – the extraction of body parts from living people (often Chinese criminals about to be executed or poor peasants in Turkey or India) in order to prolong the lives of rich sick people in the West. There is no doubt that the motivation of several of these scientific experiments is not just ungodly, but anti-God. Thus Professor Sir Robert Edwards, who invented the technique of *in vitro* fertilization, said that his research was aimed at establishing who was in charge: God or the scientists. "He was left in no doubt. 'It was us,' he said..."

The evil and truly eschatological possibilities of this revolution were clearly seen as early as 1976 by the director of the Institute of Genetics of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR, Academician N.P. Dubinin: "The achievements of human genetics, and of general and molecular genetics, will push forward the problem of interference in human heredity. The coming revolution in genetics will demand a decisive overturning of the previously dominant view concerning the primacy of nature in its natural form. Genetics will turn out to be capable of overcoming the natural story of life and creating organic forms inconceivable in the light of the laws of natural evolution... For the molecular genetics and the molecular biology of the 21<sup>st</sup> century there lies in store the prospect of creating cells as the only self-regulating open living system, which will be bound up with the understanding of the essence of life. An exchange of living forms will take place between the earth and other worlds... The aim of genetic engineering is the creation of organisms according to a given model, whose hereditary program is formed by means of introducing the recipient of new genetic information. This information can be artificially synthesised or separated in the form of natural genetic structures from various organisms. In this way a new single genetic system which cannot arise by means of natural evolution will be created experimentally... Various manipulations with DNA molecules can lead to the unforeseen creation of biologically dangerous hybrid forms..."

After quoting this passage, Fr. Vladislav Sveshnikov expressed the truly apocalyptic fear: "We have to admit that *contemporary science is preparing the ground for the coming of the Antichrist.*" In more recent years, with the mapping of the human genome, and the development of ever more sophisticated methods of genetic manipulation, these fantastical ideas seem less fantastical by the day... Both St. Nilus the Myrrh-gusher and St. Seraphim of Sarov hinted that the Antichrist will be born through a form of *in vitro* fertilization: the devil will enter, and take complete control of, the sperm of his father before it has entered the womb of his mother, enabling him to claim he was born, like Christ, from the Holy Spirit and a virgin.

Now human nature is God's greatest work, the crown of His creation. Science with all its ingenuity has never improved on man as God has created him. Once there was a scientific conference that tried to establish ways of improving on the human hand. The conclusion was: we cannot improve on it. For "Thou hast fashioned me, and hast laid Thy hand upon me. Thy knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is mighty, I cannot attain unto it" (Psalm 138.4-5)... When man attempts to overstep the bounds of human nature by trying to improve on it, he is silently rebuked. Thus human organ transplants come up against a clear sign of God's displeasure - *rejection*. Only by massive doses of drugs administered daily will the body be persuaded to accept the foreign invasion of the donor's body part. And so inadvertently, in the course of these transplant operations, scientists have discovered what the Holy Fathers always knew but which our modern mechanistic theories have caused them to forget: that there is a very mysterious union between the soul and the body, between certain psychological functions and certain "purely" physical organs.

We are not here talking about the crude and obviously false materialist theory that mental activity is simply the same as brain activity. We are talking about the fact that memory, emotion, even personal identity, seem to be linked *with every organ of the body*. Now we have always known this about *the heart*. And the first heart-transplant operations produced frightening results. The family of the first man who received a new heart in South Africa could not recognize him after the operation; he seemed to be *a different person*. Later transplants have confirmed that many of the characteristics of the donor seem to be transplanted with his heart into the patient. Some of these characteristics are trivial, such as tastes in food; others are more serious, such as sexual orientation, or suicidal thoughts...

More recently, as Dr. Danny Penman writes, scientists "started claiming that our memories and characters are encoded not just in our brain, but throughout our entire body.

"Consciousness, they claim, is created by every living cell in the body acting in concert.

"They argue, in effect, that our hearts, livers and every single organ in the body stores our memories, drives our emotions and imbues us with our own individual characters. Our whole body, they believe, is the seat of the soul; not just the brain.

"And if any of these organs should be transplanted into another person, parts of these memories - perhaps even elements of the soul - might also be transferred.

"There are now more than 70 documented cases... where transplant patients have taken on some of the personality traits of the organ donors.

"Professor Gary Schwartz and his co-workers at the University of Arizona have documented numerous seemingly inexplicable experiences... And every single one is a direct challenge to the medical status quo.

“In one celebrated case uncovered by Professor Schwartz’s team, an 18-year-old boy who wrote poetry, played music and composed songs was killed in a car crash. A year before he died, his parents came across a tape of a song he had written, entitled, *Danny, My Heart is Yours*.

“In his haunting lyrics, the boy sang about how he felt destined to die and donate his heart. After his death, his heart was transplanted into an 18-year-old girl – named Danielle.

“When the boy’s parents met Danielle, they played some of his music and she, despite never having heard the song before, knew the words and was able to complete the lyrics.

“Professor Schwartz also investigated the case of a 29-year-old lesbian fast-food junkie who received the heart of a 19-year-old vegetarian woman described as ‘man crazy’.

“After the transplant, she told friends that meat now made her sick, and that she no longer found women attractive. In fact, shortly after the transplant she married a man.

“In one equally inexplicable case, a middle-aged man developed a newfound love for classical music after a heart transplant.

“It transpired that the 17-year-old donor had loved classical music and played the violin. He had died in a drive-by shooting, clutching a violin to his chest.

“Nor are the effects of organ transplants restricted to hearts. Kidneys also seem to carry some of the characteristics of their original owners.

“Take the case of Lynda Gammons from Weston, Lincolnshire, who donated one of her kidneys to her husband Ian.

“Since the operation, Ian believes he has taken on aspects of his wife’s personality. He has developed a love of baking, shopping, vacuuming and gardening. Prior to the transplant, he loathed all forms of housework with a vengeance.

“He has also adopted a dog – yet before his operation he was an avowed ‘cat man’, unlike his wife who favoured dogs...”

The most recent – and shocking – proposed innovation is frozen brain transplants.

Although, to the present writer’s knowledge, there are no contemporary conciliar church decisions on this subject, nevertheless Church Tradition provides us with some important clues in our search for guidance on the issues raised by these facts... Thus St. Philaret of New York (+1985) wrote: “The heart is the center, the mid-point of man’s existence. And not only in the spiritual sense, where *heart* is the term for the

center of one's spiritual person, one's 'I'; in physical life, too, the physical heart is the chief organ and central point of the organism, being mysteriously and indissolubly connected with the experiences of one's soul. It is well known to all how a man's purely psychical and nervous experiences joy, anger, fright, etc., – are reflected immediately in the action of the heart, and conversely how an unhealthy condition of the heart acts oppressively on the psyche and consciousness... Yes, here the bond is indissoluble – and if, instead of the continuation of a man's *personal* spiritual-bodily life, concentrated in *his own* heart, there is imposed on him a strange heart and some kind of strange life, until then totally unknown to him – then what is this if not a *counterfeit* of his departing life; what is this if not the annihilation of his spiritual-bodily life, his individuality, his personal 'I'? And *how and as whom will* such a man present himself at the general resurrection?

“But the new attainment does not end even here. It is intended also to introduce into the organism of a man the heart of an animal – *i.e.*, so that after the general resurrection a 'man' will stand at the Last Judgement with the heart of an ape (or a cat, or a pig, or whatever). Can one imagine a more senseless and blasphemous mockery of human nature itself, created in the image and likeness of God?

“Madness and horror! But what has called forth this nightmare of criminal interference in man's life – in that life, the lawful Master of which is its Creator alone, and no one else? The answer is not difficult to find. The loss of Christian hope, actual disbelief in the future life, failure to understand the Gospel and disbelief in it, in its Divine truthfulness – these are what have called forth these monstrous and blasphemous experiments on the personality and life of man. The Christian view of life and death, the Christian understanding and conception of earthly life as time given by God for preparation for eternity – have been completely lost. And from this the result is: terror in the face of death, seen as the absolute perishing of life and the annihilation of personality; and a clutching at earthly life – live, live, live, at any cost or means prolong earthly life, after which there is nothing!”

St. Philaret's reference to the general resurrection provides us with the clue to the evaluation of the innovations we have been discussing. The Church teaches, on the one hand, that the soul continues to function with full consciousness even after the body has been reduced to dust; but on the other hand, that the body will be resurrected at the last day in order that soul and body together may receive the reward fitting to them for the deeds they have performed together in life. This illustrates two important truths. First, man, the whole man, is not soul alone, still less body alone, but *soul and body together*. Just as they are conceived together and simultaneously, so they will enter into eternal life together. And secondly, every soul will be judged with his own personal body, and not with any other's (II Corinthians 5.10).

This second truth is sometimes doubted on the grounds that in the course of a man's lifetime every cell in his body dies and is replaced many times, so that it makes no sense to speak about “his own personal body”. We take the elements of our body from outside and replace them in a constant exchange that unites us indissolubly with the nature around us. However, the discovery of DNA in the 1950s weakened

this objection in that it showed how, in principle, a man's body can be said to be *the same* throughout his lifetime in spite of the fact that its entire cellular composition will be "recycled" as it were several times in the course of his life from birth to death. For his bodily identity is encapsulated in his DNA; every organ and every cell of my body is marked by a seal showing that it belongs to me and me alone – my personal DNA, which is *who I am*, physically (but not psychologically or spiritually) speaking. This is the natural order, the foundation of my personal physical identity and the earnest of the re-establishment of my personal physical identity at the General Resurrection.

*In principle*, therefore, a body can be said to be the same and unique and belonging to only one person in spite of the most radical overhauls in its cellular and atomic composition. In view of this, it is not difficult to understand why God has ordained that my body rejects the invasion of a body part with a different DNA – it's simply not me! Physical rejection by the body should be accompanied by moral rejection by the soul – it cannot be God's will for this mixing of persons (and even of species) to take place!

This also explains why gene therapy, the attempt to change a man's DNA, whether directly or indirectly (as in the new mRNA vaccines), must be rejected insofar as it is an attempt to change the psycho-physical nature of man as God created it.

This general thesis raises the question: Are all organ transplants to be rejected? Or only transplants of the most central organs, such as the heart? Only a truly Orthodox Council, employing the expertise of Orthodox Christian scientists, can decide this question.

There has been no such Council to the present time, but a future council, Ecumenical or Local, could include this issue on its agenda...

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Being a religious animal, man will never be satisfied with a purely materialist, scientific progress to godmanhood or superman status, the more so in that the collapse of Marxism-Leninism has discredited the purely atheist concept of man. However, in order that the religious component in the scientists' world-view should support science *wherever it leads*, it must not be a traditional, dogmatic religion like Christianity. Apart from any other problems (and there are many), traditional religions like Christianity claim to have discovered the one truth once and for all – "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today and forever" (Hebrews 13.8). But scientists claim to have the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth through the uniquely reliable path of empiricism, so they cannot allow that the most important truths were discovered thousands of years ago, and not by empirical methods, but by Divine Revelation. From this point of view, Christianity (and Islam) is *passé*, outdated, pre-scientific and, to a significant degree (in that it allows other, non-empirical methods of reaching the truth), *anti-scientific*.

However, there is one ancient, pre-scientific religion that is not incompatible with the scientific march to godmanhood – Buddhism. Buddhism is popular with scientists because of its adogmatism and rejection of a personal Creator God distinct from His creation, and because some of the cosmological ideas of Buddhism and its ancestor, Hinduism, are compatible with popular modern cosmological ideas.

The most popular attempt to claim godmanhood has been the Hindu-Masonic-Theosophist-New Age doctrine that man is a god by nature. The main intellectual foundation of this doctrine, as of all materialist anthropologies, remains the theory of evolution. But the raw material or dust from which evolution springs is now endowed with a supra-material principle, or natural divinity, which emerges ever more clearly as inorganic matter evolves in organic matter, vegetable into animal, animal into human, and human – into divine status.

Thus J.S. Buck writes: “First a mollusc, then a fish, then a bird, then a mammal, then a man, then a Master, then a God... The theologians who have made such a caricature or fetish of Jesus were ignorant of this normal, progressive, higher evolution of man.” Again, Marilyn Ferguson writes: “The myth of the Saviour ‘out there’ is being replaced with the myth of the hero ‘in here’. Its ultimate expression is the discovery of the divinity within us... In a very real sense, we are each other.” And psychiatrist Scott Peck writes: “Our unconscious is God... The goal of spiritual growth is... the attainment of godhead by the conscious self. It is for the individual to become totally, wholly God.” Finally, John Dunphy preaches “a new faith: a religion of humanity that recognizes and respects the spark of what theologians call divinity in every human being.”

However, man is *not* a god by nature, although he can become one by grace. True, his soul was created by an act of Divine inbreathing. But, as St. Macarius the Great points out, this does not mean that his soul is part of the uncreated Godhead, but rather that it is “a creature noetical, beautiful, great and wondrous, a fair likeness to and image of God”. If man were a god by nature, as Vladimir Lossky points out, then, “without mentioning other outrageous consequences, the problem of evil would be inconceivable... Either Adam could not sin, since by reason of his soul, a part of divinity, he was God, or else original sin would involve the Divine nature – God Himself would sin in Adam.”

It is because man is not a god by nature that he is able to fall, and has in fact fallen, from his godlike status. Thus man has not evolved from the apes, but he can *devolve* to an animal-like status - as David says, “Man, being in honour, did not understand; he is compared to the mindless cattle, and is become like unto them” (Psalm 48.12). At the same time he retains the ability, through Christ, of returning from his present animal-like to the godlike status he had in the beginning.

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It should be clear now that the Orthodox Christian doctrine of man as a bicomposite creature made in the image of the God-Man is the only final safeguard against the opposite and antichristian doctrine of man as the man-god made in the



image of the beast, to which the whole of modern culture and scientism, both theist and antitheist, tends. For if the godlike in man is denied, he is assimilated to the animals and becomes like them. If, on the other hand, the godlike in him is recognized, but is ascribed, in common with the theistic evolutionists and New Agers, to some emergent properties of matter, then the position is no better, and even decidedly worse. For then man is seen as the summit of being, whose godlikeness comes from within creation, and within his own nature, but not from without. And the final consequence of that is that he becomes like Satan or the prince of Tyre in his pride, of whom the only true God says: "Because thine heart is lifted up, and thou has said, I am a God, I sit in the seat of God, in the midst of the seas, yet thou art a man, and not God, though thou set thine heart as the heart of God" (Ezekiel 28.2).

The Christian vision of man is both far greater, and far humbler, than the New Agers'. On the one hand, the origin of man is to be found, not in the dust of an original "big bang", but in the Council of the Holy Trinity; and the Divine image is to be identified with those attributes of reason, freedom and self-sacrificial love which raise him far above the animals. And on the other hand, his glorious destiny is not the result of his own efforts or the reward for his own merits, but the work of God Himself. Man is called to be a partaker of the Divine nature (II Peter 1.4); in St. Basil's striking phrase, he is a creature who has received the command to become a god. But he carries out this command, not in pride, but in humility, not by inflating himself, but by magnifying God his Saviour, not by nourishing his own supposed divinity, or "divine spark", but by purifying the image of God in himself so as to be irradiated by the Uncreated Light.

*February 4/17, 2021.*

## 5. THE SOLID FOUNDATION OF GOD

A verse from today's epistle expresses perfectly the tension that lies at the heart of the Christian life: "The solid foundation of God stands, having this seal: 'The Lord knows those who are His', and 'Let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity'" (II Timothy 2.19).

On the one hand, the elect are chosen by God from before the foundation of the world, and their election is irreversible, being based on God's perfect knowledge of all His creatures. He does not need to look at their external works because He knows their inner hearts; He knows that they love Him above all, and has chosen them accordingly. And as a result of that, as the Lord says, "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. My Father, Who has given them to Me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand" (John 10.27-29).

This is infinitely comforting. Whatever happens to us in our lives, and whatever our sins and mistakes and misfortunes and the enemies arrayed against us, we will remain God's, the apple of His eye, surrounded by His all-powerful protection and destined for eternal life, if we belong to the chosen. The Lord said that in the last times the temptations will be so great that "unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened" (Matthew 24.22). "False christs and false prophets will arise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if it were possible, even the elect" (Matthew 24.24). But it is *not* possible. The elect will *not* be deceived, they will remain faithful to the end, "storing up for themselves a good foundation for the time to come, that they may hold of eternal life" (I Timothy 5.19)...

On the other hand, we cannot be sure that we belong to the elect... Some of the saints were assured during their earthly lifetime that they were saved; but these were rare exceptions. One of them was St. Paul, who wrote shortly before his death that he had fought the good fight, and finished the race and kept the faith (II Timothy 4.7). But his general counsel to Christians was: "Let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall" (I Corinthians 10.12). So we may *think* we are standing firmly in the faith of Christ, when in fact we are fallen away from Him, or about to fall...

The only sure sign that we belong to the elect is that we "depart from iniquity". For faith is dead without good works, the works of repentance that prove our departure from sin. As long as we remain in iniquity, we can hope that we belong to the elect - indeed, we *must* hope - but we cannot be sure. For how can we be sure that we shall produce works that truly signify repentance, a repentance acceptable to God? Therefore, says St. Paul, "everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they [worldly athletes] do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown. Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air. But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified" (I Corinthians 9.25-27).

So the tension exists, and will continue to exist for every Christian until his soul leaves his body and he stands before the judgement seat of Christ. Until then, he must hope, but can never be completely sure, that he belongs to that flock which St. Peter addressed as “elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience and sprinkling of the Blood of Jesus Christ” (I Peter 1.2)

*February 7/20, 2021.*

## 6. THE PSEUDO-SCIENCE OF EUGENICS

In both East and West, the most popular application of science was in the control of man himself, his numbers, his “quality” – his very nature. “Eugenics”, the science of improving humanity’s gene pool, is most notoriously associated with Hitler’s experiments. But this goal was pursued before Hitler, and the “science” achieved new heights (or depths) in the decades after the discovery of DNA.

The term “eugenics” was coined by George Darwin’s cousin, Francis Galton, in 1883. That it should arise in Darwin’s family is logical, for to the Darwinists it was self-evidently good to help along the process of natural selection of those whom they considered the fittest – that is, the people of their own race and class. Galton, as A.N. Wilson writes, “would campaign politically for tax breaks to encourage intelligent people to have large families and to sterilize the ‘unfit’. Long before this campaign got under way George Darwin, developing the ideas of his father’s *Descent of Man*, had written a proposal ‘on beneficial restrictions to liberty of marriage’ in 1873. The article appeared in the *Contemporary Review* and was a classic exposition of the ‘eugenic’ idea, viz. that those deemed by the Darwins to be defective should be forbidden to breed. In July 1874, an anonymous essay appeared in the *Quarterly Review* discussing works on primitive man by John Lubbock and Edward Burnett Tylor. It included an attack on George Darwin’s paper as ‘speaking to an approving strain... of the encouragement of vice in order to check population’. The anonymous author was St. George Mivart [a major critic of Darwin’s views on the origin of man]. Today, ‘liberal’ opinion in the West deplores eugenics, not least because of the enthusiasm with which it was adopted in Germany in the period 1933-45. It would only be among conservative Christians, however, that you would be likely to find those who believed contraception or medically induced abortion to be immoral. Mivart, it is true, was Roman Catholic, albeit a convert who had been excommunicated for his belief in evolution. In 1873-4, however, he would probably have been in the huge majority of Victorians in believing contraception to be morally questionable and abortion positively criminal. George Darwin had not even ventured into the notion, which was a commonplace in the entourage of Bertrand Russell (heterosexual), Lytton Strachey (gay) and the Bloomsbury Set in the 1920s, that homosexuality was another good way of limiting the population explosion...”<sup>70</sup>

It was the huge humanitarian crises of the decade after World War One that stimulated the development of eugenicist and other scientific ideas.

“The Rockefeller Foundation sponsored campaigns to eradicate tuberculosis by ‘applying the art of advertising the facts of science’. But Europeans, too, liked to see social policy as a non-political matter, a question of ‘social hygiene’. In Britain, for instance, members of the British Social Hygiene Council called for the ‘institutionalization’ of the mentally ill, health and sex education in schools, better housing and sanitation and improvements in child nutrition. In France, the Health Ministry was advised by a Conseil Supérieur d’Hygiène Sociale. Society was seen as an object made in a spirit of rational detachment from political passions.

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<sup>70</sup> Wilson, *Charles Darwin, Victorian Mythmaker*, London: Harper, 2017, pp. 314-315.

“Nowhere were the ambiguities of this kind of approach more evident than among the eugenicists – those people, on other words, on both Left and Right who believed that it was indeed possible to produce ‘better’ human beings through the right kind of social policies...”<sup>71</sup>

We associate the policy of killing and sterilizing the mentally ill with the Fascists. But we find similar attitudes in liberal Britain. Thus while “Britain passed laws to bring down infant and maternal mortality, and set up the Ministry of Health in 1919”, “its priorities on behalf of child-rearing worried some extreme eugenicists like Sir Robert Hutchinson, President of the Royal College of Physicians, who wondered ‘whether the... careful saving of infant lives is really, biologically speaking... wholesome...’”<sup>72</sup>

But then came Hitler, and if there was something everyone, young and old, could unite on was, supposedly, the utter evil of Nazism. Everything to do with it was abhorred and banned, and especially its racism and its experiments to improve the genetic stock of the race by eliminating Jews, homosexuals and the mentally ill. But the Europeans secretly went back to their cursed inheritance...

Eugenics, writes Jonathan Freedland, was “the belief that society's fate rested on its ability to breed more of the strong and fewer of the weak. So-called positive eugenics meant encouraging those of greater intellectual ability and “moral worth” to have more children, while negative eugenics sought to urge, or even force, those deemed inferior to reproduce less often or not at all. The aim was to increase the overall quality of the national herd, multiplying the thoroughbreds and weeding out the runts.

“Such talk repels us now, but in the prewar era it was the common sense of the age. Most alarming, many of its leading advocates were found among the luminaries of the Fabian and socialist left, men and women revered to this day. Thus George Bernard Shaw could insist that ‘the only fundamental and possible socialism is the socialisation of the selective breeding of man’, even suggesting, in a phrase that chills the blood, that defectives be dealt with by means of a ‘lethal chamber’.

“Such thinking was not alien to the great Liberal titan and mastermind of the welfare state, William Beveridge, who argued that those with ‘general defects’ should be denied not only the vote, but ‘civil freedom and fatherhood’. Indeed, a desire to limit the numbers of the inferior was written into modern notions of birth control from the start. That great pioneer of contraception, Marie Stope – honoured with a postage stamp in 2008 – was a hardline eugenicist, determined that the ‘hordes of defectives’ be reduced in number, thereby placing less of a burden on ‘the fit’. Stopes later disinherited her son because he had married a short-sighted woman, thereby risking a less-than-perfect grandchild.

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<sup>71</sup> Mazower, *The Dark Continent*, p. 92.

<sup>72</sup> Mazower, *op. cit.*, p. 89.

“Yet what looks kooky or sinister in 2012 struck the prewar British left as solid and sensible. Harold Laski, stellar LSE professor, co-founder of the Left Book Club and one-time chairman of the Labour party, cautioned that: ‘The time is surely coming ... when society will look upon the production of a weakling as a crime against itself.’ Meanwhile, JBS Haldane, admired scientist and socialist, warned that: ‘Civilisation stands in real danger from over-production of “undermen”.’ That's Untermenschen in German.

“I'm afraid even the *Manchester Guardian* was not immune. When a parliamentary report in 1934 backed voluntary sterilisation of the unfit, a *Guardian* editorial offered warm support, endorsing the sterilisation campaign ‘the eugenicists soundly urge’. If it's any comfort, the *New Statesman* was in the same camp.

“According to Dennis Sewell, whose book *The Political Gene* charts the impact of Darwinian ideas on politics, the eugenics movement's definition of ‘unfit’ was not limited to the physically or mentally impaired. It held, he writes, ‘that most of the behavioural traits that led to poverty were inherited. In short, that the poor were genetically inferior to the educated middle class.’ It was not poverty that had to be reduced or even eliminated: it was the poor.

“Hence the enthusiasm of John Maynard Keynes, director of the Eugenics Society from 1937 to 1944, for contraception, essential because the working class was too ‘drunken and ignorant’ to keep its numbers down.

“We could respond to all this... by saying it was all a long time ago, when different norms applied. That is a common response when today's left-liberals are confronted by the eugenicist record of their forebears, reacting as if it were all an accident of time, a slip-up by creatures of their era who should not be judged by today's standards.

“Except this was no accident. The Fabians, Sidney and Beatrice Webb and their ilk were not attracted to eugenics because they briefly forgot their leftwing principles. The harder truth is that they were drawn to eugenics for what were then good, leftwing reasons.

“They believed in science and progress, and nothing was more cutting edge and modern than social Darwinism. Man now had the ability to intervene in his own evolution. Instead of natural selection and the law of the jungle, there would be planned selection. And what could be more socialist than planning, the Fabian faith that the gentlemen in Whitehall really did know best? If the state was going to plan the production of motor cars in the national interest, why should it not do the same for the production of babies? The aim was to do what was best for society, and society would clearly be better off if there were more of the strong to carry fewer of the weak.

“What was missing was any value placed on individual freedom, even the most basic freedom of a human being to have a child. The middle class and privileged felt quite ready to remove that right from those they deemed unworthy of it.

“Eugenics went into steep decline after 1945. Most recoiled from it once they saw where it led – to the gates of Auschwitz. The infatuation with an idea horribly close to nazism was steadily forgotten...”<sup>73</sup>

Except that in the Protestant countries of Northern Europe eugenics was neither forgotten nor abandoned, revealing a darker side of the all-embracing state. This was particularly true of that paragon of Social Democracy, Scandinavia. As Judt writes, “Early twentieth-century confidence in the capacity of the state to make a better society had taken many forms: Scandinavian Social Democracy – like the Fabian reformism of Britain’s welfare state – was born of a widespread fascination with social engineering of all kinds. And just a little beyond the use of the state to adjust incomes, expenditures, employment and information there lurked the temptation to tinker with individuals themselves.

“Eugenics – the ‘science’ of racial improvement – was more than an Edwardian-era fad, like vegetarianism or rambling (though it often appealed to the same constituencies). Taken by thinkers of all political shades, it dovetailed especially well with the ambitions of well-meaning social reformers. If one’s social goal was to improve the human condition wholesale, why pass up the opportunities afforded by modern science to add retail amelioration along the way? Why should the prevention or abolition of imperfections in the human condition not extend to the prevention (or abolition) of imperfect human beings? In the early decades of the twentieth century the appeal of scientifically manipulated social or genetic planning was widespread and thoroughly respectable; it was only thanks to the Nazis, whose ‘hygienic’ ambitions began with ersatz anthropometrics and ended in the gas chamber, that it was comprehensively discredited in post-war Europe. Or so it was widely supposed.

“But, as it emerged many years later, Scandinavian authorities at least had not abandoned an interest in the theory – and practice – of ‘racial hygiene’. Between 1934 and 1976 sterilization programmes were pursued in Norway, Sweden and Denmark, in each case under the auspices and with the knowledge of Social Democratic governments. In these years some 6,000 Danes, 40,000 Norwegians and 60,000 Swedes (90 percent of them women) were sterilized for ‘hygienic’ purposes ‘to improve the population’. The intellectual driving force behind these programmes – the Institute of Racial Biology at the University of Uppsala in Sweden – had been set up in 1921, at the peak of the fashion for the subject. It was not dismantled until fifty-five years later...”<sup>74</sup>

Closely related to eugenics is the euthanasia movement. In 2002 assisted suicide and euthanasia was legalized in the Netherlands. A few years later, it was found that more and more people were asking for euthanasia even when they did not have life-threatening diseases. The reason might be that their children did not visit them, or

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<sup>73</sup> Freedland, “Eugenics: the skeleton that rattles loudest in the Left’s closet”, *The Manchester Guardian*, February 17, 2012.

<sup>74</sup> Freedland, “Eugenics: the skeleton that rattles loudest in the Left’s closet”, *The Manchester Guardian*, February 17, 2012.

that they felt they would become a burden on their family. Most recently, cases of euthanasia *against* the will of the patients have been recorded...<sup>75</sup>

Still more recently, eugenics has enjoyed a boost from Bill Gates, the billionaire founder of Microsoft Systems, who openly declares his intention to reduce the world's population by various technological means (especially vaccination) by 15 per cent... Slowly, the old idea is creeping back: the idea of a super-race that is worthy to live, and for whose sake the older and sicker must die...

The moral objection to eugenics is obvious: the superiority of one man to another consists, not in any calculus of men's abilities of mind or body, which God has distributed to men in accordance with His inscrutable will, but in his love for God and man – including men inferior to himself. The eugenicist is prepared to sacrifice others for the sake of himself and those like him: the Christian is prepared to do the exact opposite. The Christian dies for others; the eugenicist makes others die for himself.

The *theological* objection to eugenics consists in the assertion that man is constituted by his body – that is, his genes – alone, so that he can be improved by manipulating his genes alone. But man consists of both soul and body, and the soul is infinitely more important than the body. In fact, at the general resurrection, when man's soul and body will be reunited and transfigured, the state of his body – glorious and beautiful, “without spot or wrinkle”, or corrupt and disgusting – will have been determined by the quality of his soul alone. Today, however, science in both East and West, while propelled, seemingly, by the most pious motives of love for mankind, no longer believes in the soul, having become completely conquered by atheist materialism... But how, if you do not believe in man, can you love him?

February 11/24, 2021.

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<sup>75</sup> Cassy Fiono-Chesser, “1 in 20 deaths in the Netherlands is now due to euthanasia”, *Live Action*, August 7, 2017.



## 7. THE IDEA OF TRADITION

At the beginning of the modern age, in the early years of the French Revolution, two Englishmen, Edmund Burke and Thomas Paine, had an argument over *tradition* that is still highly relevant today. Burke's emphasized tradition and denounced the revolution as "satanic", while Paine, having been one of the main agents of the American Revolution, supported the Jacobins. After fleeing from England to Paris to escape a trial for sedition, Paine was invited to sit in the National Assembly. But he was soon cast into prison by the Jacobins and barely escaped the guillotine. None the wiser for his experience, he fled to America, where he died in poverty and unpopularity.

Burke turned the key liberal idea of the social contract on its head: "Society is indeed a contract," he wrote, "[but] becomes a partnership... between those who are living, those who are dead and those who are to be born." As Sir Isaiah Berlin writes: "Burke's famous onslaughts on the principles of the French revolutionaries was founded upon the selfsame appeal to the myriad strands that bind human beings into a historically hallowed whole, contrasted with the utilitarian model of society as a trading-company held together by contractual obligations, the world of 'sophisters, oeconomists, and calculators' who are blind and deaf to the unanalysable relationships that make a family, a tribe, a nation, a movement, any association of human beings held together by something more than a quest for mutual advantage, or by force, or by anything that is not mutual love, loyalty, common history, emotion and outlook."<sup>76</sup>

Society exists over several generations, so why, asked Burke, should only one generation's interests be respected in the social contract? Another conservative in a still more revolutionary era, G.K. Chesterton, put the point as follows: "Tradition may be defined as an extension of the franchise. Tradition means giving vote to the most obscure of all classes, our ancestors. It is the democracy of the dead. Tradition refuses to submit to the small and arrogant oligarchy of those who merely happen to be walking about. All democrats object to men being disqualified by the accident of their birth; tradition objects to the fact of their being disqualified by the accident of their death. Democracy tells us not to neglect a good man's opinion, even if he is our groom; tradition asks us not to neglect a good man's opinion, even if he is our father. I, at any rate, cannot separate the two ideas of democracy and tradition; it seems evident to me that they are the same idea. We will have the dead at our councils. The ancient Greeks voted by stones; these shall vote by tombstones. It is all quite regular and official, for most tombstones, like most ballot papers, are marked with a cross..."<sup>77</sup>

Again, Sir Roger Scruton writes, "the social contract prejudices the interests of those who are not alive to take part in it: the dead and the unborn. Yet they too have a claim, maybe an indefinite claim, on the resources and institutions over which the

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<sup>76</sup> Berlin, "The Counter-Enlightenment", in *The Proper Study of Mankind*, pp. 256-257.

<sup>77</sup> Chesterton, in Michael Hoffman, *Secret Societies and Psychological Warfare*, Idaho, 2001, p. 149.

living so selfishly contend. To imagine society as a contract among its living members, is to offer no rights to those who go before and after. But when we neglect those absent souls, we neglect everything that endows law with its authority, and which guarantees our own survival. We should therefore see the social order as a partnership, in which the dead and the unborn are included with the living."<sup>78</sup>

"Every people," writes L.A. Tikhomirov, "is, first of all, a certain historical whole, a long row of consecutive generations, living over hundreds or thousands of years in a common life handed down by inheritance. In this form a people, a nation, is a certain socially organic phenomenon with more or less clearly expressed laws of inner development... But political intriguers and the democratic tendency does not look at a people in this form, as a historical, socially organic phenomenon, but simply in the form of a sum of *the individual inhabitants of the country*. This is the second point of view, which looks on a nation as a simple association of people united into a state because they wanted that, living according to laws which they like, and arbitrarily changing the laws of their life together when it occurs to them."<sup>79</sup>

Burke rejected the idea that the French Revolution was simply the English Revolution writ large. The Glorious Revolution of 1688, he claimed (not entirely convincingly), was not a revolution in the new, French sense, because it left English traditions, including English traditions of liberty, intact: it "was made to preserve our *ancient* indisputable laws and liberties, and that *ancient* constitution of government which is our only security for law and liberty... We wished at the period of the Revolution, and do now wish, to derive all we possess *as an inheritance from our forefathers*... All the reformations we have hitherto made, have proceeded upon the principle of reference to antiquity."<sup>80</sup> In fact, far from making the people the sovereign power, the English parliament in 1688 had sworn "in the name of the people" to "most humbly and faithfully submit themselves, their heirs and posterities" to the Monarchs William and Mary "for ever".

The French Revolution, by contrast, rejected all tradition. "You had," he told the French, "the elements of a constitution very nearly as good as could be wished...; but you chose to act as if you have never been moulded into civil society, and had everything to begin anew. You began ill, because you began by despising everything that belonged to you." "Your constitution, it is true,... suffered waste and dilapidation; but you possessed in some parts the walls and, in all, the foundations of a noble and venerable castle. You might have repaired those walls; you might have built on those old foundations. Your constitution was suspended before it was perfected." "Rage and frenzy will pull down more in half an hour, than prudence, deliberation, and foresight can build up in an hundred years."<sup>81</sup> The French Revolution was just another disaster "brought upon the world by pride, ambition,

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<sup>78</sup> Scruton, *Modern Philosophy*, London: Arrow Books, 1997, p. 417.

<sup>79</sup> Tikhomirov, "Demokratia liberal'naia i sotsial'naia" (Liberal and Social Democracy), in *Kritika Demokratii (A Critique of Democracy)*, Moscow: "Moskva", 1997, p. 122.

<sup>80</sup> Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*.

<sup>81</sup> Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*.

avarice, revenge, lust, sedition, hypocrisy, ungoverned zeal". The "rights of man" were just a "pretext" invented by the "wickedness" of human nature.<sup>82</sup>

"It was Burke's *Reflections*," writes G.P. Gooch, "which overthrew the supremacy of Locke [for the time being], and formed the starting-point of a number of schools of thought, agreeing in the rejection of the individualistic rationalism which had dominated the eighteenth century. The work is not only the greatest exposition of the philosophic basis of conservatism ever written, but a declaration of the principles of evolution, continuity, and solidarity, which must hold their place in all sound political thinking. Against the omnipotence of the individual, he sets the collective reason; against the claims of the present, he sets the accumulated experience of the past; for natural rights he offers social rights; for liberty he substitutes law. Society is a partnership between those who are living, those who are dead, and those who are yet to be born."<sup>83</sup>

This is one of the most important truths, not only of political philosophy, but, still more important, of the Christian faith: "Remove not the landmarks which your fathers have set" (Proverbs 22.28).

*March 11/24, 2021.  
Tsar-Martyr Paul of Russia.*

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<sup>82</sup> Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*.

<sup>83</sup> Gooch, "Europe and the French Revolution", in *The Cambridge Modern History*, Cambridge University Press, 1934, vol. VIII, p. 757.

## 8. ST. GREGORY, ST. BENEDICT AND THE ORTHODOX WEST

Rome had suffered terribly during the Gothic Wars, changing hands several times between the Goths and the Byzantines; at one point, it was completely empty for forty days. Its buildings and institutions withered away; even the Senate had disappeared by the end of the sixth century. However, one of the last Romans of senatorial rank, St. Gregory the Great, was destined to restore its glory – not the vain glory of the secular empire, but the spiritual glory of the Church...

As we have seen, the scepticism with regard to secular authority of such major figures as St. Augustine and Pope Gelasius, together with the unparalleled prestige of the Popes in the West, combined to introduce a new, specifically western exaltation of ecclesiastical at the expense of imperial and regal power. Rome's downgrading of the power of the kings may also have had something to do with simple jealousy of Eastern pre-eminence in the Church: apart from St. Leo's important contribution to the Fourth Ecumenical Council, the main theological debates in the Councils were carried out in Greek by Eastern hierarchs. Rome even went so far once as to break communion with Archbishop Acacius of Constantinople, although the East accepted the pope, rather than the archbishop, as Orthodox. The pope insisted that "the apostolic see has always kept the Orthodox faith unharmed", and that "those who do not agree in everything with the apostolic see" should not be commemorated. The Greeks did not agree with this, but for the sake of unity they were prepared to condescend to papal pride. And so the "Acacian schism" was ended when Patriarch John II of Constantinople accepted the papist doctrinal formula of Pope Hormisdas – but only after cunningly adding the phrase: "I proclaim that the see of the Apostle Peter and the see of this imperial city are one", thereby witnessing to the truth of St. Cyprian's words that "the episcopate is one" ...

Rome's pretensions were dealt a further blow by the Emperor Justinian nearly forty years later, when he forced Pope Vigilius to accept the condemnation, enshrined in the Fifth Ecumenical Council in 553, of the so-called "Three Chapters" (three heretical passages from three essentially Orthodox writers), although this led to some western councils – in Africa and Northern Italy (the so-called "Aquilean schism") – breaking communion with Vigilius. However, the fact that these western councils, and some individual saints, felt able to break with the Pope shows that they did not consider him to be infallible. Moreover, Vigilius' penitential letter to Patriarch Eutyches of Constantinople was an admission of his fallibility...

The independence of mind of Western churchmen in relation to the papacy at this time is strikingly illustrated by the Irish St. Columbanus of Luxeuil, who wrote to Pope Vigilius suggesting that he may have fallen into heresy. In that case, he continued, those "who have always kept the Orthodox Faith, whoever these may be, 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 mindful 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."

"For all we Irish," as he said to another Pope, "inhabitants of the world's edge, are disciples of Saints Peter and Paul and of all the disciples who wrote the sacred canon by the Holy Spirit, and we accept nothing outside the evangelical and apostolic teaching; none has been a heretic, none a Judaizer, none a schismatic; but the Catholic Faith, as it was delivered by you first, who are the successors of the holy apostles, has been maintained unbroken."

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The tendency to papism was halted, at least temporarily, under perhaps the greatest of the Popes, Gregory I (590-604). An Old Roman aristocrat but also loyal subject of the Eastern Empire, he believed in the primacy, but not universal sovereignty, of "the apostolic see". He never tried to override the rights of Local Churches, still less proclaim an infallible headship over them. Indeed, in his vehement refusal (following the example of his predecessor, Pelagius II) to accept the title of "universal bishop", first offered by the Emperor Maurice to St. John the Faster, Patriarch of Constantinople, St. Gregory provided an invaluable lesson to all subsequent Popes on the limits of their power and jurisdiction. For he accused St. John of pride, and wrote to him that in accepting this title he was "at enmity with that grace which was given to all [bishops] in common". He reminded him that the Fourth Ecumenical Council had offered the title of "universal" to the Roman Pope as a mark of honour to St. Peter, but that none of the Popes had accepted it, "lest by assuming a special distinction in the dignity of the episcopate, we should seem to refuse it to all the brethren".

St. Gregory wrote to the Emperor concerning St. Peter: "He received the keys of the celestial Kingdom; the power to bind and to loose was given to him; the care of all the Church and the primacy were committed to him; and yet he did not call himself universal Apostle. But that most holy man, John, my brother in the priesthood, would fain assume the title of universal bishop. I can but exclaim, O tempora! O mores!" In another letter to Patriarchs Eulogius of Alexandria and Anastasius of Antioch, he made the point that "if a Patriarch be called universal, this takes from all the others the title of Patriarch". And to Patriarch Cyriacus of Constantinople he wrote: "You must not consider this same affair as unimportant; for, if we tolerate it, we corrupt the faith of the whole Church. You know how many, not heretics only but heresiarchs, have arisen in the Church of Constantinople. Not to speak of the injury done to your dignity, it cannot be denied that if any one bishop be called universal, all the Church crumbles if that universal one fall!!!"

Finally, in another letter to the Emperor, St. Gregory wrote: "I pray your Imperial Piety to observe that there are some frivolous things that are inoffensive, but also some others that are very hurtful. When Antichrist shall come and call himself God, it will be in itself a perfectly frivolous thing, but a very pernicious one. If we only choose to consider the number of syllables in this word, we find but two (De-us); but if we conceive the weight of iniquity of this title, we shall find it enormous. I say it

without the least hesitation: whoever calls himself the universal bishop, or desires this title, is, by his pride, THE PRECURSOR OF ANTICHRIST, because he thus attempts to raise himself above the others. The error into which he falls springs from pride equal to that of Antichrist; for as that wicked one wished to be regarded as exalted above other men, like a god, so likewise whoever would be called sole bishop exalteth himself above the others."

And so we find the heresy of papism thoroughly refuted by one of the greatest of the Popes. St. Gregory reaffirms the doctrine taught by St. Cyprian of Carthage and the Orthodox East, that all bishops are essentially equal in grace, because the grace of the episcopate is one, and the bishops receive their grace, not from one man or one see, but from the episcopate as a whole. Consequently, the heresy that attempts to create, as it were, a fourth level of the priesthood above that of bishop, in the form of a universal bishop having sovereignty over all the others, undermines the ecclesiology of the Church, and is a heresy of the Antichrist, who will also exalt himself above all...

While opposing the false idea of Church unity that was Papism, St. Gregory also championed a positive ideal that, coming after Justinian's military conquests and restoration of Orthodoxy in the West, served to create a deeper unity, not only of the West with the East, but also of the West within itself, in the union between the Western nations - Italians, Gallic, Iberian, Anglo-Saxon - and the papacy. He did this in various ways: through his own decrees, epistles to kings, bishops and laymen, and theological works (especially the Pastoral Rule, Homilies on the Gospel and Morals on Job); through his missionary activities (especially in relation to the Anglo-Saxons); in his liturgical reforms (his Presanctified Liturgy is still celebrated by the Orthodox Church during Great Lent); in his music (even if what is called "Gregorian Chant" probably originates in the Carolingian age); and in his Dialogues (He is known in the East as "the Dialogist"). The Dialogues are essentially a series of Lives of the Italian saints, of which the most important and influential is the Life of the great monastic founder, St. Benedict of Nursia (+547), in the second Book.

Leonard von Matt and Stephan Hilpisch write: "After spending his patrimony in founding six monasteries in Sicily and one in Rome, Gregory himself embraced the monastic life. Pope Pelagius II employed him in the service of the Church so that, to his great sorrow, Gregory was compelled to exchange contemplation for action; but at heart he remained a monk and when, in 590, he was raised to the Chair of Peter - the first monk to be thus honoured - he showed himself a true friend and patron of monasticism. Devoted as he was to holy reading, prayer, contemplation and the liturgy, Gregory was a monk on the papal throne. He issued a number of ordinances for monasteries and assisted them in their poverty. But his most important work for monasticism is his biography of St. Benedict...

"... It was the writing of the Rule that he regarded as the Saint's greatest achievement. He writes: 'Among all the wonders which draw a shining halo around Benedict even in this world, we must count his doctrine; for he has written a Rule for monks which is conspicuous by reason of its moderation and the clarity of its

language. The teaching of this Rule is a key to the teacher's life for he would not demand from others what he had not practiced in his own person.'

"St. Gregory's biography of St. Benedict has been of incalculable benefit to Benedictine monasticism... St. Gregory's encomium of St Benedict and his Rule reached a wide audience and helped to decide the problem as to what Rule should be adopted by the monks of the West."

The Rule was very important in helping to unite the Orthodox West and in spreading it to new lands, such as Germany. By the end of the tenth century Benedictine monasteries were everywhere, and most bishops were Benedictine monks.

With the heresy of papism suppressed, at least temporarily, and monasticism flourishing, the West flourished and the papacy itself rose to the peak of its real and not vain glory and power. But important differences between East and West remained. One of them was the greater legalism of the West.

«When the Roman Empire collapsed in the West,» writes Sir Steven Runciman, «the Roman Church was left as the repository of Roman traditions and Roman law, as opposed to the customs introduced by the barbarian rulers, but also of learning and education. In the chaos of the invasions, with the former lay governors fleeing or dispossessed, ecclesiastical officers were often called upon to take over the administration of cities and whole districts. Moreover, when orderly government was restored, there were for many centuries few literate men outside of ecclesiastical ranks. Churchmen provided the lawyers and clerks on whom the lay rulers depended. This all tended to give the Roman Church a legal outlook. The Papal chancery was obliged to fill itself with trained lawyers, whose tastes began to dominate theology. Roman theologians liked clear-cut definitions. The apophatic tradition, of which Augustine had been so eminent an advocate, tended to give way to Scholastic tastes, to the desire to turn theology into a systematized philosophy...»

The five centuries or so that separate Popes Gregory I and Gregory VII constitute a fascinating period in which the Orthodox Christian forms of political and ecclesiastical life gradually succumbed to papism in the West - but only after a fierce struggle during which the Orthodox staged several "comebacks", drawing on the inspired example of Pope Gregory the Great, or, as he called himself, "a servant of the servants of God" ....

*March 12/25, 2021.  
St. Gregory the Great.*

## 9. HOW METROPOLITAN SERGIUS USURPED CONTROL OF THE RUSSIAN CHURCH

The events that followed the arrest and imprisonment of Metropolitan Peter, locum tenens of the Russian patriarchal throne, in December, 1925 are not at all clear. We know that a struggle for power took place between a group of bishops led by Archbishop Gregory (Yatskovsky) of Yekaterinburg (Sverdlovsk), on the one hand, and Metropolitan Sergius of Nizhni-Novgorod (Gorky), on the other, a struggle which Sergius eventually won. It is usually considered that the Gregorians were the agents of the atheist authorities, whose plot was foiled by Sergius, and this may well have been the case. However, it may be closer to the truth to say that the authorities were playing the two groups off against each other, and would have been happy with either outcome provided it gave them a more malleable church leader than Metropolitan Peter, the true leader of the Russian Church, whose resistance to Soviet pressure earned him long exile and eventual martyrdom in 1937.

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According to the more generally accepted version of events, on December 14, although unable to leave Nizhni-Novgorod at the time, Metropolitan Sergius, without consulting with any other senior bishop, announced that he was taking upon himself the rights and duties of the deputy of the Patriarchal locum tenens. However, he was prevented by the OGPU from coming to Moscow, many bishops refused to recognize him (for example, Archbishop Andrew of Ufa), and on December 22, 1925, a group of nine bishops led by Archbishop Gregory gathered at the Donskoy monastery.

The Gregorians, as they came to be called, gave a brief description of the succession of first-hierarchical power since 1917, and then declared concerning Metropolitan Peter: "It was not pleasing to the Lord to bless the labours of this hierarch. During his rule disorders and woes only deepened in the Holy Church... In view of this we... have decided to elect a Higher Temporary Church Council for the carrying out of the everyday affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church and for the preparation of a canonically correct Council... Moreover, we have firmly decided not to enter into any relationship or communion with the renovationists and renovationism in all its forms... Instead, we consider it our duty to witness to our complete legal obedience to the powers that be of the Government of the USSR and our faith in its good will and the purity of its intentions in serving the good of the people. We in turn ask them to believe in our loyalty and readiness to serve the good of the same people..."<sup>84</sup>

These words clearly revealed the pro-Soviet inspiration of the group. The next day they sought legalization from the GPU, and ten days later, on January 2, 1926, they received it. On January 7, *Izvestia* published an interview with Archbishop Gregory

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<sup>84</sup> Protopriest Vladislav Tsy-pin, *Istoria Russkoj Tserkvi 1925-1938* (A History of the Russian Church, 1925-1938) Moscow: Monastery of the Meeting of the Lord, 1999, p. 33.



thanking the authorities.

On January 14, Metropolitan Sergius wrote to Archbishop Gregory demanding an explanation for his usurpation of power. Gregory replied on January 22, saying that while they recognized the rights of the three *locum tenentes*, "we know no conciliar decision concerning you, and we do not consider the transfer of administration and power by personal letter to correspond to the spirit and letter of the holy canons."<sup>85</sup> This was a valid point which was later to be made by several catacomb bishops. But Sergius wrote again on January 29, impeaching Gregory and his fellow bishops, banning them from serving and declaring all their ordinations, appointments, awards, etc., since December 22 to be invalid.

It was a moot question whether Sergius had the power to act in this way. On February 26, Archbishop Hilarion of Verey wrote to Sergius from prison: "The temporary ecclesiastical organ must unite, and not divide the episcopate, it is not a judge or punisher of dissidents - that will be the Council."<sup>86</sup> However, on March 18 Sergius wrote to Metropolitan Peter attempting to justify his "rights" as "first bishop", able to ban bishops even before the Council. And he gave the similar actions of Patriarch Tikhon and Metropolitan Peter himself as precedents.<sup>87</sup> But here he "forgot", as he was to "forget" again later, that his own position was much weaker than that of the Patriarch or Metropolitan Peter, each of whom were recognized in their time by the majority of the episcopate as the true head of the Russian Church.

On January 29, three Gregorian bishops wrote to Metropolitan Peter claiming that they had not known, in their December meeting, that he had transferred his rights to Sergius, and asking him to bless their administration. The free access the Gregorians had to Peter during this period, and the fact that Sergius was at first prevented from coming to Moscow, suggests that the GPU, while not opposing Sergius, at first favoured the Gregorians as their best hope for dividing the Church.<sup>88</sup>

On February 1 the Gregorians obtained an interview with Metropolitan Peter in prison, in which they asked him to annul Sergius' rights as his deputy and, in view of Sergius' inability to come to Moscow from Nizhni and the refusal of the other deputies, Michael of Kiev and Joseph of Rostov, to accept the deputyship, to hand over the administration of the Church to them. Fearing anarchy in the Church, Metropolitan Peter went part of the way to blessing the Gregorians' undertaking. However, instead of the Gregorian Synod, he created a temporary "college" to administer the Church's everyday affairs consisting of Archbishop Gregory, Archbishop Nicholas (Dobronravov) of Vladimir and Archbishop Demetrius

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<sup>85</sup> M.E. Gubonin, *Akty Sviatejshago Patriarkha Tikhona*, Moscow: St. Tikhon's Institute, 1994, p. 429.

<sup>86</sup> Monk Benjamin, *Letopis' Tserkovnykh Sobytij (1928-1938)*, (*Chronicle of Church Events, 1928-1938*), part 2, <http://www.zlatoust.ws/letopis2.htm>, p. 147.

<sup>87</sup> Monk Benjamin, *op. cit.*, p. 148.

<sup>88</sup> Bishop Gregory Grabbe, *Ruskaia Tserkov' pered litsom gospodstvuiushchego zla* (The Russian Church before the face of Dominant Evil), Jordanville, 1991, pp. 57-58. The Gregorian Bishop Boris of Mozhaik also said that his Synod "received the rights to assemble, and to have publications and educational institutions." (Grabbe, *op. cit.*, p. 61)

(Belikov) of Tomsk, who were well-known for their firmness.

The Gregorians and Tuchkov, who was present at the meeting, were silent about the fact that Nicholas was in prison and that Demetrius could not come to Moscow. This conspiracy of silence again suggests that they were in league with each other.

Tuchkov proceeded to a further deception: he agreed to summon Demetrius from Tomsk, and even showed Peter the telegram – but never sent it. When Peter, feeling something was wrong, asked for the inclusion of Metropolitan Arsenius (Stadnitsky) in the college of bishops, Tuchkov again agreed and promised to sign Peter's telegram to him. Again, the telegram was not sent.

It has been argued by Lev Regelson<sup>89</sup> that Metropolitan Peter's action in appointing deputies was not canonical, and created misunderstandings that were to be ruthlessly exploited later by Metropolitan Sergius. A chief hierarch does not have the right to transfer the fullness of his power to another hierarch as if it were a personal inheritance: only a Council representing the whole Local Church can elect a leader to replace him. Patriarch Tikhon's appointment of three locum tenentes was an exceptional measure, but one which was nevertheless entrusted to him by – and therefore could claim the authority of – the Council of 1917-18. However, the Council made no provision for what might happen in the event of the death or removal of these three. In such an event, therefore, patriarchal authority ceased, temporarily, in the Church; and there was no canonical alternative, until the convocation of another Council, but for each bishop to govern his diocese independently while maintaining links with neighbouring dioceses, in accordance with the Patriarch's ukaz no. 362 of November 7/20, 1920.

In defence of Metropolitan Peter it should be said that it is very unlikely that he intended to transfer the fullness of his power to Metropolitan Sergius, but only the day-to-day running of the administrative machine. In fact he explicitly said this later, in his letter to Sergius dated January 2, 1930.<sup>90</sup> Moreover, in his declaration of December 6, 1925, he had given instructions on what should be done in the event of his arrest, saying that "the raising of my name, as patriarchal locum tenens, remains obligatory during Divine services."<sup>91</sup> This was something that Patriarch Tikhon had not insisted upon when he transferred the fullness of his power to Metropolitan Agathangel in 1922. It suggests that Metropolitan Peter did not exclude the possibility that his deputy might attempt to seize power from him just as the renovationists had seized power from the patriarch and his locum tenens in 1922, and was taking precautions against just such a possibility.

The critical distinction here is that whereas the patriarchal locum tenens has, de jure, all the power of a canonically elected Patriarch and need relinquish his power only to a canonically convoked Council of the whole local Church, the deputy of the

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<sup>89</sup> Regelson, *Tragedia Russkoj Tserkvi, 1917-1945* (The Tragedy of the Russian Church, 1917-1945), Paris: YMCA Press, 1977.

<sup>90</sup> Gubonin, op. cit., p. 677.

<sup>91</sup> Gubonin, op. cit., p. 422.

locum tenens has no such fullness of power and must relinquish such rights as he has at any time that the Council or the locum tenens requires it. Nevertheless, the important question remains: why did Metropolitan Peter not invoke ukaz no. 362 and announce the decentralization of the Church's administration at the time of his arrest? Probably for two important reasons:

1. The restoration of the patriarchate was one of the main achievements of the Moscow Council of 1917-18, and had proved enormously popular. Its dissolution might well have dealt a major psychological blow to the masses, who were not always educated enough to understand that the Church could continue to exist either in a centralized (though not papist) form, as it had in the East from 312 to 1917, or in a decentralized form, as in the catacomb period before Constantine the Great and during the iconoclast persecution of the eighth and ninth centuries.

2. The renovationists – still the major threat to the Church in Metropolitan Peter's eyes – did not have a patriarch, and their organization was, as we have seen, closer to the synodical, state-dependent structure of the pre-revolutionary Church. The presence or absence of a patriarch or his substitute was therefore a major sign of the difference between the true Church and the false for the uneducated believer.

There is another important factor which should be mentioned here. Under the rules imposed upon the Church administration by Peter the Great in the eighteenth century, the Ruling Synod was permitted to move bishops from one see to another, and even to retire, ban or defrock them, in a purely administrative manner. This was contrary to the Holy Canons of the Church, which envisage the defrocking of a bishop only as a result of a full canonical trial, to which the accused bishop is invited to attend three times. Peter's rules made the administration of the Church similar to that of a government department – which is precisely what the Church was according to his *Reglament*. It enabled the State to exert pressure on the Church to move and remove bishops in the speediest and most efficient manner, without the checks and balances – and delays – that following the Holy Canons would have involved. This was bad enough in itself, even when the State was kindly disposed towards the Church. It was catastrophic when the State became the enemy of the Church after 1917...

Now Patriarch Tikhon, while not rescinding Peter's rules, had opposed the pressure of the State, on the one hand, and had preserved the spirit of sobornost', or conciliarity, on the other, consulting his fellow bishops and the people as far as possible. But the danger remained that if the leadership of the Church were assumed by a less holy man, then the combination of the uncanonical, Petrine government, on the one hand, and an increase of pressure from the State, on the other, would lead to disaster...

On February 4, 1926, Metropolitan Peter fell ill and was admitted to the prison hospital. A war for control of the Church now developed between the Gregorians and Sergius. The Gregorians pointed to Sergius' links with Rasputin and the "Living Church": "On recognizing the Living Church, Metropolitan Sergius took part in the sessions of the HCA, recognized the lawfulness of married bishops and twice-

married priests, and blessed this lawlessness. Besides, Metropolitan Sergius sympathized with the living church council of 1923, did not object against its decisions, and therefore confessed our All-Russian Archpastor and father, his Holiness Patriarch Tikhon, to be 'an apostate from the true ordinances of Christ and a betrayer of the Church', depriving him of his patriarchal rank and monastic calling. True, Metropolitan Sergius later repented of these terrible crimes and was forgiven by the Church, but that does not mean that he should stand at the head of the Church's administration."<sup>92</sup>

All this was true; but these arguments were not strong enough to maintain the Gregorians' position, which deteriorated as several bishops declared their support for Sergius. In particular, Archbishop Hilarion of Verey, who had been released from prison for talks with the GPU, refused to recognize the Gregorians - for which he received an extension of his sentence. Another bishop who strongly rejected the Gregorians was Basil of Priluki.

Yaroslavsky, Tuchkov and the OGPU had already succeeded in creating a schism between Metropolitan Sergius and the Gregorians. They now tried to fan the flames of schism still higher by releasing Metropolitan Agathangel, the second candidate for the post of patriarchal *locum tenens*, from exile and persuading him to declare his assumption of the post of *locum tenens*, which he did officially from Perm on April 18. They also decided, at a meeting in the Kremlin on April 24, to "strengthen the third Tikhonite hierarchy - the Temporary Higher Ecclesiastical Council headed by Archbishop Gregory, as an independent unit."<sup>93</sup>

On April 22, Metropolitan Sergius wrote to Metropolitan Peter at the Moscow GPU, as a result of which Peter withdrew his support from the Gregorians, signing his letter to Sergius: "the penitent Peter". It would be interesting to know whether Sergius knew of Metropolitan Agathangel's declaration four days earlier when he wrote to Peter. Hieromonk Damascene (Orlovsky) claims that Agathangel did not tell Sergius until several days later.<sup>94</sup> But the evidence is ambiguous; for Gubonin gives two different dates for the letter from Agathangel to Sergius telling the latter of his assumption of the rights of the patriarchal *locum tenens*: April 18 and 25.<sup>95</sup> If the later date is correct, then Sergius cannot be accused of hiding this critical information from Metropolitan Peter. If, however, the earlier date is correct, then Sergius already knew of Agathangel's assumption of the rights of *locum tenens*, and his keeping quiet about this very important fact in his letter to Metropolitan Peter was highly suspicious. For he must have realized that Metropolitan Agathangel, having returned from exile (he actually arrived in his see of Yaroslavl on April 27), had every right to assume power as the eldest hierarch and the only patriarchal

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<sup>92</sup> Grabbe, *op. cit.*, p. 61.

<sup>93</sup> S. Savelev, Savelev, "Bog i komissary" (God and the Commissars), in Bessmertny A.R. and Filatov, S.B., *Religia i Demokratia* (Religion and Democracy), Moscow: Progress, 1993,, p. 200.

<sup>94</sup> Hieromonk Damascene (Orlovsky), "Zhizneopisanie patriarshego mestobliustitelia mitropolita Petra Krutitskago (Polianskogo)" (Biography of the patriarchal locum tenens, Metropolitan Peter (Poliansky) of Krutitsa), *Vestnik Russkogo Khristianskogo Dvizhenia* (Herald of the Russian Christian Movement), № 166, III-1992, pp. 213-242.

<sup>95</sup> Gubonin, *op. cit.*, p. 454.

locum tenens named by Patriarch Tikhon who was in freedom at that time. In view of the very ruthless behaviour now displayed by Metropolitan Sergius, it seems likely that he deliberately decided to hide the information about Metropolitan Agathangel's return from Metropolitan Peter...

In fact, with the appearance of Metropolitan Agathangel the claims of *both* the Grigorians *and* Sergius to supreme power in the Church collapsed. But Sergius, having tasted of power, was not about to relinquish it so quickly; and just as Metropolitan Agathangel's rights as locum tenens were swept aside by the renovationists in 1922, so now the same hierarch was swept aside again by the former renovationist Sergius. The chronology of events reveals how the leadership of the Russian Church was usurped for the second time...

On April 30, Sergius wrote to Agathangel rejecting his claim to the rights of the patriarchal locum tenens on the grounds that Peter had not resigned his post. In this letter Sergius claims that he and Peter had exchanged opinions on Agathangel's letter in Moscow on April 22 – but neither Sergius nor Peter mention Agathangel in the letters they exchanged on that day and which are published by Gubonin.<sup>96</sup> Therefore it seems probable that Peter's decision not to resign his post was based on ignorance of Agathangel's appearance on the scene. Indeed, there can be little doubt that if he had known he would have immediately handed over the administration of the Church to Agathangel.

On May 13, Agathangel met Sergius in Moscow, where, according to Sergius, they agreed that if Peter's trial (for unlawfully handing over his authority to the Grigorians) ended in his condemnation, Sergius would hand over his authority to Agathangel: "Should Metropolitan Peter for whatever reason abandon his position of *locum tenens*, our eyes will, of course, turn to the candidates indicated in [Patriarch Tikhon's] testament, that is, to Metropolitan Kyrill and then to Your Eminence." However, Sergius was simply playing for time, in order to win as many bishops as possible to his side. And three days later, on May 16, "after returning to Nizhny Novgorod, he wrote to him saying that he had misunderstood the Local Council's resolution about the *locum tenens*, and that he (Metropolitan Sergius) therefore could therefore not transfer authority to him."<sup>97</sup>

In effect Sergius was reneging on his agreement of three days before: "If the affair ends with Metropolitan Peter being acquitted or freed, I will hand over to *him* my authority, while your eminence will then have to conduct discussions with Metropolitan Peter himself. But if the affair ends with his condemnation, you will be given the opportunity to take upon yourself the initiative of raising the question of bringing Metropolitan Peter to a church trial. When Metropolitan Peter will be given over to a trial, you can present your rights, as the eldest [hierarch] to the post of Deputy of Metropolitan Peter, and when the court will declare the latter deprived of his post, you will be the second candidate to the *locum tenancy* of the patriarchal

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<sup>96</sup> Gubonin, *op. cit.*, pp. 454-57.

<sup>97</sup> Deacon Andrei Psarev, "Metropolitan Sergius of Nizhny Novgorod as Deputy Patriarchal Locum Tenens to Metropolitan Peter of Krutitsa", 1999, academia.edu. p. 7.

throne after Metropolitan Cyril."<sup>98</sup> In other words, Sergius in a cunning and complicated way rejected Agathangel's claim to be the lawful head of the Russian Church, although this claim was now stronger than Metropolitan Peter's (because Peter was in prison and unable to rule the Church) and *much* stronger than Sergius'.

On May 20, Agathangel sent a telegram to Sergius: "You promised to send a project to the Bishops concerning the transfer to me of the authorizations of ecclesiastical power. Be so kind as to hurry up." On the same day Sergius replied: "Having checked your information, I am convinced that you have no rights; [I will send you] the details by letter. I ardently beseech you: do not take the decisive step." On May 21, Agathangel sent another telegram threatening to publish the agreement he had made with Sergius and which he, Sergius, had broken. On May 22, Sergius wrote to Peter warning him not to recognize Agathangel's claims (the letter, according to Hieromonk Damascene (Orlovsky), was delivered personally by Tuchkov, which shows which side the OGPU was on!). However, Peter ignored Sergius' warning and wrote to Agathangel on May 22 (and again on May 23), congratulating him on his assumption of the rights of patriarchal *locum tenens* and assuring him of his loyalty: "It is with love and good will that I welcome your assumption [of the powers of Patriarchal *locum tenens*]. After I am released, God-willing, we will speak in person about the future leadership of the Orthodox Church..." At this point Sergius' last real canonical grounds for holding on to power - the support of Metropolitan Peter - *collapsed completely*.<sup>99</sup> But Agathangel only received this letter on May 31, a (OGPU-engineered?) delay that proved to be decisive for the fortunes of the Russian Church.

"Metropolitan Agathangel again summoned Metropolitan Sergius to come to Moscow in order that he might gather together the bishops and take over Metropolitan Sergius' powers, but Metropolitan Sergius did not come, citing an exit ban as the reason, even though he had come to Moscow two weeks before receiving the letter".<sup>100</sup> On May 24, after Sergius had again written rejecting Agathangel's claims, the latter wrote: "Continue to rule the Church... For the sake of the peace of the Church I propose to resign the office of *locum tenens*."<sup>101</sup> On the same day Sergius, savagely pressing home his advantage, wrote to the administration of the Moscow diocese demanding that Agathangel be tried by the hierarchs then in Moscow.

Agathangel eventually received Peter's letter (confirmed by a third one dated June 9), in which he wrote: "In the event that Your Eminence should refuse or be unable to take up the duties of Patriarchal *locum tenens*, the rights and duties associated with this position are restored to myself, and the status of deputy to Metropolitan Sergius." Agathangel then wrote to Sergius saying that he would send him a copy of the original and informing him that he had accepted the chancellery of the *locum*

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<sup>98</sup> Gubonin, *op. cit.*, p. 461 (italics mine).

<sup>99</sup> Gubonin, *op. cit.*, pp. 462-64.

<sup>100</sup> *Za Khrista postradaushie: goneniia na Russkuiu Pravoslavnuuiu Tserkov' 1917-1956 gg.* (Those Who Suffered for Christ's Sake: The Persecution of the Russian Orthodox Church from 1917 to 1956), Moscow: Saint Tikhon's Theological Institute, 1997, p. 34.

<sup>101</sup> Regelson, *op. cit.*, pp. 404, 469.

tenens. And he asked him to come to Moscow so that he could take over power from him. But it was too late. Sergius was already in control of the Church's administration and refused to come to Moscow saying that he had signed a promise not to leave Nizhni-Novgorod (although he had gone to Moscow only two weeks before!). And on June 12, in a letter to Metropolitan Peter, Agathangel finally renounced all claims to the locum tenancy "for reasons of old age and extremely fragile health".

Why did Metropolitan Agathangel renounce the post of locum tenens at this point?

The reason he gave to Sergius was his poor health; but some further light is shed on this question by Schema-Bishop Peter (Ladygin), who wrote that when Metropolitan Agathangel returned from exile, "everyone began to come to him. Then Tuchkov with some archimandrite came to Agathangel and began to demand from him that he hand over his administration to Sergius. Metropolitan Agathangel did not agree to this. Then Tuchkov told him that he would now go back into exile. Then Agathangel, because of his health and since he had already been three years in exile, resigned from the administration [the post of locum tenens] and left it to Peter of Krutitsa as the lawful [locum tenens] until the second candidate, Metropolitan Cyril, should return from exile. I heard about this when I personally went to him in Yaroslavl and he himself explained his situation to me. And he said that the canonical administration was now really in the hands of Cyril, and temporarily, until the return of Cyril, with Metropolitan Peter. He did not recognize Sergius or Gregory..."<sup>102</sup>

Bishop Peter goes on to write: "I asked him: 'What must we do in the future if neither Cyril nor Peter will be around? Who must we then commemorate?' He said: 'There is still the canonical Metropolitan Joseph, formerly of Uglich, who is now in Leningrad. He was appointed by his Holiness Patriarch Tikhon as a candidate in case the Patriarch, I, Cyril and Anthony [Khrapovitsky] died.'" Bishop Peter for a time commemorated Metropolitan Agathangel as locum tenens.<sup>103</sup>

The astonishing extent of Sergius' usurpation of power is revealed in his fifth letter to Agathangel, dated June 13, in which he refused to submit even to Metropolitan Peter insofar as the latter, "having transferred to me, albeit temporarily, nevertheless in full, the rights and obligations of the locum tenens, and himself being deprived of the possibility of being reliably informed of the state of ecclesiastical affairs, can neither bear responsibility for the course of the latter, nor, a fortiori, meddle in their administration... I cannot look on the instructions of Metropolitan Peter that have come out of prison as other than instructions or, rather, *as the advice of a person without responsibility* [italics mine - V.M.]."

A sergianist source comments on this letter: "It turns out that, once having appointed a deputy for himself, Metropolitan Peter no longer had the right to

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<sup>102</sup> Ladygin, "Kratkoe opisaniye biografii menia nedostojnago skhiepiskopa Petra Ladygina" (Short Description of the Biography of me, the unworthy Schema-Bishop Peter Ladygin). *Tserkovnaia Zhizn'* (Church Life), №№ 7-8, July-August, 1985, p. 200.

<sup>103</sup> Tsypin, op. cit., p. 56.

substitute another for him, whatever he declared. This 'supple' logic, capable of overturning even common sense, witnessed to the fact that Metropolitan Sergius was not going to depart from power under any circumstances."<sup>104</sup>

Even, as it turned out in only a year later, in 1927, when he was asked to hand over the Russian Church into the hands of the God-hating atheists...

Sergius also said that Agathangel was given over to a hierarchical trial for his anticanonical act, for greeting which Metropolitan Peter "himself becomes a participant in it and is also subject to punishment". In other words, Sergius, though only Metropolitan Peter's deputy as locum tenens for as long as the latter recognized him as such, was not only usurping the rights of the full (and not simply deputy) locum tenens, but was also threatening to bring to trial, on the charge of attempting to usurp the locum tenancy, two out of the only three men who could canonically lay claim to the post!<sup>105</sup>

Who was the usurper - Sergius or Peter? Every Russian Christian must answer that question and make the appropriate choice of ecclesiastical loyalty...

*March 12/25, 2021.  
St. Gregory the Great, Pope of Rome.*

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<sup>104</sup> *Za Khrista Postradavshie*, p. 36.

<sup>105</sup> Schema-Bishop Peter (Ladygin), who later became one of the leaders of the Catacomb Church, had a different account of these events, which still more clearly incriminated Sergius (op. cit., pp. 152-53).



## 10. THE MOST DANGEROUS YEARS, 1945-1949

In 1945, just after the war's end, President Truman did not understand the truly desperate plight of the Europeans. Lend-lease was halted after VE Day, and even the Americans' closest allies, the British, were almost denied a desperately needed loan. Some loans were provided to some nations – but only as stop-gaps to save the starving, not as the basis for a real revival of the European economy. The Bretton Woods agreement in 1944 had envisaged such a revival of the European economies as part of a new system of convertible currencies and international free trade. But in the beginning America, the world's only economic super-power, which “by the spring of 1945 accounted for half the world's manufacturing capacity, most of its food surpluses and virtually all international financial reserves”<sup>106</sup>, was not willing to provide the cash that alone could kick-start such a revival.

However, the president was persuaded to change course by a variety of factors: the withdrawal of the British from Greece for mainly financial reasons, the terrible winter of 1946-47 and the real threat of starvation and anarchy hanging over large areas of Western Europe – which in turn threatened the coming to power of communist regimes in France and Italy.

Although he was inexperienced in foreign affairs, and came to power little known and not highly rated by comparison with his famous predecessor, Truman was a quick learner. Thus he rapidly realized, writes Burleigh, “that the Soviets were bent on taking ‘here a little, there a little, they are chiseling from us’. Not long after becoming president he lectured Molotov on Soviet bad faith. In Truman's recollection, Molotov said, ‘I have never been talked to like that in my life.’ ‘Carry out your agreements and you won't get talked to like that,’ Truman snapped back. By January 1946 Truman had decided: ‘Unless Russia is faced with an iron fist and strong language, another war is in the making. Only one language do they understand: “How many divisions have you?” He would endeavour to get along with the Soviets, and work with them within the new UN Security Council, but he was never going to appease them, the common nightmare of his generation.”<sup>107</sup>

As if to confirm Truman's assessment, Stalin delivered a speech in Moscow on February 9, 1946, in which he declared: “The development of world capitalism proceeds not in the path of smooth and even progress but through crisis and the catastrophes of war” – a good summary of the path, not of capitalism, but of communism.

This was followed by Winston Churchill's “iron curtain” speech in Fulton, Missouri, Truman's home state, in which he warned that “an ‘iron curtain’ had descended on the European continent. Behind that curtain was a ‘Soviet sphere’, encompassing Warsaw, Berlin, Prague, Vienna, Budapest, Belgrade, Bucharest and Sofia. On March 10, ten days after Churchill's lecture, George Orwell wrote in the

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<sup>106</sup> Judt, *Postwar*, p. 105.

<sup>107</sup> Burleigh, *Small Wars, Far Away Places*, London: Pan, 2013, p. 52. Cf. Stalin's well-known quip: “How many divisions has the Pope?”

*Observer* that '[a]fter the Moscow conference last December, Russia began to make a "cold war" on Britain and the British Empire.'"<sup>108</sup>

At about the same time, the famous atheist mathematician and philosopher Bertrand Russell began advocating a preventative war against the Soviets. "Unlike most members of the left, Russell had never been taken in by the Soviet regime. He had always rejected Marxism completely. The book in which he described his 1920 visit to Russia, *The Practice and Theory of Bolshevism* (1920), was highly critical of Lenin and what he was doing. He regarded Stalin as a monster and accepted as true the fragmentary accounts of the forced collectivization, the great famine, the purges and the camps which reached the West. In all these ways he was quite untypical of the progressive intelligentsia. Nor did he share the complacency with which, in 1944-45, they accepted the extension of Soviet rule to most of Eastern Europe. To Russell this was a catastrophe for Western civilization. 'I hate the Soviet government too much for sanity,' he wrote on 15 January 1945. He believed that Soviet expansion would continue unless halted by the threat or use of force. In a letter dated 1 September 1945 he asserted: 'I think Stalin has inherited Hitler's ambition to world dictatorship.' Hence, when the first nuclear weapons were exploded by the US over Japan, he immediately resurrected his view that America should impose peace and disarmament on the world, using the new weapons to coerce a recalcitrant Russia. To him it was a heaven-sent opportunity which might never recur"<sup>109</sup> insofar as America was still at that time (and until 1950) the world's only nuclear power and so could impose – by the threat of nuclear annihilation, if need be – a single world government.

In a talk to the Royal Empire Society on 3 December 1947 Russell "proposed an alliance – adumbrating NATO – which would then dictate terms to Russia: 'I am inclined to think that Russia would acquiesce; if not, provided this is done soon, the world might survive the resulting war and emerge with a single government such as the world needs.' 'If Russia overruns Western Europe,' he wrote to an American disarmament expert, Dr. Walter Marseille, in May 1948, 'the destruction will be such as no subsequent reconquest can undo. Practically the whole educated population will be sent to labour camps in north-east Siberia or on the shores of the White Sea, where they will die of hardship and the survivors will be turned into animals. Atomic bombs, if used, will at first have to be dropped on Western Europe, since Russia will be out of reach. The Russians, even without atomic bombs, will be able to destroy all the big towns of England...'"<sup>110</sup>

It was not in fact true that Russia was out of reach of American bombers, and in June 1946 Truman stiffened up his military doctrine, declaring his determination not to "baby" the Soviets, and to prevent their expansion into Western Europe. A plan was drawn up by General Curtis LeMay (who had firebombed Tokyo in 1945) to drop 292 nuclear bombs on 104 Soviet cities in the event of war. And in September 1946 Secretary of State Byrnes declared in Germany that American troops would stay there

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<sup>108</sup> Niall Ferguson, *Kissinger. 1923-1968: The Idealist*, New York: Penguin, 2016, p. 193.

<sup>109</sup> Paul Johnson, *Intellectuals*, London: Harper Perennial, 1988, 2007, pp. 204-205.

<sup>110</sup> Johnson, *op. cit.*, pp. 205-206.

as long as they were needed – an implicit reversal of Roosevelt’s promise that they would be recalled home within two years.

“I have no doubt,” continued Russell, “that America would win in the end, but unless Western Europe can be preserved from invasion, it will be lost to civilization for centuries. Even at such a price, I think war would be worth while. Communism must be wiped out, and world government must be established.”

“Russell constantly stressed the need for speed: ‘Sooner or later, the Russians will have atom bombs, and when they have them it will be a much tougher proposition. Everything must be done in a hurry, with the utmost celerity.’ Even when Russia exploded an A-bomb, he still pressed his argument, urging that the West must develop the hydrogen bomb. ‘I do not think that, in the present temper of the world, an agreement to limit atomic warfare would do anything but harm, because each side would think that the other was evading it.’ He then put the ‘Better Dead than Red’ argument in its most uncompromising form: ‘The next war, if it comes, will be the greatest disaster that will have befallen the human race up to that moment. I can think of only one greater disaster: the extension of the Kremlin’s power over the whole world.’”<sup>111</sup>

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However, Russell’s proposal was rejected, and Truman replaced the bellicose Byrnes with the more statesmanlike General George C. Marshall, who chose a strategy of “containment”. This policy had been suggested by the American diplomat George Kennan in his famous “Long Telegram” sent from the Moscow embassy on February 22, 1946. Kennan argued that the West had to wield a big stick against the “expanding totalitarian state” of the Soviet Union because “Soviet power is impervious to the logic of reason, and is highly sensitive to the logic of force”. According to Kennan, “the main element of any United States policy toward the Soviet Union must be a long-term, patient but firm and vigilant containment of Russian expansive tendencies ... Soviet pressure against the free institutions of the Western world is something that can be contained by the adroit and vigilant application of counterforce at a series of constantly shifting geographical and political points, corresponding to the shifts and manoeuvres of Soviet policy, but which cannot be charmed or talked out of existence.” However, the US was to act, in Kennan’s opinion, “only in cases where the prospective results bear a satisfactory relationship to the expenditure of American resources and effort”.<sup>112</sup>

Kennan, writes Niall Ferguson, “warned that ‘Nothing short of complete disarmament, delivery of our air and naval forces to Russia and resigning of powers of government to American Communists’ would allay Stalin’s ‘baleful misgivings’. Truman drew his own conclusion from Kennan’s warning in his address to a joint session of both houses of Congress on March 12, 1947: ‘It must be the policy of the

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<sup>111</sup> Johnson, op. cit., p. 206.

<sup>112</sup> Burleigh, op. cit., pp. 52, 53.

United States,' he declared, 'to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures.'"113

In this speech which came to be called "the Truman doctrine", Truman put the case for helping Greece and Turkey, first of all, against Soviet aggression: "Totalitarian regimes imposed upon free peoples, by direct or indirect aggression, undermine the foundations of international peace and hence the security of the United States... At the present moment in world history nearly every nation must choose between alternative ways of life. The choice is too often not a free one. One way of life is based upon the will of the majority, and is distinguished by free institutions, representative government, free elections, guarantees of individual liberty, freedom of speech and religion, and freedom from political oppression. The second way of life is based upon the will of a minority forcibly imposed upon the majority. It relies upon terror and oppression, a controlled press and radio, fixed elections, and the suppression of personal freedom. I believe that it must be the policy of the United States to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures."114

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But the biggest problem for the Anglo-Americans was the comatose European economy, which depended critically on its traditional power-house, Germany. The Anglo-Saxons merged their two military zones of German occupation into one "Bizon" and unilaterally increased output there. But the German economy needed a stronger stimulant than that. The country had been gradually separating into two separate countries, with Eastern Germany being slowly but inexorably turned into a communist country. This, writes Brogan, "was a quite unintended result of the war, and came about because Russia and her allies found it impossible to agree on the government of the defeated country. It was possible to set up a tribunal at Nuremberg which tried and sentenced the surviving Nazi leaders; all other matters were divisive. Stalin was determined to... squeeze the utmost in reparations out of the Germans. Unfortunately, the reparations policy, unacceptable to Western statesmen on economic grounds (they clearly remembered what trouble reparations had caused between the wars), soon became indistinguishable from one of wholesale plunder; and Soviet security seemed to demand the permanent subjugation of Germans and the establishment by brutal means of communist governments, backed by the Red Army, everywhere else. In Central Europe only Czechoslovakia held out for a time; in South-Eastern Europe, only Greece - and there a civil war was raging between the government and communist guerrillas."115

Being occupied by the armies of the four Great Powers, Germany could not be treated like any other European country. Both France and the Soviet Union feared German revanchism. France wanted reparations and control of the coal-producing regions of the Ruhr, while the Soviets wanted a restoration of reparations from the

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113 Ferguson, *Colossus*, London: Allen Lane, 2004, pp. 78-79.

114 David Reynolds, *America. Empire of Liberty*, London: Penguin, 2010, pp. 379-380.

115 Brogan, *A History of the United States*, London: Penguin, p. 590.

Western zone (they had already grabbed what they wanted from the East) and the single administrative system and economy over the whole of Germany which would enable them to obtain that.

However, the Anglo-Americans no longer feared German revanchism, and in general wanted, instead of reparations and a very thorough denazification programme that would inevitably hinder economic recovery, a swift recovery of the German economy that would benefit all.

Now "it had been the last vain hope of the Nazis that the Western allies would recognize the Soviet threat in time to make a common cause with them against Stalin. The ground having been prepared by Goebbels's propaganda, ordinary Germans were therefore even quicker to anticipate such a conflict. As early as Christmas 1945, rumors in Bergstrasse [in Krefeld] included 'the alleged arming of German soldiers for a war against Russia' and 'a war this winter between Russia and the Western Powers'. But the Cold War was to take very different forms from World War II... the Americans had not scrupled to appoint members of the German Communist Party (KPD) to positions of responsibility in their zone of occupation. Any 'anti-Nazi' was considered eligible. Only slowly did it become clear that the KPD might be acting as a Soviet fifth column. 'The best organized party in Kreis Bergstrasse are [the] communists,' according to a CIC [Counter-Intelligence Corps] report of October 1945, which added darkly, 'Their organization is closely modelled on the Nazis.'..."<sup>116</sup>

The critical change in thinking was initiated, according to Yanis Varoufakis, on September 6, 1946, "when James F. Byrnes, the US secretary of state, travelled to Stuttgart to deliver his Speech of Hope - a significant restatement of America's policy on Germany... Byrnes's speech was the first postwar sign the German people were given of an end to the revanchist deindustrialization drive that, by the end of the 1940s, had destroyed 706 industrial plants. Byrnes heralded a major policy reversal with the statement that 'the German people [should] not... be denied to use... [such] savings as they might be able to accumulate by hard work and frugal living to build up their industries for peaceful purposes.'..."

"A speech on 18 March 1947 made by Herbert J. Hoover, President Roosevelt's predecessor, flagged up America's new policy on Europe. 'There is an illusion,' Hoover said, 'that the New Germany... can be reduced to a pastoral state. It cannot be done unless we exterminate or remove 25 million people out of it.'..."<sup>117</sup>

And so in August, 1947 "the Joint Chiefs of Staff directive ICS 1067 (the 'Morgenthau plan') was replaced by JCS 1779 which formally acknowledged the new American goals: economic unification of the western zone of Germany and the encouragement of German self-government. For the Americans especially, Germans were rapidly ceasing to be the enemy..."<sup>118</sup>

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<sup>116</sup> Niall Ferguson, *Kissinger. 1923-1968: The Idealist*, New York: Penguin, 2016, p. 193.

<sup>117</sup> Varoufakis, *And the Weak Suffer What They Must?*, pp. 47, 49.

<sup>118</sup> Judt, *op. cit.*, p. 125.

For the British too. Thus “British official, Ivan Hirst, sent to the Volkswagen tank factory, supposedly bombed to pieces, was ordered to dismantle and sell what was left. Ford of America declared it ‘not worth a dime’. Within weeks Hirst was making cars and by 1946 was producing 1,000 a month.”<sup>119</sup>

By contrast, the French, and especially General de Gaulle, were always very wary of any increase in German power. They had some reason to be worried. After all, the Germans had not at first taken well to the “denazification” programme that the Allies had imposed on them. Nor had true justice been done on the surviving Nazi leaders. Thus, as Anne Applebaum writes: “In the years after the Second World War, West Germany brought 85,000 Nazis to trial, but obtained fewer than 7,000 convictions. The tribunals were notoriously corrupt, and easily swayed by personal jealousies and disputes. The Nuremberg Trial itself was an example of ‘victors’ justice’ marred by dubious legality and oddities, not the least of which was the presence of Soviet judges who knew perfectly well that their own side was responsible for mass murder too.”<sup>120</sup>

Under American pressure, the French finally came round to the idea of relaunching the German economy provided Germany could be “hooked” into a European framework that would neutralize her militarily, and in which “French administrators would run a unified Central Europe (from Paris and from Brussels), while French banks would handle the flow of capital and German profits within and outside this entity.”<sup>121</sup>

Only the incorrigibly anti-American De Gaulle among the leading Europeans rejected this plan, and so he resigned and went into the political wilderness for another ten years...

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However, the decisive act in rescuing Europe came in June, 1947, when Truman approved his new Secretary of State Marshall’s European Recovery Program, which was almost as important as American troops in saving the West from Soviet tyranny. Marshall announced that “our policy is not directed against any country or doctrine, but against hunger, poverty, desperation and chaos”.

He was as good as his word: “In four years from 1948 the United States provided \$13 billion [\$210 billion in early twenty-first-century prices] of aid to Western Europe. During that same period the Soviet Union took out roughly the same amount from eastern Europe.”<sup>122</sup>

America also wrote off 93 per cent of the Germans’ pre-1945 debt, and postponed collection of the rest of it for nearly fifty years. According to the London debt agreement of February, 1953, the German debt, which was about 12 per cent of GDP

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<sup>119</sup> Simon Jenkins, *A Short History of Europe*, London: Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 2018, p. 271.

<sup>120</sup> Applebaum, *Gulag: A History*, London: Penguin, 2004, p. 507.

<sup>121</sup> Varoufakis, op. cit., p. 52.

<sup>122</sup> Reynolds, op. cit., pp. 381-382.

in the 1950s, much higher than that of the victorious allies, was completely wiped out. The Germans needed to be reminded of that during the European financial crisis of 2009, when they refused to remit the debts of struggling Greece.

Richard Palmer writes: “Historically, the conqueror bleeds the vanquished dry. Not the U.S. Under the Marshall Plan, the United States poured into Western Europe the equivalent of \$130 billion in today’s money, much of it going to West Germany. If America were to give the same share of its economy today, it would amount to over \$800 billion. And it gave this while its economy was shrinking. Secretary of State George C. Marshall called this plan to rebuild Germany a ‘calculated risk.’”<sup>123</sup>

“Between 1945 and 1953 total global US aid was \$44 billion, of which \$12.3 billion was pumped into European economies after 1948. This permitted European governments an extended range of policy choices while lubricating recovery that was often already under way. All wished to introduce welfare states, but there were wide divergences in how US aid was used in each national case, with the French and Germans making most intelligent use of these funds. If the strictly economic impact of the Marshall Plan is contentious, it undoubtedly contributed to the consolidation of the West as an Atlantic political entity. No similar effect was achieved in Asia, where equally vast sums were invested, but not under a similar unifying plan... In former Axis countries, where nationalism was under a cloud, productivity became a consensus-building vocation, a miraculous *Wunder* as the Germans called it. The rapid revival of West Germany in turn accelerated French efforts to contain it, which took the form of intra-European institutions...”<sup>124</sup>

Marshall Aid was also offered to Eastern Europe – in fact, all the European countries except Franco’s Spain. “Soviet participation was out of the question since it would mean revealing the economic reality of Soviet weakness through data Stalin would never share. Stalin also realized that such a plan would undermine the Soviets’ lock on their satellites, if they were enticed into the orbit of the powerful sun that was the US economy.

At first, writes Jean-François Revel, “instead of lambasting American generosity, as it later did, pretending to see the plan as a satanic manoeuvre by Western imperialism and its ‘trusts’, the USSR showed great interest in the offer. Stalin even sent Vyacheslav M. Molotov to Paris to discuss it with the British and French Foreign Ministers. But he quickly realized that acceptance of Marshall Plan aid would hamper the process of absorption and consolidation then nearing fulfilment in satellite Europe and might even shake the totalitarian Soviet system. For an American condition to granting credits was that the beneficiary countries coordinate their reconstruction and harmonize their economies. This was the embryo of the future Common Market. To the Communist leadership, this meant creation of a pan-European network of consultation and exchanges, an imbrication of economies and

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<sup>123</sup> Palmer, “A Relationship Formed in the Aftermath of World War Two Has Hit Hard Times. Is it Over?” *The Trumpet*, August, 2018, [https://www.thetrumpet.com/17414-europe-and-america-theyve-lost-that-loving-feeling?](https://www.thetrumpet.com/17414-europe-and-america-theyve-lost-that-loving-feeling/)

<sup>124</sup> Burleigh, op. cit., p. 64.

interpenetration of societies that would in any case have shattered totalitarian power in the satellites and put even Moscow's on shaky ground. How could Czechoslovakia, Poland, Hungary, East Germany have resisted the attraction of a Western Europe that, in 1950, was about to embark on the most vigorous economic expansion in its history? To force them to remain in the Soviet orbit, to put up with the pervasive beggary of daily life that marks socialist economies, Moscow had to separate them forcibly and totally from the West. So the Soviet Union refused Marshall Plan aid for itself and obliged its satellites to do the same. An ultimatum from Stalin barred Czechoslovakia, which maintained its hopes until the last minute, from accepting American assistance."<sup>125</sup>

Already before the Aid started pouring in, the Americans had succeeded in keeping Western Europe in their sphere when the Communists came critically close to electoral victory in France and Italy. For "in December 1945 the Italian Communists had 1.8 million members and gained 19 per cent of the popular vote in free elections. The French Communist party had nearly a million members. In November, 1947, at the instigation of Stalin's Cominform, two million workers struck throughout France. Similar strikes paralysed Italy..."<sup>126</sup>

"Truman showed great dexterity in determining which of the Western European leftist parties could become U.S. allies. He correctly concluded that Italy's Communists and Socialists were monolithic: they were united in supporting the Soviet Union and opposing the U.S.-sponsored Marshall Plan. Truman instead cultivated the Christian Democrats, helping them win a crucial election in 1948. In France, however, Truman recognized that the Socialists opposed communism and struck a deal with them, allowing France to become an honorary but genuine U.S. partner."<sup>127</sup>

The unprecedented act of enlightened self-interest that was the Marshall Plan - Ernest Bevin called it "generosity beyond belief" - did the trick: the Western European economy spluttered into life. And so, by the Providence of God, President Truman and his team played the decisive role in shoring up the Western world against Stalin, the most evil and powerful dictator in history, fulfilling the vital role, if not of "him who restrains" the coming of the Antichrist (for that could be played only by an Orthodox Autocrat), at any rate of "world provider" and "world policeman". For that, the whole world should be grateful to them and to the American people.

Indeed, there can be no doubt that in a secular sense America saved humanity in the immediate post-war era. It is sufficient to imagine what the world would have been like if Stalin had not had in the Americans a powerful and determined opponent, or how many millions would have starved to death if America had not "fed the world" in accordance with the 1911 prophecy of St. Aristocles of Moscow. In

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<sup>125</sup> Revel, *How Democracies Perish*, London, 1985, p. 102.

<sup>126</sup> Ferguson, *op. cit.*, p. 593.

<sup>127</sup> John M. Owen IV, "From Calvin to the Caliphate", *Foreign Affairs*, May/June, 2015, vol. 94, no. 3, p. 84.



fact, the Bretton Woods system, the Marshall Plan, the London debt agreement and other American-sponsored initiatives and investments around the globe, formed the basis for the greatest rise in prosperity in the whole of world history.

The paradox is that this vast increase in prosperity, though sponsored and driven by America, was carried out in a very un-American way, through the activity of *the State* rather than private business. For in the conditions of Europe's post-war anarchy and devastation, a recovery of the European economy was possible only through the massive intervention of the State – both the American State and the European States. For at that time there were no private resources capable of accomplishing the massive work of survival and reconstruction; the private sector could, of course, help, but the initiative had to be taken by the State, as it had done, successfully, at the time of Roosevelt's New Deal (and Hitler's rearmament programme) in the 1930s.

But, as Mark Mazower explains, these were “two very different policy environments. The world of the post-war welfare state was one of full employment, fast population growth and relative internal and external peace inside Europe. Inter-war social policy, by contrast, had been made against a backdrop of mass unemployment, fears of population decline, revolution, political extremism and war. In both eras, the state took the lead, but whereas before 1940 it aimed to secure the health of the collectivity, the family, and above all, the nation, after the war it acted chiefly in order to expand opportunity and choices for the individual citizen. Each epoch reacted against its predecessor: post-1918 against the individualism of mid-nineteenth century liberalism, post-1945 against inter-war collectivism...”<sup>128</sup>

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In February, 1948, Stalin abandoned his policy of allowing East European communist parties to take part in democratic elections (where they didn't do very well), and blessed the Czech party to launch a coup d'état. His action here was very similar to Lenin's in January, 1918 when he dissolved the Constituent Assembly. Communism will go along with the democratic process if it yields the results the communists want. If not, then the democratic process has to be destroyed... The successful coup accelerated the deterioration of relations between East and West. By March, the system of joint Allied occupation of Germany had collapsed, and was superseded by a Communist East Germany and a Capitalist West Germany. On April 1, the Soviets cut off all transport links from the West to West Berlin (a distance of 110 miles of Soviet-controlled territory), offering to lift the ban if the West withdrew the newly-introduced Deutschmark from West Berlin. The West refused. “We stay in Berlin,” said Truman. “We will supply the city by air as a beleaguered garrison...”

However, as David Reynolds writes, “this seemed a very tall order. Many pundits believed it impossible to keep 2 million people supplied by air but the Americans and British mounted ‘Operation Vittles’, as the Americans called it (the RAF code-name was ‘Operation Plain Fare’). Against all the odds the airlift continued all through the

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<sup>128</sup> Mazower, *Dark Continent. Europe's Twentieth Century*, London: Penguin, 1999, p. 303.

winter; at its height a plane landed every thirty seconds, carrying essentials such as food, coal and clothing.”<sup>129</sup>

“At the height of the airlift,” writes Andrew Roberts, “planes landed at Berlin’s Tempelhof Airport every three minutes forty-three seconds, delivering 4,000 tons of food and other essentials per day. Twenty thousand Berliners built a third airport, virtually ‘with their bare hands’. There was severe hardship, of course, but ultimately the West proved that Stalin would not starve West Berlin into surrender. The airlift continued until September, as supplies needed to be stockpiled. The last flight was the 276,926<sup>th</sup>, flown by Captain Perry Immel. In total, the 321 days of the operation had transported 227,655 people in and out of Berlin, and delivered 2,323,067 tons of (mostly food and coal) at a cost of \$345 million to America, £17 million to Britain and 150 million Deutschmarks to the Germans. Seventy-five American and British lives were lost in the operation. As a result of the crisis, and the message it sent about Soviet assumptions and intentions, the United States began to build up her nuclear arsenal massively: in 1947 she had only thirteen bombs, in 1948 fifty, but by 1949 no fewer than 250.”<sup>130</sup>

On May 12 1949, the Soviets climbed down... Forty years later, Henry Kissinger asked the Soviet Foreign Minister at the time, Andrei Gromyko, “how, in light of the vast casualties and devastation it had suffered in the war, the Soviet Union could have dealt with an American military response to the Berlin blockade. Gromyko replied that Stalin had answered similar questions from subordinates to this effect: he doubted the United States would use nuclear weapons on so local an issue. If the Western allies undertook a conventional ground force probe along the access routes to Berlin, Soviet forces were ordered to resist without referring the decision to Stalin. If America were mobilizing along the entire front, Stalin said, ‘Come to me’. In other words, Stalin felt strong enough for a local war but would not risk general war with the United States...”<sup>131</sup>

We may wonder, however, whether the Soviets would have dared any kind of war at that point. Revel argues that if the Americans had made a determined effort to enforce their agreements with the Soviets over Berlin, it is possible that they could have achieved, not just the relief of West Berlin, but the reunification of Germany: “It was not only in 1952 [when Stalin dangled the prospect of the reunification of Germany before the West] that the West let a chance go by to negotiate a German reunification treaty, which would have eliminated one of the most glaring weaknesses in the democratic camp and one of Moscow’s most effective means of blackmail. Truman fumbled a first opportunity during the 1948 Berlin blockade when he refused to send an armored train from West Germany to Berlin to see if the Soviets would dare to attack it. Whether they did or not, they were beaten and the United States could have capitalized on their blunder to demand clarification of the German situation. Instead, the American airlift eluded the blockade, in a sense, without really breaking it. Washington was unable to follow up its prestige victory with a

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<sup>129</sup> Reynolds, *op. cit.*, p. 383.

<sup>130</sup> Roberts, *A History of the English-Speaking Peoples from 1900*, London: Penguin, 2015, p. 403.

<sup>131</sup> Kissinger, *World Order*, London: Penguin, 2015, pp. 281-282.

diplomatic victory. When the blockade was lifted in 1949, the Allies, as usual, returned to their old stances, as shaky militarily as they were confused juridically. Under the elementary rules of diplomacy, the Allies should have demanded that, in reparation for the Soviet treaty violation, Moscow negotiate an immediate German peace treaty. Their failure to do so is proof of their diplomatic incompetence. That the Allies failed to press the advantage granted them by the Soviet setback during that brief period when the United States had a monopoly on the atomic bomb, which gave it an absolute superiority unprecedented in history, has no rational explanation, however blind we may think Western leaders were at the time – an estimate we need not be tender about. There certainly would have been nothing immoral about using our atomic monopoly to force Stalin to agree to a German peace treaty, since we would have been using our military superiority not to make war but to eliminate a cause of future war or, at least, of permanent friction and of fundamental Western weakness.”<sup>132</sup>

The Berlin blockade spurred the West into creating the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) on April 4, 1949, which, writes Burleigh, “was one of the great achievements of British Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin, who therewith dodged a solely European defensive alliance. NATO bolted the US into Europe’s defence, in a sort of ‘empire by invitation’; and in 1955 locked in West Germany too, frustrating Soviet gambits for a neutral unified Germany. It was sold to Congress as a new kind of alliance, allegedly directed against ‘armed aggression’ in general, rather than any specific enemy. It was a precedent-setting novelty in US foreign policy, a cardinal tenet of which had always been to avoid ‘foreign entanglements’. Together these confident policies hugely benefited centrist Christian Democrat, Liberal (meaning free-market) and Social Democrat politicians, marginalizing Stalin’s West European Communist puppets...”<sup>133</sup>

NATO’s real aim was to defend its members – Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Iceland, Italy, Luxemburg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, the United Kingdom and the United States – against Soviet aggression. “The best summary of NATO’s original purpose,” writes James Sheehan, “was the comment attributed to its first secretary-general, Lord Ismay, suggesting that the alliance existed to ‘keep the Russians out, the Americans in, and the Germans down’. For forty years it succeeded in those three objectives: the United States remained committed to European security, the Soviet Union did not expand into western Europe, and West Germany, though economically powerful and rearmed, did not become a threat to its neighbours.”<sup>134</sup>

The defensive nature of the alliance was underlined by its doctrine of “containment”; the aim was not to destroy the Soviet Union but to contain it within certain limits. The most critical part of its constitution was Article 5, which began with the words: “The parties agree that an armed attack against one or more of them in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against them all.”

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<sup>132</sup> Revel, op. cit., pp. 251-252.

<sup>133</sup> Burleigh, op. cit., pp. 64-65.

<sup>134</sup> Sheehan, “Is the Future of NATO under threat?” *BBC World Histories*, April/May, 2017, p. 10.

However, as David Reynolds has pointed out, “each nation was allowed to ‘take such action as it deems necessary’ to honour that obligation: there was no automatic commitment to use force.”<sup>135</sup>

NATO succeeded in its aim of containing Soviet power and protecting the West. If the Marshal Plan and the European Economic Community brought *prosperity*, it was NATO that provided *peace* and the *protection* of that prosperity.

“NATO,” writes Kissinger, “was a new departure in the establishment of European security. The international order no longer was characterized by the traditional European balance of power distilled from shifting coalitions of multiple states. Rather, whatever equilibrium prevailed had been reduced to that existing between the two nuclear superpowers. If either disappeared or failed to engage, the equilibrium would be lost, and its opponent would become dominant. The first was what happened in 1990 with the collapse of the Soviet Union; the second was the perennial fear of America’s allies during the Cold War that America might lose interest in the defence of Europe. The nations joining the North Atlantic Treaty Organization provided some military forces but more in the nature of an admission ticket for a shelter under America’s nuclear umbrella than as an instrument of local defense. What America was constructing in the Truman era was a unilateral guarantee in the form of a traditional alliance...”<sup>136</sup>

*March 18/31, 2021.  
St. Edward the Martyr, King of England.*

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<sup>135</sup> Reynolds, “Security in the New World Order”, *New Statesman*, March 29 – April 4, 2019, p. 31.

<sup>136</sup> Kissinger, *op. cit.*, pp. 282-283.

## 11. A REPLY TO MICHAEL NAZAROV ON RUSSIA AND UKRAINE

Does present-day Ukraine rightfully belong to the present-day Russian Federation? This is the subject of this article... There are certain Orthodox – even True Orthodox – who argue that since Ukraine was part of Russia for centuries, Putin has the right and duty to “reclaim” it and force it back into what they suppose is the historical Russian empire. Thus the Orthodox publicist Mikhail Nazarov writes: “Ukraine (Little Russia), as the historical cradle of Rus’, is a part of thousand-year-old Russia that is dear to us, and for us it is not a foreign state, but is a part of our people that has been artificially and unlawfully cut off from us by its enemies against its will.”

“Against its will”? Certainly not. Whether or not one likes the Ukrainians’ decision to stay separate from the Russian Federation, there can be no doubt that this is what they chose – and freely. In 1991, when the Soviet Union began to fall apart, the Ukrainians voted decisively in favour of independence.

It is worth recalling the poll figures in order to understand how decisive this decision was *in every part of the Ukraine, including the Russian-speaking regions of Crimea and Donbass*. Thus 92.3% of the population as a whole voted for independence. In the Russian-language provinces of Lugansk and Donetsk the majorities were 83% and 77% respectively, while in Crimea the majority was 54%...

Nazarov’s defence of the invasion was made in the context of an illuminating dialogue on the war in Ukraine between himself and Prioress (now Abbess) Euphrosyne (Molchanova) of Lesna monastery in France. His position is, in essence, that since contemporary Russia, for all its undisputed evils, is still the Third Rome, and therefore the last bastion of True Christianity – potentially, if not actually – against the real and greatest threat to civilization in the modern world, the Jewish-American Antichrist, it should be supported against Ukraine, America’s satrap. Let us look at his argument in a little more detail.

In some ways, Nazarov’s anti-Americanism recalls the polemic of Alexander Dugin, who also plays with the concept of “Moscow – the Third Rome”, and who expresses a hatred of America so intense as to demonstrate that, while he may have abandoned the *ideology* of the Soviet era, he has by no means been exorcised of its ruling *spirit*: “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...

“To close down America is our religious duty...”

Nazarov does not speak about “closing down” America (still less about reducing it to “nuclear ash”, as does another Putinist propagandist, Dmitri Kiselev). But he accepts the Putinist theory that in the Russo-Ukrainian war it is really America that is fighting Russia under the Ukrainian flag, and that America is the Antichrist. And for that reason alone, in his opinion, it is right – indeed, vitally important and one’s duty as an Orthodox Christian – to support the Russian side.

And this in spite of the fact, as Molchanova rightly points out, that it is Russians and Ukrainians who are suffering and dying, not Americans. For “I can agree with your understanding of what *should be*,” he writes to Molchanova, “but not in your apprehension of what is really happening and *could be* in contemporary Russia.”

And so he begins his argument thus: “It was pleasing to God, for the uncovering of the spiritual meaning of history to mankind, that the most antichristian people, who was preparing the kingdom of its messiah-antichrist, should find itself on the territory of the most Christian kingdom, the Third Rome, and enter into apocalyptic conflict with it. In order to crush the Orthodox Kingdom, all the external and internal anti-Russian forces were mobilized. Also multiplied were the apostatic sins of the Russian upper classes, which became the inner reason for its fall. But it was allowed by the Lord as a final means of our sobering up ‘from the reverse’.

“Such a sobering up has not yet taken place at the level of the state, and perhaps will never take place. But is there in the world another people with such experience of resisting the forces of the Antichrist and with such knowledge of the meaning of history as the sobered-up part of the Russian people – albeit a very small part (the three percent mentioned above)? Where in the world are there more favourable conditions for the creation of the Camp and the City [Revelation 20.9]?...”

So far we can agree with Nazarov. The Russian people have indeed had unique experience in resisting the power of the Antichrist in the form of Soviet power, and therefore it is reasonable to suppose – and fully in accord with the prophecies of the saints – that Russia in the future should constitute the last refuge of True Christianity during the reign of the personal Antichrist. The problem is: the number of those who are “sobered-up” is far smaller than the three percent he mentions, and the Soviet Antichrist is still in power in its Putinist mutation, followed by the vast majority of the Russian people. So at the moment they are not in the Camp and City of the Saints, but in the camp and city of Gog and Magog

- the Antichrist. The implication must be that Putin's regime must be destroyed before Holy Russia can be resurrected...

He goes on: "However, let us examine the essence of the post-Soviet regime of the Russian Federation. You write: 'The contemporary and Soviet authorities are one and the same. The Putinist regime at all times and in all place confesses itself to be the direct heir of the Soviet regime, which, in the words of Archbishop Nathanael (Lvov), 'justifies, whitewashes and praises the greatest cruelties, deceptions, violence and in general trampling upon all the Divine and human laws, the greatest crimes that have ever been committed in human history.'

"I share your rejection both of the Soviet regime and the unworthy rulers of the Russian Federation, but I see their essence in something else. So as not to waste time (I'm already tired of writing), I shall cite an excerpt from the final, 25<sup>th</sup> chapter of 'The Mission of the Russian Emigration' (2014) which I should have shortened here, but did not succeed in doing. I consider this analysis important for the understanding also of the essence of the whole present world balance of forces, and for a correct relationship to this clergy 'brought up from childhood in ROCOR, living in the West, but always considering itself Russian'.

"Of course, the present regime in the Russian Federation contradicts the Russian national tradition and historical truth, tramples on spiritual values and corrupts the people. Everywhere they are carefully preserving Soviet symbolism and the monuments to the God-fighting executioners, the Vandal destroyers of Russia (while their destruction is called 'vandalism'), the communist festivals are celebrated as usual or given a new face in a cunning manner. This is nothing else than a continuing *resistance to God*, which is depriving our country of God's help."

True, too true. And the question then naturally arises: if God is depriving this accursed state of help, why should any Russian support it? Do not the supporters of Putin's regime in this way *resist God*? How can good come from supporting such manifest evil which God - by Nazarov's own admission - refuses to support?

"Nevertheless, to call this regime 'Soviet and Chekist' is not accurate. This is another form of resistance to God that is closer to the Western type.

"During the years of the Cold war between the West and the USSR, the well-known ROCOR ideologues Archbishop Averky (Taushev) and Archimandrite Konstantin (Zaitsev) foresaw this regeneration of the Soviet regime (cf. chapter 24), and already at that time they noted: '*God-fighting Marxist Communism, or Bolshevism, the struggle with which is placed by all nationalist Russian patriots as their main task, is only one of the children of this 'world evil'. To struggle against it means to cut off the branches without noticing the trunk and the root that gave them birth and nourished them*' [Archbishop Averky (Taushev). *The Protecting Veil of the Mother of God over Russia and the Russian Church Abroad // Contemporary Life in the Light of the Word of God. Sermons and Speeches, Jordanville, 1975, vol. II, pp. 514-515*]. Since then the regime has changed still more in the direction of this basic 'trunk' from which it grew. Here are only a few of the basic differences between the former and the present regime."

Three great lying ideologies predominate in today's world - the ideology of individual human rights, or liberalism, the ideology of individual national rights,

or nationalism, and the ideology of collective human rights, or communism. They are like the three unclean spirits seen by the God-seer: "I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet" (Revelation 16.13). While all of them have roots going way back in human history, they all came out into the open together at approximately the same time and place - France during the French Revolution.

In this sense they are all children of the same world evil, and it is perfectly true that in order to fight evil at the root, it is necessary to be aware of all three of the evil branches.

Nazarov continues: "1. *The communist ideology* in the Russian Federation is not the state ideology. 'No ideology can be established in the capacity of a state ideology' (article 13 of the constitution of the RF), - although in practice it merges into the state 'democratic' ideology in imitation of the liberal principles of the legalization of sin. In the RF because of the conservatism of our people, things have not gone so far as the introduction of one-sex marriages, incest, euthanasia, etc. - this, in the eyes of despairing normal Europeans even makes the RF a bastion of 'Christian values'..."

Putin has tried to include all constituencies in his doctrine of "sovereign democracy". This doctrine means, in effect, that Russia is a "democracy" and Putin is her sovereign. Thus, as Roger Bootle writes, "In place of the tired and rotten value system of Communism, the prime value and objective of the modern Russian state is quite simply *pro bono Putino*..." But this, too, is quintessentially communist; for in the last analysis Lenin and Stalin did not rule for the benefit of anyone other than themselves, as absolute dictators who were prepared to kill *anybody* to remain in power...

Certainly, Putin's regime is not Marxist-Leninist. However, the *spirit* of communism is still palpable; and the resurrection of Soviet symbolism and the veneration of communist heroes, including Stalin, hardly gives ground for believing that old-style communism is dead. Above all, the retention of Lenin's mausoleum with its rotting corpse is a clear sign that the past is just waiting to leap back like a zombie into the present...

"2. *The economic system of the RF is not socialist*, but its complete opposite - so-called Capitalism in its worst, criminal-oligarchical variant. The people's heritage was seized after the fall of the USSR by the nomenklatura of the CPSU and its trusted representatives. Moreover, the state sector of the economy in the RF is in many profitable branches even smaller than, for example, in Germany or the Scandinavian countries - in the RF everything that was most valuable (in spite of its value to the state) was immediately farmed out to the newly created billionaires close to the authorities, whom the state even supports from the state budget in crisis moments."

Alright, so the Russian economy is not formally socialist; it has been farmed out to Putin's cronies, the "oligarchs". But Putin can seize back any of those farmed out assets any time he wants. Look at the way he seized Khodorkovsky's assets and then threw him in prison. This is not a socialist economy, perhaps. But



it is certainly a mafia economy, an economy seized by thieves and then parcelled out among the thieves, with Putin as the master-thief overseeing the distribution.

“3. In contrast with the USSR, *the freedom of the word* in the RF is not under total control with the threat of repressions for any dissident paper, while it is effect in the western manner: that is – complete control over the main media while ‘a squeak of freedom’ is allowed in small-circulation publications and internet-blogs. Although this private sphere of freedom is also being (‘what is not in the media does not exist’) constantly restricted, and the list of banned literature is increasing and article 282 of the Criminal Codex of the RF works unceasingly, nevertheless every thinking man, if he wants it, can find and read truthful information on the internet. Even on Central Television channels, which are filled with Soviet and neo-Soviet films (for example, on the Civil War) truthful versions sometimes break through, as also documentary films on pre-revolutionary Russia, the revolution, collectivization and the GULag. True, ‘antisovietism’ is generally given out in westernising interpretations, and it is usually westernisers and communists (for example, Svanidze vs. Kurginian) who take part in television discussions of the Soviet period, while the Russian Orthodox evaluation is not allowed, for it would demonstrate the lie of both sides.

“There is undoubtedly a general ‘Soviet patriotism’ tendency among the present rulers; they preserve their succession from the USSR both in symbolism and in the system of school education and in external politics. However, to call this ‘the re-establishment of the Soviet regime’ is also not true. Putin’s aims and those of his ruling elite, which emerged from the CPSS and the KGB, is different: *to launder and ennoble the past Soviet order as being their own past and the legitimate basis of succession of their own power, exalting its scientific-technical, military, sporting and other achievements, and especially its victory in the Second World War, which has been turned into some kind of hysterical-religious ritual. This neo-Soviet mythology, with its evident harmfulness for the prestige of our country in the eyes of our Eastern European neighbours, has been implanted not for ideological, but for pragmatic ends, our of a refusal to offer personal repentance for their complicity in the strengthening of the God-fighting Marxist regime and for serving it. Therefore the people continues to be fooled, its ‘Sovietism’ is encouraged, as is its spiritual illiteracy together with its debauchery by western liberalism through television – for it is simpler to rule this people by means of material goods given in doses. After all, this is the basic principle of western democracy, but not of the communist order with its ‘Moral codex’.* (By the way, it is in approximately the same way, without any repentance, that the USA by means of Hollywood ‘ennobled’ and laundered its racist genocide of the American Indians, and the French – their God-fighting French revolution.)”

Here Nazarov makes a very eloquent case *against* Putin. How, after all this, can it be argued that his regime, which claims to be, and in essence and spirit is, the successor of the Soviet regime, should be supported in a fratricidal war against a nation that is struggling to escape its Soviet past? Let us remind ourselves of certain facts that Nazarov appears to have forgotten.

The Russian Orthodox Church was faced with the question of whether it was right to obey and support the Soviet state very shortly after the revolution, and

came up with an unequivocal answer: the Soviet State is cursed by God, and no confessing Orthodox Christian can recognize it. Already on November 11, 1917 the Local Council of the Russian Church meeting in Moscow declared that Soviet power was “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...”

This attitude was confirmed and sealed by his Holiness Patriarch Tikhon in his famous anathema against the Bolsheviks on January 18 / February 1, 1918, which was enthusiastically endorsed by the whole Council some days later. The holy patriarch, who was martyred for the Faith in 1925, exhorted the faithful to have “no dealings whatsoever” with “those outcasts of humanity”, the Bolsheviks. Some have argued that this anathema was addressed only to individual Bolsheviks who carried out acts of sacrilege against the Church and believers. However, in 1923 the patriarch confirmed that he had anathematized precisely “the Soviet state”. Moreover, the anathema fell not only on the Bolsheviks, but also on all those who cooperated with them.

An anathema on a state is unprecedented in Orthodox history. The only possible parallel is the virtual declaration of war on Julian the Apostate by SS. Basil the Great and Gregory the Theologian. The truly Orthodox Church and the Soviet state were – and are - irreconcilable foes...

Nazarov continues: “5. This ‘*neosovietization*’ is also based on the people’s *psychological nostalgia* for the state order in the USSR, its more solid standard of life, its lower rate of criminality and greater social equality, and also on nostalgia for its lost ‘imperial’ state might (military, geopolitical).

“*Such nostalgia is nourished by the present blatantly anti-Russian politics of the USA and their European vassals, with their cynical ‘double standards’ and egging on of all the RF’s opponents against her. In rejecting such western russophobia, the rulers of the RF usually resort to the inertia of the recent Cold war, ‘patriotically’ whitewashing and justifying its external politics – defensively now, not aggressively, as in the past (hence the re-establishment of pragmatic unions with communist and leftist regimes). But this in its turn is nourished by western affirmations that the RF is continuing its Soviet aggressive politics.*”

Which, of course, it is! In fact, there can be little doubt that since the invasion of Georgia in 2008 Putin’s regime has become no less aggressive than the Soviet Union was, albeit from a weaker power base. The major difference, in fact, is in

the West's response, which has been much more hesitant and divided than in the past, largely because of the successful propaganda war waged by Putin's propagandists all around the world.

"Most of all, the ruling elite of the RF would like to be accepted in the western, 'pan-human family' with its apostatic course. In the 1993 constitution of the RF, article 15, point 4, the primacy of international law over Russian laws was affirmed. The rulers of the RF are even dreaming of joining the membership of the world's behind-the-scenes elite (forgiving it all its crimes against historical Russia) - as was openly recognized by the general director of the Information-Analysis agency for the administration of President Putin's affairs, A.A. Ignatov:

"The critical factor influencing contemporary globalization processes is the activity of the World government. Without going into the distressing details that are sketched by numerous conspiracy theories, we must recognize that this supra-national structure carries out its role as the staff headquarters of the 'New World Order' completely effectively. However, this organization orients itself in its work on the interests of a small elite, which is united by ethnic kinship and initiative in the lodges with destructive intentions. This circumstance - the usurpation of power in the World government by a Hasidic, para-Masonic group - needs to be corrected as soon as possible... The Russian elite must join the World government and its structures... and have the opportunity to influence the decisions taken by the secret international structures of power' (A. Ignatov, *Strategia 'globalizatsionnogo liderstva' dlia Rossii* (The Strategy of a Globalized Leadership for Russia), *Nezavisimaia Gazeta* (The Independent Newspaper), September 7, 2000)."

However, this news is surely out of date now. In the 1990s and early 2000s, it certainly made sense for the KGB to infiltrate Russia's leaders into the global elite, since Russia's leaders were heavily involved in globalization for the maximisation of their ill-gotten and criminal gains. And there is little doubt that the global elite would have given, and probably did in fact give, the Russians "a place on the board" - as long as they played according to their rules. (We must remember that Yeltsin became a Freemason in 1992.) But when they invaded Ukraine in 2014, they broke those rules. And so the G8 group of top economies expelled Russia - it is now the G7 - and sanctions followed. Now Russia has the choice: play by the West's rules or force it to do Russia's will by coercive means...

"Therefore the present 'neosovietization' of Putin is just a *simulachrum* (from the Latin *simulo*, 'I give the appearance, I pretend') - a copy having no original in reality. By its resort to Soviet symbolism (as by its parasitism on pre-revolutionary history, 'reburial' of the heritage of the Russian emigration), the present authority is only trying to cover up its destructive essence and receive legitimacy in the eyes of its own people. And it is necessary to rebuke the present leaders of the RF precisely in this, main point - its western-oligarchical, Compradorian resistance to God (it's still worse in Ukraine)... The present 'democratic' corruption of the people is even more dangerous than was the crude and lying Soviet dictatorship. The lie of 'communism' with its partisan stupidity was easier to recognize than the present lie, which has hundreds of new masks of 'good', of new manifestations in which the truth simply drowns in an ocean of lies, and is not crudely banned by the former methods. And unfortunately all this is covered up in a conformist

manner by the church leadership, which is itself interested in 'laundering' the Soviet regime, so as not to repent of having served it."

Nazarov is here arguing against himself. If, under Putin, the Soviet lie has been replaced by a still subtler and more dangerous one, then of course his regime should be still more firmly rejected! However, Nazarov points here to the worst lie of all, whose origin is by no means the West, but the East: that his regime goes under the name of "Orthodox". Archimandrite Konstantin (Zaitsev) of Jordanville once said that the greatest crime of the Soviet State was to create the Soviet church, the MP. Putin's neo-Soviet regime has trumped the old one in claiming to be Orthodox itself. This is the biggest lie of all - and an extremely successful one so far.

"9. However, too often criticism of the present authorities by the 'true anticommunists' does not distinguish the simulachrum from the essence of the power, and its interests from the national-historical rights of the people. Hence the very striking phenomenon of the 'true anti-communists'' support for the Ukrainian-American revolution in Ukraine and its punitive war against rebellious New Russia ('O God, give victory to the Ukrainians and Russians over the Chekist RF'). That is, this blind, haughty 'trueness' is being turned into the same Russophobia, which differs little from the western variety; and the realization of its calls can lead in fact only to the overthrow of one group of oligarchs by another (which is what happened in Ukraine in 2014)."

One has to admire the ingenuity of Nazarov in supporting the anathematized Chekist regime of Putin even while providing a host of excellent reasons why it is destroying the Russian people! He thinks that the overthrow of Putin and his oligarchs will only lead to the instalment of another band of criminals. Possibly - although it is difficult to see how things could be any worse than they are now. One thing is certain: if Putin remains in power and conquers the Ukraine (with the help of 'untrue anti-communists' like Nazarov), then the progress already being made in the decommunization of the country will be reversed - at the cost, probably, of hundreds of thousands of Russian and Ukrainian lives. Moreover, it is almost certain that the West would intervene before the whole of Ukraine has been conquered - leading without fail to the greatest and most destructive war in history.

"10. In such a situation, remembering the experience of the Russian emigration and remembering 'the fragility of Russia', the morally justified choice is not that of one of the two sides in this confrontation between the plans of the world's secret government and the plans of Putin, but that of the Russian Orthodox 'third force' in its defence of the historical rights and traditions of our people in hoping on God's help..."

At first sight, this sudden turn in Nazarov's argument is attractive. Why should we not reject *both* Putin's "sovereign democracy" *and* Ukraine's "western democracy" in this war, adopting a neutral stance behind this Orthodox "third force"? The trouble is: apart from the fact that neutrality is impossible, and Nazarov himself is by no means neutral, it is not clear what this "third force" is. It cannot be the thoroughly Sovietized and heretical MP. It cannot be ROCOR-A (which has expelled Nazarov!). Does he mean the future True Orthodox Tsar,

which several of the prophecies speak about? If so, why doesn't he mention him openly?

The truth is: the Russian people today are like the Israelites in Egypt, but without a Moses. Nazarov's task seems to be to reconcile them to the rule of Pharaoh without mentioning the possibility of a Moses. It is as if he is saying: "Yes, Pharaoh is evil and oppressive; but we must obey him and support him in all his evil wars because there is in fact a still greater threat to our faith and nationhood coming from across the Tigris and Euphrates..."

But however great the threat posed by western civilization, the immediate and far greater threat to the salvation (in both a personal and a national sense) of the Russian people has to be the threat coming from *inside* Russia, from the neo-Soviet state of Putin and the neo-Soviet (and ecumenist) church of Gundiaev. God is not expecting the Russian people to save (or destroy) the West before they have saved themselves; charity begins at home, as does resistance to evil (David said: "Depart from evil" and *then* "do good"). The Russian revolution was created mainly by Russians, 80% of whom voted for socialist parties in 1917 without any significant encouragement from the West. Their task now is to repent thoroughly of that, and cast the last remnants of the rotten leaven of the Russian revolution out of their lives. Then, and then only, will it be the right time to turn to the wider world and rid it of Eurosodom and other related evils, if this is the task God gives them.

"In this polemic, honourable Mother Euphrosyne, I see the basic watershed in the following. My older instructors in the emigration at the beginning taught me, 'a simple anti-Soviet', *to distinguish between the anti-national rulers and the people with its historical, lawful interests*. In the tradition of ROCOR and the whole Russian Orthodox emigration it was always accepted that the Russian people with its historical rights should be distinguished from the criminal government. That is how the fathers of ROCOR acted, denouncing western Russophobia, the 'Law on the enslaved nations', the separatist politics of Radio Liberty. ROCOR always defended the territorial integrity of the Russian people and historical Russia even under the Communist God-fighting authorities, which had destroyed tens of millions of people. The ROCOR Synod also released a declaration against NATO's aggression in defence of Serbia in spite of the fact that its then leader was the Communist Milošević. And could the real historical ROCOR today stand on the side of the 'ATO' punishers, the defenders of the Leninist-Khrushchevian boundaries of a state of 'Ukraine' that never existed independently, of the Ukronazis of the 'Right Sector' and their western protectors?"

Nazarov should be careful: the language of "rights", whether human or national, is a western language deriving from the French revolution: it has no place in discussions of God's judgements about the nations. "The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof", and He gives it to whom He wills - temporarily and on trust. If we are believers, then we know that God changes the boundaries of the nations in accordance with His justice and for the sake of the salvation of the peoples - *all* the peoples - living in them, not because of any specious "rights". Do the Jews have the right to rule present-day Israel. No they do not! Not even the King of Israel, the Lord Jesus Christ conceded them that right before His death, having given "to Caesar what is Caesar's"; still less did He accord them that right

after they had killed Him, but scattered them in exile across the face of the earth. Do the Russians have the right to the whole of the former Russian empire now? Absolutely not! "The owner of the Russian land" under God was Tsar Nicholas II. But the Russians killed the lawful owner of the land and seized it for themselves. As a result, part of the Russian people was exiled like the Jews of old, while the rest were subjected to tortures in Russia herself, now given over to new owners and under a new name.

In 1994 the Russians signed the Budapest Memorandum in which the Russian Federation solemnly guaranteed the integrity of the boundaries of the Ukrainian state. After that, the Russians constantly interfered in the affairs of the Ukraine, in which it still had a considerable stake, to the extent of poisoning its democratically elected leader in 2004 and invading it in 2014, after declaring that the manifest will of the majority of the Ukrainian people to remain the citizens of a sovereign state was an illusion created by the intrigues of the CIA. Let us suppose that the Ukraine is as evil a state as Putin and his cronies believe, and that its desire to join the European Union is mistaken (which I believe it is). Does this give the Russian Federation, a mafia state that declares itself the successor of the anathematized Soviet Union, the right to violate its international agreements and invade Ukraine? By no means – even if it were the Third Rome, which, as Nazarov has himself demonstrated, it certainly is not!

Nor is Nazarov being accurate in saying that the ROCOR Fathers made a strict distinction between the "bad" rulers of the USSR and the "good" people. On the contrary: both Archbishop Averky and St. John Maximovich declared that the *whole* of the Russian people were guilty of the sins of oath-breaking and regicide, thereby subjecting themselves not only to the 1918 anathema on those who cooperated with Soviet power but also to the curse of the Sobor of 1613 on those who would betray the Romanov dynasty. Of course, true repentance wipes out all sin; and the Holy New Martyrs, together with the best Christians of the Catacombs and Abroad, have proved by their confession and deeds that they are no longer under the curse. But not the whole people by any means...

On the first day of Great Lent, the Church reads the following words of the Prophet Isaiah: "The *whole* head is sick, and the *whole* heart faints; from the sole of the foot even to the head, there is no soundness in it" (1.5-6). And if it be objected that the leaders are worse than the followers, we may agree – with this important qualification: that "if the blind follow the blind, they both fall into the pit" (Matthew 15.14). For as Isaiah says again: "The elder and honourable, he is the head; the prophet who teaches likes, he is the tail. For the leaders of this people cause them to err, and those who are led by them are destroyed. Therefore the Lord will have no joy in their young men, nor have mercy on their fatherless and widows, for everyone is a hypocrite and an evildoer, and every mouth speaks folly" (9.15-17).

So let us put away all talk of "rights". The people that has sinned as the Orthodox Russian people sinned has no rights! It can only beg for mercy from the Just God, realizing that "*all* have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God" (Romans 3.22). Indeed, it is precisely because of the privileges God gave them in the past – being subjects of a truly Orthodox king, with access to the true faith and

true sacraments – that they have been punished more severely than any other nation and been deprived of all their former rights and privileges, being more guilty than the surrounding nations (even the Americans!). For “to whom much has been given, of him much will be demanded” (Luke 12.48).

Nazarov continues: “No other people in the world has, even to a minimal degree..., that understanding of the meaning of history which has been preserved in the Orthodox teaching... This is revealed even among the spiritually illiterate Russian patriots and politicians, albeit in naïve, utopian, chiliastic beliefs and hopes in a special ‘messianic’ role for Russia in human history. It remains for us, in spite of everything, to preserve and spread a truly Orthodox understanding of Russianness and a true evaluation of what is happening in the hope of becoming worthy of God’s help. This hidden potential of the Russian people, which is able to reveal itself if it acquires a spiritual leadership, worries the secret world government exceedingly, since it is the indestructible Russian archetype, incompatible with the New World Order. Therefore the world system of evil continues to this day its preventative war against Russia independently of her regime.”

Here we come to the core of Nazarov’s Putinist faith. The Russian people, in his view, have a special “historiosophical” understanding of history, and a special continuing role in it. That is, Russia is still, now, the Third Rome, the only power capable of resisting the Jewish-American Antichrist; it is, or will be, “the City and Camp of the Saints”. However, he refrains from saying this openly because he does not want to be identified with “the spiritually illiterate Russian patriots and politicians” and their “naïve, utopian, chiliastic beliefs and hopes in a special ‘messianic’ role for Russia in human history”. But surely he should be more honest: as his writings have shown, he himself has definite beliefs and hopes in Russia’s messianic role, although his hopes and beliefs are, of course, not “native, utopian, chiliastic”? The fact is: it is perfectly possible to believe in a special messianic role for Russia while rejecting completely the Putin regime and all its works, both within and outside the country. Indeed, the complete rejection of the Russian revolution in all its 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, Jerusalem (+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.”

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? 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 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'?

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. In the same way, the present reimmunization led by Putin has to be extirpated completely. "Do you not 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."

*March 30 / April 12, 2021.*



## 12. THE ALLIED INTERVENTION IN THE RUSSIAN CIVIL WAR

Although the civil war took place in Russia, it had inevitable international ramifications, not least because the Bolsheviks, even while fighting for survival, believed that their revolution was on course to becoming a *world* revolution. In fact, they believed that if it did not succeed throughout the world it would ultimately be defeated. As Lenin said: "Our cause is an international cause, and so long as a revolution does not take place in all countries... our victory is only half a victory, or perhaps less." For this reason the foundation of the Third Communist International, or Comintern, in March, 1919 was not a byproduct of the revolution, but in a sense its beginning on a global scale.

Since Lenin's revolution threatened the existence of all states, it was only natural that other states should intervene against it. The resulting war was therefore an international war between states no less than it was a civil war between Russians. However, the western states' intervention was not as powerful as it might have been, for several reasons. First, they were occupied with Versailles peace conference. Secondly, the First World War in the west was now over, the war-weary troops wanted to go home and the war leaders wanted to return to urgent domestic considerations. Thirdly, from November 1918 Russia was no longer in alliance with, or controlled by, Germany, and therefore seemed less of a threat. And fourthly, Soviet Russia had built up its military strength, and it would now need a much larger force to defeat it than the West was prepared to assemble.

But the most important factor, as Paul Johnson writes, was that "with one exception none of the Allied statesmen involved even began to grasp the enormous significance of the establishment of this new type of totalitarian dictatorship, or the long-term effect of its implantation in the heart of the greatest land power on earth. The exception was Winston Churchill. With his strong sense of history, he realized some kind of fatal watershed was being reached. What seems to have brought the truth home to him was not only the murder of the entire Russian royal family on 16 July 1918, without any kind of trial or justification, but Lenin's audacity, on 31 August, in getting his men to break into the British embassy and murder the naval attache, Captain Crombie. To Churchill it seemed that a new kind of barbarism had arisen, indifferent to the standards of law, custom, diplomacy or honour which had hitherto been observed by civilized states. He told the cabinet that Lenin and Trotsky should be captured and hanged, 'as the object upon whom justice will be executed, however long it takes, and to make them feel that their punishment will become an important object of British policy.' He told his Dundee electors on 26 November 1918 that the Bolsheviks were reducing Russia 'to an animal form of barbarism', maintaining themselves by 'bloody and wholesale butcheries and murders, carried out to a large extent by Chinese executions and armoured cars... Civilization is being completely extinguished over gigantic areas, while Bolsheviks hop and caper like troops of ferocious baboons amid the ruins of cities and corpses of their victims.' 'Of all the tyrannies in history,' he remarked on 11 April 1919, 'the Bolshevik tyranny is the worst, the most destructive, the most degrading.' Lenin's atrocities were 'incomparably more hideous, on a larger scale and more numerous than any for which the Kaiser is responsible.' His private remarks to colleagues were equally

vehement. Thus, to Lloyd George: 'You might as well legalize sodomy as recognize the Bolsheviks.' To H.A.L. Fisher: 'After conquering all the Huns – the tigers of the world – I will not submit to be beaten by the baboons.' Once the regime consolidated itself it would become far more expansionist than Tsarist Russia and, he warned Field Marshal Wilson, 'highly militaristic.' Churchill never wavered in his view that it ought to be a prime object of the policy of the peaceful, democratic great powers to crush this new kind of menace while they still could.

"But even Churchill was confused about means. He resented suggestions his colleagues fed the press that he had some kind of master plan to suppress Bolshevism throughout the world. He wrote to Lloyd George (21 February 1919): 'I have no Russian policy. I know of no Russian policy. I went to Paris to look for a Russian policy! I deplore the lack of a Russian policy.' He admitted it was not the job of the West to overthrow Lenin: 'Russia must be saved by Russian exertions.' All the other Western leaders, in varying degrees, were lukewarm about the business. On 14 February 1919 Wilson said he was for withdrawal: 'Our troops were doing no sort of good in Russia. They did not know for whom or for what they were fighting.' The French were more interested in building up their new ally, Poland, into a big state. Lloyd George was thinking in terms of public opinion at home. 'The one thing to spread Bolshevism was to attempt to suppress it. To send our soldiers to shoot down the Bolsheviks would be to create Bolshevism here.' Sir David Shackleton, head official of the Ministry of Labour, warned the cabinet in 1919 that British intervention was the main cause of industrial unrest. The War Office warned of 'revolutionary talk in the Brigade of Guards' and General Ironside, in charge at Archangel, cabled home of 'very persistent and obstinate' mutinies among his own troops.

"None of this might have mattered if Lloyd George, in particular, had regarded Leninism, as the ultimate evil. He did not. Leninism subscribed to self-determination. It was prepared to let go, had indeed already let go, all the small nations on its fringes..."<sup>137</sup>

Orlovsky writes that "intervention by the allies, however much they might have loathed Bolshevism, had little military effect. It could hardly be otherwise: a momentous revolution in the vast Russian spaces could not be channeled, let alone halted or reversed, by the tactical forces of the allied power. Exhausted by four years of total war, fearful of domestic unrest, the allies provided some men and equipment, but lacked the clear purpose and persistence necessary to stay the course. Nor did they even share common goals. Under Winston Churchill's [more exactly: Lloyd George's] leadership, Britain supplied the most money and equipment; its primary aim was to contain German power (and avert a German-Russian alliance) and to prevent Russian advances in Asia and the Near East. For its part, Japan landed troops for the simple purpose of acquiring territory in the eastern maritime provinces. Wilson dispatched American soldiers but eagerly seized on Soviet peace feelers, first at an elective conference in Prinkipo in late 1918, later in a mission by William Bullitt and the writer Lincoln Steffens to Moscow in early 1919. In the end the allies, having denied unconditional support to the Whites, gradually withdrew from the conflict,

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<sup>137</sup> Johnson, *Modern Times*, New York: Harper Perennial, 1990, pp. 73-74.

having done little more than to reify the myth of hostile ‘imperialist aggression’ against the young socialist state.”<sup>138</sup>

*March 30 / April 12, 2021.*

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<sup>138</sup> Orlovsky, “Russia in War and Revolution 1914-1921”, in Gregory L. Frazee, *Russia. A History*, Oxford University Press, 2009, pp. 299-300.

### 13. THE JEWS AND THE REVOLUTION

If the root of the Russian revolution was a nihilistic-messianic-chiliastic kind of faith built out of many strands of European and Jewish thought, the actual composition of forces that brought about the revolution was no less varied. We need to distinguish between at least three levels at which the revolution took place. First, there was the level of the out-and-out revolutionaries, usually *intelligenty*, who were supported by many from the industrial proletariat and the revolutionary-minded peasantry, who were aiming to destroy Russian tsarism and Russian Orthodox civilization completely before embarking on a world revolution that would dethrone God and traditional authority from the hearts and minds of all men everywhere. This level was led by Lenin, Trotsky, Dzerzhinsky and Stalin; it was composed mainly of Jews, but also contained Russians, Latvians, Georgians and Poles. They were possessed by the revolutionary faith to the greatest extent, and owed no allegiance to any nation (least of all Russia) or traditional creed or morality.

Secondly, there was the level of the Freemasons, the mainly aristocratic and middle-class Duma parliamentarians and their supporters in the country at large, who were not aiming to destroy Russia, but only to remove the tsar and introduce a constitutional government on the English model. This level was led by Guchkov, Rodzianko and Kerensky; it was composed mainly of Russians, but also contained most of the intelligentsia of the other nations of the empire. They believed in the revolutionary faith, but still had moral scruples derived from their Christian background. They played the critical role in the February revolution that removed the Tsar, but were swept away in October.

Thirdly, there were the lukewarm Orthodox Christians, the great mass of ordinary Russians, who did not necessarily want either world revolution or a constitutional government, but who lacked the courage and the faith to act openly in support of Faith, Tsar and Fatherland. It is certain that if very many Russians had not become lukewarm in their faith, God would not have allowed the revolution to take place. After the revolution, many from this level, as well as individuals from the first two levels, seeing the terrible devastation that their lukewarmness had allowed to take place, bitterly repented and returned to the ranks of the confessing Orthodox Christians.

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The extraordinary prominence of Jews in the revolution is a fact that cannot be denied; to recognize it is not "anti-semitism" but faithfulness to historical truth. It was caused, at least in part, by the traditionally anti-Russian and anti-Christian attitude of Jewish culture and the Jewish Talmudic religion, which is reflected in both of its major political offspring – Bolshevism and Zionism. The theist Jews who triumphed in Israel in 1948, and especially in 1948 after the foundation of the State of Israel, came from the same region and social background – the Pale of Settlement in Western Russia – as the atheist Jews who triumphed in Moscow in 1917, and sometimes even from the same families. One such family was that of Chaim Weitzmann, the first president of

Israel, who in his *Autobiography* wrote that his own mother was able to witness her sons' triumph both in Bolshevik Moscow and Zionist Jerusalem...<sup>139</sup>

M. Heifetz pointed to the extraordinary coincidence in time between the October revolution and the Balfour declaration. "A part of the Jewish generation goes along the path of Herzl and Zhabotinsky. The other part, unable to withstand the temptation, fills up the band of Lenin and Trotsky and Stalin." "The path of Herzl and Bagritsky allowed the Jews to stand tall and immediately become not simply an equal nation with Russia, but a privileged one."<sup>140</sup>

That the Russian revolution was actually *Jewish*, but at the same time part of an *international* revolution of Jewry against the Christian and Muslim worlds, is indicated by an article by Jacob de Haas entitled "The Jewish Revolution" and published in the London Zionist journal *Maccabee* in November, 1905: "The Revolution in Russia is a Jewish revolution, for it is a turning point in Jewish history. This situation flows from the fact that Russia is the fatherland of approximately half of the general number of Jews inhabiting the world... The overthrow of the despotic government must exert a huge influence on the destinies of millions of Jews (both in Russia and abroad). Besides, the revolution in Russia is a Jewish revolution also because the Jews are the most active revolutionaries in the tsarist Empire."

Winston Churchill wrote: "It would almost seem as if the Gospel of Christ and the gospel of anti-Christ were designed to originate among the same people; and that this mystic and mysterious race had been chosen for the supreme manifestations, both of the Divine and the diabolical... From the days of 'Spartacus' Weishaupt to those of Karl Marx, and down to Trotsky (Russia), Bela Kun (Hungary), Rosa Luxembour (Germany) and Emma Goldman (United States), this worldwide conspiracy for the overthrow of civilization and for the reconstitution of society on the basis of arrested development, of envious malevolence and impossible equality, has been steadily growing. It played, as a modern writer, Mrs. Nesta Webster, has so ably shown, a definitely recognizable part in the tragedy of the French Revolution. It has been the mainspring of every subversive movement during the nineteenth century; and now at last this band of extraordinary personalities from the underworld of the great cities of Europe and America have gripped the Russian people by the hair of their heads and have become practically the undisputed masters of that enormous empire. There is no need to exaggerate the part played in the creation of Bolshevism and in the bringing about of the Russian Revolution by these international and for the most part atheistical Jews. It is certainly a very great one; it probably outweighs all others."<sup>141</sup>

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<sup>139</sup> Weitzmann, *Trial and Error: The Autobiography of Chaim Weitzmann*, New York: Harper, 1949.

<sup>140</sup> Heifetz, "Nashi Obschie Uroki", 1980; in Solzhenitsyn, *Dvesti Let Vmeste* (Two Hundred Years Together), Moscow, 2001, p. 112.

<sup>141</sup> Churchill, *Illustrated Sunday Herald*, February 8, 1920; in Douglas Reed, *The Controversy of Zion*, Durban, S.A.: Dolphin Press, 1978, pp. 272-273. Detailed data on the domination of the Jews over Russia can be found in Winberg, *Krestnij Put'*, Munich, 1920, pp. 359-372.

However, there are many kinds of Jews, and it is important to point out that the Bolshevik Jews were neither religious Jews (Talmudists), nor nationalists (Zionists). As Donald Rayfield writes, "The motivation of those Jews who worked for the Cheka was not Zionist or ethnic. The war between the Cheka and the Russian bourgeoisie was not even purely a war of classes or political factions. It can be seen as being between Jewish internationalism and the remnants of a Russian national culture... What was Jewish except lineage about Bolsheviks like Zinoviev, Trotsky, Kamenev or Sverdlov? Some were second- or even third-generation renegades; few even spoke Yiddish, let alone knew Hebrew. They were by upbringing Russians accustomed to a European way of life and values, Jewish only in the superficial sense that, say, Karl Marx was. Jews in anti-Semitic Tsarist Russia had few ways out of the ghetto except emigration, education or revolution, and the latter two courses meant denying their Judaism by joining often anti-Jewish institutions and groups."<sup>142</sup>

Liberals ascribed the revolutionism of the Jews to a reaction against, or revenge for, anti-Semitism, the pogroms and the multitude of restrictions placed on the Jews by the Russian tsars. The reverse is the truth: far fewer Jews died at the hands of Russians in anti-Jewish pogroms than Russian officials at the hands of Jewish and Gentile terrorists in anti-Christian pogroms, and the anti-Jewish pogroms were reactions against the anti-Christian pogroms, not the other way around. This was especially obvious during the 1905 revolution in Kiev.

Moreover, the restrictions were placed on the Jews precisely in order to protect the Russian peasant, who was ruthlessly exploited by them, especially, as Solzhenitsyn demonstrated, through their domination of the liquor trade. It is significant that the massive emigration of Jews in the 1890s began after the Tsar restricted this domination, thereby threatening the main source of livelihood of the Jews living in the Pale. Although fear of pogroms undoubtedly played a part, the Jewish exodus was in the first place an economic emigration...

As the future Hieromartyr John Vostorgov said: "The Jews are restricted in their rights of residence not as a confessional unit, but as a predatory tribe that is dangerous in the midst of the peaceful population because of its exploitative inclinations, which... have found a religious sanction and support in the Talmud... Can such a confession be tolerated in the State, when it allows its followers to practice hatred and all kinds of deceit and harm towards other confessions, and especially Christians? ...

"The establishment of the Pale of Settlement is the softest of all possible measures in relation to such a confession. Moreover, is it possible in this case not to take account of the mood of the masses? But this mood cannot be changed only by issuing a law on the complete equality of rights of the Jews. On the contrary, this can only strengthen the embitterment of the people..."<sup>143</sup>

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<sup>142</sup> Rayfield, *Stalin and his Hangmen*, London: Viking, 2004, p. 72.

<sup>143</sup> Vostorgov, in Fomin, S. and Fomina, T., *Rossia pered vtorym prishestviem* (Russia before the Second Coming), Moscow, 1994, vol. II, p. 624.

“Let us remember,” writes Solzhenitsyn: “the legal restrictions on the Jews in Russia were never racial [as they were in Western Europe]. They were applied neither to the Karaites [who rejected the Talmud], nor to the mountain Jews, nor to the Central Asian Jews.”<sup>144</sup> In other words, restrictions were placed only on those Jews who practiced the religion of the Talmud, because of its vicious anti-Christianity and double morality.

Moreover, the restrictions were very generously applied. The boundaries of the Pale (a huge area twice the size of France) were extremely porous, allowing large numbers of Jews to acquire higher education and make their fortunes in Great Russia – to such an extent that by the time of the revolution the Jews dominated Russian trade and, most ominously, the Russian press. Stolypin wanted to remove the restrictions on the Jews. But in this case the Tsar resisted him, as his father had resisted Count Witte before him.<sup>145</sup>

This was not because the Tsar felt no responsibility to protect the Jews; he spoke about “my Jews”, as he talked about “my Poles”, “my Armenians” and “my Finns”. And his freedom from vicious anti-semitism is demonstrated by his reaction to the murder of Stolypin by a Jewish revolutionary, Bogrov, in Kiev on September 1, 1911. As Robert Massie writes: “Because Bogrov was a Jew, the Orthodox population was noisily preparing a retaliatory pogrom. Frantic with fear, the city’s Jewish population spent the night packing their belongings. The first light of the following day found the square before the railway station jammed with carts and people trying to squeeze themselves on to departing trains. Even as they waited, the terrified people heard the clatter of hoofs. An endless stream of Cossacks, their long lances dark against the dawn sky, rode past. On his own, Kokovtsev had ordered three full regiments of Cossacks into the city to prevent violence. Asked on what authority he had issued the command, Kokovtsev replied: ‘As head of the government.’ Later, a local official came up to the Finance Minister to complain, ‘Well, Your Excellency, by calling in the troops you have missed a fine chance to answer Bogrov’s shot with a nice Jewish pogrom.’ Kokovtsev was indignant, but, he added, ‘his sally suggested to me that the measures which I had taken at Kiev were not sufficient... therefore I sent an open telegram to all governors of the region demanding that they use every possible means – force if necessary – to prevent possible pogroms. When I submitted this telegram to the Tsar, he expressed his approval of it and of the measure I had taken in Kiev.’”<sup>146</sup>

In the end, the Pale of Settlement was destroyed, not by liberal politicians, but by right-wing generals. For in 1915, as the Russian armies were retreating, some Jews

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<sup>144</sup> Solzhenitsyn, op. cit., p. 292.

<sup>145</sup> As Witte recorded in his Memoirs: “‘Are you right to stand up for the Jews?’ asked Alexander III. In reply Witte asked permission to answer the question with a question: ‘Can we drown all the Russian Jews in the Black Sea? If we can, then I accept that resolution of the Jewish question. If not, the resolution of the Jewish question consists in giving them a chance to live. That is in offering them equal rights and equal laws.’” (Edvard Radzinsky, *The Last Tsar*, London: Arrow, 1993, p. 69). But Witte’s reply misses the point, as if the choice lay between killing all the Jews or giving them complete equality. No State can give complete freedom to a section of the population that does not respect the law and endangers the lives or livelihoods of the majority.

<sup>146</sup> Massie, *Nicholas and Alexandra*, p. 229.

were accused of spying for the enemy and were shot, while the Jewish population in general was deemed unreliable. So a mass evacuation of the Jews from the Pale was ordered. But the results were disastrous. Hordes of frightened Jews fleeing eastwards landed up in large cities such as Moscow and Petrograd where there had been no large Jewish population before. These disgruntled new arrivals only fueled the revolutionary fires.

The February revolution benefited the Jews but brought only harm and destruction to the Russian population. As Solzhenitsyn points out, "Jewish society in Russia received in full from the February revolution everything that it had fought for, and the October coup was really not needed by it, except that cut-throat part of the Jewish secular youth that with its Russian brother-internationalists had stacked up a charge of hatred for the Russian state structure and was rearing to 'deepen' the revolution." It was they who through their control of the Executive Committee of the Soviet - over half of its members were Jewish socialists - assumed the real power after February, and propelled it on - contrary to the interests, not only of the Russian, but also of the majority Jewish population, - to the October revolution.<sup>147</sup>

The unprecedented catastrophe of the Russian revolution required an explanation... For very many this lay in the coming to power of the Jews, and their hatred for the Russian people. However, Archbishop Andrew of Ufa, the future hieromartyr, wrote: "In defence of the Russian people, they try to say that the people have been confused by the Jews, or deceived by their own leaders... A bad excuse! It's a fine people and a fine Christian religious disposition that can be confused by any rogue that comes along!..."

Nevertheless, that the revolution brought power to the Jews, who had been plotting against the Russian state for decades, if not centuries, is undeniable. "In 1917," writes the pro-Semite David Vital, "five of the twenty-one members of the Communist Party's Central Committee were Jews, and it has been estimated that at the early post-1917 congresses between 15 and 20% per cent of the legates were Jewish".<sup>148</sup>

These percentages remained fairly stable: by 1922 Jews constituted 15% of Bolshevik Party membership (Russians constituted 65%).<sup>149</sup> Only when Stalin came to power did the percentages begin to fall.

But these are conservative estimates: some give much higher estimates, especially in the higher reaches of the Party and Government apparatus. Thus Douglas Reed writes: "The Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party, which wielded the supreme power, contained 3 Russians (including Lenin<sup>150</sup>) and 9 Jews. The next body in

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<sup>147</sup> Solzhenitsyn, *op. cit.*, pp.41, 43.

<sup>148</sup> Vital, *A People Apart: The Jews in Europe, 1789-1939*, Oxford University Press, 1999, p. 703.

<sup>149</sup> Donald Rayfield, *Stalin and his Hangmen*, London: Viking, 2004, p. 74.

<sup>150</sup> However, Lenin was partly Jewish. His grandfather was called Israel before his baptism by an Orthodox priest, and his great-grandfather's name was Moishe Blank. See Lina Averina, "Evrejskij koren" (The Jewish Root), *Nasha Strana* (Our Country), January 22, 1997; Michael Brenner, "Lenin i



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."<sup>151</sup>

The London *Times* correspondent in Russia, Robert Wilton, reported: "Taken according to numbers of population, the Jews represented *one* in ten; among the commissars that rule Bolshevik Russia they are *nine* in ten; if anything the proportion of Jews is still greater."<sup>152</sup> And the American scholar 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."<sup>153</sup>

The Jews were especially dominant in the most feared and bloodthirsty part of the Bolshevik State apparatus, the Cheka. Probably the most rabid Chekist of all, Latsis, was a Latvian Jew. The Cheka, writes Brendon, "consisted of 250,000 officers (including 100,000 border guards), a remarkable adjunct to a State which was supposed to be withering away. In the first 6 years of Bolshevik rule it had executed at least 200,000. Moreover, the Cheka was empowered to act as 'policeman, gaoler, investigator, prosecutor, judge and executioner'. It also employed barbaric forms of torture."<sup>154</sup>

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But *why* were the Jews the most active revolutionaries? What was it in their upbringing and history that led them to adopt the atheist revolutionary teachings and actions of Russia's "superfluous young men" more ardently than those young men themselves? Hatred of Christ and the Christians was, of course, deeply imbedded in the Talmud and Jewish ritual - but the angry young men that began killing thousands of the Tsar's servants even before the revolution of 1905 had rejected the Talmud as well as the Gospel, and even all religion in general.

Part of the answer lies in Paul Johnson's observation, in his *History of the Jews*, that the young atheist Jews saw in the revolution "liberation from their Jewish burden". That is, it enabled them *to get away from* their own religious upbringing and culture.

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ego yevrejskij praded" (Lenin and his Jewish Great-Grandfather), <http://inosmi.ru/history/20110228/166930202.html>

<sup>151</sup> Reed, *The Controversy of Zion*, Durban, South Africa, 1978, p. 274.

<sup>152</sup> Reed, *op. cit.*, p. 276.

<sup>153</sup> Pipes, *Russia under the Bolshevik Regime, 1919-1924*, London: Fontana, 1995, pp. 112-13.

<sup>154</sup> Piers Brendon, *The Dark Valley. A Panorama of the 1930s*, London: Pimlico, 2001, p. 11.

This is illustrated by the deathbed confession of Yurovsky, the Tsar's murderer: "Our family suffered less from the constant hunger than from my father's religious fanaticism... On holidays and regular days the children were forced to pray, and it is not surprising that my first active protest was against religious and nationalistic traditions. I came to hate God and prayer as I hated poverty and the bosses."<sup>155</sup>

That is why religious and Zionist Jews suffered almost as much as the Gentiles from the Jewish Bolsheviks, the religious fathers from their atheist sons. Thus "in August 1919, all Jewish religious communities were dissolved, their property confiscated and the overwhelming majority of synagogues shut for ever. The study of Hebrew and the publication of secular works in Hebrew were banned. Yiddish printing was permitted, but only in phonetic transcription, and Yiddish culture, though tolerated for a time, was placed under careful supervision. The supervising agency consisted of several Jewish sections, Yevsektisya, set up in Communist Party branches, manned by Non-Jewish Jews, whose specific task was to stamp out any sign of 'Jewish cultural particularism'. They broke up the Bund, then set about destroying Russian Zionism. In 1917 it had become by far the strongest political feature of Russian Jewry, with 100,000 members and 1,200 branches. It was much stronger, numerically, than the Bolsheviks themselves. From 1919 onwards, the Yevsektiya attacked the Zionists frontally, using Cheka units commanded by Non-Jewish Jews. In Leningrad they took over the Zionist central headquarters, arresting its staff and closing down its paper. Congress was broken up by a Cheka squad led by a Jewish girl, who had seventy-five of the delegates arrested. From 1920 onwards, many thousands of Russian Zionists were in the camps, from which few ever emerged. The Zionist Party, said the regime (26 August 1922), 'under the mask of democracy, seeks to corrupt the Jewish youth and to throw them into the arms of the counter-revolutionary bourgeoisie in the interests of Anglo-French capitalism. To restore the Palestinian state, these representatives of the Jewish bourgeoisie rely on reactionary forces (including) such rapacious imperialists as Poincaré, Lloyd George and the Pope.'

"Once Stalin, who was deeply anti-Semitic, took power, the pressure on the Jews increased, and by the end of the 1920s all forms of specifically Jewish activity had been destroyed or emasculated. He then dissolved the Yevsektiya, leaving supervision of the Jews to the secret police. By this time, Jews had been eliminated from nearly all senior posts in the regime, and anti-Semitism was once more a powerful force within the party. 'Is it true,' wrote Trotsky in rage and astonishment to Bukharin, 4 March 1926, 'is it possible, that in our party, in Moscow, in *Workers' Cells*, anti-Semitic agitation should be carried out with impunity?' Not with impunity, with encouragement: Jews, especially within the Communist Party, were to constitute a wholly disproportionate percentage of Stalin's victims..."<sup>156</sup>

At the same time, some Bolshevik Jews do appear to have sympathized with Talmudism. Thus in 1905 the Jewish revolutionaries in Kiev boasted that they would turn St. Sophia cathedral into a synagogue. Again, in 1918 they erected a monument

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<sup>155</sup> Yurovsky, in Radzinsky, *op. cit.*, p. 177.

<sup>156</sup> Johnson, *op. cit.*, pp. 453-454.

to Judas Iscariot in Sviazhsk<sup>157</sup>, and in 1919 - in Tambov.<sup>158</sup> And when the Whites reconquered Perm region in 1918 they found many Jewish religious inscriptions in the former Bolshevik headquarters and on the walls of the basement of the Ipatiev House in Yekaterinburg where the Tsar and his family had been shot. Moreover, while officially rejecting all religion, the revolutionaries did not reject the unconscious emotional energy of Talmudic Judaism, the fierce pride of the nation that had once been the chosen people of God. Having fallen away from that chosen status, and been scattered all over the world by the wrath of God, they resented their replacement by the Christian peoples with an intense resentment. *Roma delenda est* – Christian Rome had to be destroyed, and Russia as “The Third Rome” had to be destroyed first of all. The atheist revolutionaries of the younger generation took over the resentment and hatred of their forefathers while rejecting its religious-nationalist basis...

In his work, *The Religio-Philosophical Foundations of History*, the former revolutionary L.A. Tikhomirov pointed out that the essence of the Talmudic religion consisted, not in dogmas about God, but in commandments – that is in *action*. And he quotes the very authoritative Ilya del Medigo (15<sup>th</sup> century), who in his notable *Test of Faith* says that “Judaism is founded not on religious dogma, but on religious acts.”

So Talmudism creates a personality that subordinates dogmatic faith to the imperative of *action*. That is, it is the action that is first proclaimed as necessary – the reasons for doing it can be thought up later. And this corresponds exactly both to the philosophy of Marx, for whom “the truth, i.e. the reality and power, of thought must be demonstrated *in action*”<sup>159</sup>, and to the psychological type of the Marxist revolutionary, who first proclaims that Rome (i.e. Russia) must be destroyed, and then looks for an ideology that will justify destruction. Talmudic Law is useful, indeed necessary, not because it proclaims God’s truth, but in order to secure the solidarity of the Jewish people and their subjection to their rabbinic leaders. In the same way, Marxist theory is necessary in order to unite adherents, expel dissidents and in general justify the violent overthrow of the old system.<sup>160</sup>

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<sup>157</sup> The Danish writer Halling Keller was present at the unveiling of the monument to Judas in Sviazhsk. He wrote: “The local Soviet discussed to whom to raise a statue for a long time. It was thought that Lucifer did not completely share the idea of communism. Cain was too much of a legendary personality, so they decided on Judas Iscariot since he was a completely historical personality. They represented him at full height with his fist raised to heaven.” (M. Nazarov, “Presledovania Tserkvi i dukhovnaia sut’ bol’shevizma” (The Persecutions of the Church and the spiritual essence of Bolshevism), in *Vozhdiu Tret’ego Rima* (To the Leader of the Third Rome), ch. 3)

<sup>158</sup> *Leningradskaia Panorama* (Leningrad Panorama), N 10, 1990, p. 35.

<sup>159</sup> Marx, *Eleven Theses on Feuerbach*, 1845.

<sup>160</sup> This point has been well developed by Pipes: “Important as ideology was,... its role in the shaping of Communist Russia must not be exaggerated. If any individual or a group profess certain beliefs and refer to them to guide their conduct, they may be said to act under the influence of ideas. When, however, ideas are used not so much to direct one’s personal conduct as to justify one’s domination over others, whether by persuasion or force, the issue becomes confused, because it is not possible to determine whether such persuasion or force serves ideas or, on the contrary, ideas serve to secure or legitimize such domination. In the case of the Bolsheviks, there are strong grounds for maintaining the latter to be the case, because they distorted Marxism in every conceivable way, first to gain political power and then to hold on to it. If Marxism means anything it means two propositions: that as

So the Russian revolution was Jewish not so much because of the ethnicity of its leaders as because the Satanic hatred of God, Christ and all Christians that is characteristic of the Talmudic religion throughout its history was transferred from the nationalist Talmudic fathers to their internationalist atheist sons, finding expression in the supremely hateful and destructive act of the revolution.

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capitalist society matures it is doomed to collapse from inner contradictions, and that this collapse ('revolution') is effected by industrial labor ('the proletariat'). A regime motivated by Marxist theory would at a minimum adhere to these two principles. What do we see in Soviet Russia? A 'socialist revolution' carried out in an economically underdeveloped country in which capitalism was still in its infancy, and power taken by a party committed to the view that the working class left to its own devices is unrevolutionary. Subsequently, at every stage of its history, the Communist regime in Russia did whatever it had to do to beat off challengers, without regard to Marxist doctrine, even as it cloaked its actions with Marxist slogans. Lenin succeeded precisely because he was free of the Marxist scruples that inhibited the Mensheviks. In view of these facts, ideology has to be treated as a subsidiary factor: an inspiration and a mode of thinking of the new ruling class, perhaps, but not a set of principles that either determined its actions or explains them to posterity. As a rule, the less one knows about the actual course of the Russian Revolution the more inclined one is to attribute a dominant influence to Marxism..." (*op. cit.*, pp. 501-502)

## 14. AMERICAN DEMOCRACY

By the 1830s, the French revolution, in spite of its radicalism, had not attained its revolutionary aims. It required further revolutions – in 1830, in 1848 and even in 1871 – to remove from it the last remnants of Bonapartism and monarchism and reduce it to some kind of stable republicanism and democratism (not to mention atheism). America, by contrast, was more advanced than any other major European country from a liberal point of view.

As Paul Johnson writes, “Independent America had never possessed an *ancien regime*, a privileged establishment based on prescriptive possession rather than natural justice. There was no irrational and inequitable existing order which the new breed of secular intellectual could scheme to replace by millenarian models based on reason and morality... There was no cleavage between the ruling and the educated classes. Then, too, as de Tocqueville noted, there was in the United States no institutionalized clerical class, and therefore no anti-clericalism, the source of so much intellectual torment in Europe. Religion in America was universal but under the control of the laity. It concerned itself with behaviour, not dogma. It was voluntary and multi-denominational, and thus expressed freedom rather than restricted it. Finally, America was a land of plenty and opportunity. There was none of the ocular evidence of flagrant injustice which, in Europe, incited clever, well-educated men to embrace radical ideas. No sins cried out to heaven for vengeance – yet. Most men were busy getting and spending, exploiting and consolidating, to question the fundamental assumptions of their society...”<sup>161</sup>

There were both advantages and disadvantages to this stunning social homogeneity of the United States by comparison with Europe. On the one hand, from the point of view of the revolution, it meant that there was no need for the first, anti-monarchical and anti-clerical stage. For the Americans, having expelled King George, were all either middle-class bourgeois or workers with every opportunity of becoming bourgeois and comfortably middle class if they worked hard. Thus Engels argued that socialism was weak in America “just because America is so purely bourgeois, so entirely without a feudal past and therefore proud of its purely bourgeois organization.” Lenin thought that in the USA, “the model and ideal of our bourgeois civilization”, socialism had to deal with “the most firmly established democratic systems, which confront the proletariat with purely socialist tasks”. And Gramsci blamed “Americanism”, which he defined as “pure rationalism without any of the class values derived from feudalism”. H.G. Wells in *The Failure of America* (1906) attributed the absence of a powerful socialist party to the symmetrical absence of a conservative one: “All Americans are, from the English point of view, Liberals of one sort or another”.<sup>162</sup>

On the other hand, the comparative lack of social distinctions meant also a lack of subtlety, of richness of texture in social life. This may be why America’s greatest and most subtle novelist, Henry James, chose to spend his last days in class-ridden

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<sup>161</sup> Johnson, *Intellectuals*, London: Harper Perennial, 1988, 2007, pp 138-139.

<sup>162</sup> Johnson, *Modern Times*, New York: Harper Perennial, 1990, p. 213.

England rather than in his native America. Of course, fallen human nature hates real egalitarianism, which would deny the passion of envy any material to feed on. So the few criteria that marked people off as “better” or “worse” than each other – race, above all the black/white divide, and wealth, above all wealth acquired by one’s own toil – became still more important. Of course, these criteria were very prominent in Old Europe – where would the nineteenth-century novel, from Jane Austen onwards, be without distinctions of wealth? But for Europeans there was the important distinction between inherited wealth, which was not earned but proved innate “breeding”, and acquired wealth, which was looked down on precisely because it was not inherited. Americans compensated for their lack of inherited wealth, their “nouveau riche” status, by seeing their acquired wealth as evidence, not of “breeding”, but of moral virtue. This was completely in line with the old Puritan ethic, which never died out completely: if you worked hard and honestly, then God, rewarding your good moral character, would give you wealth. Here we see both the strength and the weakness of the American character: on the one hand, its sturdy moral individualism, which made it relatively impervious to socialist fairy-tales, and on the other, a love of money and luxury which, by the twentieth century, made it vulnerable to the assault of foreign socialists.

America’s government was more genuinely democratic than any other, with a by now stable party system; for the supposed European scourges of monarchism, class-war and feudalism had been more effectively removed from America – or rather, prevented from implanting themselves in her soil – than from any other country. So from one point of view, America was, as Hegel put it, “the land of the future, where, in the ages that lie before us, the burden of the world’s history shall reveal itself. It is a land of desire for all those who are weary of the historical lumber room of Europe.”<sup>163</sup>

So America should be paradise on earth, according to liberal theory, truly a new world. However, the idea that America, whose genes, both physical and cultural, were largely European, could escape the inheritance of Europe’s original sin, her rejection of the Orthodox faith, was a fantasy; and no amount of dreaming about her “manifest destiny”, or speculation about the workings of the “World Spirit”, could eradicate the contradictions in her historical path. Nevertheless, disillusion with America lay far in the future; and in this period the dream looked real. That the republic, as Hugh Brogan writes, “was now a democracy, was patent to all. But it was a democracy of a particular kind. Every white male adult citizen was, or could be, involved (the percentage of the electorate voting in 1840 was 80.2 – a proportion to be surpassed only in 1860 and 1870); a legal revolution could occur every four years. A permanent contest had sprung up spontaneously between the Ins and the Outs: whatever the good luck or the good management of the ruling party, there would always be an opposition ready to fight. The spoils system [whereby a new incoming government necessitated the removal and replacement of all existing officials] gave it something to hope for; the prospect of another election gave it something to hope for; and though a party might be defeated nationally, it would have great reserves of

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<sup>163</sup> Hegel, *The Philosophy of History*, in M.J. Cohen and John Major, *History in Quotations*, London: Cassell, 2004, p. 576.

strength in the states, cities and counties which it still controlled – for no party victory has ever been absolutely complete – and, throughout the history of the American party system, local victory has always seemed, to some politicians, more important than a national one. The contest was by no means wholly cynical. Whigs and Democrats stood for significantly different economic programmes, and although both parties tried to appeal to all parts of the country equally, they did not sink all their beliefs in order to do so. The Democrats stuck by the doctrines they had inherited from Thomas Jefferson and Andrew Jackson. The federal government, they believed, should be weak, the states strong. There should be no national bank, nor paper money, but instead a currency of gold and silver, and an independent Treasury where federal revenues, derived from the sales of public lands rather than the tariff (the Democrats were a party of free-traders), could be kept safe from aristocratic speculators and corrupters. The Whigs were equally loyal to the memory of Hamilton's reports on manufactures and banking, and to Henry Clay's American System, which contradicted the notions of the Democracy at every point. The Whigs wanted to build up American national strength by building up the economy; if that meant creating a class of rich men, so much the better. But they were not undemocratic, in the political sense: they enjoyed the game too much for that; nor were they illiberal or reactionary as to social policy. This was a great era of experimental reform, and of noisy egalitarianism. The Whigs, or some of them at any rate, espoused both. Seward, for example, began his career as a leader of the so-called Anti-Masonic Party in New York state, which in the early thirties suspected the Freemasons of dreadful conspiracies against democracy; and as governor of New York he showed himself a human supporter of prison reform."<sup>164</sup>

The failure of the Anti-Masonic Party was perhaps the greatest failure of the American Republic, and doomed it to eventual disaster. For God's blessing could not be on the state whose main religion after Protestantism was anti-Christian Masonry (there were more Masonic lodges in America than in any other country), whose blasphemies and plotting against lawful authority was to destroy the Russian Empire in 1917. But leaving aside this most fundamental defect, American democracy had others, which even some democrats detected.

Some found American democracy much too egalitarian. Thus the New Yorker Thomas Whitney declared: "I take direct issue with democracy. If democracy implies universal suffrage, or the right of all men to take part in the control of the State without regard to the intelligence, the morals, or the principles of the man, I am no democrat... As soon would I place my person and property at the mercy of an infuriated mob... as place the liberties of my country in the hands of an ignorant, superstitious, and vacillating populace."<sup>165</sup> Lord Macaulay wrote in a similar vein to the American Henry Stephens Randall: "I have not the smallest doubt that if we had a purely democratic government here... either the poor would plunder the rich, and civilization would perish, or order and prosperity would be saved by a strong military government, and liberty would perish."<sup>166</sup>

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<sup>164</sup> Brogan, *The Penguin History of the USA*, London: Penguin, 2019, p. 278.

<sup>165</sup> Whitney, in David Reynolds, *America, Empire of Liberty*, London: Penguin, 2010, pp. 171-172.

<sup>166</sup> Macaulay, in Cohen and Major, *op. cit.*, p. 611.

The French aristocrat Alexis de Tocqueville, who came to America in 1831, wrote in his *Democracy in America* (1835) that the Russians and the Anglo-Americans seemed each “to be summoned by a secret plan of Providence one day to hold in its hands the destinies of half the world”.<sup>167</sup> He was right about that...

So, on the assumption that he shared the prejudice of almost all educated westerners that Russia was an evil despotism, how did he rate the world’s only democratic superpower-to-be?

The short answer is: not as highly as one might expect... “Following his famous visit to America,” writes Stephen Holt, “he suggested that democracy, if unchecked by religion and other forms of association, could well be characterized by self-destructive individualism, oppressive egalitarianism and an anxious desire to acquire, or be provided with, material well being.”<sup>168</sup>

An important defect of American democracy, Tocqueville thought, was what he called “the tyranny of the majority”: “In the United States, as in every country where the people rules, it is the majority which governs in the name of the people... If ever liberty dies in America, we shall have to blame it on the omnipotence of the majority which will have reduced the minorities to despair and compelled them to make an appeal to physical force. We shall then see anarchy, but it will come as the consequence of despotism.”<sup>169</sup>

“The moral authority of the majority is partly based on the notion that there is more enlightenment and wisdom in a numerous assembly than in a single man, and the number of the legislators is more important than how they are chosen. It is the theory of equality applied to brains. This doctrine attacks the last asylum of human pride; for that reason the minority is reluctant in admitting it and takes a long time to get used to it...

“The idea that the majority has a right based on enlightenment to govern society was brought to the United States by its first inhabitants; and this idea, which would of itself be enough to create a free nation, has by now passed into mores and affects even the smallest habits of life...”<sup>170</sup>

The worst aspect of this freedom was its extreme intolerance of any minority opinion. “I know of no country in which there is so little independence of mind and real freedom of discussion as in America. The majority raises formidable barriers around the liberty of opinion; within these barriers an author may write what he pleases, but woe to him if he goes beyond them.”<sup>171</sup>

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<sup>167</sup> Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, Bk. 1, pt. 2, ch. 10.

<sup>168</sup> Holt, review of Tocqueville’s *Democracy in America* in *History Today*, May 2001, p. 58.

<sup>169</sup> Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, Bk. 1, pt. 2, chs. 1,7.

<sup>170</sup> Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, New York: Fontana, 1968, vol. I, pp. 305-306.

<sup>171</sup> Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*.



This contributed to a cultural “dumbing down”, although it also prevented complete brutalization. “Few pleasures are either very refined or very coarse, and highly polished manners are as uncommon as great brutality of tastes. Neither men of great learning nor extremely ignorant communities are to be met with; genius becomes more rare, information more diffused. There is less perfection, but more abundance in all the productions of the arts.”<sup>172</sup>

This state of affairs was facilitated by the fact that there was no native American aristocracy, and few minority interests (except those of the Indians and Blacks) which were directly and permanently antagonistic to the interests of the majority. The Indians and the Blacks, however, continued to be persecuted. Thus from the 1930s the vast herds of bison, the Indians’ main source of food, were systematically slaughtered. This slaughter reached a peak in the 1860s, when the railways started to be built across the prairies...

“Hence the majority in the United States has immense actual power and a power of opinion which is almost as great. When once its mind is made up on any question, there are, so to say, no obstacles which can retard, much less halt, its progress and give it time to hear the wails of those it crushes as it passes.

“The consequences of this state of affairs are fate-laden and dangerous for the future...”<sup>173</sup>

One consequence was the idea of “making the world safe for democracy”, which has been so “fate-laden and dangerous” for the contemporary world... Another consequence was legislative instability, “an ill inherent in democratic government because it is the nature of democracies to bring new men to power.... Thus American laws have a shorter duration than those of any other country in the world today. Almost all American constitutions have been amended within the last thirty years, and so there is no American state that has not modified the basis of its laws within that period... For “As the majority is the only power whom it is important to please, all its projects are taken up with great ardour; but as soon as its attention is turned elsewhere, all these efforts cease; whereas in free European states, where the administrative authority has an independent existence and an assured position, the legislator’s wishes continue to be executed even when he is occupied by other matters.”<sup>174</sup>

But, continues de Tocqueville, “I regard it as an impious and detestable maxim that in matters of government the majority of a people has the right to do everything, and nevertheless I place the origin of all powers in the will of the majority. Am I in contradiction with myself?

“There is one law which has been made, or at least adopted, not by the majority of this or that people, but by the majority of all men. That law is justice.

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<sup>172</sup> Tocqueville, *On the Effects of Future Democratization*, 1840.

<sup>173</sup> Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, pp. 306-307.

<sup>174</sup> Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, pp. 307-308.

“Justice therefore forms the boundary to each people’s right.

“A nation is like a jury entrusted to represent universal society and to apply the justice which is its law. Should the jury representing society have greater power than that very society whose laws it applies?

“Consequently, when I refuse to obey an unjust law, I by no means deny the majority’s right to give orders; I only appeal from the sovereignty of the people to the sovereignty of the human race.”<sup>175</sup>

In a believing age, instead of “the sovereignty of the human race”, the phrase would have been: “the sovereignty of God” or “the authority of the Church as the representative of God”. But after this obeisance to the atheist and democratic temper of his age, Tocqueville does in fact invoke the sovereignty of God. For the essential fact is that the majority – even the majority of the human race – can be wrong, and that only God is infallible. “Omnipotence in itself seems a bad and dangerous thing. I think that its exercise is beyond man’s strength, whoever he be, and that only God can be omnipotent without danger because His wisdom and justice are always equal to His power. So there is no power on earth in itself so worthy of respect or vested with such a sacred right that I would wish to let it act without control and dominate without obstacles. So when I see the right and capacity to do all given to any authority whatsoever, whether it be called people or king, democracy or aristocracy, and whether the scene of action is a monarchy or a republic, I say: the germ of tyranny is there, and I will go look for other laws under which to live.

“My greatest complaint against democratic government as organised in the United States is not, as many Europeans make out, its weakness, but rather its irresistible strength. What I find most repulsive in America is not the extreme freedom reigning there, but the shortage of guarantees against tyranny.

“When a man or a party suffers an injustice in the United States, to whom can he turn? To public opinion? That is what forms the majority. To the legislative body? It represents the majority and obeys it blindly. To the executive power? It is appointed by the majority and serves as its passive instrument. To the police? They are nothing but the majority under arms. A jury? The jury is the majority vested with the right to pronounce judgement; even the judges in certain states are elected by the majority. So, however, iniquitous or unreasonable the measure which hurts you, you must submit.

“But suppose you were to have a legislative body so composed that it represented the majority without being necessarily the slave of its passions, an executive power having a strength of its own, and a judicial power independent of the other two

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<sup>175</sup> Tocqueville, *op. cit.*, pp. 309-310.

authorities; then you would still have a democratic government, but there would be hardly any remaining risk of tyranny.”<sup>176</sup>

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Towards the end of his great work, de Tocqueville describes in a remarkably prescient manner how he sees democracy, as exemplified in America, the world’s first true democracy, changing into a sinister despotism: “I ask myself in what form will despotism reappear in the world. I see an immense agglomeration of people, all equal and alike, each of them restlessly active in getting for himself petty and vulgar pleasures which fill his whole being. Each of them, left to himself, is stranger to the fate of all the others. A vast, protecting power overshadows them. This power alone is responsible for securing their satisfaction and for watching over their fates. The power is absolute, concerned with every detail, smooth in operation, takes account of the future, and is not harsh... The power wants all citizens to be happy, provided that happiness is their sole aim. It works willingly for their well-being, but insists upon being the source of this well-being and the sole judge of what it should consist. It gives them security, foresees and supplies their needs, conducts the principal business of their lives, manages their industries, divides their properties and regulates their inheritances and, in short, saves them from the trouble of thinking and the difficulties of living.

“This tutelary power is continuously at work to render less useful and more infrequent the use of free-will; the sphere of liberty of decision is thus restricted more and more until every citizen loses, as it were, the control of himself. Equality has conditioned men for all these transformations and prepared to accept such things and even to welcome them as beneficial.

“After having brought the individual, stage by stage, into its mighty bonds and moulded him to its wishes, the sovereign extends its tentacles over the community as a whole, and covers the surface of society with a network of little rules, complicated, detailed and uniform, but from beneath which the more original minds and the more vigorous personalities can find no way of extricating themselves and rising above the crowd. The sovereign does not break the wills of the subjects; it enervates them, bends them to its purpose, directs them, rarely forcing them to act, but continually preventing them from action; it does not destroy, but merely prevents things from coming to life; it never tyrannizes, but it hampers, dumps down, constricts, suffocates, and at the last reduces every nation to the level of timid and industrious animals of whom the Government is the shepherd...

“This kind of regulated servitude, well regulated, placid and gentle, could be combined – more easily than one would think possible – with the forms of liberty

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<sup>176</sup> Tocqueville, *op. cit.*, pp. 311- 313. “I am guided by Alexis de Tocqueville,” writes Charles C. Camosy, “in my assessment of the course of liberal democracy, who observed that as democracy becomes ‘more itself,’ it becomes ‘less itself.’ Thus, the end station of democracy, according to Tocqueville, was despotism” (“Why Individualist Liberalism Wins, and the Catholic Side Loses”, *Cruce*, December 19, 2017).

and could even establish itself under the shadow of the sovereignty of the people..."<sup>177</sup>

In the light of our modern experience of democracy, it will be useful to examine the estimate of Tocqueville given by his fellow Frenchman and fierce anti-communist, Jean-François Revel: "Tocqueville the visionary depicted with stunning precision the coming ascension of the omnipresent, omnipotent and omniscient state that twentieth-century man knows so well; the state as protector, entrepreneur, educator; the physician-state, helpful and predatory, tyrant and guardian, economist, journalist, moralist, shipper, trader, advertiser, banker, father and jailer all at once. The state ransoms and the state subsidizes. It settles without violence into a wheedling, meticulous despotism that no monarchy, no tyranny, no political authority of the past had the means to achieve. Its power borders on the absolute partly because it is scarcely felt, having increased by imperceptible stages at the wish of its subjects, who turn to it instead of to each other. In these pages by Tocqueville we find the germ both of George Orwell's *1984* and David Riesman's *The Lonely Crowd*.

"In one sense, history has endorsed Tocqueville's reasoning and, in another, has invalidated it. He has been proved right insofar as the power of public opinion has indeed increased in the democracies through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. But public opinion has not grown more consistent or uniform; it has in fact become increasingly volatile and diversified. And the state, instead of gaining strength in proportion to its gigantism, is increasingly disobeyed and challenged by the very citizens who expect so much from it. Submerged by the demands on it, called on to solve all problems, it is being steadily stripped of the right to regulate things.

"So the omnipotence based on consensus that Tocqueville forecast is only one side of the coin of modern government. The other is an equally general impotence to deal with the conflicting daily claims made on it by constituents eager for aid but less and less willing to assume obligations. By invading every area of life, the democratic state has stuffed itself with more responsibilities than powers. The very contradictions among special interests that are as legitimate as they are incompatible, all expecting to be treated with equal goodwill, show that the state's duties are expanding faster than its means of performing them. There is no denying how burdensome a tutelary government is on society - provided we add that its expansion makes it vulnerable, often paralysing it in its relations with client groups that are quicker to harry it than obey it.

"This sort of behavior splinters democratic societies into separate groups, each battling for advantage and caring little for the interests of others or society as a whole. Public opinion, instead of being united by uniform thinking, is fragmented into a variety of cultures that can be so different in tastes, ways of living, attitudes and language that they understand each other only dimly, if at all. They coexist but do not mingle. Public opinion in today's democracies forms an archipelago, not a continent. Each island in the chain ranks its own distinctiveness above membership

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<sup>177</sup> De Tocqueville, op. cit.

in a national group and even higher above its association with a group of democratic nations.

“In one sense, we do live in a mass era as residents of a ‘planetary village’ where manners and fashions blend. But, paradoxically, we also live in an age of the triumph of minorities, of a juxtaposition of widely differing attitudes. While it is obvious that the passion for equality, identified by Tocqueville as the drive wheel of democracy, generates uniformity, let’s not forget that democracy also rests on a passion for liberty, which fosters diversity, fragmentation, unorthodoxy. Plato, democracy’s shrewdest enemy, saw this when he compared it to a motley cloak splashed with many colours. In a democracy, he said, everyone claims the right to live as he chooses [*Republic* 8], so that ways of living multiply and jostle each other. To Aristotle, too, liberty was the basic principle of democracy. He broke this down into two tenets: ‘for all to rule and be ruled in turn’ and ‘a man should live as he likes’. In American democracy, the right to do one’s own thing is as much or more cherished than equality”<sup>178</sup> - more cherished even than the Christianity that they so prided themselves on, which exhorted men to be “free, yet not using liberty as a cloak for vice” (*I Peter* 2.16)...

And yet a certain degree of equality, especially equality of opportunity, remains part of the American dream. Hence the blow dealt to that dream by the recent vast increase in inequality in American society, when, as John Plender writes, “finance has become a mechanism for recycling resources from the rest of the economy into the pockets of a global super-rich elite. It was against this background that President Obama declared late in 2013 that the basic bargain at the heart of the American economy had frayed, as increasing inequality combined with declining upward mobility posed a fundamental threat to the American dream, to Americans’ way of life and to what the US stood for around the globe.”<sup>179</sup>

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This brings us to the question of American religion and the secular religion of Americanness. “In America,” wrote Sir Roger Scruton in 2002, “religion has been a vital force in building the nation. The initial unity of faith among the Pilgrim Fathers rapidly disintegrated, however, and while religious worship remains an important feature of the American experience, freedom of conscience has been guaranteed from the beginning by the Bill of Rights. This does not mean that America is a secular nation, or that religion has no part to play in establishing the legitimacy of American institutions. It means, rather, that all the many religions of America are bound to acknowledge the authority of the territorial law, and that each renounces the right to intrude on the claims of the state. Furthermore, these religions come under pressure to divert their emotional currents into the common flow of patriotic sentiment: the God of the American sects speaks with an American accent.

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<sup>178</sup> Revel, *How Democracies Perish*, London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1985, pp. 13-15.

<sup>179</sup> Plender, *Capitalism. Money, Morals and Markets*, London: Bloomsbury, 2016, p. 292.

“The patriotism that upholds the nation-state may embellish itself with far-reaching and even metaphysical ideas like the theories of race and culture that derive from Herder, Fichte and the German romantics. But it might just as easily rest content with a kind of mute sense of belonging – an inarticulate experience of neighbourliness – founded in the recognition that this place where we live is ours. This is the patriotism of the village, of the rural community, and also of the city street, and it has been a vital force in the building of modern America. Indeed, in the last analysis, national identity, like territorial jurisdiction, is an outgrowth of the experience of a common home.

“Of course, if people turn their backs on one another, live behind closed doors in suburban isolation, then this sense of neighbourliness dwindles. But it can also be restored through the ‘little platoons’ described by Burke and recognized by Tocqueville as the true lifeblood of America. By joining clubs and societies, by forming teams, troupes, and competitions, by acquiring sociable hobbies and outgoing modes of entertainment, people come to feel that they and their neighbours belong together, and this ‘belonging’ has more importance, in times of emergency, than any private difference in matters of religion or family life. Indeed, freedom of association has an inherent tendency to generate territorial loyalties and so to displace religion from the public to the private realm...”<sup>180</sup>

This may have been true in the nineteenth century, or even in some parts in the 1950s, but feels outdated today, in the twenty-first century, when social cohesiveness has declined drastically, political divides have become much deeper and fiercer, and religion has been not only banished to the private realm, but been invaded and trampled on. True cohesiveness does not exist without the true faith, which the Americans never did possess (although they gave refuge to many immigrants having the true faith). Hence the sage words of President John Adams: “We have no government capable of contending with human passions, unbridled by morality and religion... Our constitution was made only for a moral and religious people.”

Indeed, we can generalize this conclusion: no constitution can survive the onslaught of unbelief and immorality from the mass of the people. Constitutional “safeguards” are powerless to do anything but delay the eventual collapse of the impious state into anarchy or despotism. Therefore the best “constitution” is that which is united to the true religion and represents its natural political expression....

*April 6/19, 2021.  
St. Methodius, Enlightener of the Slavs.*

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<sup>180</sup> Scruton, *The Rest and the West*, London: Continuum, 2002, pp. 47-49.

## 15. SUPER-ECUMENISM, THE ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION

Ecumenism may be defined as a process of spiritual globalization working in parallel with the processes of political and economic globalization. It accelerated in the years 1990-94.

Since the early 1920s Orthodoxy had been split into two camps: the "World Orthodox", who joined the ecumenical movement, and the "True Orthodox", who rejected ecumenism (and other important issues, such as Sergianism). In 1948 the Greek-speaking Churches, and those Local Churches in Constantinople's orbit, joined the World Council of Churches. At first, the Moscow Patriarchate and the East European Churches within its orbit, rejected this; but from 1961 they, too, joined the WCC. In the 1980s, and especially in the years 1990-94, at the ecumenical assemblies of Canberra, Chambésy and Balamand, all the Local Churches of World Orthodoxy, with the exception of Jerusalem, were enthusiastic participants in the ecumenical movement, both inter-Christian and inter-religious ecumenism.

Besides the World Council of Churches, one of the movement's main organs was the World Constitution and Parliament Association (WCPA), which was founded in 1959. Although its aims were political and economic, it clearly had ramifications for religious organization. For, as a 1992 report made clear: "Its members in their turn are representatives of such organizations as, for example: the United Nations, the World Council of Churches, Green Peace, the World Muslim Congress, the Council on Foreign Relations, the World Court, and the ambassadors and ministers of many countries. This organization has already arranged several meetings of a Provisional World Parliament and passed eleven laws of a World Codex of laws. It is interesting that the WCPA has divided the whole world into *ten kingdoms*, employing precisely that term in English: 'kingdoms'. It is proposed that a new world financial system will be introduced immediately the first *ten countries* confirm a World Constitution, since the remaining countries will then be forced to accept this constitution for economic reasons. At the present time the WCPA is trying to convene a Constitutional Assembly so as to substitute the constitution of the USA for the World Constitution. In 1990 the WCPA sent a letter to all heads of government in which it declared the formation of a World Government, and after this many leaders of states openly began to speak about the New World Order."<sup>181</sup>

In September, 1990, inter-Christian ecumenism took a major step forward at Chambésy, Switzerland, where a Declaration was agreed between a Joint Commission of Orthodox and Monophysite (called "Oriental Orthodox" in the documents), the Orthodox and Monophysites being called two "families of churches" (a phrase unknown to Orthodox ecclesiology).

Paragraph Four of the Declaration said: "The two families accept that the two natures [of Christ] with their own energies and wills are united hypostatically and naturally without confusion, without change, without division and without separation and that they are distinguished only in thought (τη θεωρία μόνη)."

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<sup>181</sup> *Pravoslavnaia Rus'* (Orthodox Russia), N 15, 1992, p. 16.

This was already completely unacceptable to the Orthodox, and represented a heretical, Monophysite formulation. The two natures and wills of Christ are not distinguishable “only in thought”, but also in reality. Paragraph Seven also spoke of the two natures being distinguishable “only in thought”, which implied, as Ludmilla Perepiolkina points out “an *absence of this distinction in reality*”.<sup>182</sup>

Paragraph Five stated: “The two families accept that the One Who wills and acts is always the single Hypostasis of the incarnate Logos”. However, as Perepiolkina again correctly points out, according to the teaching of St. Maximus the Confessor, “the concept of energy (activity) of nature is attributable only to nature as a whole, and not to the hypostasis. This teaching was affirmed at the Sixth Ecumenical Council. In the Chambésy Declaration, as it is evident from Paragraph Five, natural wills and energies in Jesus Christ are attributed to His Hypostasis. In other words, this Paragraph is a *purely Monothelite formula*.”<sup>183</sup>

Paragraph Eight stated: “The two families accept the first three Ecumenical Councils which form our common heritage. With regard to the four later Councils of the Orthodox Church, the Orthodox affirm that, for them, points one through seven are also the teaching of these four later Councils, whereas the oriental Orthodox consider this affirmation of the Orthodox like their own interpretation. In this sense the oriental Orthodox respond positively to this affirmation.” An unclear statement, about which one thing, however, is clear: the Monophysites did *not* commit themselves to accepting the Fourth, Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Ecumenical Councils in the way the Orthodox did, but only “positively responded to their affirmation”, which means *nothing* in dogmatic terms.

Paragraph Nine stated: “In the light of our joint declaration on Christology and the joint affirmations mentioned above, we now clearly realize and understand that our two families have always loyally guarded the same and authentic Christological Orthodox Faith, and have maintained uninterrupted the apostolic tradition although they may have used the Christological terms in a different manner. It is that common faith and that continual loyalty to the apostolic tradition which must be the basis of our unity and communion.”

This was in flat contradiction to 1500 years of Orthodox Tradition. In this period all the Holy Fathers unambiguously affirmed that the Monophysites had *not* “loyally guarded the same and authentic Christological Orthodox Faith”, and were in fact heretics. But the modern ecumenists claimed that all the six hundred and thirty holy Fathers of the Fourth Ecumenical Council, as well as all the Fathers of all the succeeding Council that condemned Monophysitism, were wrong, and the whole controversy was simply based on some linguistic misunderstandings!

Paragraph Ten of the Declaration stated: “The two families accept that all the anathemas and the condemnations of the past which kept us divided must be lifted

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<sup>182</sup> Perepiolkina, *Ecumenism – A Path to Perdition*, St. Petersburg, 1999, p. 251.

<sup>183</sup> Perepiolkina, *op. cit.*, p. 252.



by the Churches so that the last obstacle to full unity and communion of our two families can be removed by the grace and power of God. The two families accept that the lifting of the anathemas and the condemnations will be based on the fact that the Councils and the father previously anathematised or condemned were not heretics.”

So the Seven Ecumenical Councils needed to be amended, said these “theologians”, and the anathemas against all the Monophysite councils and fathers, including the notorious heresiarchs Dioscurus, Timothy and Severus, lifted! This was an explicit rejection of the Faith of the Ecumenical Councils! Of course, the Autocephalous Orthodox Churches (with the exception of Jerusalem) had already *implicitly* rejected the Councils and the Fathers by their communion in prayer and the sacraments with all sorts of heretics, and even pagans, of which the WCC General Assembly in Canberra in 1991 was perhaps the most extreme example. Nevertheless, it was a further and important stage to say *explicitly* that the Ecumenical Councils, the highest authority in Orthodoxy, had been *wrong*, that the Monophysites should not have been condemned, that they had been Orthodox all these centuries although the Holy Fathers and all the saints of the Orthodox Church considered them to be heretics. This was not simply a failure to come up to the standards of the Ecumenical Councils: *it was a renunciation of the standards themselves.*

Although the Chambesy unia was not formally ratified by the Moscow Patriarchate, this was for completely non-theological reasons<sup>184</sup>, and the MP has continued to act as if the unia were valid and true. It was therefore with complete justification that the Holy Synod of the True Orthodox Church of Greece under Archbishop Chrysostom (Kiouisis) issued declared in July, 1991:-

“At Chambésy the Orthodox and the Monophysites agreed that ‘now they have clearly understood that both families (i.e. the Orthodox and the Monophysites) have always loyally maintained the same authentic Orthodox Christological Faith and the unbroken continuity of the Apostolic tradition...’

“... How is it possible to accept as correct that which has now been understood by twenty-one representatives of the Patriarchates and Autocephalous Churches – that is, that for fifteen hundred years the Orthodox and Monophysites had the same Christological Faith – when it is a fact that *four* Ecumenical Councils condemned the latter as heretical? Is it possible that the Holy Fathers who took part in them were mistaken, and were unjust towards the Monophysites? Was there not to be found even one of the 630 Fathers of the Fourth Ecumenical Council, of the 165 Fathers of the Fifth, of the 227 of the Sixth, or of the 367 of the Seventh, to understand this which the ecumenist Orthodox of Chambésy have now understood – that is, that the Monophysites are not heretics? So it is that 1,389 Holy Fathers are in error, and the twenty-one representatives of the innovative Orthodox are right? Are we to believe that the Holy Spirit did not enlighten the Holy Fathers? Are we to deny the divine inspiration of the Holy Councils? Heretical and blasphemous! Even more boldly, are we to assert that St. Euphemia, who sealed with a miracle the Definition of Faith of

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<sup>184</sup> Perepiolkina, op. cit., p. 252.

the Fourth Ecumenical Council, misunderstood the 'Orthodoxy' of the Monophysites because she did not understand the language? A fearsome thing!

"The Orthodox and the Monophysites agree that 'both families accept the first *three* Ecumenical Councils...' [But] the Orthodox Church accepts *seven* Ecumenical Councils. At Chambésy, at the demand of the Monophysites, the Orthodox delegates accepted the recognition of the first three; the rest are *put aside* and are considered a matter *only* for the Chalcedonian Orthodox. For the Monophysites, who are condemned as heretics and anathematised by them, it *is* appropriate to oppose these four other Ecumenical Councils. But is it permissible for men, however modernist they might be, who would be called Orthodox, and who declare themselves hierarchs and theologians, to limit the Ecumenical Councils to three? How do they dare? How did they sign such a grossly treasonous agreement? At least those who signed the false union of Florence-Ferrara [with Rome], when they returned to the capital and repented, declared 'Let our hands be cut off' and abjured the false union...

"One can only be horrified at the betrayal of those who signed the agreement at Chambésy. Those who were deposed and anathematised as heretics by four Ecumenical Councils are now recognized as 'saints' and 'Fathers' of the innovating Church... Who are they? There is Dioscorus, whom the Fourth Ecumenical Council anathematised as being of one mind with the heretic Eutyches... and the rest against whom the Orthodox Church cries out the Anathema which is read in the hearing of all on the Sunday of Orthodoxy. Now the modernist Orthodox would honor them in their churches, make icons of them and light candles to them, asking forgiveness because our Holy Fathers unjustly condemned them as heretics...

"*Let all who signed the agreement at Chambésy know that they have ceased to be Orthodox, since they are communicants of the heresy of the Monophysites.*

"Those who signed the agreement at Chambésy did not sign as individuals. Chiefly, they signed as representatives of their Churches, and their Churches accepted the agreement at Chambésy...

"Therefore we denounce this new false union which was signed at Chambésy by the representatives of the Autocephalous Churches and Patriarchates, who, after 1,500 years, have fallen into the heresy of Monophysitism... and... the New Calendarist State Church for all that has been stated, and declare it to be heretical henceforth. We call upon every faithful Orthodox person, following upon the treasonous agreement at Chambésy, to choose between Orthodoxy and Monophysitism. Whoever wants to remain Orthodox, whoever wants to remain a member of the Body of the Church of Christ, must immediately cease all relationship and communion with the heretical and monophysitizing shepherds of the Churches which signed and accepted the agreement of Chambésy.

"All who remain disinterested or silent, and ally themselves with the supporters of the agreement of Chambésy, have simply embraced Monophysitism and its wrong-thinking 'Fathers' Dioscorus, Severus, Timothy, and the other heretics. Such people have upon their heads the anathemas of the Ecumenical Councils. They are

outside the Church, outside of salvation, and their portion is with that of all the heretics.

“We have spoken. Let every Orthodox faithful take up his responsibilities before God and man. ‘Let us stand aright; let us stand with fear.’”<sup>185</sup>

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Chambésy was soon producing other concrete fruits. Thus in 1991 it was followed by the Seventh General Assembly of the WCC in Canberra, at which the Orthodox delegates were among those invited by aboriginal pagans to pass through a “cleansing cloud of smoke” uniting Aboriginal to Christian spirituality (!). In spite of this, Metropolitan Cyril (Gundiaev), head of the Department of External Relations of the MP, said that the WCC was “our common home and we want it to be the cradle of the one church”.<sup>186</sup>

However, in 1992 a Russian parliamentary commission revealed Gundiaev, the present patriarch, and almost all his hierarchical colleagues, was a KGB Agent. This was confirmed recently in Bulgaria: “The Sofia District Court found that the statement of the former Deputy Prime Minister of Bulgaria Valery Simeonov that Patriarch Kirill (Gundiaev) was an ‘agent’ of the KGB was true. As reported by [Novosti Bulgaria](#) on April 14, it is a question of decision No. 20069484 in case No. 18199/2018 on the application of Emil Milanov.

“Another similar lawsuit was filed by a retired general and leader of the pro-Russian organization International Slavic Community - Perun 2000, secretary of the Russophiles movement and chairman of the Renaissance Bulgaria party, Emil Milanov.

“Valery Simeonov was able to prove in court that the information he had spread about Kirill's cooperation with the KGB under an operational pseudonym was true. ‘It has been proven that the Patriarch of the Russian Orthodox Church, Kirill, is a second-rate Soviet agent of the KGB. The one who said that human rights are a new heresy. And he still dared to administer justice over the Bulgarian president,’ said Valery Simeonov.”<sup>187</sup>

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<sup>185</sup> From the translation in *Living Orthodoxy*, vol. XIII, No 1, January-February, 1991, pp. 29-30. See also Metropolitan Calliopius of Pentapolis, *Prodosia tis Orthodoxias* (A Betrayal of Orthodoxy), Piraeus, 1991; *O Pharos tis Orthodoxias* (The Lighthouse of Orthodoxy), October, 1991, No 66, p. 120; Monk Isaac, "Commentary on the latest recommendations of the Joint Commission for theological dialogue between the Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox Churches", *Orthodox Life*, vol. 42, No 3, May-June, 1991; "Dossier sur les Accords de Chambésy entre Monophysites et Orthodoxes" (Dossier on the Chambésy Agreements between the Monophysites and the Orthodox), *La Lumière du Thabor* (The Light of Tabor), No 31, 1991.

<sup>186</sup> *Christian News*, April 1 and 8, 1991; in "Ecumenism down under", *Orthodox Christian Witness*, vol. XXIV, No 45 (1149), August 5/18, 1991, p. 3; *Keston News Service*, No 370, March 7, 1991, p. 2.

<sup>187</sup> Published in Credo Press, April 17, 2021.

On July 22, 1991, the Synod of the Antiochian Patriarchate (which included the notoriously pro-Islamic Metropolitan George Khodre) implemented a series of measures aimed at achieving full union with the Monophysite Syriac Church. These included a prohibition on proselytism among the Monophysites and full eucharistic communion.<sup>188</sup> Then, on November 12, 1991 Patriarch Ignatius IV of Antioch issued an "Official Statement of the Orthodox Church of Antioch on Relations between the Eastern Orthodox and Syrian Orthodox Churches of Antioch" in which the unia between his Church and the Syrian Monophysites (called here "the Syrian Orthodox Churches") was proclaimed as follows:

"1. We affirm the total and mutual respect of the spirituality, heritage and Holy Fathers of both Churches. The integrity of both the Byzantine and Syriac liturgies is to be preserved.

"2. The heritage of the Fathers in both Churches and their traditions as a whole should be integrated into Christian education curricula and theological studies. Exchanges of professors and students are to be enhanced.

"3. Both Churches shall refrain from accepting any faithful from one Church into the membership of the other, irrespective of all motivations or reasons.

"4. Meetings between the two Churches, at the level of their Synods, according to the will of the two Churches, will be held whenever the need arises.

"5. Every Church will remain the reference and authority for its faithful, pertaining to matters of personal status (marriage, divorce, adoption, etc.).

"6. If bishops of the two Churches participate at a holy baptism or funeral service, the one belonging to the Church of the baptized or deceased will preside. In case of a holy matrimony service, the bishop of the bridegroom's Church will preside.

"7. The above mentioned is not applicable to the concelebration in the Divine Liturgy.

"8. What applies to bishops equally applies to the priests of both Churches.

"9. In localities where there is only one priest, from either Church, he will celebrate services for the faithful of both Churches, including the Divine Liturgy, pastoral duties, and holy matrimony. He will keep an independent record for each Church and transmit that of the sister Church to its authorities.

"10. If two priests of the two Churches happen to be in a locality where there is only one Church, they take turns in making use of its facilities.

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<sup>188</sup> *The Word*, April, 1992.

“11. If a bishop from one Church and a priest from the sister Church happen to concelebrate a service, the bishop will preside even when it is the priest's parish.

“12. Ordinations into holy orders are performed by the authorities of each Church for its own members. It would be advisable to invite the faithful of the sister Church to attend.

“13. Godfathers, godmothers (in baptism), and witnesses in holy matrimony, can be chosen from the members of the sister Church.

“14. Both Churches will exchange visits and will co-operate in the various areas of social, cultural, and educational work.

“We ask God's help to continue strengthening our relations with the sister Church, and with other Churches, so that we all become one community under one Shepherd.”<sup>189</sup>

At the time of writing, the Orthodox and the Monophysites in Syria are indeed “one community” even if they do not yet have one shepherd, while the leaders of the other patriarchates frequently concelebrate with them...

As for Constantinople, in November, 2009 the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, the honorary president of the Masonic “XAN” organization<sup>190</sup>, said the following before the UN Diplomatic Corps: “The theological dialogue between our two Christian families – that is the Orthodox Church and the Ancient Oriental Churches, has formally ended the misunderstandings of the past. It is not theology that divides us...”

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The only exception to this “superecumenist” trend among the Local Churches of World Orthodoxy was Patriarch Diodorus of Jerusalem, who left the ecumenical movement on May 22, 1989, declaring with his Synod: “The Orthodox Church firmly believes that She possesses the full, complete truth and that She is the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church, the repository of Divine Grace and Truth. She alone is the ark of security within which the unsullied teachings and sacred Tradition of the Faith are to be found and the fullness of their salvific character and expression. Further participation by the Orthodox in the dialogues is now becoming harmful, damaging and, indeed, dangerous. The non-Orthodox are taking advantage of these theological dialogues and are using these contacts against the Orthodox Church. Here in the Holy Land especially they are now saying, ‘Together with the Orthodox we are trying to find the truth.’ Thus, day after day they are increasingly successful in their proselytising and draw Orthodox believers into their ranks. The non-Orthodox are also showing photographs and video films to our people in which our representatives appear embracing the non-Orthodox and they tell our faithful: ‘the union of the

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<sup>189</sup> <http://www.antiochian.org.au/content/view/143/21>.

<sup>190</sup> *Kathimerini*, October 16, 1992.

churches has come; come to our churches for joint prayers.' To such acts must also be added their tempting offers of houses (and housing is a pressing problem for the majority of the Arab population), offers of jobs and of financial assistance if the Orthodox will only join their religion. This draining away or, rather, bleeding of our Orthodox flock, but above all our primary desire and obligation to preserve the purity of the Orthodox Faith and Tradition from the dangerous activities of non-Orthodox has compelled us to put an end to the dialogues, not only with the Anglicans who for some time now have been ordaining women, but also with the Roman Catholics, the Lutherans, as well as with those Protestant denominations with whom the Church of Jerusalem has only more recently had theological dialogues."<sup>191</sup>

Patriarch Diodorus showed that he was serious by refusing to sign the agreement of Chambésy with the Monophysites in 1990; he strongly criticized the official intercommunion between the Antiochian and Alexandrian patriarchates and the Monophysites; and in March, 1992, at the meeting of the heads of the Orthodox Churches in Constantinople, he argued forcefully for breaking *all* dialogue with the Vatican.

However, while more "conservative" than the other Churches of World Orthodoxy, the Jerusalem Patriarchate has never broken communion with World Orthodoxy, nor decisively broken with the major organizations of the ecumenical movement. It is relatively guarded in relation to other confessions only because it has to defend the Holy Places from the pretensions of Catholics, Armenians, Copts and others. In confirmation of this, we may cite the following joint statement of the Jerusalem Patriarchate, the Antiochian Patriarchate, and Monophysites, Papists, and Protestants at the Seventh Assembly of the Middle East Council of Churches in 1999: "God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us... Oriental Orthodox [*Monophysite*], Orthodox, Catholic, and Evangelical... We renew our commitment to strive to be [*the*] One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, according to the will of the Lord Jesus, 'so that they may be one' (John 17:11)... by opening our hearts and minds to the guidance of the Holy Spirit, so that we encounter each other cooperatively, with respect, and with kindness. In Him, we are one."<sup>192</sup>

The Constantinople Council issued a communiqué that more or less renounced missionary work among the Western heretics. After condemning the work of Catholic Uniates and Protestant fundamentalists in Orthodox countries, they went on to "remind all that every form of proselytism – to be distinguished from evangelization and mission – is absolutely condemned by the Orthodox. Proselytism, practiced in nations already Christian, and in many cases even Orthodox, sometimes through material enticement and sometimes by various forms of violence, poisons the relations among Christians and destroys the road towards their unity. Mission, by contrast, carried out in non-Christian countries and among non-Christian peoples, constitutes

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<sup>191</sup> *Agiofatis* (Holy Sepulchre), translated in *The Canadian Orthodox Missionary Journal*, year 16, issue 5, No 134, September-October, 1989, p. 2.

<sup>192</sup> Dr. Fred Strickert, *The Washington Report: On Middle East Affairs: Christianity and the Middle East*, July/August 1999, pp. 84-85.

a sacred duty of the Church, worthy of every assistance" (point 4).

Here a dishonourable deal was being proposed: if you refrain from proselytising in Orthodox countries, we will not receive converts in western countries. Of course, this renunciation of proselytism among western heretics had been implicit in the Ecumenical Patriarchate's statements since the encyclical of 1920, and in all the Orthodox leaders' actions in ecumenical forums since the 1960s. But it still came as a shock to see the "Orthodox Church" renouncing the hope of conversion and therefore salvation for hundreds of millions of westerners. Here the ecumenical "Orthodox" renounced the first commandment of the Lord to His Church after the Resurrection: "Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you..." (Matthew 28.19-20). Patriarch Bartholomew confirmed his renunciation of proselytism on November 30, 1998, when, referring to the representatives of the Pope, he said: "In view of the fact that one Church recognizes the other Church as a locus of grace, proselytization of members from one Church to the other is precluded."<sup>193</sup>

The 1992 communiqué also made threats against "schismatic groups competing with the canonical structure of the Orthodox Church" (point 3), i.e. the True Orthodox. This threat was made clearer when, in May, a delegation from the Ecumenical Patriarchate together with a detachment of Athonite police expelled the Russian-American monks of the Skete of the Prophet Elijah on Mount Athos, who did not commemorate, not the patriarch, but ROCOR.<sup>194</sup>

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Not only inter-Christian ecumenism, but also "super-", that is, inter-religious ecumenism was making gigantic strides in this period.

Thus on November 13, 1991 Patriarch Alexis of Moscow addressed the Rabbis of New York as follows: "Dear brothers, shalom to you in the name of the God of love and peace!... We are all brothers, for we are all children of the Old Testament on Mount Sinai, which, as we Christians believe, was renewed by Christ... Your law is our law, your prophets are our prophets."

This was a profound error, which was thoroughly exposed – and anathematized – by the holy Apostle Paul in his epistle to the Galatians and condemned by the 29<sup>th</sup> Canon of Laodicea: "But if any shall be found to be Judaizers, let them be anathema from Christ".

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<sup>193</sup> *Ekklesiastiki Alitheia* (Ecclesiastical Truth), December 12, 1998.

<sup>194</sup> Damian Thompson, "Holy Sanctuary in turmoil over monks' eviction", *The Daily Telegraph*, June 4, 1992 ecumenists seize Skete of the Prophet Elias", *Living Orthodoxy*, vol. XIII, № 4, July-August, 1991, pp. 1, 9. For other harassment of non-commemorators on Mount Athos, see Monk Maximus of the Great Lavra, *Human Rights on Mount Athos*, Welshpool: Stylite Publishing, 1990; "Of Truth and Falsehood: Allegations of the 'O.C.A.' and Response from the Holy Mountain", *Living Orthodoxy*, vol. XIII, № 3, May-June, 1991.

. There is a sense in which the Old Testament law and prophets were not destroyed, but fulfilled by Christ (Matthew 5.17) – that is, in the sense that He revealed their inner meaning. But “the law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ” (Galatians 3.24), and having found Christ, we follow, not the law of the Old Testament, but of the *New* Testament.

Some parts of the old law are still obligatory for Christians – the Ten Commandments, for example. But even there adjustments need to be made: the commandment to “keep the sabbath holy”, for example, applies now to Sundays and Church feast days, not to Saturdays. And the commandments against murder and adultery are now deepened to become commandments against anger and lust. As for circumcisions and animal sacrifices and the worship in the Temple on Mount Moriah, this is now definitely excluded, being replaced by the worship and sacraments of the Church. So the Jews’ law is *not* our law. Nor do they stand in a relationship of equality of honour to the Christians. As for the prophets, they prophesied about Christ; and it is the Christians, not the Jews, who have understood the prophecies and paid heed to them.

The patriarch continued: “Judaism and Christianity are united by a spiritual and natural affinity and positive religious interests. We are united with the Jews without renouncing Christianity. For this is not contrary to Christianity, but in the name and for the sake of Christianity. And the Jews are united with us also in the name and for the sake of genuine Judaism.”

Astonishing! Then why have the main persecutors of Orthodox Christianity for the last two thousand years been the Jews? And why does the Jews’ “holy” book, the Talmud, say such terrible things about Christ, the Mother of God and Christians in general? No: to be united with the Jews means precisely to renounce Christianity; it is to be united with Annas and Caiaphas and Judas and to be separated from Christ and the holy Apostles.

“We are separated from the Jews because we are not wholly Christian, and the Jews are separated from us because they are not wholly Jewish. Because full Christianity embraces Judaism and full Judaism is Christianity.”

The patriarch speaks truly about himself when he says he is “not wholly Christian”. More precisely, he is not Christian at all. For no Christian, whether “full” or not, can possibly embrace Judaism, which is the antithesis of Christianity. For the Jews reject every single article of the Nicene Creed with the possible exception of the first, about God the Father. And yet even here it cannot be said that the Jews know God the Father. For “who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son. Whosoever denieth the Son, hath not the Father” (I John 2.22-23).

“The hierarchs, clergy and theologians of our Church resolutely and openly denounce all and sundry manifestations of anti-Semitism and enmity and pogroms against the Jews.”



The Orthodox Church rejects anti-Semitism, that is, a rejection of the Jews on the grounds of their race. She also rejects pogroms because pogroms are murder. But the Church is and will never cease to be anti-Judaic, because Talmudic Judaism is a lie, the worst of all lies.

“During the notorious Beilis trial, Archpriest Alexander Glagolev, a professor at the Kiev Ecclesiastical Academy, and Ivan Troitsky, a professor at the St. Petersburg Ecclesiastical Academy, firmly defended Beilis and resolutely rejected the accusations of ritual killings allegedly practised by the Jews. The Metropolitan of St. Petersburg, Antony (Vadkovksky), did much to protect the Jews from the anti-Semitic attacks of the extreme right-wing radical organizations. There were also many other hierarchs and theologians of our Church who courageously defended the Jews from the enmity and slanderous accusations made by the anti-Semitic circles: Metropolitan Makary (Bulgakov), Bishop Donatus (Babinsky) of Grodno, Bishop Vissarion (Nechaev), Archbishop Seraphim (Mescheryakov), Archbishop Makary (Miroliubov).”

Much could be said about the Beilis trial, which was indeed “notorious” – mainly because of the extreme pressure brought to bear upon witnesses by the Jews and their supporters, and the extreme inefficiency of the police work. Beilis was indeed acquitted, but the court also established that the victim, Andrew Yuschinsky, *had* been the victim of a ritual murder. The patriarch also ignored the fact that the Orthodox Church has officially glorified at least one victim of Jewish ritual murder – the Child Martyr Gabriel, to whom Metropolitan Anthony Khrapovitsky wrote a service.

“We should also mention that many of our theologians and outstanding religious thinker, such as Vladimir Soloviev, Nicholas Berdiaev, and Father Sergius Bulgakov, stood up for the Jews. Vladimir Soloviev regarded the defence of the Jews, from the Christian point of view, to be one of the major tasks of his life. For him the main question was not whether the Jews were good or bad, but whether we Christians were good or bad. Much had been done for establishing a Christian dialogue by our famous religious thinkers of Jewish origin, Semyon Frank and Lev Shestov.

“In this difficult but sacred cause for all of us we hope for understanding and help from our Jewish brothers and sisters. We shall build, by our joint efforts, a new society – one that is democratic, free, open and just. It will be a society which no one will want to leave, and in which the Jews will live confidently and calmly, in an atmosphere of friendship, creative cooperation and fraternity between the children of our common God – the Father of all, the God of your and our fathers...”<sup>195</sup>

During the visit of Alexis II to the U.S.A. in 1993 the chief rabbi of New York, Schneier, presented him with the prize “The Call of Conscience”. And both in 1991

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<sup>195</sup> Shmakov, *Rech' Patriarkha Alekseia II k rabbinam g. Nyu Yorka (S.Sh.A.) i Eres' Zhidovstvoyushchikh*, (The Speech of Patriarch Alexis II to the Rabbis of New York (U.S.A.) and the Heresy of the Judaisers) U.S.A., 1993 (MS), Moscow, 1992, pp. 8-10; Valery Kadzhaya, “Ask Peace for Jerusalem”, [http://www.newtimes.ru/eng/detail.asp?art\\_id=778](http://www.newtimes.ru/eng/detail.asp?art_id=778).

and in 1993 the patriarch was a guest of a Zionist organization of the same name; he visited synagogues and met Jewish religious leaders... In 1992, the president of the Union of Orthodox Brotherhoods, Sergei Poliakov, declared that the patriarch's speech to the New York rabbis had been "clearly heretical". In Tver diocese "almost 60% of the diocesan clergy" were refusing to commemorate the patriarch.<sup>196</sup>

The MP was able to face down its dissidents. In its council in December, 1994, the patriarchate's participation in the WCC was unequivocally endorsed as having been inspired "primarily by considerations of the good it would do for the Church". Then a purge of the anti-ecumenist brotherhoods began.<sup>197</sup> The decision was made to permit common prayers with heretics with the blessing of the local bishop!<sup>198</sup> And with the death in 1995 of the only anti-ecumenist in the hierarchy, Metropolitan John (Snychev) of St. Petersburg, the victory of the ecumenists appeared to have been sealed. The abomination of desolation, which had first been put up in the temple of the MP in 1927, with the enthronement of God-fighting atheism in the heart of the Church's administration, now, four years after the fall of communism, was securely re-established there in a theistic form...

*April 18 / May 1, 2021.  
Holy and Great Saturday.*

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<sup>196</sup> *Priamoj Put'* (The Straight Path), February, 1992, p. 5; E. Polyakov, "Khronika Tserkovnoj Zhizni v Yanvare-Fevrale 1992 g." (A Chronicle of Church Life in January-February, 1992) (MS), p. 2; *Russkii Pastyr'*, No 30, I-1998, p. 86. Cf. Fr. Timothy Alferov, "Nekotore uroki dvizhenia 'nepominaiushchikh' (Some Lessons of the Movement of the Non-Commemorators), *Russkii Pastyr'* (Russian Pastor), No 19, II-1994, pp. 102-104.

<sup>197</sup> A. Soldatov, "Obnovlenie ili obnovlenchestvo?" (Renovation or Renovationism?), *Pravoslavnaia Rus'* (Orthodox Russia), No 20 (1521), October 15/28, 1994, pp. 6-9; *Service Orthodoxe de Presse* (Orthodox Press Service), No 194, January, 1995, pp. 7-10 (F); V.N. Osipov, "Pravoslavnoe serdtse na vetru", *Pravoslavnaia Rus'* (Orthodox Russia), No 2 (1527), January 15/28, 1995, pp. 14-15.

<sup>198</sup> Perepiolkina, op. cit., p. 205; from the Documents and Reports of the Council published by the MP in 1995, p. 191.

## 16. 1945 AND THE MP'S "THEOLOGY OF VICTORY"

It is well-known that for over eighty years now the Moscow Patriarchate has assiduously defended and advanced the cause of world communism, making excuses for the Soviet government even in its most evil acts – and such acts have been without precedent in world history... This process began with the pro-Soviet “declaration” of Metropolitan, later Patriarch Sergius in 1927. It gathered pace under Patriarch Alexis during and after the Second World War. In the 1960s, under Metropolitan Nicodemus of Leningrad, it acquired a quasi-theological basis in the “Theology of Peace”, very similar to the “liberation theology” of the contemporary Catholic Marxists of Central and South America. This “Gospel of Communist Christianity” suffered a temporary setback after the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991, but towards the end of the 1990s a new “religion of victory” was being developed, a glorification of the Soviet victory in 1945 as a victory of good over evil comparable to the victory of Christ over the devil at Pascha! Now, in 2010, to crown this truly horrific justification of the greatest evil as the greatest good, the new patriarch, Cyril (Gundiaev) has described the deaths of the millions of Soviet citizens in the Second World War as “a nation-wide propitiatory sacrifice” to God for the sins of the Russian people...<sup>199</sup>

Let us briefly examine how this “theology of victory” grew out of the “theology of peace” of the 1960s.

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The so-called “movement for peace” or “theology of peace” arose as an essentially political reaction to the foundation of NATO in 1949. This organization had been created in order to defend Europe against Soviet aggression. But from the viewpoint of Marxism-Leninism, it was not a defensive organization, but a threat to world peace.

In line with this position, the MP organized a series of ecumenical conferences “in defence of peace” with representatives not only of the Christian confessions, but also of Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Islam, Shintoism and Sikhism. Insofar as these religious “fighters for peace” worshipped completely different gods or (in the case of Buddhism) no god at all, there was no place at these conferences for the specifically *Christian* understanding of peace. Thus there was no mention of the fact that peace on earth is possible only if there is peace with God, which is obtained only through faith in the redeeming work of Christ, Who “is our peace” (Ephesians 2.14), and through a constant struggle with evil in all its forms, including atheism and communism.

Moreover, as Kurochkin writes, “on the pages of the ecclesiastical press and on the lips of those speaking before the believers, the similarity and closeness of the communist and Christian social and moral ideals was proclaimed more and more often.” And so the cult of Stalin was transformed into the cult of communism. For

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<sup>199</sup> “Bogoslovie ‘Pobedy’”, *Nasha Strana* (Buenos Aires), no. 2891, May 8, 2010 (in Russian).

“the patriarchal church, having conquered the renovationists, was forced to assimilate the heritage of the conquered not only in the field of political re-orientation, but also in the sphere of ideological reconstruction.”<sup>200</sup>

The “Gospel of Communist Christianity” appeared in an encyclical of the patriarchate “in connection with the Great October Socialist Revolution”, which supposedly “turned into reality the dreams of many generations of people. It made all the natural riches of the land and means of production into the inheritance of the people. It *changed the very essence of human relations*, making all our citizens equal and excluding from our society any possibility of enmity between peoples of different races and nationalities, of different persuasions, faiths and social conditions.”<sup>201</sup>

Insofar as the MP confessed that the revolution “changed the very essence of human relations” for the better, it renounced the Christian Faith for that of the faith of the Antichrist. This aspect of the MP’s apostasy is often forgotten. And of course now, since the fall of communism, the MP no longer talks about its enthusiasm for the antichristian creed of communism. But by any normal definition of words, the hierarchs of the MP ceased to be, not only Orthodox in any meaningful sense, but also Christian at this time...

“The so-called ‘theology of peace’,” wrote Protopresbyter George Grabbe, “is in essence the chiliastic preaching of the Kingdom of God on earth, with the help of the planting of communist socialism...”

“The peace which the Moscow patriarchate is clamouring for is not spiritual peace, but political peace, and moreover, a false peace, for the so-called ‘theology of peace’ is linked with the deceptive propaganda of the Soviets. In trying to echo communist propaganda, the patriarchate is involuntarily falling into the preaching of a certain kind of chiliasm, that is, the attainment of a golden age and general peace by human means of a political character. If the Saviour said: ‘Seek first of all the Kingdom of God, and all the rest will be added to you,’ the Moscow patriarchate puts the question in the reverse order: the Kingdom of God must be attained through the external means of the communist social order.

“That is why, in his report ‘Peace and Freedom’ at the local conference of the movement for peace in Holland in 1963, Metropolitan Nicodemus called for the Church to come closer to this world. ‘From ancient times,’ he said, ‘the apologists of the unchangeability of social relations have begun to incline the thoughts of Christians to complete alienation from the world with the aim of drawing them away from burning social problems, for the struggle for the reconstruction of society on the principles of justice. Under the long influence of this pseudo-Christian preaching whole generations of narrow fanatics have been educated and grown up with distorted ideas about Christianity’ (*J.M.P.*, 1963, № 1, p. 40).

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<sup>200</sup> P.K. Kurochkin, *Evolutsia sovremennogo russkogo pravoslavia*, Moscow, 1971, pp. 81, 82 (in Russian)

<sup>201</sup> *Zhurnal Moskovskoj Patriarkhii*, 1967; translated in *Orthodox Life*, № 110, March-April, 1968, p. 25.

“What is Metropolitan Nicodemus renouncing in these words? He is renouncing the patristic and ascetic past, he is trying to turn the Church from striving for heaven to the path of earthly social tasks. His Kingdom of God on earth is the communist order.

“He is echoed by Protopriest V.M. Borovoj, who expressed himself still more vividly: ‘Systematic theology and the historical churches have never been on the side of the revolution for the simple reason that they were prisoners of the cosmo-centric understanding of reality, prisoners of the static understanding of an order established once and for all on earth. Only in the last decades, when profound changes, a kind of revolution, have taken place in philosophical, theological and scientific thought as the result of an anthropocentric view of the cosmos, an evolutionary conception of the universe and a new rethinking of the whole history of humanity – only after all this has there appeared the possibility of working out a theology of development and revolution’ (J.M.P., 1966, № 9, p. 78)...

“By moving in this apostatic direction the Moscow patriarchate has already lost Christianity itself, replacing it with the religion of this world. Contrary to the word of the Saviour (Matthew 6.24), it is trying to serve two masters, and, as the Saviour warned, it has arrived at the point where it is careless with regard to Christianity but ardent in serving atheist communism.”<sup>202</sup>

Marxism-Leninism went out of fashion after the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991. But the communist spirit never died, and by the end of the liberal era of the 1990s, it revived in the form of “National Bolshevism”, an extreme nationalistic form of the old communism with some “Orthodoxy” added but without Marxism. This modernized form of the old ideology sought to justify the Soviet past in all its unprecedented evil, and rejected repentance for its sins as a betrayal of the nation.

It was illustrated most vividly in an article entitled “The Religion of Victory” in which a new Russian religio-political bloc, “For Victory!” presented its programme. The victory in question was the victory of the Soviet forces over Nazi Germany in 1945, whose blood was considered by the bloc to have “a mystical, sacred meaning”, being “the main emblem of the Russian historical consciousness”. The political and economic aspects of the bloc’s programme were communistic; but its nationalist and religious aspects were still more alarming. Yeltsin and his colleagues were accused of having betrayed ‘45 and the “truly genius-quality” achievements of post-war Sovietism.

“The enemy [which is clearly the West],” wrote Valentine Chikin, “has not succeeded in destroying our Victory. Victory is that spiritual force which will help us to be regenerated. From Victory, as from a fruitful tree, will arise new technologies, will grow new schools, defence will be strengthened, a world-view will be worked out. And a new communality embracing the whole nation will confirm the Victory of ‘45 in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

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“Let us not forget: in the 40s a wonderful fusing together of Russian epochs took place. Of the pagan, with Prince Sviatoslav [‘the accursed’, as the Orthodox Church calls him], who defeated the Khazars. Of the Orthodox, in which the great Russian commanders and saints Alexander Nevsky and Dimitri Donskoj acted. Of the monarchist, with Peter, Suvorov and Kutuzov. In the smoke of the battles of the Fatherland war they combined with the brilliant ‘reds’ Zhukov, Vasilevsky and Rokossovsky, which Joseph Stalin so clearly and loudly proclaimed from the Mausoleum...

“Only the bloc ‘For Victory’ has the right to claim the breadth of the whole nation. The ideology of the bloc ‘For Victory!’ is the long awaited national idea... Victory is also that sacred word which overflows the Russian heart with pride and freedom.”

Alexander Prokhanov continued the theme: “Victory is not simply the national idea. Victory is a faith, the particular religious cast of mind of the Russians. Under the cupola of Victory both the Orthodox and the Muslim and the atheist and the passionately believing person will find himself a place. Of course, in order to reveal this faith, it needs its evangelists, such as John the Theologian. It needs its builders and organizers. In the consciousness of this religious philosophy there is a place for artists and sculptors, sociologists and political scientists, historians and politicians.

“We still have to finish building this great Russian faith – Victory! In it the miracle expected for centuries, which was handed down from the sorcerers from mouth to mouth, from Kievan Rus’ to the Moscow principedom, from the empire of the tsars to the red empire of the leaders (*vozhdej*). This is the hope of universal good, of universal love. The understanding that the world is ruled, not by the blind forces of matter, but by Justice and Divine righteousness....”<sup>203</sup>

Orthodox writers rushed to support this ideology. Movements began for the canonization of such “strong” leaders as Ivan the Terrible and Rasputin. “Icons” of Stalin have appeared. And, most horrific and blasphemous of all, the anniversary of the Soviet victory on May 9, 1945 was described as a “feast of feasts” comparable to Pascha – even as Pascha itself! Thus in an article on an MP web-site we read: “The ‘atheist’ USSR, trampling down death by death, resurrected and saved the world. Only because ‘godly’ and ‘ungodly’ soldiers died in their millions do we live today and the whole population of the world, the whole of humanity, is alive. It would be no exaggeration to think that that terrible and great war and great Victory in that Great war caused the first sociologically large-scale micro-resurrection, a reproduction by the peoples of the USSR of the exploit of Christ. May 9, 1945 became the most convincing witness of the fact that 2000 years ago Christ was resurrected. Therefore our Great Victory is the feast of feasts, it is Pascha...”<sup>204</sup>

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<sup>203</sup> V. Chikin, A. Prokhanov, “Religia Pobedy: Beseda”, *Zavtra*, № 32 (297), 1999, p. 2. Cf. Egor Kholmogorov, “Dve Pobedy”, *Spetznaz Rossii*, № 5 (44), May, 2000, and my reply: V. Moss, [http://www.orthodoxchristianbooks.com/articles/316/imperia-i-anti-imperia-\(-russian\)](http://www.orthodoxchristianbooks.com/articles/316/imperia-i-anti-imperia-(-russian)).

<sup>204</sup> Yuri Krupnov, “The Victory is Pascha”, <http://pravaya.ru/look/7580?print=1> (in Russian).

Again, the former idol of ROCOR's liberals, Fr. Demetrius Dudko, wrote: "Now the time has come to rehabilitate Stalin. And yet not him himself, but the concept of statehood. Today we can see for ourselves what a crime non-statehood is and what a blessing statehood is! No matter how many cry that in Soviet times many perished in the camps – how many are perishing now, without trials or investigations... If Stalin were here, there would be no such collapse... Stalin, an atheist from the external point of view, was actually a believer, and this could be proved by facts if it were not for the spatial limitations of this article. It is not without reason that in the Russian Orthodox Church, when he died, 'eternal memory' was sung to him... The main thing is that Stalin looked after people in a fatherly manner. Stalin legitimately stands next to Suvorov!"<sup>205</sup>

"Ecclesiastical Stalinism" was the most horrific sign of the lack of repentance of the Moscow Patriarchate even now that it had been liberated from Soviet oppression. That lack of repentance has continued and intensified in the first decade of the twenty-first century. In 2010, it has become the official ideology of the Moscow Patriarchate as preached by her new leader, Patriarch Cyril, who believes that "we must be penetrated with a special understanding of the redemptive significance of the Great Patriotic War – and this is a religious understanding".

Cyril mocks those historians who think that the evil on the Soviet side was no less than that on the Nazi side: with their "primitive and sinful analysis", he says, they fail to see "the Divine perspective". The fact is, according to the patriarch, that Russia was spiritually regenerated in 1945 thanks to the blood of the millions of Soviet citizens who died in the war. That is why we must triumphantly celebrate May 9 as a general Church feast.<sup>206</sup>

Let us consider for a moment what actually happened in the war, and in the period just before and after it.

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The period 1917 to 1941 constituted the most relentless, massive, bloody and destructive persecution of the Orthodox Church in the whole of her history. To take just one out of many staggering statistics: according to Russian government figures, in 1937 alone 136,900 clergy were arrested, of whom 106,800 were killed.<sup>207</sup> Not content with destroying its own citizens on an unprecedented scale, the Soviet Union

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<sup>205</sup> Dudko, "Mysli sviaschennika", <http://patriotica.narod.ru/history/dudko> (in Russian).

<sup>206</sup> "Bogoslovie Pobedy", *op. cit.*

<sup>207</sup> A document of the Commission attached to the President of the Russian Federation on the Rehabilitation of the Victims of Political Repressions, January 5, 1996; *Service Orthodoxe de Presse*, № 204, January, 1996, p. 15 (in French). According to another source, from October, 1917 to June, 1941 inclusive, 134,000 clergy were killed, of whom the majority (80,000) were killed between 1928 and 1940. ("Nasha Strana' – konechno zhe ne Vasha, [http://catacomb.org.ua/modules.php?name=Pages&go=print\\_page&pid=771](http://catacomb.org.ua/modules.php?name=Pages&go=print_page&pid=771), p. 3 (in Russian).

then entered into a pact with Nazi Germany, and proceeded, with the Nazis' blessing, to invade Poland, the Baltic countries and Finland.

The Nazi invasion on the Sunday of All Saints of Russia, 1941 liberated Western Russia from the Soviet yoke, and was greeted with unfeigned enthusiasm by most of the inhabitants. The collective farms (slave-labour camps in all but name) were dissolved, the churches were reopened, and millions of people were baptized, enjoying free church life for the first time in a generation. Legitimate church hierarchies were re-established in the form of the Autonomous Orthodox Churches of Belorussia and the Ukraine, who joined ROCOR in 1946.

However, it was a different story for those who remained in the Soviet sphere. The miseries of war compounded the miseries created by the Soviets themselves, and there was no let-up in the persecution of the Christians, especially the Catacomb Christians who refused to recognize Soviet power or fight "for the achievements of October". Many were shot for refusing to serve in the Red Army; thousands more were sent to the camps.

Moreover, in spite of the best efforts of the Soviet propagandists, there was no genuine revival of Russian patriotism, in spite of the peddling of the myth of "the Great Fatherland War" as a great victory for Russian patriotism over a foreign invader. For, as Anton Kuznetsov writes, "from the very beginning the Bolsheviki showed themselves to be an *anti-Russian power*, for which the concepts of Homeland, Fatherland, honour and duty do not exist; in whom the holy things of the Russian people elicit hatred; which replaced the word 'Russia' with the word 'Internationale', and the Russian flag with the red banner; which even in its national composition was not Russian: it was dominated by Jews (they constituted a huge percentage, and at first it seemed as if it was a question of a purely 'Jewish power') and foreigners.

"During the 24 years of its domination the Bolshevik ('Soviet') power had had enormous successes in the annihilation of historical Russia. All classes were wiped out one by one: the nobility, the merchants, the peasantry, the clergy and the educated class (including all the Russian officers), and all the state institutions of what had been Russia were destroyed: the army, the police, the courts, local administration, charitable institutions, etc. A systematic annihilation of Russian culture was carried out - churches were blown up, museums were robbed, towns and streets were renamed, Russian family and everyday traditions were exterminated, Russian sciences and schools were liquidated, the whole of Russian history was blotted out and spat upon. In the place of the annihilated Russian element a red and Soviet element was created, beginning with the Red army and the Red professors and ending with Soviet orthography and Soviet sport. Our earthly Fatherland, Russia, was in fact destroyed, by terror; she was transformed into the Sovdepiia, which was a complete denial of Russia - it was anti-Russia. A Russian person has no right to forget that a consistent denial of Russian statehood is that on which the Soviet regime stood and on which it prided itself with emphasis.



“One has no right to call such a regime a national power. It must be defined as *an anti-national, occupying power, the overthrow of which every honourable patriot can only welcome.*

“... The antinational and antipopular essence of the Red (Soviet) army is clear to everyone who has come into more or less close contact with this army.

“Every Russian who has preserved his national memory will agree that the Workers and Peasants Red Army (RKKA) *never was either the continuer of the traditions, nor the successor by right, of the Russian Imperial Army* (that is what the White army was and remains to this day). The Red army was created by the Bolsheviki in the place of the Russian Army that they had destroyed. Moreover, the creators, leaders and backbone of the personal make-up of this army were either open betrayers of the Homeland, or breakers of their oath and deserters from the Russian Army. This army dishonoured itself in the Civil war by pillaging and the killing our Russian officers and generals and by unheard-of violence against the Russian people. At its creation it was filled with a criminal rabble, village riff-raff, red guards, sailors, and also with Chinese, Hungarians, Latvians and other ‘internationalists’. In the make-up of the Red army the communists constituted: in 1920 – 10.5%, in 1925 – 40.8%, in 1930 – 52%, and from the end of the 30s all the command posts were occupied by communists and members of the komsomol. This army was stuffed with NKVD informants and political guides, its destinies were determined by commissars, the majority of whom were Jews; it represented, not a national Army, but the party army of the Bolshevik Communist Party (B) – the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. The slogan of this army was not ‘For the Faith, the Tsar and the Fatherland!’, but ‘Give us the Internationale!’ This army was created from the beginning, not for the defence, but for the enslavement of our Fatherland and in order to turn it into ‘the launch-pad of world revolution’; it had to wage an aggressive war against it in order to spread antitheist communism throughout the world...

“But of course the most terrible blow at this myth is delivered by the Russian Liberation Army [ROA] in the Second World War, which is called ‘the Vlasovites’ by Soviet patriots. The very fact that at various times 1,000,000 (one million!) Soviet citizens served in the German Wermacht must cut off all talk of a ‘great fatherland’ war, for in fact: where, when and in what Fatherland war do people in such numbers *voluntarily* pass over to the side of the opponent and fight in his ranks? Soviet patriots find nothing cleverer to say than to declare these people innate traitors, self-seekers and cowards. This is a blatant lie, but even if it were true, it remains complete incomprehensible why Russia never knew such a massive ‘betrayal’ in her history. How many wars has Russia waged, and never have there been so many traitors, turncoats and ‘self-seekers’ among us. And yet it was enough for the ‘Fatherland’ war to begin and not just a simple one, but a ‘Great’ one, and hundreds of thousands of people with weapons in their hands passed over to the side

of the enemy. Moreover, people were enlisting in the ROA even in 1945, when the fall of Hitler's Germany and the victory of Stalin was evident..."<sup>208</sup>

As the Bolsheviks retreated in 1941, "the NKVD carried out a programme of liquidation of all the prisoners sitting in their jails. In the huge Lukyanov prison in Kiev thousands were shot in their cells. But in Stavropol they still had time to take the 'contras', including several old priests and monks, out of the city. They were led out onto the railway line from Kislovodsk to Moscow. At the small station of Mashuk, where the poet Lermontov had his duel, the wagons containing the prisoners were uncoupled from the trains and shunted into a siding at Kamenolomnya. Then the priests and monks were taken out with their hands bound and their eyes covered. In groups of five they were led to the edge of a sheer cliff, and thrust over the edge. Then the bodies were lifted up with hooks and covered with crushed stone and sand before a tractor levelled the area for the next wagon-full..."<sup>209</sup>

The Germans were in general greeted with ecstatic joy. Thus Alexander Solzhenitsyn writes: "Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia gave the Germans a jubilant welcome. Belorussia, the Western Ukraine, and the first occupied Russian territories followed suit. But the mood of the people was demonstrated most graphically of all by the Red Army: before the eyes of the whole world it retreated along a 2,000-kilometre front, on foot, but every bit as fast as motorized units. Nothing could possibly be more convincing than the way these men, soldiers in their prime, voted with their feet. Numerical superiority was entirely with the Red Army, they had excellent artillery and a strong tank force, yet back they rolled, a rout without compare, unprecedented in the annals of Russian and world history. In the first few months some three million officers and men had fallen into enemy hands!

"That is what the popular mood was like - the mood of peoples some of whom had lived through twenty-four years of communism and others but a single year. For them the whole point of this latest war was to cast off the scourge of communism. Naturally enough, each people was primarily bent not on resolving any European problem but on its own national task - liberation from communism..."<sup>210</sup>

"In the years of the war," writes Anatoly Krasikov, "with the agreement of the German occupying authorities, 7547 Orthodox churches were opened (as against 1270 opened in 1944-1947 with the permission of the Council for the Affairs of the

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<sup>208</sup> Kuznetsov, "О Sovietsko-Germanskoj Vojne", <http://catacomb.org.ua/modules.php?name=Pages&go=print> page&pid=570 pp. 3-4, 7-8 (in Russian). A. Soldatov writes: "The memory of the 'Vlasovtsy' 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' ("Radosti Paskhi i Skorb' Pobedy", *Moskovskie Novosti* and *Vertograd*, № 520, May 14, 2005 (in Russian)).

<sup>209</sup> Monk Epiphany (Chernov), "Tserkov' Katakombnaya na Zemle Rossijskoj" (MS, Old Woking, in Russian).

<sup>210</sup> Solzhenitsyn, *The Mortal Danger*, London: The Bodley Head, 1980, pp. 39-40.

Russian Orthodox Church)."<sup>211</sup> Even in fully Sovietized regions such as Pskov and the Eastern Ukraine, 95% of the population, according to German reports, flooded into the newly-opened churches.

However, the Germans' stupidity and race-hatred towards the Slavs undermined the goodwill initially shown them, and towards the end of the war many Russians were glad to see the back of them. For the fact is that Nazism and Sovietism are closely related spirits and ideologies, two branches of the single antichristian revolution. So the savage war between them was in no way a war between good and evil, even relatively speaking, but rather a war between two demon-possessed regimes.

And the bigger demon won... with the natural result that as the Red Army advanced westwards in the later stages of the war, one of the greatest exoduses in human history took place. Millions of people of various nations fled before the apocalyptic beast – especially Russians, who knew precisely what the return of Soviet power portended. These included almost the whole hierarchy of the Belorussian and Ukrainian Autonomous Churches, together with many future luminaries of the Russian Church Abroad such as Metropolitan Vitaly, Archbishops Vitaly and Averky of Jordanville, Leonty of Chile and Andrew of Rockland.

The behaviour of the Red Army soldiers was almost unbelievably bestial, cruel and lustful. This has been excused by Soviet propagandists on the grounds that it was natural for the soldiers to take vengeance on the Germans for their atrocities in Russia. Such an argument might convince a pagan or a communist, but hardly a Christian, still less an Orthodox Christian.

In any case, what atrocities had the female population of the German provinces committed? And yet, as recent historical research has demonstrated, it was precisely this element of the population that suffered the most. For, as Richard Evans, Regius Professor of Modern History at Cambridge University, 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 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

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<sup>211</sup> Krasikov, "Tretij Rim' i Bol'sheviki", in L.M. Vorontsova, A.V. Pchelintsev and S.B. Filatov (eds.), *Religia i Prava Cheloveka*, Moscow: "Nauka", 1996, p. 203 (in Russian).

to hide, especially after dark; or, if they were young, to take a Soviet soldier, preferably an officer, as a lover and protector..."<sup>212</sup>

In this way, if Patriarch Cyril is to be believed, did the glorious Christian soldiers of the Red Army "redeem the sins of the Russian people"! In this way did Stalin "trample down death by death"! In this way was Christ glorified in a new Pascha, a new and unprecedentedly glorious propitiatory act!

But no: the results of the war were irredeemably evil for all the peoples who came within the Soviet sphere – and even outside that sphere, since Stalin bullied his allies into forcibly repatriating millions of Russians in accordance with the Yalta agreement. Thus "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."<sup>213</sup> However, according to Vitaly Shumilo writes, "more than 6 million 'Soviet' prisoners of war, 'Osty' workers, refugees and émigrés were forcibly repatriated to the USSR up to 1948. The majority of them perished within the walls of Stalin's NKVD."<sup>214</sup>

The largest category of those forcibly repatriated was composed of those who had fought in the Red army. Already during the war the authorities had executed 157,000 Red Army soldiers (the equivalent of fifteen divisions) and almost a million were arrested.<sup>215</sup> And there was no respite now for those who had spent the war in Nazi prisoner-of-war camps or had simply witnessed the prosperity of the West and therefore knew that Soviet propaganda about the West was a lie. Thus 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..."<sup>216</sup>

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<sup>212</sup> Evans, *The Third Reich at War*, London: Penguin Books, 2009, pp. 710-711.

<sup>213</sup> Soldatov, *op. cit.*, p. 11, footnote 6.

<sup>214</sup> Shumilo, "Sovietskij Rezhim i 'Sovietskaia Tserkov'" v 40-e-50-e gody XX stoletia", <http://catacomb.org.ua/modules.php?name=Pages&go=page&pid=678> (in Russian)).

<sup>215</sup> Alexander Yakovlev, *A Century of Russian Violence in Soviet Russia*, Yale University Press, 2003.

<sup>216</sup> Ardov, "Avoiding participation in the Great Victory Services", sermon given on May 8, 2005, *Vertograd*, May 18, 2005; translated in *The Hoffman Wire*, May 18, 2005.

In 1945 a hand-picked selection of the most craven bishops in Russia were ordered to elect Alexis (Simansky) as patriarch of Moscow, and agreed to an unprecedentedly total control of the State over the Church. Shumilo writes: "An internal result of the Moscow council of 1945 that was positive for the Soviet regime was the fact that, thanks to the participation in it of the Eastern Patriarchs, the appearance of 'legitimacy' and 'canonicity' had been given to this Stalin-inspired undertaking. This led into error not only a part of the Orthodox clergy and hierarchy in the emigration, but also many of the True Orthodox Catacomb pastors in the USSR, who naively did not suspect that there might have been any anti-canonical crimes."<sup>217</sup>

The decisions of the council had direct and extremely unpleasant consequences for those Orthodox Christians who remained faithful to Christ. Thus Professor Ivan Andreev, who was a member of the Catacomb Church before the war, writes: "The Underground or Catacomb Church in Soviet Russia underwent her hardest trials after February 4<sup>th</sup>, 1945, that is, after the enthronement of the Soviet Patriarch Alexis. Those who did not recognize him were sentenced to new terms of imprisonment and were sometimes shot. Those who did recognize him and gave their signature to that effect were often liberated before their terms expired and received appointments... All secret priests detected in the Soviet zone of Germany were shot."<sup>218</sup> This fact, writes M.V. Shkarovsky, "is partly confirmed by documents in the archives of the security police. In 1944-45 in the camps a whole series of cases on counter-revolutionary organizations was fabricated. In these, many clergymen were sentenced to an increase in their sentence or were shot."<sup>219</sup>

Other consequences of Stalin's "redemption" included the enslavement of the Romanian, Bulgarian and Serbian Orthodox Churches to the KGB and its sister-organizations, as a result of which hundreds of bishops and clergy were killed while the survivors became obedient puppets of the collective Antichrist. Then began the terrorization and communization of the captive populations of Eastern Europe; and if the physical and spiritual devastation in these lands did not equal that in the Soviet Union, this was only because they were under the communist yoke for a shorter period, and most of that period took place after the death of Stalin... Meanwhile, as the "free" population of the Soviet Union suffered starvation conditions, the population of the Gulag swelled to its greatest-ever extent, making the period *after* the war still more terrible for Russia than the period before it...

Further west, the communist parties of France and Italy received a new lease of life from "Uncle Joe's" prestigious victory and the generous subsidies he gave them (at the expense of the starving Russian people, of course), so that only the presence of American troops in Western Europe and the still more generous (self-interested, but still generous) subsidies of the American Marshall plan saved Western Europe from the Soviet yoke. As the Iron Curtain fell across Europe, hordes of Stalin's redeeming angels dispersed throughout the world, spreading peace and goodwill for

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<sup>217</sup> Shumilo, *op. cit.*

<sup>218</sup> I.M. Andreev (Andreevsky), "The Catacomb Church in the Russian Land".

<sup>219</sup> Shkarovsky, *Russkaia Pravoslavnaia Tserkov' pri Staline i Khrushcheve*, Moscow, 2005, p. 205 (in Russian).

all men – except Christians, Capitalists and all men in general who did not embrace the antichristian creed of Dialectical Marxism.

Their greatest victory came in 1949, when the world's most populous country, China, embraced communism. Now about a quarter of the earth's surface, from Berlin to Peking, was under communist rule. Involuntarily, the words of the seer come to mind: **I looked, and behold, a pale horse** [the Greek word for "pale" is *khloros*, the colour of human flesh]. **And the name of him who sat on it was Death, and Hades followed after him. And power was given to them over a quarter of the earth, to kill with the sword, and with hunger, and with death, and by the beasts of the earth** (Revelation 6.8).

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It is characteristic of fallen men to understand everything in crudely physical and *external* terms, in terms of men alive or dead, lands conquered or lost, goods seized or destroyed... But Christians are exhorted not to judge by external appearances (John 7.24), but by internal reality. For Christianity is the religion of the Spirit, of the invisible and the immaterial, which manifests itself in the visible and the material, but has its roots elsewhere.

The sergianists' "theology of victory" proclaims a crudely sensual, blasphemously heretical understanding of redemption and of the basic principles of Christian morality. Their understanding of redemption through Stalin is essentially the same as the Judaic understanding of redemption through their false Messiah: a national-political liberation from, and extermination of, their external enemies by means of war and bloodshed. While Patriarch Cyril may talk about the victory of 1945 as having redeemed the Russian people from their sins, this is merely a quasi-religious fig-leaf for a shamelessly non-religious and even anti-religious goal.

Christ rejected the Judaic dream of national liberation from the Romans, and for that He was crucified. The redemption He wrought, which was redemption from *sin, death and the devil*, as opposed to a national-political oppressor, was accomplished through precisely the opposite means to those employed in the Jewish and Soviet-German wars: through the voluntary acceptance of suffering and humiliation without the slightest hint of vengefulness, hatred, lust or pride. *Externally*, Christ and His work appeared to suffer complete defeat as His Body was laid in the tomb and His disciples fled in fear and despair. *Externally*, His Death on the Cross appeared to change nothing – at any rate, in the political domain. But *internally*, within His own Soul and Body, within the depths of Satan's domain in the heart of the earth, and later in the souls and bodies of those who followed Him in truth, sin was redeemed, death was abolished and Satan crushed in a Victory far more devastating and complete than any national or political victory.

St. Paul writes: "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good" (Romans 12.21). However, the soldiers of the Red Army in 1945, while overcoming the evil of Nazism in the physical sense, were overcome by it morally and spiritually. While standing for an utterly evil world-view themselves, they imbibed all the evil

of their adversaries, their pride, their lust, their race-hatred. And after the war, while the Germans, humbled by defeat, repented and achieved *Vergangenheitsbewältigung*, “the overcoming of the past”, the Soviets, puffed up by victory, multiplied their iniquities and impenitence.

Physical evils can be overcome by physical means, but spiritual evil can be overcome by nothing else than spiritual means. And the twin demons of Sovietism and Nazism are undoubtedly spiritual evils. Thus Elder Aristocles of Moscow and Mount Athos declared in 1911: “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...”

Such spiritual evils can be overcome only by spiritual good, by holiness. This was the teaching of Tsar-Martyr Nicholas, in his last message to the world, as passed on by his daughter, the martyred Great-Princess Olga Nikolayevna: “Father asks the following message to be given to all those who have remained faithful to him, and to those on whom they may have an influence, that they should not take revenge for him, since he has forgiven everyone and prays for everyone, that they should not take revenge for themselves, and should remember that the evil which is now in the world will be still stronger, but that it is not love that will conquer evil, but only love...” And the reverence in which the Tsar-Martyr is held in Russia today is one of the few signs that all is not lost, that good may finally triumph over evil there.

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But was there *nothing*, it may be asked, to redeem the “victory” of 1945, that bacchanalia of evil? Yes, there was, and we find it again in Revelation: **When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held. And they cried with a loud voice, saying, “How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?” Then a white robe was given to each of them, and it was said to them that they should rest a little while longer, until both the number of their fellow servants and their brethren who would be killed as they were was completed (6. 9-11).** In other words, the silver lining in the black cloud, the redeeming factor in the horrific triumph of evil that was 1945, was the feat of the Holy New Martyrs of Russia who rejected Soviet power.

Not, of course, that any mere man can redeem – and not the least of Patriarch Cyril’s heresies is his implication that mere men can redeem sins independently of Christ the Redeemer. For, as David says: “A brother cannot redeem; shall a man redeem? He shall not give to God a ransom for himself, nor the price of redemption of his own soul, though he hath laboured for ever, and shall live to the end” (Psalms 48.7-8 (LXX)). Not even the greatest of the saints, and certainly not the raging atheist rapists of the Red Army, can be said to redeem anyone. Only Christ God is the Redeemer, He Who has offered up the perfect propitiatory Sacrifice for the sins of the whole world.

And only He is the Victor. For the true victor is not he who kills men and conquers kingdoms, thereby offering pleasing sacrifices to the devil, the hater of men and “ruler of this world”, but He Who through His perfect Sacrifice of Himself to God destroyed the power of the devil himself, thereby freeing men from death.

Nevertheless, of the saints and the martyrs it can truly be said that they *participate* in the redeeming Sacrifice and Victory of Christ to this extent, that by their sufferings they “fill up in their flesh what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ” (Colossians 1.24). They offered themselves up as whole-burnt sacrifices to the Saviour, and their sacrifice was not in vain, but rather gives them the boldness to intercede for the avengement of their blood and the bringing forward of the final victory of Christ over Bolshevism...

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So where does this leave Patriarch Cyril, and his glorification of the “redemptive sacrifice” of the Bolshevik Satanists? Metropolitan Anastasy, first-hierarch of the Russian Church Abroad, put it well when, in response to Patriarch Alexis’ description of Stalin as “the chosen one of the Lord, who leads our fatherland to prosperity and glory”, he wrote that at this point “the subservience of man borders already on blasphemy. Really – can one tolerate that a person stained with blood from head to foot, covered with crimes like leprosy and poisoned deeply with the poison of godlessness, should be named ‘the chosen of the Lord’, and could be destined to lead our homeland ‘to prosperity and glory’? Does this not amount to casting slander and abuse on God the Most High Himself, Who, in such a case, would be responsible for all the evil that has been going on already for many years in our land ruled by the Bolsheviks headed by Stalin? The atom bomb, and all the other destructive means invented by modern technology, are indeed less dangerous than the *moral disintegration* which the highest representatives of the civil and church authorities have put into the Russian soul by their example. The breaking of the atom brings with it only physical devastation and destruction, whereas the *corruption of the mind, heart and will* entails the *spiritual death* of a whole nation, after which there is *no resurrection*.”<sup>220</sup>

And yet a resurrection of Holy Russia *is* possible. But it can come about only when the nation as a whole repents, condemns the satanic victory of 1945, anathematizes “Patriarch” Cyril and all those with him who glorify it, and returns to a real knowledge of the one and only Victor over death and hades, the Lord Jesus Christ. Each one who repents in this way is offering his own true sacrifice to counteract the false sacrifices of the Bolsheviks. For, as Elder Aristocles said: “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

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<sup>220</sup> I.M Andreyev, *Is the Grace of God present in the Soviet Church?*, Wildwood, Alberta, 2000, pp. 32-33 (the translation has been slightly altered by me, V.M.).



smallest of good in the cup tips the balance, then will God reveal His mercy upon Russia...”

May 15/28, 2010; revised May 21 / June 3, 2010, April 26 / May 9, 2020 and April 26 / May 9, 2021.

## 17. RIGHTEOUS NICODEMUS

Today is the feast of the Holy Myrrh-bearing Women, and Righteous Joseph and Nicodemus. The least famous among them is Nicodemus. But his story is no less instructive than theirs'.

Nicodemus as "a ruler of the Jews" who came to Jesus by night "for fear of the Jews". He respected Christ, believing that He must be from God because of the miracles He did. So the Lord taught him, bestowing on him one of His most profound teachings, on Holy Baptism by water and the Spirit, and spiritual regeneration.

Nicodemus did not understand. Hindered by his literalist, materialist, typically Jewish way of thinking, he could not understand how a man could go back into his mother's womb and be born again. Jesus rebuked him, but gently. How could he call himself a teacher in Israel, and yet think in such a materialist way? If he couldn't understand this, how would he understand the still deeper teachings of the Gospel (John 3).

But the dim-witted Nicodemus was a lover of the truth and justice. When the Pharisees were arguing about Christ and slandering him, Nicodemus stuck up for him, for what we would not call His "human rights". "Does our law judge a man before it hears him and knows what he is doing?" (John 7.51).

Gradually increasing in courage and strength, Nicodemus joined Joseph in burying the Body of Christ. In fact it was he who bought the myrrh and aloes (John 19.39).

The story of Nicodemus' journey from weak faith to open confession of the truth is less spectacular than the stories of the conversion of the Apostles Thomas and Paul. It reminds us that we must never lose hope when our relatives or friend seem slow go grasp the truths of the Gospel, still less vaunt ourselves over them. Faith is a gift of God, and He gives to different people in different ways and following different trajectories. Some see it all in a flash, like the Myrrh-bearing Women and St. John when they saw the empty tomb. Others believe in a less sudden, but no less firm and consistent manner, like Joseph, who was determined to bury the Body of his Master, come what may, and attained his end. And then there are others who, like Nicodemus, are a bit slow-witted (by God's permission), who come to the faith by stages, who take time to understand it all, but get there in the end. All glorify God in their different ways.

Let us not despair of anyone's salvation before the end. For while there is life there is hope.

*May 3/16, 2021.  
Sunday of the Holy Myrrh-Bearing Women, Joseph and Nicodemus.*

## 18. IVAN THE TERRIBLE: CHURCH AND STATE

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I feel very honoured to speak today to you on the subject of Ivan the Terrible: Church and State. But I am also somewhat shamefaced. Because I am only an amateur historian of Russia – and I see in my audience some real, professional historians, whose knowledge of Russia is, I am sure, much greater than mine. However, this does have the major advantage that if I make some big howlers in my talk, the real historians here will be able to correct them in the Q & A session.

You may well ask: Do I have any qualifications at all to talk about Ivan the Terrible? Well, I do have some training in psychology – and Ivan was definitely a terrible nutcase.

But one of the reasons why I left psychology for the study of Orthodox history is that in my view psychology rarely provides anything but superficial explanations of the people and events that interest me.

Take the question: “Why did Brutus kill Caesar?” Is this a psychological or a historical question? It is of course both. But does it really help us to know that, for the sake of argument, Brutus hated his father or was in love with his mother, and therefore wanted to take it out on his surrogate father, Julius Caesar? I don’t think so. I think it is much more useful to explain his behaviour in terms of his fundamental beliefs about Rome and republicanism, which is of course what most historians do.

In other words, I think it makes sense to attribute as much importance to a man’s conscious beliefs as to his subconscious motivation, even if he is mentally ill.

I think the same is true with the question that interests me: “Why did Ivan kill so many thousands of innocent men, women and children who were no conceivable threat to him?” The psychological answer would be: he was a paranoid schizophrenic, or he was reliving the trauma of his insecure childhood. So, as Ivan’s biographer Benson Bodrick puts it, he was “Ivan the Terrible” because he was also “Ivan the Terrified”. There may be some limited truth in this explanation, but I think it is rather superficial. A more satisfactory answer, in my view, would be in terms of Ivan’s fundamental beliefs, his views about Russia and the role of the Russian autocrat.

That is what I shall try to do in this lecture. Briefly my thesis is as follows:- Ivan, for reasons I will go into, had a distorted view of the relationship of the Church and the State in Russia, and in particular of the rights and duties of the tsar, on the one hand, and of the metropolitan or patriarch on the other. When he discovered that several leading boyars did not want his infant son to succeed him, and when the one churchman whom he admired and who had exalted his authority, Metropolitan Makary, died, he lost all restraint. The rest is history.

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Now Ivan was a very intelligent man with an almost photographic memory who was extremely well-educated in the Holy Scriptures and Fathers of the Orthodox Church. As he revealed particularly in his correspondence with the rebel Prince Kurbsky, he was able to quote at length from the Orthodox teaching on his own and his subjects' respective rights and duties. So what was this teaching? At this point I must launch into a necessary excursus on what I may call the Orthodox "Theology of Politics" in the Byzantine and Kievan and early Muscovite periods. Then I will return to Ivan's own highly selective interpretation of this teaching.

In Byzantium there was a dominant, official theory of politics, which I shall call the symphonic theory, and a minor, unofficial theory, which I shall call the pagan or absolutist theory that became important in times of crises in the Church and State.

The symphonic theory stated that Church and State are independent authorities and institutions, both of which are derived from God, not men. Although independent, they are called by God to work together in "symphony" or harmony, for the sake of the salvation of the Christian race and the spreading of the Gospel to non-Christian peoples. Each had its own hierarchy, headed by the Patriarch in the Church and the Emperor in the State. The Patriarch was autonomous in the sphere of the Church and in all spiritual matters, and the Emperor was autonomous in the sphere of the State and in all secular matters. The Patriarch had the right to advise the Emperor on all legislation that affected faith and morality, and could object to any law that in his opinion violated any dogma of the faith or principle of morality. He also had the right to intercede for prisoners, widows and orphans, and in general for anyone whom he believed to have been wronged by the State. This right of intercession, *Pechalovanie* in Russian, became, as we shall see, very important in the reign of Ivan the Terrible. The Emperor, on his part, had the right to make his wishes known with regard to the appointment of bishops and patriarchs (in late Byzantium he could choose between a list of three candidates for the patriarchate presented to him by the Holy Synod). He also had the right to convene Church Councils (all seven of the Ecumenical Councils were convened by Byzantine Emperors, as well as all the important Local Councils convened in the Middle and Late Byzantine periods).

The symphonic theory worked pretty well and for a very long period of time not only in Byzantium, but also in many independent Christian states formed on the model of Byzantium: from Anglo-Saxon England in the West to Georgia in the East, from Kiev and Moldavia in the north to Ethiopia and Yemen in the south. In the medieval period Serbia and Bulgaria were also what we may call "symphonic" States.

Let us now turn to the unofficial, rebel or heretical theory of politics. This was essentially a hangover from the period of the pagan Roman emperors before Constantine, who exercised supreme authority over both politics and religion in the Roman empire. The pagan emperors had the title of *Pontifex Maximus*, "Greatest Priest", a title first assumed by Julius Caesar and then by Augustus and all subsequent Emperors. The early Christians, as is well known, in accord with the teaching of Christ, were quite prepared to obey the Emperors in all political matters - taxes, military service, etc. - but categorically refused to obey him in religious

matters, and particularly in offering worship to the pagan gods, including those Emperors who proclaimed themselves to be gods.

However, the Christian Emperors, from the Emperor Gratian onwards, rejected the title *Pontifex Maximus* and confined themselves to political matters. Nevertheless, some of the heretical emperors continued to try and impose their will on the Church, and even to call themselves “priests”, to which the Church leaders, such as Saints Athanasius the Great, Basil the Great, Gregory the Theologian and John Chrysostom, responded very strongly and defiantly. There is a famous case when the Emperor Julian the Apostate tried to turn the whole empire back to paganism, and Saints Basil the Great and Gregory the Theologian, who knew him from university days in Athens, flatly refused to recognize his authority and even prayed for his overthrow. He did not last long, being pierced through by a mysterious warrior in the sands of Mesopotamia...

But the pagan, absolutist tradition stubbornly refused to die completely. Thus Justinian’s juridical corpus contains the words: “what has pleased the prince has the force of law” (*quod principi placuit legis habet vigorem*). This was a fatal phrase which, if applied consistently, would have completely undermined the Byzantine symphony of powers that was also officially proclaimed in Justinian’s laws. And some emperors did try to use it in this way, for example the iconoclast emperors in the eighth and ninth centuries. Moreover, as the centuries passed the pagan, absolutist tradition gradually came to suppress the symphonic theory and dominate Byzantium, as the Emperors came to control the Church in what western scholars call “caesaropapism”. Thus by the late fourteenth century the Church showed itself voiceless and powerless when the Emperor John VIII travelled to Rome and quite openly became a Roman Catholic! In the old days, the Church would have excommunicated him on the spot as a heretic and the people of Byzantium would have rioted against him and kicked him out. But not now. And the very last emperor of Byzantium, Constantine XI, was in fact a uniate Roman Catholic.

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Let us now turn to Russia. Russia had, of course, received its Orthodoxy from Byzantium in the time of St. Vladimir, and for the next 500-600 years remained remarkably faithful to her spiritual mother. As Byzantium declined in strength, and Russia increased, the Russians never tried – unlike the Bulgarians – to free themselves from Byzantine tutelage and dominion. The Russian Church, in spite of its vast size, remained a junior metropolitan district of the Byzantine Church, ruled (usually) by a Greek metropolitan appointed by the Patriarch of Constantinople; and the Russian Great Prince, though far more powerful than the Byzantine Emperor, remained in theory his younger brother and far inferior in status.

For the whole of the Kievan period, as well as during the Mongol yoke, Church-State relations were good. None of the Great Princes ruled despotically; for the Church enjoyed spiritual strength and prestige, and its leaders continued to exert a powerful beneficial influence on the rulers.

But then, in 1438-39, came an earth-shaking event: the Council of Florence. This was convened by the Pope of Rome and attended by the Byzantine Emperor and Patriarch together with many metropolitans and bishops. Its aim was to subordinate the Byzantine Church to Rome, in exchange for which the Pope would appeal to the western rulers to send military help to save Constantinople from the Turks. But the Greek Metropolitan Mark of Ephesus refused to sign the unia – as did the Russian and Georgian Churches. In fact, the Russian Great Prince Vassily II, Ivan the Terrible's great-grandfather, imprisoned the uniate Metropolitan Isidore of Kiev, who was sent to take control of the Russian Church (he then allowed him to escape to Rome, where he became a cardinal). Only a few years later, in 1453, Constantinople fell to the Turks – which the Russians (and many Greeks) saw as God's retribution on the old Empire for its apostasy.

These events had three very important consequences. First, the Russian Church and State was forced to break communion with the Byzantine Church and State, which had become heretical, and became de facto autocephalous, that is, independent. Russia had come of age; she was no longer tied to the apron-strings of Byzantium in either Church or State.

Secondly, the Russian Great Prince had played an important role in rejecting the uniate metropolitan, thereby preserving Russia in Orthodoxy. Therefore the prestige of the State went up, while that of the Church went down. Caesar had shown himself more zealous in giving the things of God to God than the Church. Ivan the Terrible took this lesson to heart...

Thirdly, the Russians experienced a burst of pride in their own state and nation, and began to lose their reverence for the Greeks. The influence of Byzantinism, the dominant theological and cultural influence in Russia for 500 years, began to decline. This was one of the motives of the development of the Third Rome ideology. The essential idea was that the Second Rome, Byzantium, had fallen, and Russia was left as the only independent Orthodox state and therefore the only possible successor of the Second Rome as the main defender of Orthodoxy throughout the world. Again, Ivan took this lesson to heart, as did the Old Believers in the seventeenth century.

As we come towards the end of the fifteenth century, and the beginning of the sixteenth, we witness the beginning of a deterioration in Church-State relations.

First of all, a very serious heresy, that of the Judaizers, made serious inroads into both Church and State. The rot went to the very top. Thus in 1492, the new Metropolitan of Moscow, Zossima, turned out to be a Judaizer. It was a bit like discovering that the Archbishop of Canterbury is in fact a Hindu or a Jehovah's Witness. The shock was great. The heresy was successfully ejected, but the leaders of society were very alarmed.

Then a serious quarrel broke out between the so-called Possessors and Non-Possessors, that is, between those who believed that the Church should own large landed estates and serfs, so as to be able to help the poor and the State, and those

who believed that possessing such riches was spiritually harmful to the Church. The Possessors won the argument, but the Non-Possessors continued to be influential.

Then there arrived in Russia from Mount Athos in Greece a remarkable monk known as St. Maxim the Greek. He had been summoned to Moscow to work in the monastic libraries where there were many Greek manuscripts. As he got to know Russia and the Slavonic language better, St. Maxim noticed many mis-translations from Greek originals into Slavonic, and with the blessing of Metropolitan Varlaam, who valued his talents, he began to correct the texts. At the same time, he began to point out to the Russians that they should return to communion with Constantinople because while the Greeks had definitely fallen away at the Council of Florence, they had repented of their error and were now Orthodox again. As if that were not provocative enough for the incipient nationalism of the Russians, Maxim also began to upbraid Great Prince Vassily for his sins in the tradition of the bold confessor-hierarchs of the Byzantine Church. When a new metropolitan, Daniel, was appointed who was less sympathetic to Maxim and more fearful of the Great Prince, Maxim was thrown into prison, where he suffered for the next twenty years until released by Ivan the Terrible...

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And so we come to the reign of Ivan the Terrible. The real question was: which part of his education would he act upon? The symphonic theory of Church-State relations, the traditional system of governance in which allowed churchmen to rebuke Great Princes and Emperors, or the pagan, absolutist theory which put all power, in both Church and State, into the hands of the secular ruler?

For the first half of his reign it looked as if he would hold to the symphonic theory. Under the direction of an exceptionally capable and astute Church leader, Metropolitan Makary, who crowned and anointed him with the title of "tsar" in 1547, the Church recovered some of its damaged reputation and worked well with the Tsar in a series of *Zemskie Sobory*, or "Councils of the Land". In the whole of this first part of his reign, Ivan showed respect for Makary and the Church, and even, at the *Stoglav* Council of 1551, humbly declared that the hierarchs could and should rebuke him for his sins. It looked as if the traditional symphonic theory was firmly re-established.

However, there were some straws in the wind to indicate that there might be trouble ahead...

First, early in 1553, Ivan fell ill, seriously ill, so that it was thought that he might die. One of his most trusted advisers, Viskovaty, then suggested that he draw up a will and get the leading boyars to sign it. The will was drawn up making Ivan's infant son Dmitri his heir, and the boyars were now asked to pledge their allegiance to Ivan and his son before the Holy Cross. To Ivan's astonishment and rage, a significant faction of boyars refused to make the oath. They thought it foolish to swear an oath to a baby boy, which would necessitate a long period of regency with all its attendant instability. The favoured candidate of the boyars was Prince Vladimir Staritsky. This reactivated in Ivan his childhood memories of how he had been ill-treated by the

boyars during the regency of his mother, Elena Glinskaya. To make matters worse, Vladimir Staritsky was defended by Protopriest Sylvester, who had been a very influential and trusted adviser of Ivan's. In punishment for having spoken up in defence of Staritsky, Sylvester was banished to the northern island fortress of Solovki...

Then Ivan suffered what must have looked like a serious insult to him from another ungrateful churchman. In 1552 he had scored a great victory over the Tartar khanate of Kazan. On his return to Moscow, he planned to go with his wife Anastasia on a pilgrimage to the Holy Trinity - Saint Sergei monastery in order to give thanks for his victory. However, the battle for Kazan had produced many casualties, and St. Maxim the Greek, recently released from prison by Ivan but undimmed in his zeal for righteousness, told Ivan that he must not go on pilgrimage now but attend to the needs of the widows and orphans of the soldiers killed. If he did not, warned Maxim, his baby son Dmitri would die. Ivan rejected the warning, and went on pilgrimage. The baby died...

Throughout the 1550s whatever incipient leanings towards absolutism Ivan may have had were restrained by two good angels at his side. The first was his wife Anastasia, whom he loved and who was, by all accounts, a beautiful, kind and pious woman. The other was Metropolitan Makary, whom Ivan trusted, and who exalted the tsar's power and glory without allowing his own authority to be diminished.

The turning point came when these two good angels in the life of Ivan died. First Anastasia died on August 7, 1560. Ivan suspected her of having been poisoned by the boyars who did not like her family's influence in the Kremlin. And then, on December 31, 1563, Metropolitan Makary died. Grief, suspicion, even paranoia began to grip Ivan's heart against both boyars and churchmen.

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So the terrible year of 1564 dawned.

Ivan began to persecute the boyars, Prince Dmitri Obolensky was killed, and several others fled abroad, usually to Poland or Lithuania. One of those was Prince Andrei Kurbsky, who had been an important general of Ivan's in the Livonian war. There then began a fascinating correspondence between Ivan and Kurbsky.

What was this correspondence about?

First, it must be understood that the differences between the two men had nothing to do with democracy or human rights. Such ideas had not yet penetrated into Russia from the West, and would not do so until the last years of the reign of Catherine the Great.

Kurbsky lambasted Ivan for his cruelty to the boyars and generals. But underlying this complaint was the more fundamental complaint that the symphony between Church and State had broken down. This was partly Ivan's fault. But Kurbsky also



laid into the Church for not upholding the Church's privileges in that symphonic relationship. Indeed, in a letter to a monk called Vassian, who was a Non-Possessor, he waxed very eloquent against the Church: "The clergy - we will not judge them, far be that from us, but bewail their wretchedness - are ashamed to bear witness to God before the tsar; rather they endorse the sin. They do not make themselves advocates of widows and orphans, the poor, the oppressed and the prisoners, but grab villages and churches and riches for themselves. Where is Elijah, who was concerned for the blood of Naboth and confronted the king? Where are the host of prophets who gave the unjust kings proof of their guilt? Who speaks now without being embarrassed by the words of Holy Scripture and gives his soul as a ransom for his brothers? I do not know one. Who will extinguish the fire that is blazing in our land? No-one. Really, our hope is still only with God..."

Ivan, by contrast, upheld the essentially pagan, absolutist theory that the king or emperor has total power over both Church and State in his dominion. If the tsar sometimes executed innocent people, that was not the business of Kurbsky or anyone else, including the Church. He, the tsar, would have to answer for that before God. In any case, those who suffered innocently and patiently were martyrs for Christ, as St. Peter taught in his first epistle. The essential point was that the tsar held his authority from God, not men, and therefore, as St. Paul put it, he wielded his sword not in vain (Romans 13).

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We now come to what was, in my opinion, the decisive event in the whole of Ivan's reign. On December 3, 1564, Ivan abdicated from the throne - an absolutely unprecedented act which shocked and horrified the populace. For what would they do without a tsar? Russia had never been without a tsar or Great Prince. And now there were enemies on all sides: the Poles, the Swedes and the Lithuanians in the West, the Crimean Tatars in the South, and the resurgent Tartars of the Volga region in the East. How could they survive against these ruthless enemies without a tsar to lead them into battle? Actually, Ivan had shown himself to be a poor, even a cowardly military leader. But there was nobody to replace him, and several of the generals had already been executed or forced into exile.

Ivan withdrew with his "Chosen Thousand" supporters to the village of Kolomenskoye. He stirred up the people still more by specifically blaming not only the boyars for their ambition, but also the Church for interceding on behalf of his enemies. In order to prevent a people's uprising, in a scene immortalized by Eisenstein's cinematography, "Pimen, archbishop of Novgorod, was dispatched at the head of a delegation to plead with Ivan for forgiveness, and to beg him to return to Moscow 'to govern as he pleased, and to punish traitors at his discretion'.

"'We are but poor and inconsolable sheep,' Pimen told him, 'We are now without a shepherd, and the wolves of our enemies, surround us... In the past nations have been conquered and left without rulers; but that a mighty sovereign and abandon his loyal subjects and his tsardom - such things are unheard of, and not to be read in

books. Let the Tsar proclaim the names of those whom he knows to be traitors, and let him punish them as he likes.'

The historian Benson Bobrick has very justly remarked on this petition: "*This momentous concession struck at the very heart of the Orthodox Church, for it abolished what was most precious in its advisory role to the tsar: the voice of mercy.*" Metropolitan Afanasy of Moscow, would have nothing to do with it and adamantly remained in Moscow..."<sup>221</sup> Afanasy maintained his oppositional stance, and thereby the honour of the Church, until May 19, 1566, when he resigned in protest at Ivan's evildoing and withdrew to the Chudov monastery. His successor, Archbishop German of Kazan, also rebuked Ivan for his sins and was therefore dismissed.

In this period, Ivan did something unprecedented in the history of Russia and, I think, of Europe. He divided up the whole of Russia into two zones. In one, the so-called Oprichnina, he ruled as an absolute monarch, a new Genghis Khan. In the other, the Zemshchina, life went on in accordance with traditional norms. However, life could not really go on as usual in the Zemshchina, because Ivan sent his "oprichniki", a band of weirdly dressed thugs, all over the towns and countryside, raping and killing and pillaging at will.

In the capital of his Oprichnina state within a state, Ivan would force his thugs to dress in monastic gear and attend long services in church. Ivan, too, would demonstrate great zeal for prayer in church, while at the same time drawing up lists of victims and popping downstairs for a bit of bloody torture at intervals. This of course was a blasphemous mockery of Orthodoxy.

In 1566 a genuinely holy man, Philip, abbot of the monastery of Solovki in the far north, was summoned to Moscow and made metropolitan. He pleaded with Ivan to abolish the Oprichnina. Ivan ignored him. He pleaded with Ivan to stop killing people. Ivan ignored him. Finally, the tsar got so tired of Philip's rebukes that he got him deposed and eventually, murdered.

After the death of St. Philip, Ivan's despotism and cruelty went into overdrive. In 1570 he marched to Novgorod, Russia's second city, and in the course of a few weeks killed and tortured thousands of people of all classes, ages, sex and rank. Among the victims was Archbishop Poemen, who had abandoned the Church's right of intercession some years before. So perhaps there was some Divine or poetic justice in the fact that nobody interceded for him now.

In fact, the only people of any class left who still resisted Ivan were the so-called "fools for Christ", poor men of no fixed abode who went about the cities and towns behaving in strange ways, sometimes completely naked even in winter, but often with the gift of prophecy and miracles. Two fools for Christ confronted Ivan during his reign. One was Basil the Blessed of Moscow, after whom St. Basil's cathedral on Red Square is named. And the other was St. Nikola of Pskov, who so frightened Ivan

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<sup>221</sup> Bobrick, *Ivan the Terrible*, p. 196.

that he abandoned Pskov before he could make it into the kind of desert filled with corpses that Novgorod had already become.

The Church remained supine and servile for the rest of Ivan's reign. Perhaps the most egregious example was its cooperation in the enthronement of a Tatar prince, Sain-Bulat, who had been baptized Simeon Bekhulatovich in 1573 and had served successfully as a general in Ivan's armies. In 1575 Ivan abdicated (for the second time) and ordered Simeon to be anointed by the metropolitan. Since the real tsar was still alive and very much in control, for the metropolitan to take part in such a pantomime was sacrilegious, to say the least.

And here, I believe, we find the key to the understanding of Ivan's behaviour. He knew, as a well-trained Orthodox, that the only limit on the tsar's power in an Orthodox state is not constitutional checks and balances, but the Church, and in particular the leader of the Church, the patriarch or metropolitan. In a truly religious people the voice of the patriarch is as the voice of God, and can be just as powerful a check and balance on the king's power as any laws or parliamentary institutions. We see this in the early Soviet period, when the only really independent voice in Russia was that of Patriarch Tikhon, whom the believing people venerated and obeyed until he was murdered in 1925, after which the way was open for Stalin to destroy the Church's leadership. So in his pathological drive for supreme and absolute power, Ivan had to destroy the Church's power.

Now that drive could manifest itself in killing members of the Church en masse. But, as history proves – and Ivan knew his Church history well – the Church actually increases in strength when its members are tortured and martyred for the faith. Indeed, as the old saying from the early Church went: “the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church”. What weakens the Church is when it is shown to violate its own principles and trample on its own holiness. That is why Ivan the Terrible – and after him Peter the Great – sought to *mock* the Church and force it to defile itself. The lily-livered metropolitans who flattered and obeyed him, and even created a pseudo-tsar for his pleasure, served that purpose well. For Ivan would attain supreme power, not when he tortured and subdued the bodies of his subjects, but when he poisoned their minds against their great hope and the other pillar of the symphony of powers – the Orthodox Church...

So by the end of Ivan's reign, Russia was devastated not only economically and demographically and militarily, but also spiritually. The path to recovery was long and difficult. But eventually, in 1612, the enemies of Russia, the Swedes and the Poles, were driven out, and in February, 1613, the first member of a new ruling dynasty, that of the Romanovs, was enthroned.

But let us note one vitally important fact about the establishment of the Romanov dynasty. It was not the State that took the initiative in driving the Poles and the Swedes out of Russia, *but the Church – in the person of Patriarch Hermogen. And it was not the State, or even the Tsar, Mikhail Romanov, who was the most powerful person in early seventeenth-century Russia, but the Tsar's father, Patriarch Philaret.*

*Talk given on May 12/25, 2021 at the Turf Club, London before the Romanov  
Foundation.*

## 19. WHY THE WORLD ORTHODOX CANNOT HAVE GRACE

Recently Chris Gorman (a GOC-K layman from California) and Radu Blabea (an Australian layman of unknown ecclesiastical affiliation), following the lead, it would seem, of Bishop Auxentios of Portland (GOC-K), have been resurrecting arguments from the (supposedly defunct and (since 1986) defrocked) "Cyprianite" jurisdiction in favour of the thesis that World Orthodoxy still has the grace of sacraments. The "Cyprianites", as I shall call them for convenience, are distinguished by the fact that they accept that World Orthodoxy confesses Ecumenism, "the heresy of heresies", and consider that one should "wall oneself off" from it for that reason, but that the True Orthodox have no right to call these ecumenists graceless (in the sense of deprived of sacraments). This article is an attempt to refute this thesis.

A preliminary question needs to be posed and answered. Why is this necessary? Has this question not created many divisions already?

In answer to this question, we reply: THE QUESTION OF GRACE IS THE MOST IMPORTANT QUESTION THAT CAN POSSIBLY BE POSED BECAUSE IF A PERSON IS NOT RECEIVING THE GRACE OF SACRAMENTS HE CANNOT BE SAVED. For "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Unless one is born of the water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the Kingdom of God" (John 3.5). And again: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Unless you eat of the Bread of the Son of Man and drink His Blood, you have no life in you" (John 6.53).

The question whether heretics have grace or not was actually settled quite early in the history of the Church, in the middle of the third century, when St. Cyprian of Carthage and the Synod of Carthage decreed authoritatively that heretics and schismatics do not have grace. This decision was then incorporated into the decisions of the Holy Ecumenical Councils, becoming the official teaching of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. Moreover, Apostolic Canon 46 (whose date we do not know for sure, but whose apostolic authority is generally accepted) confirmed the same teaching.

In the past, there were fewer arguments over grace precisely because St. Cyprian of Carthage had finally settled the question early on. Instead, the arguments were over whether such-and-such a teaching was truly heretical or not, and various subtle variants of the heresy were put forward in order to justify and mask its heretical nature. For everyone understood that if the teaching was indeed heretical, then its adherents were ipso facto graceless.

However, in the twentieth century, taking advantage of the general wooliness of people's ecclesiological conceptions and their lack of knowledge of Church history, apologists for the heretics have taken a double-barrelled approach. On the one hand, they have argued that the heretics are not really heretics because they contain some good men, even wonder-workers - which proves that they have grace. Of course, this was no argument for the ancients, who knew that before the demon of heresy all other demons bow down, and that there is no sure criterion of Orthodoxy except Orthodoxy itself and the refusal to have communion with heterodoxy. But people are

weaker nowadays... On the other hand, they concede that so-and-so is a heretic, but they say: he is still uncondemned, together with his whole local Church; so for justice's sake he must be given a fair trial, in public, before an Ecumenical Council, before he can be considered to be definitely outside the Church and graceless.

Of course, this leads to a highly paradoxical situation unheard of in the history of Christianity: that there should be two Churches, one Orthodox and the other (by common consent) heretical, yet both inside the One True Church and both having grace. Is this not in effect another, subtler version of Ecumenism, a variant of the Anglican branch theory? It is indeed, which is why the True Orthodox of Greece led by Archbishop Chrysostom (Kiouisis) of Athens was right to defrock Metropolitan Cyprian for schism and heresy in 1986. For he had to choose: was the Old Calendar or the new calendar church of Greece his "mother Church"? And he chose the latter, declaring for good measure that the teaching of the Old Calendar on this issue was, "according to us, unwitnessed, unacceptable, anti-patristic and as such anti-Orthodox" (letter to Metropolitan Kallinikos of Corinth, May 30, 1983).

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But let us now turn to the attempts by the ex-Metropolitan Cyprian's modern-day followers to justify their heretical leader on the grounds of natural justice - in other words, that he hasn't had a fair trial. This is rather a legalistic argument, but we shall attempt to answer it nevertheless. And the main argument against it is that while a bishop (or priest) has to be tried with due process for moral or canonical faults, the matter is very different when it comes to heresy.

For heresy is a sin against dogmatic truth, not morality or canonical order. As such, it is *the Truth Itself, God, Who* condemns the heretic. This is made clear in the classic case of the expulsion of heresy from the Church, that of Arius. For long before being expelled from the Church of Alexandria in the Local Councils of 321 and 323, and again by the First Ecumenical Council of 325, Arius was expelled by the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, Who appeared to Hieromartyr Peter, Archbishop of Alexandria (+311), in the form of a twelve-year-old child in torn clothing, and on being asked by St. Peter: "O Creator, who has torn Your tunic?", replied: "The mindless Arius; *he has separated from Me people whom I had obtained with My Blood.*" So here we see an exemplification of the Lord's words to Nicodemus: "He that believeth not is *condemned already*" (John 3.18), and of the Apostle Paul's words: "A man that is a heretic, after the first and second admonition, reject, knowing that he... is *self-condemned*" (Titus 3.10, 11). It is on the grounds of this principle, this mystical vision of the Truth, that believers in Christ are allowed to flee from, and anathematize, heretics even before they have been condemned by a Council of the Church. For as the holy Apostle Paul says: "If anyone preaches any other gospel to you that what you have received, let him be anathema" (Galatians 1.9). The principle is enshrined in canon law, in the famous 15<sup>th</sup> Canon of the First-and-Second Council of Constantinople (861) which declares those who proclaim heresy openly and "with bared head" to be "false teachers" and "false bishops", from whom the faithful are exhorted to flee *even before they have been condemned by any Council.*

Such drastic action is necessary because heresy is such a serious matter, separating from the Truth in a way that moral and canonical violations do not. That is why, when Abba Agathon of Egypt was accused of various moral sins, he did not defend himself. But when he was accused of heresy, he objected vigorously – for heresy, unlike a moral fall, immediately separates a man from Christ and the Church.

So where do bishops and councils of bishops come in? First of all, in order to clear up any possible misunderstandings, and give the heretic, assuming he is justly accused, the chance to repent of his views. “But if he refuses the Church, let him be to you like a heathen and a publican. Verily, verily, I say unto you: whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. Again I say to you that if two or three agree on earth concerning anything they ask, it will be done for them by the Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am in the midst of them.” (Matthew 18:18-20).

As this point, it will be useful to introduce a distinction between the mystical *organism* of the Church and her visible, external *organization*. This distinction was worked out in detail by New Hieromartyr Mark (Novoselov), the leader of the Catacomb Church in Moscow, who was shot in 1938.<sup>222</sup> So we could say that Arius was cut off from the mystical *organism* of the Church by Christ, but was cut off from the external *organization* of the Church, first by the Bishops of the Alexandrian Church, and then by the Holy Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council.

How many bishops are necessary in order to expel a bishop from the Church? The passage from Matthew 18 quoted above would seem to suggest two or three. And this is in accord with the First Apostolic Canon, which decrees that no less than two or three bishops are needed in order to consecrate a new bishop. If two or three bishops are required to make a new bishop, then it seems reasonable to assume that two or three bishops are required to unmake a bishop, to defrock him. “Two or three” witnesses are required to justify a witness, and “two or three” bishops express the conciliar opinion of the Church.

The Cyprianite bishops furiously reject this. For them, not only two or three bishops are insufficient to defrock a bishop: even a whole Local Church’s Synod of Bishops is insufficient. Only a Pan-Orthodox or Ecumenical Council is sufficient to remove a heretic from the Church.

The problem is: there are many Councils much smaller than the Ecumenical that Church tradition has hallowed as expressing the truth. For example, the local Council in Rome under St. Celestine in August, 430, and then the local Council in Alexandria under St. Cyril, condemned Nestorius and his Nestorian heresy. Finally, in 431 the Third Ecumenical Council in Ephesus *confirmed* the decisions of these local Councils. St. Celestine confirmed the authority of his *Local* Council in his letter to the clergy of Constantinople who were opposing Nestorius: “The authority of our Apostolic See has determined that the bishop, cleric or simple Christian who has been deposed or

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<sup>222</sup> Novoselov, *Pis'ma*, Moscow, 1994.

excommunicated by Nestorius or his followers, after the latter began to preach heresy, shall not be considered deposed or excommunicated. For he who had defected from the faith with such preachings cannot depose or remove anyone whatsoever." In other word, from the time that Nestorius "*began to preach heresy*", his actions were to be considered invalid, insofar as he was no longer a true bishop.

Again, the heresy of Monothelism was first condemned by a local Council under St. Martin the Confessor in Rome in 649. It was confirmed by another local Council under St. Theodore, Archbishop of Canterbury (a Greek from Tarsus), in Hatfield, England on September 17, 679. The decision of the English Church was then brought by St. Wilfrid, Bishop of York, to Rome, where another local Council under St. Agatho condemned the heresy for the third time, on March 27, 680. Finally, in 681 the Sixth Ecumenical Council anathematized it again, *confirming* the decisions of the three Western Councils. It should be noted that when the heretical bishop Theodosius in conversation with St. Maximus the Confessor disputed the validity of the first of these Councils, of 649, on the grounds that it was not convened by an emperor like the Ecumenical Councils, St. Maximus replied that the validity of a Council depended on its recognising "the true and immutable dogmas", not on who convened it or how general it was. Again, when the same saint was asked in the Emperor's palace why he was not in communion with the Throne of Constantinople, he replied: "... They have been deposed and deprived of the priesthood at the *local* council which took place recently in Rome. What Mysteries, then, can they perform? Or what spirit will descend upon those who are ordained by them?"

Again, the heresy of iconoclasm was first condemned by a local Council in Rome under Pope Gregory III in 731. This decision was then *confirmed* by the Seventh Ecumenical Council under St. Tarasius in 787. Bishop Theophan the Recluse points out that before the start of the Seventh Council, its president-to-be, St. Tarasius, bewailed the fact that "we (the iconoclastic Church of Constantinople) are being anathematised by them (the other Local Churches in Local Councils) every day". There is no suggestion that St. Tarasius considered these local decisions to be invalid. Rather, he hastened to bring his Church out from under the anathemas by confessing the true faith. Moreover, those heretics who were united to the Church during the Council confessed that they had been *outside* the Church before this. (This directly contradicts the assertion of Metropolitan Cyprian in his *Ecclesiological Theses* (1984) that they were still inside the Church because "uncondemned".) Thus we read in the Acts of the Seventh Ecumenical Council. "These are the words of the uniting iconoclasts. Thus Basil, bishop of Ancyra, said: 'As far as I was able, I investigated the question of the icons and converted to the Holy Catholic Church with complete conviction.' Theodore, bishop of Myra, said: '... I beseech God and your holiness to unite me, the sinful one, to the Holy Catholic Church.'" (pp. 41, 43 in the edition of the Kazan Theological Academy). And here are the witnesses of the holy Fathers of the Council: "His Holiness Patriarch Tarasius said: 'What is now to be our relationship to this heresy that has again arisen in our time?' John, the most beloved of God, locum tenens of the apostolic throne in the east, said: 'Heresy divides every man from the Church.' The Holy Council said: 'That is evident.' The Holy Council said: 'Let the bishops who are standing before us read their renunciations, insofar as they are now converting to the Catholic Church.'" (Kazan edition, 1900, p. 48).



It is clear, therefore, writes Christopher Gorman (presumably before he became a Cyprianite), "from the cited canonical, conciliar and Patristic witness, that when a bishop publicly and pertinaciously embraces a heresy over an extended (albeit canonically undefined) period of time, a process of deprivation begins to occur, which gradually strips him of his administrative, teaching and sanctifying authority, which can lead, in certain cases, to *de facto* deposition and expulsion from the Church, even without an official pronouncement by a competent council."

This basically correct statement needs to be corrected in only one point: that the deprivation of a heretic bishop's authority is not a "process", but takes place immediately he proclaims his heresy "publicly, with a bared head".

If local Councils did not have the authority to expel heretics from the Church, we should have to condemn many local Councils for exceeding their competency and assuming an authority that did not belong to them. These would include many local Councils of the Early, pre-Constantinian Church, which was never able to convene an Ecumenical Council but expelled such heretics as Marcion and Sabellius; the local Councils of the Great Church of Constantinople between the eleventh and fourteenth centuries that expelled the Roman Catholics; the local Councils of the Russian Church presided over by Patriarch Tikhon that anathematized the communists and their co-workers in 1918 and the renovationist heretics in 1923. However, the Church, which has the mind of Christ, has accepted all of these acts as lawful and valid. To think otherwise - that is, to think that the Church cannot expel heretics through local Councils, but only through Ecumenical ones - is to suppose that for the last 1231 years, since the convening of the last Ecumenical Council, the Church has - God forbid! - lost her God-given power to bind and to loose!

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Let us now turn to the contemporary heresy of ecumenism.

Strictly speaking, even the Local Council of the Russian Church that anathematized ecumenism in 1983 was not necessary; for, according to Archimandrite Justin Popovich (+1979), ecumenism is a combination of over 200 old heresies, that were already anathematized centuries ago.

Similarly, Bishop Theophan the Recluse (+1894) said that there was no need for further conciliar anathemas to condemn the heretics of his day since they had all already been condemned by earlier decisions. Commenting on St. Paul's words, "If anyone preaches any other gospel than that which we have preached unto you, let him be anathema" ([Galatians 1.8](#)), he writes: "The apostle laid only the beginning to anathematization. Since then all the opinions worthy of this punishment have already been marked out by the Church. At the present time there is no point waiting for a special ecclesiastical act to strike the evildoers with this judgement. They themselves are placing their own heads under this sword immediately they acquire opinions contrary to the truth and stubbornly begin to insist on them."

Bishop Theophan is here in complete accord with the teaching of St. Nicephorus, Patriarch of Constantinople (+815), who considered that no further Council was necessary in his time in order to pronounce the neo-iconoclasts outside the Church. Thus St. Nicephorus wrote about unrepentant iconoclasts: "Insofar as they have deprived themselves of that teaching of the faith in which they had been consecrated, they have of necessity been deprived of their ordination and deposed as teaching other things..."

Again, St. Nicephorus wrote: "They must have been deprived of the anointing of the Spirit as soon as they renounced the confession, for it is impossible for them to transgress the faith with which they were anointed, and [at the same time] to carry out that which [is given] by the anointing." *As soon as they renounced the confession* - the defrocking was immediate! (A further Council was in fact convened, but in order to restore penitent heretics to the Church, not in order to pronounce the heretics outside the Church.)

Again, Bishop Theophan is supported by the 15<sup>th</sup> Canon of the First-and-Second Canon of Constantinople, convened in 861. This canon, as we have noted above, decreed that a bishop ceases to be a bishop *immediately he proclaims his heresy*.

Therefore the "new" heretics of the nineteenth century, as of the ninth century, did not need synodal condemnation because their teachings were not in fact new, but had been condemned long ago by the Church. Theoretically, a new heresy not already condemned by the Councils or the Fathers would have needed a conciliar condemnation. But Bishop Theophan doubted that any such new heresy existed in his time.

So what about the "pan-heresy" of Ecumenism, which was first proclaimed officially by the Ecumenical Patriarchate in 1920, when the Catholics and Protestants were declared to be branches of the True Church?

There was no immediate response to this "Charter for Ecumenism" from the Local Orthodox Churches. The first reaction came from the Russian Church, by far the largest and most important of the Local Churches, which in 1922-23 went to war with the Russian renovationists, a pro-Soviet schism that adopted the new calendar, rejected the authority of Patriarch Tikhon and the Russian Holy Synod, and was officially proclaimed by the Ecumenical Patriarchate as the True Russian Church. In July, 1923 Patriarch Tikhon officially declared the renovationists *deprived of the grace of sacraments*. According to the Cyprianites, this decision must be considered invalid, insofar as it was the decision of a purely Local Council. But the Orthodox Church has accepted it as binding... Patriarch Tikhon did not extend the same sentence that he had placed on the renovationists onto the Ecumenical Patriarch, no doubt hoping that he would repent of his communion with the renovationist heretics. They did not - immediately. Instead, after the death of Patriarch Tikhon and the establishment of the neo-renovationist "Soviet church" of the Moscow Patriarchate, they transferred their allegiance to the Moscow Patriarchate, with whom they remain officially in communion, despite various arguments, to the present day.

The Greek Church decreed that the new calendarist schismatics were graceless in 1935, 1950 1974 and 1998. These decisions based themselves on several Pan-Orthodox and Local Councils that condemned the new calendar from 1583 onwards... A more general condemnation and anathematization of all ecumenists, and not only new calendarists, was issued by the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad in 1983.

So there is no way in which the heresy of ecumenism can be considered to be “uncondemned”. It is condemned from all eternity by Christ God, and in time by the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church in the persons of her holy bishops and confessors who have given their blood for the truth. The consensus of the Holy Fathers of Russia, of Greece, of Mount Athos and Romania, as well in the diaspora, is clear: the ecumenists are outside the Church. As for Metropolitan Cypria, he joined the True Orthodox Church of Greece in 1974, the very year in which the new calendarists were condemned as graceless schismatics and heretics for the umpteenth time. He knew what he was doing; he was not acting in ignorance, but was acting hypocritically, deceiving his fellow Christians into believing that he accepted their faith when he did not. Moreover, he accepted the episcopate from two bishops, Kallistos of Corinth and Anthony of Megara, who always unambiguously confessed, with all the other bishops, that the new calendarists had no grace. Then, in 1984, having got what he wanted (the episcopate), he broke from these bishops precisely for that reason, because he considered their confession of faith to be “anti-Orthodox”. Having cut himself off from the True Church because he considered the True Church to have the wrong faith, he was justly defrocked in 1986, as the verdict of the Synod said, “because he fell into the heresy of Ecumenism and cut himself off from our Church”.

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For over one hundred years, the enemies of Christ’s Church have warred against her with various heresies, but especially with the heresy of Ecumenism. Many thousands have been tortured and killed in Russia, in Greece, in Romania and elsewhere. The consensus of the Holy Fathers has remained the same throughout that period: the ecumenists are outside the Church and graceless. It is irrational and highly impious for anyone who calls himself Orthodox to war against this consensus. It is time for anyone who refuses to hear the Church to submit to her – or be considered a heathen and a publican.

*May 21 / June 3, 2021.*

*Vladimir Icon of the Most Holy Mother of God.  
Holy Equals-to-the-Apostles Constantine and Helena.*

## 20. THE HOLY SPIRIT OF PEACE

For this great feast, the Church has appointed what might at first seem to be a surprising choice for the Gospel reading: Matthew 18.10-20. There is no talk of the Holy Spirit in this Gospel. So what is the connection?

There are two major commandments in the Gospel reading: first, not to despise the despised members of the Church, the poor in spirit who seem to be of little importance but are rich in God's eyes; and secondly, to resolve all conflicts between Christians. By obeying these commandments, we do not "quench the Spirit". And by not quenching the Spirit, but preserving Him within us, we get to know Him better; for there is no other way to know God except by acquiring Him and keeping Him in one's soul.

The poor in spirit are not to be despised, He says, because "they have angels watching them so that they may not be harmed by the demons. Every believer, and indeed every one of us human beings, has a guardian angel. The angels of those who are little and humble in Christ are so intimate with God that they always stand before Him and behold His face."<sup>223</sup>

This is a powerful argument, because while we might be inclined to despise a man, especially if he is not outwardly impressive, we will not be so inclined if we learn that we have made an enemy of his angel.

The second commandment is that if Christians quarrel with each other, they should seek reconciliation - first, if possible, through private admonition and forgiveness, but if private reconciliation turns out to be impossible, through the arbitration of the Church. And the Church's decision is final: if a Christian refuses to listen to the Church, he is cast out of it - that is, he is deprived of the Holy Spirit.

For the Holy Spirit dwells among Christians who are at peace with each other. If that condition is fulfilled, then if any two of them "agree on earth a touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of My Father Who is in heaven" (Matthew 18.19). A powerful incentive to harmony! "For where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them" (18.20).

St. Theophylact comments on this verse: "Those who agree are those who collaborate, not in evil, but in good. Mark what He said: 'if two or you', that is, of believers who are virtuous. For Annas and Caiaphas also agreed, but in a manner deserving blame. That is why we often pray but do not receive, because we do not agree among each other."

A vivid illustration of this Gospel is provided by the *Life* of St. Columba, the Apostle of Scotland (+597), by his successor, St. Adamnan.

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<sup>223</sup> St. Theophylact of Bulgaria, *Explanation of the Holy Gospel according to Matthew*.

St. Columba had quarrelled with another great saint, Finnian, over the ownership of a copy of the Gospel made by St. Columba but on vellum (made from the skin of cows) owned by St. Finnian, who also owned the original manuscript. The quarrel had become so intense that the supporters of the two saints had come to blows, and some of St. Finnian's supporters had even been killed. Shocked, the Synod of the Church of Ireland summoned St. Columba to a trial. The outcome of the trial was that St. Columba was pronounced guilty and, as a penance for his crime, was ordered to leave Ireland forever (hence his apostolic work in neighbouring Scotland).

St. Columba accepted the verdict of the Church, and before leaving Ireland to go into exile, he traveled to Moville to be reconciled with his old teacher. Finnian was walking outside his monastery one April night when he saw Columba coming towards him. And he also saw "an angel of the Lord accompanying him. Then he said to those of his brothers who were with him: 'Behold! Look at Columba as he approaches. He has been deemed worthy of having an angelic inhabitant of heaven to be his companion on his wanderings!'"<sup>224</sup>

The angel of peace was with him who sought peace, who did not quench the Spirit, but preserved it within his heart by mastering his anger, thereby bringing forth great fruits of the Spirit to the Lord.

*June 8/21, 2021.*

*Day of the Holy Spirit.*

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<sup>224</sup> Adomnan, *Life of Columba*.

## 21. THE UNITED NATIONS: ITS FOUNDATION AND IDEOLOGY

There had already been much discussion of the future political world order during the Second World War. Two things were clear. On the one hand, totalitarianism of the Nazi kind was unacceptable, and defences against its possible re-emergence had to be constructed. On the other hand, there could be no return to the kind of parliamentary, laissez-faire democracy that had failed so miserably in the 1930s. The pendulum had shifted towards a more collectivist, albeit democratic order. This was lamented by free market thinkers like the Austrian economist Friedrich von Hayek, who argued in his book, *The Road to Serfdom* (1944), that a refusal to return to the “abandoned road” of pre-war economic liberalism would inevitably lead to totalitarianism; “democratic socialism”, he argued, was a contradiction in terms.

But Hayek lost the argument (until the advent of Thatcherism in the 1980s). Even the most democratic states moved in a more collectivist direction. Britain’s Labour government of 1945, building on the Beveridge Report of 1942, introduced welfarism and nationalization on a large scale without abandoning parliamentary democracy, while the first steps towards what would become the social-democratic European Union were soon under way...

At the international level, too, nothing would ever be the same again. The Second World War had 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, it would seem, must necessarily break out between the unnatural allies, albeit hopefully in another, less open and “hot” form. Hence the Cold War of the period 1946-1991. 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. One of these was Albert Einstein, who wrote in 1946: “A world government must be created which is able to solve conflicts by judicial decision. This government must be based on a clear-cut constitution which is approved by the governments and nations and which gives it the sole disposition of offensive weapons.”<sup>225</sup>

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<sup>225</sup> Einstein, “Towards a World Government”, in *Out of My Later Years: The Scientist, Philosopher and Man Portrayed through his own Words*, New York: Wing Books, 1956, p. 138.

Such an ideal goes back at least to Dante's *De Monarchia* and *Convivio* in the early fourteenth century.<sup>226</sup> In 1625 Grotius published *On the Law of War and Peace*, which, as Sir Roger Scruton writes, "was an attempt to adapt principles of natural law to the government of affairs between sovereign state. Grotius laid the foundations for international law as we now know it."<sup>227</sup>

However, the origin of the idea of world government in its modern, secular expression must be sought in the eighteenth-century Enlightenment, and in particular in 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". According to John C. Lennox, Kant "suggested the formation of 'an international state (*civitas gentium*), which would necessarily continue to grow until it embraced all the peoples of the earth'. Yet Kant had strong reservations about a world monarchy. He thought that a federal union of free and independent states 'is still to be preferred to an amalgamation of the separate nations under a single power which has overruled the rest and created a universal monarchy'.

"The reason for hesitation was: 'For the laws progressively lose their impact as the government increases its range, and a soulless despotism, after crushing the germs of goodness, will finally lapse into anarchy.' Kant thought that a 'universal despotism' would end 'in the graveyard of freedom'."<sup>228</sup>

According to Scruton, "Kant can be taken only as partly endorsing transnational government as we now know it. His League of Nations could be a reality, he thought, only if the states united by it were genuinely sovereign, genuinely representative of their people and genuinely governed by law. This is manifestly not the case of a great many members of the UN today, and certainly not the case of those, like North Korea, which have posed the greatest threat to their immediate neighbours. Such state are not really sovereign bodies, but rather conscript armies in the hands of thugs. Power is exercised by these thugs not by representative governments, still less by law, but by the machinery of one-party dictatorship, supplemented by mafia clientism and family ties. Advocates of Kantian internationalism are therefore caught in a dilemma. If law is to be effective in the resolution of conflicts, all parties must be law-abiding members of the community of nations. What are we to do, then, with the rogue state? Are we entitled to depose its rulers, so as to change subjects into citizens, rulers to representatives and force to law? If not, are we to regard ourselves as *really* bound by laws and treaties by which the rogue state merely *pretends* to be bound? In which case, what guarantee do those laws and treaties offer of a 'perpetual peace'?"<sup>229</sup>

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<sup>226</sup> Dante thought that war could be eliminated "if the whole earth and all that humans possess be a monarchy, that is, one government under one ruler. Because he possesses everything, the ruler would not desire to possess anything further, and thus he would hold kings contentedly within the borders of their kingdoms, and keep peace among them" (*Convivio*, 169).

<sup>227</sup> Scruton, *How to be a Conservative*, London: Bloomsbury, 2014, pp. 105-106.

<sup>228</sup> Lennox, *Against the Flow*, Oxford: Monarch Books, 2015, p. 246.

<sup>229</sup> Scruton, *op. cit.*, p. 114.

The first attempt at incarnating a federation of states was the Congress System erected by Tsar Alexander I and the monarchs of Prussia and Austria after the defeat of Napoleon in 1815. This never came to much more than a defensive alliance against the revolution, and of course it was a *monarchical* alliance, not the kind of alliance of representative republics or democracies that Kant had in mind (although he himself lived under a monarch, Frederick the Great). It finally fell apart 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. But this had little practical impact and did not prevent the outbreak of war in 1914.

In 1919 President Woodrow Wilson put forward the idea of a League of Nations. It was accepted, with reservations, by the other victorious powers, but was rejected by the American Congress and American public opinion, and failed to prevent the outbreak of war in 1939. However, the Second World War cured the Americans of isolationism more or less permanently. So the idea of the United Nations as a more powerful and realistic successor to the League of Nations was put forward by President Franklin Roosevelt. And this, unlike its predecessor, won the support of the American public. Thus “in a poll held in later 1947, as many as 82 per cent believed that it was ‘very important that the UN succeed’; while 56 per cent wanted it converted into ‘a world government with power to control the armed forces of all nations, including the United States’.”<sup>230</sup> Thus globalism really began with the UN in 1945, and with the United States as its main proponent...

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“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 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

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<sup>230</sup> Michael Burleigh, *Small Wars, Far Away Places*, London: Pan, 2013, p. 50.



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...”<sup>231</sup>

At Yalta, after much argument, Roosevelt finally achieved his principal goal, the agreement to found 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 to be composed of fifteen members with five permanent members – the Big Three, China and France (which Roosevelt had wanted to exclude, but Churchill insisted on including).

“Roosevelt had despaired of the original Wilsonian mechanisms for achieving universal peace and freedom (he dismissed the League of Nations as ‘nothing more than a debating society and a poor one at that’) and, more significantly, saw promise in the very principles and techniques which Wilson had renounced. If he did not actually favour secret treaties, he certainly believed in Great Power hegemony. After the war, he thought, responsibility for the happiness of the world would lie with those he called ‘the Four Policemen’ – the United States, the Soviet Union, Britain and China. [At Yalta, as we have seen, he was forced to include France in spite of his

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<sup>231</sup> Plokhy, *Yalta: The Price of Peace*, London: Penguin, 2010, pp. 118-119.

detestation of De Gaulle.] He once went so far as to tell Molotov, the Soviet Foreign Minister, that all other countries should be disarmed. And he never wavered in his belief that agreement and co-operation between the Four Policemen were essential. That was why he was prepared to go to such lengths in wooing Stalin; and in spite of bursts of irritation at Russian boorishness he never gave up, even at the very end of his life..."<sup>232</sup>

Fortunately, Roosevelt died, and his plan of giving unprecedented power to the red beast, well beyond his "sphere of influence", did not come to fruition. While the western powers wanted the cooperation of the Soviets, they were not as enamoured of "Uncle Joe" as Roosevelt had been, and were determined to hold on to their veto power. For in 1945, there was very little appetite among the victor nations for anything that smacked of a world government or loss of national sovereignty; for one of the main motivations spurring them on to victory had been a renewed feeling of patriotism and a determination (at any rate, on the western side) to restore the sovereign rights of small nations in the face of Nazi imperialism. At the same time, the unparalleled destruction wrought by the war forced the politicians to return to more globalist ideas, while stopping short of the idea of a global government...

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If the United Nations was Roosevelt's idea, its realization depended on his successor, Harry S. Truman. So who was the new American president?

After a hesitant start at the Potsdam summit in July, 1945, at which he displayed his predecessor's underestimation of Stalin<sup>233</sup>, and an unnecessarily passive acceptance of the decision to drop the atom bomb on the Japanese, Truman acted decisively to stop Soviet expansion in Western Europe, Iran, Turkey and Greece, where he took the place of the exhausted and bankrupt British, thereby winning "the war of the British succession."<sup>234</sup>

President Truman owed his rise in politics before the war to "Boss" Tom Pendergast, who, as Victor Sebestyen writes, "controlled Kansas City business and the State of Missouri's elected offices. The Pendergast 'machine' was sophisticated. It went beyond stuffing ballot boxes and other vote-rigging tactics. It turned politics, prohibition, prostitution and gambling into thriving enterprises, the profits of which could be invested into more legitimate areas. Truman never took cash for favours, thus squaring his conscience, but he depended on the Pendergast machine to deliver, by hook or by crook, large lopsided majorities for 'his' candidates. Typically, Truman stayed loyal to Pendergast well after it was politically expedient to do so, and even after Pendergast was convicted of tax evasion and sent to Leavenworth jail Truman

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<sup>232</sup> Brogan, op. cit., p. 575.

<sup>233</sup> "In 1948, talking about the Potsdam conference, he told a reporter that he knew Stalin well and that 'I like old Joe'; the dictator, he maintained, was a decent sort who could not do as he wished because he was the Politburo's prisoner. Here we are, back to the hawks and doves, a notion that the Soviets would always know how to play on to extort one-way concessions" (Jean-François Revel, *How Democracies Perish*, London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1985, p. 220).

<sup>234</sup> Norman Stone, *The Atlantic and its Enemies*, London: Penguin, 2010, p. 1.

defended him. 'He has been a friend to me when I needed it,' he said. 'I am not one to desert a ship when it is about to go down, Besides, Truman admired Pendergast, '... even if he did own a bawdy house, a saloon and a gambling establishment, because he was a man of his word.'..."<sup>235</sup> Here is the besetting sin of American politicians, which has gotten worse over time: a tendency to justify evil means by good ends, to choose sleazy and corrupt friends and allies to carry out well-intentioned goals.

"The path to hell is paved with good intentions", and this could be said particularly of American politics in the post-war era. So often good intentions such as freedom from oppression and prosperity for all were undermined by ill-chosen methods and allies, leading inevitably to charges of inconsistency and hypocrisy. Moreover, as time passed, the good ends became less good and even, as many argued, outrightly evil... Truman is not singled out here because he was any worse than very many before and after him. On the contrary, he was one of the best of American presidents, who did much to save western civilization at a particularly critical time of anarchy and chaos. But the deal he struck, and stuck to, with the unsavoury Pendergast is symbolic...

Truman was a regular church-goer. But at the same time he was a Freemason, whose god was the same god as that worshipped by the American business establishment - Mammon. At the higher levels of Masonry, Mammon merged into a still more sinister god, "Jah-Bul-On" - and Truman was not just a low-level, relatively inactive Mason (like Churchill), but a very high ranking one. Thus "In 1959, he was given a 50-year award by the Masons, recognizing his longstanding involvement: he was initiated on February 9, 1909 into the Belton Freemasonry Lodge in Missouri. In 1911, he helped establish the Grandview Lodge, and he served as its first Worshipful Master. In September 1940, during his Senate re-election campaign, Truman was elected Grand Master of the Missouri Grand Lodge of Freemasonry; Truman said later that the Masonic election assured his victory in the general election. In 1945, he was made a 33° Sovereign Grand Inspector General and an Honorary Member of the supreme council at the Supreme Council A.A.S.R. Southern Jurisdiction Headquarters in Washington D.C."<sup>236</sup>

So Truman's Masonry, by his own admission, assured his victory in the election. We may wonder how much it influenced and helped him in other parts of his political activity. For example, did the Jewish element in Masonry motivate his support for the creation of the state of Israel in 1948? Roosevelt had abandoned his Zionism towards the end of his life, and both the American State Department and Defense Department, as well as the oil companies, were strongly against it.<sup>237</sup> But the central myth of Masonry is the rebuilding of the Temple at Zion, so how could the Mason Truman have resisted the call to back Zionism?

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<sup>235</sup> Sebestyen, 1946: *The Making of the Modern World*, London: Pan, 2014, p. 20.

<sup>236</sup> Sebestyen, 1946: *The Making of the Modern World*, London: Pan, 2014, p. 20.

<sup>237</sup> Paul Johnson, *History of the Jews*, London: Phoenix, 1987, pp. 524-525.

It is this combination of (heretical) Christianity with anti-Christian Masonry, the worshippers of Mammon and controllers of most of the world's wealth, which would be the Achilles heel of post-war "Christian democracy" in America, ensuring that the victory over Communism attained in 1989-91 as the Iron Curtain fell would be incomplete and in fact illusory... The American empire - for that's what it was, albeit an unusually benign one - probably reached its peak in 1945 and the immediate post-war years. There then began a slow but steady decline that has continued to this day.

The decline could be said to have begun already in April, 1945, when the first secretary-general of the United Nations became the American Alger Hiss - a Soviet spy! The extraordinary danger of ideological penetration that the United States was in at this, the moment of its greatest triumph, is indicated by the fact that, as Andrew Roberts writes, "Had Roosevelt died six months before he did, and his [very leftist] Vice-President Henry Wallace had succeeded him, Hiss might well have become Under-Secretary of State, along with the NKVD agent Laurence Duggan as Secretary of State and Harry Dexter White as Secretary of the Treasury."<sup>238</sup>

The Security Council convened for the first time on January 17, 1946; its 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 significantly more difficult...

The potential strangle-hold exerted over the United Nations by the Soviets was revealed 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.'"<sup>239</sup>

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<sup>238</sup> Roberts, *A History of the English-Speaking Peoples*, London: Penguin, 2014, p. 404.

<sup>239</sup> Gilbert, *A History of the Twentieth Century*, volume 2: 1933-1951, London: HarperCollins, 1998, pp. 682-683.

Truman telegraphed Churchill to say 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 a World Organization to prevent territorial aggression and future wars will be attained."<sup>240</sup> Churchill, of course, agreed...

"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..."<sup>241</sup>

In spite of this failure, the United Nations did much valuable humanitarian work for many decades after the war. Particular 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 non-state 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.

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<sup>240</sup> Gilbert, op. cit., p. 686.

<sup>241</sup> Gilbert, op. cit., p. 694.

“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 the organization becomes just another tool of one or more powerful states and resented as such.”<sup>242</sup>

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A quasi-global government like the United Nations is inconceivable 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...

Having said, there is no denying that certain part of the human rights ideology were useful in combatting the most egregious aspects of contemporary collectivist ideologies, such as Communism. 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...”

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 universal

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<sup>242</sup> Judt, “Is the UN Doomed?”, in *When the Facts Change*, London: Vintage, 2015, pp. 257-258.

human rights and see that they are observed by all nations. 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,” 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.”<sup>243</sup>

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 Nuremberg 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.”<sup>244</sup>

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<sup>243</sup> Pinto-Duschinsky, “The Hijacking 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](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hans_Kelsen)).

<sup>244</sup> Pinto-Duschinsky, op. cit., pp. 36-37.

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...”<sup>245</sup>

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 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...”<sup>246</sup>

More fundamentally, profound ethical questions cannot be resolved without reference to the ultimate arbiter and judge – Almighty God. But the knowledge of the

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<sup>245</sup> Pinto-Duschinsky, *op. cit.*, p. 37.

<sup>246</sup> Gray, *False Dawn: The Delusions of Global Capitalism*, London: Granta Books, 1999, pp. 108- 109.



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...

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...

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The real problem with the post-war philosophy of human rights lies in the conjuring up of this multiplicity of new rights. For, from the time of the United Nations Declaration, as Scruton writes, "the search for liberty has gone hand in hand with a countervailing search for 'improvement'. The negative freedoms offered by traditional theories of human rights, such as Locke's, do not compensate for the inequalities of power and opportunity in human societies. Hence egalitarians have begun to insert more positive rights into the list of negative freedoms, supplementing the liberty rights specified by the various international conventions with rights that do not merely demand non-encroachment from others, but which imposed on them a positive duty. And in this they are drawing on the other root of the human rights idea – the root of 'natural law', which requires that every legal code conform to a universal standard.

Thus 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 is apparent in the UN Declaration of Human Rights which begins with a list of freedom rights and then suddenly, at Article 22, begins making radical claims against the state – claims that can be satisfied only by positive action from governments. Here is Article 22: 'Everyone, as a member of society, has the right to social security and is entitled to realization, through national effort and international cooperation and in accordance with the organisation and resources of each State, of the economic, social and cultural rights indispensable for his dignity and the free development of his personality.' There is a weight of political philosophy behind that article. Contained within this right is an unspecified list of other rights called 'economic, social and cultural' which are held to be indispensable not for freedom but for 'dignity' and the 'free development of personality'. Whatever this means in practice, it is quite clear that it is likely to involve a considerable extension of the field of human rights, beyond those basic liberties acknowledged in the American Declaration. Those basic liberties are arguably necessary for any kind of government by consent; the same is not true of the claims declared in Article 22 of the UN Declaration.

"The Declaration goes on in this vein, conjuring a right to work, to leisure, to a standard of living sufficient to guarantee health – and other benefits which are, in effect, claims against the state rather than freedoms from its encroachments.

“... Even if [those benefits were] rights, they are not justified in the same way as the freedom rights granted earlier in the Declaration. Moreover, they open the door to the ‘rights inflation’ that we have witnessed in recent decades, and to an interpretation of human rights that is prodigal of conflicts. When the ‘right to a family life’ declared by the European Convention of Human Rights enables a criminal who is also an illegal immigrant to escape deportation when the right to the traditional lifestyle of one’s ethnic community declared by the European Court of Human Rights, is used to instal a park of mobile homes in defiance of planning law, so destroying property values all around; when the Court of British Columbia discovers a ‘right that is not to be offended’ violated by a stand-up comedian’s response to a lesbian couple ostentatiously snogging in the front row of his show; when bankers claim their outrageous bonuses as a ‘human right’; when the courts are burdened by these and similar cases, coming in at the rate of seven a day in Britain and at a cost of £2 billion a year for the taxpayer: we are entitled to ask whether the concept of a human right is after all securely founded and whether there is any valid argument that would enable us to distinguish the true from the false among the many contenders.

“The first point to note in response is that, as Dworkin puts it, ‘rights are trumps’. That is, in a court of law, if you can show that your interest in the matter is also protected as a right, then you win the case against anyone whose interests, however great, are not so protected. (Rights provide ‘exclusionary reasons’, in Raz’s plausibly way of putting it.)

“The second important point is that, unlike the solutions issued by a legislature, those issued by a court are not compromises: they are not attempts to reconcile the many interests involved in a situation, and the court does not see itself as formulating a policy for the good government of a community – that is the task of a legislature, not a court. The court sees itself as resolving a conflict in favour of one of the parties. In normal circumstances, a dispute over rights is a zero-sum game, in which one party wins everything, and the other loses everything. There are no consolation prizes. Moreover, the doctrine of precedent ensures that the court’s decision will punch a hole in any legislation designed to solve issues of the kind that come before it. And this is one of the dangers inherent in human rights’ legislation – namely, that it places in the hands of the ordinary citizen a rod with which even the most vital piece of public policy can be overturned in favour of the individual, regardless of the common interest and the common good. Thus terrorists in Britain have been able to overthrow attempts to deport them by claiming that this or that ‘human right’ would be violated by doing so. Without a criterion enabling us to distinguish genuine human rights from the many imposters we will never be sure that our legal provisions, however wise, benevolent and responsible, will be secure against the individual desire to escape from them.

“The third important point is that the human rights declared by the various pieces of legislation, and the various decisions of the courts, are not obviously of the same philosophical, moral or political standing. A doctrine of human rights is entitled to the name only if the rights declared under it can be established *a priori*, in other words, as right established by philosophical reasoning rather than by the workings

of a specific system of law. The attempt to do this, in the case of basic freedom rights, has been made by various writers – by Nozick, beginning from Kantian premises, by Finnis, beginning from Thomist premises, and so on. I think we can all see the force of the idea that there are certain things that cannot be done to human beings – certain basic goods, including life itself, that cannot be taken away from them unless they in some way *forfeit* them. Life, limb and the basic freedom to pursue our goals undisturbed (comparable with a similar freedom enjoyed by others) are plausible candidates. You can see *how* the entitlement to these things lies at the heart of political cooperation: for without some guarantee that, in these respects at least, people are protected from invasion, there really could not be a system of law that enjoyed the free consent of those subject to it.

“Furthermore, we can understand those basic freedoms as rights partly because we can understand the reciprocal duty to respect them. My right to life is your duty not to kill me; and duties of non-encroachment and non-infliction and naturally upheld by morality and easily influence by the law. However, once we step outside this narrowly circumscribed area of basic freedoms, we enter a much more shady and conflicted territory. The case in which a park of mobile homes was allowed to destroy the amenities of a settled village depended upon the provision for ‘non-discrimination’ – a provision that steps outside the area of basic freedoms, into that of justice. And the striking thing is that this provision, meant to prevent one group of citizens from arbitrarily enjoying privileges denied to another, has been sued precisely to claim for the minority privileges that are legally denied to the majority – the minority in this case being those who could claim to be ‘travellers’, apparently entitled to consideration as an ‘ethnic group’. Similar paradoxical consequences have emerged from the advocacy in America of ‘positive discrimination’, by which is meant a policy of giving to members of some disadvantaged group legal privileges designed to ‘rectify’ their position.

“The original purpose behind liberalism’s invocation of natural rights was to protect the individual from arbitrary power. You held your right, according to Locke and his followers, as an individual, and regardless of what group or class you belonged to. These rights force people to treat you as a free being with sovereignty over your life, and as one who has an equal claim on others’ respect. But the new ideas of human rights allow rights to one group that they deny to another: you have rights as the member of some ethnic minority or social class that cannot be claimed by every citizen. People can now be favoured or condemned on account of their class, race, rank or occupation, and this in the name of liberal values. The rights that form the substance of international declarations therefore reflect a profound shift in liberal philosophy. The rhetoric of rights has shifted from freedoms to claims, and from equal treatment to equal outcomes.”<sup>247</sup>

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The United Nations may reasonably be called a part of the American New World Order founded after 1945 because: (a) it was the brainchild of successive American

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<sup>247</sup> Scruton, *How to be a Conservative*, London: Bloomsbury, 2014, pp. 70-73.

presidents – Wilson, Roosevelt and Truman; (b) its headquarters is in New York, built on land owned by that quintessentially American capitalist, Rockefeller; (c) the organization continues to be funded mainly by the United States; and (d) most of the Permanent Members of the Security Council were westernized powers dependent on the United States for their security and prosperity and basically in agreement with the American interpretation of human rights. However, in time the Americanness of the institution was weakened. The first major breach came in 1949 when China became communist and therefore not American-oriented. Fortunately, China did not immediately team up with Russia in order to form a united anti-American front in the United Nations. But the unanimity of the institution's governance – which was Roosevelt's dream and goal – was destroyed by such issues as the Israeli/Arab conflict and many battlefields of the Cold War from Vietnam onwards. A turning point came during the Second Iraq War of 2003, when the United States and Britain were outvoted. From that time, the American presidency, disillusioned with its own creation, turned increasingly against it. The consequences are as yet unclear...

*June 8/21, 2021.  
The Day of the Holy Spirit.  
St. Theodore the General.*

## 22. THE ROOT SIN OF OUR TIME

The root sin of western civilization, almost universal among the wise of this world, is the belief in Darwinism, which is tantamount to atheism, because it denies that there is one God Who created the heavens and the earth, but asserts that all things, even the most complex and spiritual and exquisitely beautiful, came by chance from NOTHING, or at any rate from a small clump of over-heated dust which also came from NOTHING. Evidently a very similar belief was current among the Romans of St. Paul's time. For, as he says in today's epistle (Romans 1.18-27), "what may be known of God is manifest to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood from the things that are even His eternal power and Godhead, so that THEY ARE WITHOUT EXCUSE, because although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools..."

However, the most characteristic sin of western civilization, which is not universal, but which is almost everywhere now recognized as NOT a sin, but an inevitable product of one's genes, and therefore (illogically) a matter of GAY PRIDE, is homosexuality. And this is asserted by St. Paul to be the product of the first sin, atheism. "For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use [of sex] for what is against nature. Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in their selves the penalty of their error which was due."

What is that penalty for the most widespread and the most characteristic sins of western civilization? Sexual diseases? Perhaps. AIDS? Perhaps. The scourge of the Covid pseudo-vaccine, which is actually a form of gene-changing that is only now beginning to appear throughout the world? Perhaps. Whatever it is, there can be no doubt that the penalty is the product of "the wrath of God revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness".

What is "suppressing the truth in unrighteousness"? Knowing the truth about God but refusing to glorify Him as God in order to justify our own unrighteousness. That is the truth evident to all: that God is the Creator, and that all things, including natural sex, are His creation, and that unnatural sex is not created by Him and is therefore unrighteousness, sin. For sin is that which is against the nature.

So let us not "make excuse for excuses in sin" lest we find ourselves WITHOUT EXCUSE when God comes to judge this generation, not by plagues and diseases from the earth and the genes of our earthly bodies but by a cataclysm FROM HEAVEN. For surely what we have seen so far is only "the beginning of sorrows", the beginning of God's wrath revealed from heaven against all the inhabitants of the earth that delight in lies and unrighteousness.

*June 10/23, 2021.*

### 23. KING LAZAR AND KOSOVO POLYE

“The 14th century,” writes Alexander Dvorkin, “buried the epoch of multinational super-empires. The future lay with centralized national states. However, it is interesting to note 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 Castilia. 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). This process touched Russia a little later – in the 15th century, in the form of the theory of the Third Rome...”<sup>248</sup>

Of all the newly powerful nation-states of the 14th century formed out of the ruins of the ever-decreasing Byzantine Empire, the most powerful was Serbia. As Aristides Papadakis writes: “Greatly expanded under powerful leaders like King Stephen Urosh Milutin (1282-1321) and particularly Stephen Dushan (1331-55), the Serbian kingdom annexed traditionally Byzantine territories in Macedonia and northern Greece. In fact, Stephen Dushan dominated the entire Balkan peninsula. It was inevitable that, like Symeon of Bulgaria in the tenth century, he would dream of taking Constantinople itself and assume the ‘Roman’ imperial title. In the expectation of achieving this goal, he called himself – provisionally – ‘emperor and autocrat of Serbia and Romania’ (1345) and raised the archbishop of Pech to the rank of ‘patriarch of the Serbs and the Greeks’. The important city of Skopje, captured by Milutin, had, more than the other, smaller cities of the Serbian realm, the appearance of an imperial capital. There, on April 16, 1346, Dushan was crowned emperor by his newly-established patriarch Ioannikije.”<sup>249</sup>

Shortly after this, Dushan published his “Archangelic Charter”, whose introduction set out his political theology in impressive style. The foundation of all power is the Lord God, Who dwells in eternal light. The earthly ruler is a lord only for a time; he does not dwell in eternal light; and his splendour is only a reflection of the splendour of the Lord God. The incarnation of God the Word, His humiliation and descent, is imitated by the earthly ruler in his constant self-correction and the thought of death: “I am reminded of the terrible hour of death, for all the prophets, and apostles, and martyrs, and saints, and emperors died in the end; none of them remained, all were buried, and the earth received them all like a mother”. At the same time, the ruler, if he protects Orthodoxy and is guided by love for God, earns the titles “holy lord”, “patriot”, “enlightener of Serbia” and “peace libator”. In accordance with this dual character of the ruler’s power, his subjects are obliged, on the one hand, to obey him, in accordance with St. Paul’s word, and on the other to criticise him if

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<sup>248</sup> Dvorkin, *Ocherki po Istorii Vselenskoj Pravoslavnoj Istorii* (Sketches on the History of the Universal Orthodox Church), Nizhni-Novgorod, 2006, op. cit., p. 716.

<sup>249</sup> Papadakis, *The Orthodox East and the Rise of the Papacy*, Crestwood, N.Y.: St. Vladimir’s Seminary Press, 1994, pp. 258-259.

he departs from the true path. For while power as such is from God, those in power may act in accordance with God's will or against it.<sup>250</sup>

Dushan's code, writes Rebecca West, "brought up to date the laws made by the earlier kings of the Nemanyan dynasty and was a nicely balanced fusion of Northern jurisprudence and the Byzantine system laid down by Justinian. It coped in an agreeable and ingenious spirit with the needs of a social structure not at all to be despised even in comparison with the West.

"There, at this time, the land was divided among great feudal lords who ruled over innumerable serfs; but here in Serbia there were very few serfs, so few that they formed the smallest class in the community, and there was a large class of small free landowners. There was a National Diet which met to discuss such important matters as the succession to the throne or the outbreak of civil war, and this consisted of the sovereigns, their administrators, the great and small nobility, and the higher clergy; it was some smaller form of this, designed to act in emergencies that met to discuss whether John Cantacuzenus should receive Serbian aid. All local government was in the hands of the whole free community, and so was all justice, save for the special cases that were reserved for royal jurisdiction, such as high treason, murder, and highway robbery. This means that the people as a whole could deal with matters that they all understood, while the matters that were outside common knowledge were settled for them by their sovereign and selected members of their own kind; for there were no closed classes, and both the clergy and the nobility were constantly recruited from the peasantry."<sup>251</sup>

In this period, the way in which the Serbian kings were portraying themselves was almost indistinguishable from the symbolism of the Byzantine Emperors. Thus Desanka Milošević describes a portrait of Tsar Milutin in Grachanitsa in which "the king had all the prerogatives of power of the Byzantine Emperor, except for the title. The crown, the garments, the loros and the sceptre were all identical to the Byzantine Emperor's. Before Milutin, something like this would have been absolutely unthinkable, for only the Byzantine Emperor was Christ's regent on earth..."<sup>252</sup>

Dushan went further: directly challenging the authority of the Byzantine Emperor, he refused to call his kingdom, following Byzantine custom, "of the Romans", but rather "of the Serbs and the Greeks". The ethnicity of this title was in direct contradiction to the universalism of Christian Romanity. And yet he had come to the throne by rebelling against and then strangling his own father, St. Stephen Dechansky; so his claim even to the Serbian throne, not to speak of the Byzantine, was weak.

In spite of this, so feeble and divided was the Empire at this time that many Greeks supported his claims, and the *protos* of Mount Athos was present at his coronation in

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<sup>250</sup> Bogdanović, Bogdanovich, "The Political Philosophy of Medieval Serbia", in *1389-1989, Boj na Kosovu* (The Battle of Kosovo), Belgrade, 1989, pp. 16-17.

<sup>251</sup> West, *Black Lamb and Grey Falcon*, Edinburgh: Canongate, 2006, pp. 892-893.

<sup>252</sup> Milošević, in Tim Judah, *The Serbs*, London: Yale University Press, 1997, p. 22.



Skopje. But St. Gregory Palamas, remained loyal to Byzantium – even though Dushan had ransomed him from captivity to the Turks. St. Gregory confirmed the traditional Byzantine theory that just as there is only one true God, so there can be only one Orthodox empire. As he wrote: “Will you transform into two emperors that one emperor whom God has established for us on the earth? Will you demonstrate that his empire is composed of two empires?”<sup>253</sup>

“The Serbian patriarchate was immediately recognized and supported by the patriarch of Trnovo and the archbishop of Ochrid (the latter was now controlled by Serbian power), as well as the monasteries of Mount Athos. It included within its realm a number of Greek dioceses, located on territories conquered by Dušan. In the circumstances, it is understandable that the establishment of such a patriarchate was challenged in Constantinople: on December 1349, ecumenical patriarch Callistus anathematized the Serbian Church.”<sup>254</sup>

To anathematize a whole Local Church neither for heresy nor for schism, but for appropriating to itself territories that did not belong to it may have been a defensible step, but it was also a drastic one. It showed how anxious the patriarch was, in the absence of a strong emperor, to retain the centralising power of the patriarchate as the “glue” holding the Byzantine commonwealth together.

However, there is no question: the leading power in the Balkans at this time was not Byzantium, but Serbia. Dushan’s land was prosperous, and attracted Venetians and Ragusans as traders, and Saxons as miners. As West writes: “Against the military difficulties that constantly beset Stephen Dushan there could be counted the security of this possession: a country rich in contented people, in silver and gold, in grain and cattle, in oil and wine, and in the two traditions, one Byzantine and mellow, one Slav and nascent, which inclined its heart towards civilization... Stephen Dushan ordered that all foreign envoys travelling through the land should be given all the meat and drink they desired at the imperial expense. As he pressed southward into Byzantine territory he restored to it elements necessary to civilized life which it had almost forgotten. He was not in need of money, so he did not need to rob his new subjects after the fashion of participants in the Civil War; he taxed them less, repaired gaps in their strongholds, and lent them Serbian soldiers as police. He also practised the principle of toleration, which was very dear to the Byzantine population; it must be remembered that the Orthodox crowd of Constantinople rushed without hesitation to defend the Saracen merchants’ mosque when it was attacked by the fanatic Latin knights. There could be no complete application of this principle, and Stephen Dushan certainly appointed Serbian governors to rule over his new territories, as well as Serbian ecclesiastics when the local priests were irreconcilable; but he left the indigenous social and political systems as he found them, and there was no economic discrimination against the conquered.

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<sup>253</sup> St. Gregory Palamas, *Triads*, III, 2, 27, in *Défense des saints hésychastes (Defence of the Holy Hesychasts)*, edited by John Meyendorff, Louvain: Sacrilgium Sacrum Lovaninense, 1973, pp. 692, 693 (in French and Greek).

<sup>254</sup> Papadakis, *op. cit.*, p. 259.

“It was as if there were falling down the map from the Serbian Empire an ooze of honey, runnels of wine. They must drip across Byzantium, they must spread all over the country to the sea, to the Bosphorus. To all men’s minds it became possible that some day Stephen Dushan might come to Constantinople and that he might be Emperor not only of the Byzantines but of Byzantium, seated at its centre in the palace that had known Constantine the Great and Justinian... His own age, and those who lived within recollection of its glory, believed him capable of that journey, and more...”<sup>255</sup>

But it was not to be. Why? Because Dushan’s quarrel with Byzantium divided the Orthodox world at just the moment it needed to unite against their common enemy, the Turks. Indeed, it was the rivalry between the two Orthodox states that let the Turks into the Balkans, leading to the destruction of both... For, as Andrew Wheatcroft writes, “in 1350 the Byzantine Emperor, John Cantacuzenus, recruited [Sultan] Orhan’s Ottoman warriors in his campaign against the King of Serbia, Stephen Dushan. Three years later Orhan’s son, Suleiman, crossed the Hellespont to take possession of the fortresses promised as the price of their support. Within a few years, from their base at Gallipoli, the Ottomans had advanced to cut the road from Constantinople to the fortress town of Adrianople, the capital of Thrace.”<sup>256</sup>

Still more importantly, the prosperity of the Serbian Empire under Dushan could not outweigh the injustice of his seizure of the throne, and, above all, the curse of the Church on the ecclesiastical and political disunity that he introduced into the Orthodox world. And so Dushan, for all his glory, was one of the few kings of the glorious Nemanja dynasty who is not inscribed among the saints. Like King Solomon’s in the Old Testament, his reign marks the culmination of his people’s glory in the political sphere, on the one hand, and on the other, the beginning of its decline in the spiritual sphere.

According to Bishop Nikolai Velimirović, “The Serbs had their national state from St. Sava until Czar Dušan. Dušan strayed from the ideals of St. Sava, he created an empire, and by this he prepared the downfall of his country, that is, of the national state. As in other instances, here too, the empire destroyed our homeland, our national state. For being subjugated or subjugating another nation result in the same catastrophe...”<sup>257</sup>

In 1354 Patriarch Ioannikije died, and in 1355 - Tsar Dushan. “It was as if,” writes Fr. Daniel Rogich, “the passing of two great religious and secular leaders created a huge vacuum over the empire which was filled by a black cloud of lack of faith and political disaster. The upcoming events and internal and external strife would bring Serbia to the brink of political and religious disaster.

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<sup>255</sup> West, op. cit., pp. 893-894.

<sup>256</sup> Wheatcroft, *Infidels*, London: Penguin Books, 2004, p. 203.

<sup>257</sup> Bishop Nikolai Velimirović, “Saint Sava’s Nationalism” (1935), in *The New Chrysostom*. Bishop Nikolaj Velimirović, St. Tikhon’s Seminary Press, 2011, p. 126.

“The new leadership fell into the hands of Dushan’s son, King Urosh IV and Empress Helen. Urosh was only seventeen years old at the time... Being truly humble in spirit and less worldly than his departed father, Urosh was unable to control such a vast territory. In fact many began to call him Urosh ‘the Weak’. As a result, the next twenty years saw the breakup of the entire region of the southern territory of the Serbian empire, as well as a vying for power in the northern half.”<sup>258</sup>

In 1371 the Serbs were disastrously defeated by Sultan Murad I on the Maritsa, and in the same year Tsar Urosh died. However, at this point the Serbian Prince Lazar of Krushevac gradually began to reunite the Serbs with the slogan, *Samo Sloga Srbina Spasava*, that is, “Only Unity Saves the Serbs”.

Still more important, he finally managed to heal the ecclesiastical break with Constantinople. “In the spring of 1375, Holy Lazar called a National Church Assembly, inviting all civil leaders and bishops to his palace in Krushevac. The widowed Empress Helen, Dushan’s wife, was given a special place of honor, and Patriarch Sava IV served as the ecclesiastical head of the meeting. It was decided at the gathering to bless the virtuous monk Isaiah of Hilandar, with monks Theophanes, Silvester, Niphon, and Nicodemus as companions, to travel to Constantinople to visit His Holiness, Patriarch Philotheos (1364-1376). Due to the letters of the Patriarch and Holy Tsar Lazar, Patriarch Philotheos granted, as Archbishop Danilo II wrote in his *Lives of the Kings and Archbishops of Serbia*, ‘that the Serbs would no longer simply have an archbishop, but an autocephalous Patriarch over whom no one would exercise authority.’ The Patriarch also forgave Tsar Dushan, Patriarch Ioannikios, Patriarch Sava IV, King Urosh IV, and all the Serbian Orthodox Christians. He also sent two hieromonks, Matthew and Moses, to Prizren to celebrate Divine Liturgy with His Holiness Patriarch Sava IV, and to pronounce over the grave of Tsar Dushan in Pristina the revocation of the anathema. This took place on Thomas Sunday, April 29, 1375. Shortly thereafter Patriarch Sava IV fell asleep in the Lord, and Tsar Lazar summoned the Synod of Bishops, which elevated the venerable elder Ephraim as the new Patriarch of Serbia.”<sup>259</sup>

In spite of this inspiring miracle of political and ecclesiastical peacemaking, the Turks continued to make inroads, defeating the Serbs at the battle of the River Maritsa in 1371. Then, at the famous battle of Kosovo Polje (Blackbird Field) in 1389, the Sultan was killed, but also 77,000 Serbs, including Tsar Lazar. 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 the Heavenly Kingdom. He chose the latter and lost the battle – but his incorrupt relics continue to work miracles to this day.<sup>260</sup>

For as Patriarch Danilo wrote in his late-fourteenth century *Narrative about Prince Lazar*: “We have lived for a long time in the world, in the end we seek to accept the martyr’s struggle and live for ever in heaven. We call ourselves Christian soldiers,

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<sup>258</sup> Rogich, *Great Martyr Tsar Lazar of Serbia*, Platina: St. Herman Brotherhood, 2001, pp. 8-9.

<sup>259</sup> Rogich, *Great Martyr Tsar Lazar of Serbia*, pp. 11-12.

<sup>260</sup> Tim Judah, *The Serbs*, Yale University Press, 1997, p. 39.

martyrs for godliness to be recorded in the book of life... Suffering begets glory and labours lead to peace."<sup>261</sup>

According to Bishop Nikolai Velimirović, just as St. Sava taught the Serbs how to live, so St. Lazar taught them how to die. It was this conscious seeking of martyrdom, rather than self-preservation, that distinguished Kosovo from all other battles between Orthodox armies and the enemies of Orthodoxy. "As the dead are dressed in new and expensive clothes, so was the Serbian army dressed in its best robes. The shiny and glowing procession hurried from all the borders of the empire into the focus of honour and fame, to the field of Kosovo. Shaded by cross-shaped banners and the icons of the family saints (slava), singing and cheering, singing and playing musical instruments, with song and joy, the army rushed towards its place of execution. Not a single Christian martyr is known to have prayed to God to save him from his approaching death, while thousands and thousands are known to have prayed not to be spared from a martyr's death. Neither did Lazar's army hold prayers for salvation from death. On the contrary – it confessed its sins and took Communion – for death. One whole armed people as one Christian martyr, obedient to the thoughtful will of the Almighty, accepted the bitterness of death and that not as bitterness but as a vital force. And hasn't Kosovo right up to the present day, indeed, served as a vital force to dozens of generations? In the history of the Christian peoples there is not a case of one whole army, one whole armed people being imbued by the wish to die, to meet death for the sake of its religion. Not to meet a suicidal but a heroic death. Kosovo is unique in the twenty-century-old history of the Christian world."<sup>262</sup>

However, as he stood, supported in the arms of a Turkish soldier, the dying king began to have doubts. "He prayed to God to reply to the question that was tormenting him: 'I am a sinner, and I am dying, but why are my people and my warriors condemned to this torment, to these sufferings?' And at this moment the king remembered that he had once made a choice between the earthly kingdom and the Heavenly Kingdom. And at that time he had chosen the Heavenly Kingdom. Perhaps his choice had been incorrect, and he had stirred up his people, forcing it to suffer. This thought tormented the dying king. Perhaps it was this decision of his that had become the main reason for the defeat of Serbia and the destruction of his people, the destruction of his closest friends...

"At that moment, when the pain in the soul of the king was so deep that he could no longer feel his physical sufferings, he was suddenly overshadowed by a bright light, and before him there stood an angel and someone else in shining raiment. (This was the Prophet Amos – King Lazarus' holy 'slava', that is, his heavenly protector – Nun I.).

"The angel addressed him with the following words: 'Do not grieve, King Lazarus. I am sent from God. I have been sent to you to answer all the questions which are

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<sup>261</sup> Danilo, in Wheatcroft, op. cit., p. 241.

<sup>262</sup> Danilo, in Wheatcroft, op. cit., p. 241.

753 Velimirović, "Kosovo", in 1389-1989, Boj na Kosovu, pp. 52-53.

tearing your soul apart. Do not suffer thinking that you made an incorrect choice. Your choice was correct'....

"He said: 'Why has your country fallen? Because it has grown old.'

"Seeing the perplexity of the king, the angel explained that old age is not a physical condition, but a spiritual one (more precisely, not old age, but spiritual paralysis). The poison of sin had poisoned the Serbian nobility and made it old, and this poison was beginning also to penetrate the people and poison its soul. Only a powerful storm could sweep away this evil, the corrupting spirit of the poison, and save the people from the destruction that threatened it. And so in order to save the country spiritually (from sin), it would have to be overthrown. 'Do not grieve, king,' continued the Angel, 'your choice was correct and in agreement with the will of God. It is clear that Christ Himself and His angels, while confirming the sufferings of life, have given them a special higher meaning and thereby forced man to find in them a higher righteousness: to find in these sufferings the path to a better life.' King Lazarus had to understand this inner and higher meaning of sufferings. These sufferings had to be perceived by him as a voluntary exploit taken on by him and his people, an exploit of love for the highest principles of life.

"The world cannot accept this love, for it loves only itself with a love of the flesh and sensuality.

"'No, king, no,' said the angel, 'you made no mistake in your choice, and therefore you will receive a double crown, both a heavenly and an earthly. You have made the right choice, but you are sinning in doubting it.'

"'But how can my choice of the Heavenly Kingdom,' asked the king, 'bring good to my people?'

"Your choice of the Heavenly Kingdom will undoubtedly give unwaning benefit to your people. It will purify their mind, heart and will. It will transfigure their souls into radiant mirrors in which eternal life will be reflected. The Heavenly Kingdom will enter into them and will make them worthy of It. Their minds will be purified from impurity, and their hearts will become worthy of grace. 'In Thy light shall we see light'...

"'Since neither the example of the saints of your people, not the sermons of the priests have produced any benefit or positive result, Providence allowed this terrible death, this killing of your noble generals, and your death. Then will come a time of deep repentance, silence and sufferings. And so, step by step, the hearts of people will have to be drawn away from this world and return to Heaven. Their hearts must be freed from the smoke of hell and be filled with the true Light...

"One more question tormented King Lazarus: 'Will not slavery destroy that feeling of inner freedom which is innate in my people? And will not all their talents and abilities dry up under the heavy yoke of slavery?'

The angel replied: 'Your words, O king, witness to the fact that you are still in the chains of the flesh. But in the Heavens human affairs are evaluated only in accordance with the motives that rule man. All the rest: cities, palaces, mechanisms - are emptiness without any value. Huge cities are all just the dust of the roads, smoke that vanishes. A small, pitiful bee can laugh on looking at your huge towers and empires. And how is one to explain to a bird sitting in a cage this inner, deep meaning of the freedom of a free bird? Those who have chosen the earthly kingdom cannot understand those who have chosen the Heavenly Kingdom. Their evil will is united with the demonic will and so they cannot look on the Heavenly Kingdom. The entrance into it is closed to them. And they have no freedom, they are the slaves of their flesh and the demons.

“Understand, O king, that this sad day may be the day of the turning of your people, not to evil, but to good. Until now their earthly will has dragged them down into the abyss of eternal death. Beginning from now, your people must carry out the will of another, and this can teach them to carry out the will of God, separating them from self-opinion and self-will.

“They will have to submit to the will of a cruel tyrant, and so will be able to understand and hate their own tyranny, the tyranny of their flesh over their soul. Through the years and centuries, labours and sorrows will teach them to hate these evil powers, their own will and the will of their slave-owners.

“And so the people will strive upwards, to heaven, as a tree in a thick wood, and will seek the bright light of their Creator, for, not possessing anything earthly, they will easily acquire the Heavenly Light; for they will hate both their own will and the will of their slave-owners. And then the Divine will will become for them sweeter than milk and honey.

“... And so, O king, say to God: 'Thy will be done.' It is possible to understand the meaning of the cross and sufferings only if one voluntarily accepts to take up the cross sent by God. Taking up the cross is a witness to one's love for God through one's voluntary sufferings. The cross is the witness of holy love.'

“The angel also explained the meaning of freedom. What does freedom mean? It is a symbol. The word 'freedom' has many meanings. When the external form of freedom changes to the tyranny of one man over another, and is not punished by the laws of the country, then the Lord takes away the freedom of this nation and casts it into the 'school' of slavery, so that the people may esteem and understand true freedom. But this true, golden freedom is closely linked with the honourable cross. Only through the cross is golden freedom revealed to people. Golden freedom is true, unailing freedom. And only that mortal man who acquires such freedom becomes truly free, and not the slave of the flesh and passions. Then it truly becomes free from illusions, fleshly passions and glory, free from people and demons, free from himself, from his passions. Free at all times and in all places, wherever he may be, whether in freedom or in slavery. This gem is preserved precisely in the depths of the human soul. True freedom is that freedom which cannot be taken away from man by prison or any foreign power. Without this freedom man is a pitiful slave, be he a king or the

meanest servant. This freedom is not from obedience to God, but this freedom is in God - the true, eternal, joyful and golden freedom.

“... And the angel added: ‘It is better to acquire the Kingdom of Heaven by sufferings than the kingdom of the earth by evil. And there is no evil on earth, or in hell, that could conquer the eternal wisdom of the Heavens.’

“After these words of the angel, Lazarus was no longer spiritually the old man, but was renewed in spirit. His soul was enlightened by the spirit of the Heavens. And although the battle still raged around him, in his soul Lazarus felt a new, eternal life and eternal joy. He sighed deeply and said: ‘Amen.’”<sup>263</sup>

As James E. Held writes, after Kosovo “Serbia did not totally lose its independence until 1459, and Orthodox refugees fleeing as well, Latin Crusaders and Venetian raiders, found refuge under the rule of Stefan, Prince Lazar’s son. Although an Ottoman vassal, his sister Olivera joined the Sultan’s harem, his reign was a time of cultural growth and economic prosperity. For a time, Serbia held a privileged position in the Ottoman Empire, even as the Turks systematically dismembered the disjointed Balkan kingdoms until twice reaching the gates of Vienna.”<sup>264</sup>

June 15/28, 2021.  
*Martyr-King Lazar of Serbia.*

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<sup>263</sup> Velimirović, in Nun Ioanna, “Taina kosovskoj bitvy – dukhovnoe zaveshchanie tsaria Lazaria” (“The Mystery of the Battle of Kosovo – the Spiritual Will of Tsar Lazarus”), *Pravoslavnaia Zhizn’* (Orthodox Life), N 7 (583), July, 1998, pp. 15, 16, 19, 21, 22-23.

<sup>264</sup> Held, “Legend of the Fall, 1389: the Battle of Kosovo”, *Medieval History*, January, 2004, p. 37.

## 24. 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.'<sup>265</sup>

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.

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<sup>265</sup> 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.*

## 25. THE TWO SACRIFICES

The holy prophet Elijah challenged the priests of Baal to a contest: each would build an altar and offer a sacrifice upon it. Then the world would see upon whose sacrifice and altar the fire of God would come down. As we know, the fire of God descended only on Elijah's sacrifice, which compelled the people to cry: "The Lord [Jehovah, not Baal], He is God; the Lord, He is God".

This was not the only such contest in Holy Scripture. According to tradition, the reason why Cain knew that God was not satisfied with his sacrifice was that the Holy Fire did not descend upon it, while it consumed that of Abel. Again, it was through fire that God revealed whose sacrifice was pleasing to Him and whose was not.

In New Testament times we see the same. It is recorded that two stylites, one Orthodox and the other Monophysite, decided to have a similar contest to reveal whose faith was true. A cauldron of boiling water was brought and placed between the two pillars. When the heretic cast a piece of meat into the cauldron, nothing happened. But when the Orthodox cast his morsel in, the boiling suddenly stopped and the water became still...

The Holy Fire descends each year on the Orthodox altar in the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem. When the Roman Catholics built their own altar after the First Crusade, the Holy Fire did not descend upon it. Only when heretics seized the altar has the Holy Fire not descended...

The Holy Fire of Grace descends only on the Orthodox altars. Heretics do not have Grace, so their offerings are not sanctified. On their altars the bread and wine remain stubbornly bread and wine, and not transformed by the Fire of the Holy Spirit into the Body and Blood of Christ.

So, following the words of the great and holy Prophet Elijah, who will come again at the time of the Antichrist, let us not halt between two contradictory opinions, but declare with the faithful people: "The Lord, He is God. The Lord, He is God."

*July 20 / August 2, 2021.  
Holy Prophet Elijah.*

## 26. OSCAR WILDE: ART, LIFE AND GOD

During the 1880s, British upper-class culture and society became increasingly decadent; there was even a specific group calling themselves “decadents”. This tendency became still more evident in the Edwardian era, following the notoriously decadent example of King Edward VII himself. “In Sherlock Holmes, Conan Doyle had created a resonantly hybrid figure, in one guise a reassuring Nietzschean superman of action, but in another a Wildean decadent, dependent on cocaine, wearing make-up, and often living in a state of lethargy, boredom and ennui. In 1894 John Lane launched *The Yellow Book*, the house magazine of the decadent group, whose spirit was powerfully captured by Aubrey Beardsley (or Aubrey Wierdsley, as *Punch* called him), with his disturbing, erotic pen and ink drawings conveying intimations of cruelty and vice through their sinuous lines. In 1895 the Hungarian Max Nordau published *Degeneration*, denouncing such decadent aesthetes as portending the end of European civilization, and four years later the American Thorstein Veblen produced *The Theory of the Leisure Class*, which criticized the new, super-rich for being in thrall to the material indulgences of ‘conspicuous consumption’.”<sup>266</sup>

The most famous proponent of decadence was the Anglo-Irish Oscar Wilde (1854-1900), “who had begun that decade as the leader of the ‘aesthetic movement’, lampooned by Gilbert and Sullivan in *Patience* (1881), but who by the end of it had become the leader of the so-called ‘decadents’, professing to prefer pessimism to optimism, the decayed to the living, the abnormal to the normal. They were also suspected of drug-taking and homosexuality, and they were widely regarded in strait-laced circles as degenerate and corrupt. In fact there were never that many of them, but the anxiety and alarm the ‘decadents’ deliberately and undoubtedly provoke, along with simultaneous fears about the ‘white slave trade’, helps explain the passing of the Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1885, which raised the age of consent for girls from thirteen to sixteen; in addition, as the result of an amendment carried by Henry Labouchère, it criminalized for the first time as ‘gross indecency’ all forms of homosexual activity, in public or in private. Hence the police raid, four years later, on a homosexual brothel in Cleveland Street in London’s plush Fitzrovia district, and although the scandal was largely hushed up, it was rumoured that some of the greatest and grandest names in the land were implicated. The four plays that Wilde wrote at this time – *Lady Windermere’s Fan* (1892), *A Woman of No Importance* (1893), *An Ideal Husband* (1895) and *The Importance of Being Ernest* (1895) – all explored upper-class decadence: their idle, leisure characters, interested in little but social gossip; and the darker explorations of hypocrisy, blackmail, corruption and double lives.”<sup>267</sup>

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Wilde was the most famous exponent of “Art for Art’s sake”, the idea that art exists for no higher purpose than itself. He went so far as to call art “the supreme

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<sup>266</sup> Cannadine, *op. cit.*, p. 453.

<sup>267</sup> Cannadine, *op. cit.*, pp. 397-398.

reality". He believed, following Nietzsche, that one should make one's own life a work of art, uniting in one artistic whole the good, the bad and the ugly of life. The one essential element was *style*. As Nietzsche put it: "One thing is needful. – To 'give style' to one's character – a great and rare art! It is practiced by those who survey all the strengths and weaknesses of their nature and then fit them into an artistic plan until every one of them appears as art and reason and even weaknesses delight the eye..."<sup>268</sup>

The fluid boundaries between art and reality are explored by Wilde in his *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1890), in which, as Sir Richard Evans writes, "the ravages of the protagonist's dissolute life are visited upon his portrait, while his own physical appearance remains untouched by age or the consequences of sin. Art, argued Wilde and the other proponents of Aestheticism in the 1890s, should be pursued for art's sake, and for no other purpose."<sup>269</sup>

Wilde's radical aestheticism was opposed by Friedrich Nietzsche, who denied that there was any such thing as art for art's sake: "When the purpose of moral preaching and of improving man has been excluded from art, it still does not follow by any means that art is altogether purposeless, aimless, senseless – in short, *l'art pour l'art*, a worm chewing its own tail. 'Rather no purpose at all than a moral purpose!' – that is the talk of mere passion. A psychologist, on the other hand, asks: what does all art do? does it not praise? glorify? choose? prefer? With all this it strengthens or weakens certain valuations. Is this merely a 'moreover'? an accident? something in which the artist's instinct had no share? Or is it not the very presupposition of the artist's ability? Does his basic instinct aim at art, or rather at the sense of art, at life? at a desirability of life? Art is the great stimulus to life: how could one understand it as purposeless, as aimless, as *l'art pour l'art*?"<sup>270</sup>

Wilde devoted not only his whole artistic oeuvre to the doctrine of aestheticism, but also his whole life. He placed art higher than ethics, declaring: "Aesthetics are higher than ethics. They belong to a more spiritual sphere."<sup>271</sup> With a ferocious energy that belied the mask of idleness and indifference that he put on, he tried to make the whole of his life into a work of art. As he said to André Gide: "J'ai mis tout mon génie dans ma vie, je n'ai mis que mon talent dans mes oeuvres."<sup>272</sup> He made his art, including his greatest work, his life, into an idol in the strict sense of the word. And God destroyed him for his idolatry...

"Art is the great stimulus to life," said Nietzsche. Indeed, but how does it best accomplish this purpose? By the grim realism of the late-nineteenth-century novel? Or by some other means? The "art for art's sake" movement was reacting against grim realism in art. Their slogan was not expressing a frivolous attitude to life, but rather an exalted attitude to art, not so much "holding a mirror up to nature", in

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<sup>268</sup> Nietzsche, *Gay Science*, 290.

<sup>269</sup> Evans, *The Pursuit of Power. Europe 1815-1914*, London: Penguin, 2017, p. 532.

<sup>270</sup> Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Gods*, "Skirmishes of an Untimely Man", 24.

<sup>271</sup> Wilde, "The Critic as Artist" (1891).

<sup>272</sup> *Collins Complete Works of Oscar Wilde*, London: HarperCollins, 2003, introduction to the 1994 edition, p. 3.

Hamlet's words, as revealing beauties in life that are invisible to the non-artistic eye, even if the artist has to resort to distorting the surface reality, in order to do it. This is a highly ambitious, romantic, if not Platonic understanding of art, which is perhaps best expressed – albeit with characteristic hyperbole – in a dialogue by Oscar Wilde called “The Decay of Lying” (1891), in which “lying” – i.e. the artistic imagination – is exalted above a narrowly realist, positivist understanding of truth.

“If something cannot be done,” writes Wilde, “to check, or at least to modify, our monstrous worship of facts, Art will become sterile and beauty will pass away from the land.

“Even Mr. Robert Louis Stevenson, that delightful master of delicate and fanciful prose, is tainted with this modern vice, for we know positively no other name for it. There is such a thing as robbing a story of its reality by trying to make it too true, and *The Black Arrow* is so inartistic as not to contain a single anachronism to boast of, while the transformation of Dr. Jekyll reads dangerously like an experiment out of the *Lancet*. As for Mr. Rider Haggard, who really has, or once had, the makings of a perfectly magnificent liar, he is now so afraid of being suspected of genius that when he does tell us anything marvellous, he feels bound to invent a personal reminiscence, and to put it into a footnote as a kind of cowardly collaboration...”<sup>273</sup>

The famous French realist novelist Zola (who had taken refuge in England following the furore of his defence of Dreyfus) comes in for even harsher criticism. Although Wilde admits that Zola is “not without power” at some times, for example in *Germinal*, still “his work is entirely wrong from beginning to end, and wrong not on the ground of morals, but on the ground of Art. From any ethical standpoint it is just what it should be. The author is perfectly truthful, and describes things exactly as they happen. What more can any moralist desire?... [Zola's characters] have their dreary vices, and their drearier virtues. The record of their lives is absolutely without interest. Who cares what happens to them? In literature we require distinction, charm, beauty and imaginative power. We don't want to be harrowed and disgusted with an account of the doings of the lower orders...”<sup>274</sup>

“Charles Dickens was depressing enough in all conscience when he tried to arouse our sympathy for the victims of the poor-law administration...

“Believe me, my dear Cyril, modernity of form and modernity of subject-matter are entirely and absolutely wrong. We have mistaken the common livery of the age for the vesture of the Muses, and spend out days in sordid streets and hideous suburbs of our vile cities when we should be out on the hillside with Apollo. Certainly we are a degraded race and have sold our birthright for a mess of facts...

“Art begins with abstract decoration, with purely imaginative and pleasurable work dealing with what is unreal and non-existent. This is the first stage. Then Life becomes fascinated with this new wonder, and asks to be admitted to its charmed

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<sup>273</sup> Wilde, “The Decay of Lying”, *op. cit.*, p. 1074.

<sup>274</sup> Wilde, “The Decay of Lying”, p. 1075.



circle. Art takes life as part of her rough material, recreates it, and refashions it in fresh forms, is absolutely indifferent to fact, invents, dreams, and keeps between herself and reality the impenetrable barrier of beautiful style, of decorative or ideal treatment. The third stage is when Life gets the upper hand, and derives Art out into the wilderness. This is the true decadence, and it is from this that we are now suffering..."<sup>275</sup>

"What is true about the drama and the novel is no less true about those arts that we call the decorative arts. The whole history of these arts in Europe is the record of the struggle between Orientalism, with its frank rejection of imitation, its love of artistic convention, its dislike to the actual representation of any object in Nature, and our own imitative spirit. Wherever the former has been paramount, as in Byzantium, Sicily and Spain, by actual contact or in the rest of Europe by the influence of the Crusades, we have had beautiful and imaginative work in which the visible things of life are transmuted into artistic conventions, and the things that Life has not are invented and fashioned for her delight. But wherever we have returned to Life and Nature, our work has always become vulgar, common and uninteresting..."<sup>276</sup>

It is unexpected to find Wilde as a champion of Byzantine art, which contained a "spiritual realism" that escapes him – as it escaped the whole of the West. This inability of the West to understand the essence of Byzantine art, writes Florecne Hallett, goes back to Vasari's *Lives of the Artists* (1550)<sup>277</sup>, and was a consequence of its alienation from the true faith that the Byzantines confessed. Wilde should have dated the beginning of Western art's imitative, representative, materialist tendency to the time of the Crusades, when the West had just broken communion with Orthodox Byzantium. Instead, he placed the beginning of this "decadence" somewhat later, in the Renaissance; it was already evident, he asserted, in the more boorish parts of Shakespeare's plays.

But he laid the main blame for contemporary boorish realism on America, its "crude commercialism, its materialising spirit, its indifference to the poetic side of things..."<sup>278</sup>

"Art finds her own perfection within, and not outside of herself. She is not to be judged by an external standard of resemblance. She is a veil, rather than a mirror. She has flowers that no forests know of, birds that no woodland possesses. She makes and unmakes many worlds, and can draw the moon from heaven with a scarlet thread. Hers are the 'forms more real than living man', and hers the great archetypes of which things that have existence are but unfinished copies. Nature has, in her eyes,

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<sup>275</sup> Wilde, "The Decay of Lying", pp. 1077, 1078.

<sup>276</sup> Wilde, "The Decay of Lying", p. 1080. (His contemporary and fellow Anglo-Irish poet, W.B. Yeats, expresses a deeper appreciation of the iconic, non-representational, timeless but at the same time spiritually realistic quality of Byzantine art in "Sailing to Byzantium":

*Gather my soul*

*Into the artifice of eternity.*

<sup>277</sup> Hallett, "The Byzantine Complex", *The New European*, October 4-10, 2018.

<sup>278</sup> Wilde, "The Decay of Lying", p. 1081.

no laws, no uniformity. She can work miracles at her will, and when she calls monsters from the deep they come...

"Paradox though it may seem – and paradoxes are always dangerous things – it is none the less true that Life imitates Art far more than Art imitates Life..."<sup>279</sup>

"The Greeks, with their quick artistic instinct, understood this, and set in the bride's chamber the statue of Hermes or of Apollo, that she might bear children as lovely as the works of art that she looked at in her rapture or her pain. They knew that Life gains from Art not merely spiritually, depth of thought and feeling, soul-turmoil or soul-peace, but that she can form herself on the very lines and colours of art, and can reproduce the dignity of Pheidias as well as the grace of Praxiteles. Hence came their objection to realism. They disliked it on purely social grounds. They felt that it inevitably makes people ugly, and they were perfectly right. We try to improve the conditions of the race by means of good air, free sunlight, wholesome water, and hideous bare buildings for the better housing of the lower orders. But these things merely produce health, they do not produce beauty. For this, Art is required, and the true disciples of the great artist are not his studio-imitators, but those who become like his works of art, be they plastic as in Greek days, or pictorial as in modern times; in a word, Life is Art's best, Art's only pupil.

"As it is with the visible arts, so it is with literature... Schopenhauer had analysed the pessimism that characterises modern thought, but Hamlet invented it. The world has become sad because a puppet was once melancholy. The Nihilist, that strange martyr who has no faith, who goes to the stake without enthusiasm, and dies for what he does not believe in, is a purely literary product. He was invented by Tourgenieff, and completed by Dostoevski. Robespierre came out of the pages of Rousseau... Literature always anticipates life. It does not copy it, but moulds it to its purpose...

"Life holds up the mirror to Art, and either reproduces some strange type imagined by painter or sculptor, or realises in fact what has been dreamed in fiction... Young men... have died by their own hand because by his own hand Werther died."<sup>280</sup>

Wilde's life held up the mirror to his art, to the whole of the "art for art's sake" movement, and, still more generally, to the whole of western bourgeois civilization as it reached its glittering climax in the years leading up to the Great War.

After a brilliant double First in Classics at Oxford, Wilde embarked on a literary career that soon had high society gaping in astonishment. His plays *An Ideal Husband* and *The Importance of Being Ernest* packed playhouses then as now, eliciting tumultuous praise.

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<sup>279</sup> Wilde, "The Decay of Lying", p. 1082.

<sup>280</sup> Wilde, "The Decay of Lying", *Collins Complete Works*, p. 1080.

His fellow Irishman George Bernard Shaw – no mean playwright himself – wrote after the first performance of *An Ideal Husband*: “Mr Oscar Wilde’s new play at the Haymarket is a dangerous subject, because he has the property of making his critics dull... He plays with everything with wit, with philosophy, with drama, with actors and audience, with the whole theatre...”<sup>281</sup>

In view of Wilde’s notorious homosexuality, it is tempting to search for the beginnings of this fall in his earlier life. But no early fall has been recorded – he had a happy marriage (although, of course, his homosexuality grieved his wife), and two sons. Nor were the themes of his plays particularly scandalous – otherwise he would never have become so popular in the strait-laced Victorian milieu of 1890s London.

The clue is to be found in the fact that while the predominant tone of his writing is not serious, he himself took his writing ultra seriously, to the point of self-worship. Thus he describes himself as “a man who stood in symbolic relations to the art and culture of my age. I treated Art as the supreme reality, and life as a mere mode of fiction. I awoke the imagination of my century so that it created myth and legend around me. I summed up all systems in a phrase, and all existence in an epigram...”<sup>282</sup>

So the underlying disease of Wilde, as of his whole generation, was *pride* and *blasphemy*. His gifts were genuine, and his work was by no means superficial (“the supreme vice”, according to Wilde, is “shallowness”); in it are to be found both wit and wisdom. But if “Art is the supreme reality” and “Aesthetics are higher than ethics”<sup>283</sup>, then there is no room for God or morality. Therefore, for his idolatry, God “gave him up to uncleanness” (Romans 1.24), to the demon of homosexuality.

Indeed, “no artist has ethical sympathies,” he wrote. “An ethical sympathy in an artist is an unpardonable mannerism of style. No artist is ever morbid. The artist can express everything...”<sup>284</sup>

Having made of himself a Romantic man-god-artist, Wilde’s fall was swift and steep. As his grandson Vyvyan Holland writes, by 1895 “Wilde had now reached the pinnacle of his success. Two plays of his were drawing crowded audiences in the West End, and actor-managers were falling over one another to write for them. Then the Marquess of Queensbury, with the object of attacking his son, Lord Alfred Douglas, because of his [homosexual] friendship with Wilde, launched a campaign of ungovernable fury on Wilde. The story has been told often enough; Alfred Douglas, whose only object was to see his father in the dock, persuaded Oscar Wilde to bring a prosecution for criminal libel against him. Lord Queensbury was triumphantly acquitted and his place in the dock was taken by Oscar Wilde, who was sentenced to two years imprisonment.”<sup>285</sup>

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<sup>281</sup> Collins *Complete Works*, Introduction to 1994 edition, pp. 10-11.

<sup>282</sup> Wilde, “De Profundis”, *Collins Complete Works*, Introduction to 1994 edition, pp. 1-2.

<sup>283</sup> Wilde, “The Critic as Artist”.

<sup>284</sup> Wilde, “The Picture of Dorian Gray”, *Complete Works*, p. 17.

<sup>285</sup> Holland, in “Introduction to the 1966 Edition”, *Complete Works*, p.11. The story has been made into a film with the homosexual Stephen Fry as Wilde.

In *De Profundis*, a letter written from prison to his former lover, Wilde shows a moving determination not to spare himself and not to yield to hatred of the man who “in less than three years had ruined me from every point of view” (although he did not spare him a lengthy description of how he had done that): “After my terrible sentence, when the prison-dress was on me, and the prison-house closed, I sat amidst the ruins of my wonderful life, crushed by anguish, bewildered by terror, dazed through pain. But I would not hate you. Every day I said to myself, ‘I must keep Love in my heart today, else how shall I live through the day.’ I reminded myself that you meant no evil, to me at any rate: I set myself to think that you had but drawn a bow at a venture, and that the arrow had pierced a King between the joints of the harness. To have weighed you against the smallest of my arrows, the meanest of my losses, would have been, I felt unfair. I determined I would regard you as one suffering too. I forced myself to believe that at last the scales had fallen from your long-blinded eyes. I used to fancy, and with pain, what your horror must have been when you contemplated your terrible handiwork. There were times, even in those dark days, the darkest of all my life, when I actually longed to console you. So sure was I that at last you have realised what you had done...”<sup>286</sup>

Released from prison, Wilde fled from the opprobrium of the English Pharisees – as he wrote, *I think they love not Art / Who break the crystal of a poet's heart / That small and sickly eyes may glare or gloat* - to self-imposed exile in his beloved France as a penitent publican. He died soon after, penniless and miserable, in a French hotel. However, “all his life,” says his grandson, “my father had an intense leaning towards religious mysticism, and was strongly attracted to the Catholic Church, into which he was received on his death bed in 1900.”<sup>287</sup>

What did this final act in the life of the notorious roué mean? Perhaps, as in the similar case of Byron's death-bed conversion to Orthodoxy, it was a final recognition that the supreme reality is not Art, but God, and that Ethics *are* higher than Aesthetics. Certainly if there was one subject on which Wilde, against his principles, expressed an “ethical sympathy”, it was in his withering condemnation of the English middle classes who so admired him, and of the Anglican Church whose hypocrisy he abominated: “The dreams of the great middle classes of this country... are the most depressing things I have ever read. They are commonplace, sordid and tedious. There is not even a fine nightmare among them. As for the Church, I cannot conceive anything better for the culture of a country than the presence in it of a body of men whose duty it is to believe in the supernatural, to perform daily miracles, and to keep alive that mythopoeic faculty which is so essential for the imagination. But in the English Church a man succeeds, not through his capacity for belief, but through his capacity for disbelief. Ours is the only Church where the sceptic stands at the altar, and where St. Thomas is regarded as the ideal apostle. Many a worthy clergyman, who passes his life in admirable works of kindly charity, lives and dies unnoticed and unknown, but it is sufficient for some shallow uneducated passman out of either University to get up in his pulpit and express his doubts about Noah's

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<sup>286</sup> Wilde, “De Profundis”, *Complete Works*, p. 1005.

<sup>287</sup> Holland, in “Introduction to the 1966 Edition”, *Complete Works*, p.12.

ark, or Balaam's ass, or Jonah and the whale, for half of London to flock to hear him, and sit open-mouthed in rapt admiration at his superb intellect. The growth of common sense in the English Church is a thing very much to be regretted. It is really a degrading concession to a low form of realism..."<sup>288</sup>

So Wilde's last act was to reject appreciative but moralistic and unbelieving England for frivolous but beautiful and forgiving France; he exchanged English undogmatic Protestantism for French dogmatic Catholicism...

In the twenty-first century Wilde's countrymen, exceeding even his pride and blasphemy, have made of his sin an object of "gay pride", thereby attempting to nullify the only real moral achievement of his life, his repentance.<sup>289</sup> The greatness of his *art* is now firmly established, it has stood the test of time. What the tragedy of the last years of his life proves is the falseness of his idolatrous theory that art and the artist are greater than life and the Supreme Artist, "God, the Father Almighty, the Poet (in Greek: Poitis] of heaven and earth" ...

*July 24 / August 6, 2021.*

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<sup>288</sup> Wilde, "The Decay of Lying", *Complete Works*, 1089.

<sup>289</sup> Rupert Everett's film of Oscar's last days, *The Happy Prince*, ignores his conversion altogether.

## 27. GOD, ORDER AND CHAOS

“In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and void, and darkness was on the face of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the deep. Then God said: Let there be light; and there was light” (Genesis 1.1-3).

These familiar words conceal a profound paradox. They seem to indicate that God’s original creation was chaotic, “without form” or order, even “void”. But how can that be, when God represents order to the highest degree? For, as St. Paul says, “God is not the author of confusion” (I Corinthians 14.33). And St. John says: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was God” (John 1.1), where “the Word”, the Person of Jesus Christ, the Second Person of the Holy Trinity and the Creator of all things, represents all that is orderly, rational in the highest sense, wise, planned and meaningful.

And does not the universe offer itself to our perception as wonderfully ordered and harmonious? “How magnified are Thy works, O Lord! In wisdom hast Thou made them all; the earth is filled with Thy creation” (Psalms 103.26). “Marvellous are Thy works, and my soul knoweth it right well. My bone is not hid from Thee, which Thou madest in secret; nor my substance in the nethermost parts of the earth. My being while it was still unformed Thine eyes did see, and in Thy book shall all men be written; day by day they are formed, when as yet there none of them” (Psalms 138.13-15).

And yet there is a clue to our perplexity here: “My being while was still unformed”; “day by day they are formed”. Does this not indicate that there was a time when the creation was indeed “without form and void”? Does it not indicate that in God there is not only Being but also Becoming, not only actuality but also potentiality, where “potentiality” by definition refers to that which is unformed and unordered?

However, is this conversation not over-philosophical, too abstract? What difference in a practical sense does it make whether God is pure Being, or contains also Becoming? The difference it makes is that it may help solve, or at least make less incomprehensible, the mystery of the deepest puzzle in modern physics – the indeterminacy principle.

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Physicists display a paradoxical combination of faith both in radical determinism and in an equally radical indeterminism. For on the one hand, they believe that in most of the sciences, ideally in all, there reigns the most absolute, iron-like dominion of natural law without any exceptions in the form of miracles; that is, they believe in fate. On the other hand, as regards the most fundamental science of all, quantum physics, the study of the smallest units of matter and energy, they believe that no determinist laws in fact exist, but only indeterminism – that is, chance. This creates a

radical schism, an unbridgeable gulf, between the two halves of what has been called “the Theory of Everything” (TOE).

“The two pillars of twentieth-century physics,” writes the physicist Carlo Rovelli, “- general relativity and quantum mechanics - could not be more different from each other. General relativity is a compact jewel: conceived by a single mind, based on combining previous theories, it is a simple and coherent vision of gravity, space and time. Quantum mechanics, or quantum theory, on the other hand, emerges from experiments in the course of a long gestation over a quarter of a century, to which many have contributed; achieves unequalled experimental success and leads to applications which have transformed our everyday lives...; but, more than a century after its birth, it remains shrouded in obscurity and incomprehensibility...”

The reality this theory has unveiled, continues Ravelli, has three aspects: granularity, indeterminism and relationality. The most important of these for our theme is indeterminism, which contains a seemingly insoluble problem or paradox. The British physicist Paul Dirac discovered the equations enabling us to compute the velocity, energy, momentum and angular momentum of an electron with great accuracy. However, these equations are statistical and probabilistic in nature: in spite of their accuracy, they provide us with no certain knowledge of what will be. And not only because all scientific hypotheses are uncertain and provisional, but *in principle*. Thus quantum physics, the most successful theory in the history of science, declares that reality at the most basic, fundamental level *does not follow law*; it is lawless. Thus “we do not know with certainty where the electron will appear, but we can compute the probability that it will appear here or there. This is a radical change from Newton’s theory, where it is possible, in principle, to predict the future with certainty. Quantum mechanics bring probability to the heart of the evolution of things. This indeterminacy is the third cornerstone of quantum mechanics: the discovery that chance operates at the atomic level. While Newton’s physics allows for the prediction of the future with exactitude, if we have sufficient information about the initial state and if we can make the calculations, quantum mechanics allows us to calculate only the probability of an event. This absence of determinism at a small scale is intrinsic to nature. An electron is not obliged by nature to move towards the right or the left; it does so by chance. The apparent determinism of the macroscopic world is due only to the fact that microscopic randomness cancels out on average, leaving only fluctuations too minute for us to perceive in everyday life.”<sup>290</sup>

The greatest minds in science wrestled with this problem, trying to get rid of it if they possibly could. Even Einstein - who considered Dirac a great genius, albeit one bordering on madness - could not be reconciled with the theory at first: As he wrote to Born: “You believe in a God who plays dice, and I in complete law and order in a world which objectively exists and which I, in a wildly speculative way, am trying to capture. I firmly *believe*, but I hope that someone will discover a more realistic way or rather a more tangible basis than it has been my lot to find.”<sup>291</sup>

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<sup>290</sup> Ravelli, *Reality is Not What it Seems*, London: Penguin, 2014, pp. 91, 103-104.

<sup>291</sup> “The scientist,” said Einstein, “is possessed by the sense of universal causation. His religious feeling takes the form of a rapturous amazement at the harmony of natural law, which reveals an intelligence

And yet Einstein, too, was finally, if reluctantly, reconciled with what appeared to be undeniable reality, confirmed by the extraordinary predictive accuracy of quantum physics.

It took a non-scientist, an Oxford professor of medieval literature, the famous Christian apologist C.S. Lewis, to express the full, shattering implications of quantum indeterminism for the nature of science and scientific laws – and the possibility of miracles. “The notion that natural laws may be merely statistical results form the modern belief that the individual unit obeys no laws. Statistics were introduced to explain why, despite the lawlessness of the individual unit, the behaviour of gross bodies was regular. The explanation was that, by a principle well known to actuaries, the law of averages levelled out the individual eccentricities of the innumerable units contained in even the smallest gross body. But with this conception of the lawless units the whole impregnability of nineteenth-century Naturalism has, it seems to me, been abandoned. What is the use of saying that all events are subject to laws if you also say that every event which befalls the individual unit of matter is not subject to laws? Indeed, if we define nature as the system of events in space-time governed by interlocking laws, then the new physics has really admitted that something other than nature exists. For if nature means the interlocking system, then the individual unit is outside nature. We have admitted what may be called the sub-natural. After this admission what confidence is left us that there may not be a supernatural as well? It may be true that the lawlessness of the little events fed into nature from the sub-natural is always ironed out by the law of averages. It does not follow that great events could not be fed into her by the supernatural: nor that they also would allow themselves to be ironed out...”<sup>292</sup>

So the sub-natural revealed by quantum physics appears to open up the possibility of the supra-natural, confounding simple-minded naturalism... But there is another mystery here: why should the essential lawlessness of every single microscopic subatomic event translate, at higher levels of macroscopic perception – those of atoms, molecules, organs, objects, planets, galaxies – into law-governed things and events? In other words, why does indeterminism become determinism, chance become fate – not in time, but simultaneously, and not only in some places but everywhere?

The answer, I would suggest, can only be that God, Who is subject neither to chance nor to fate but is supremely free, being beyond all space and time, decrees every single event in the universe in order to give the impression of chance and indeterminism at one level of perception and fate at the other. Thus Ravelli's declaration: “An electron is not obliged by nature to move towards the right or the left; it does so by chance” should be changed to read: “An electron is not obliged by nature to move towards the right or the left; it does so by the command of God”.

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of such superiority that, compared with it, all the systematic thinking and acting of human beings is an utterly significant reflection” (in Montefiore, *Titans of History*, p. 471).

<sup>292</sup> Lewis, “Religion without Dogma?” (1946), in *Compelling Reason*, London: Fount, 1986, pp. 92-93.



So is God deliberately deceiving the scientists? By no means! They are deceiving themselves – and God allows this in order to expose the folly of their atheism! For “the world by [scientific] wisdom knew not God” (I Corinthians 1.21) and “He catches the wise in their own craftiness” (Job 5.12; I Corinthians 3.1).

This is most obvious at the macroscopic level. Since ancient times human beings, even primitive, uneducated ones, have always known that nature is governed by laws. And the great majority of them have drawn the obvious conclusion: that there is a Law-giver who commands things to happen in an orderly, lawful way. At the same time, it was obvious to all human beings in ancient times, both primitive and sophisticated, that there were exceptions to natural law – what we call miracles. For if He speaks and they come into being, why should He not at some times *not* speak so that they do *not* come into being? Or why should He not change a law of nature for a longer or shorter period for reasons known to Him alone? Indeed, any unprejudiced observer of history will accept that while some “miracles” are fake, there is a vast number of well-attested events whose only explanation must be God’s temporary suspension of the laws He Himself created.

It was this belief in laws and the Law-giver, combined with intellectual curiosity, that was the main motivation of modern science from the seventeenth century onwards. Newton was such a believer (he also believed in the Holy Scriptures); even Einstein appears to have been one (although not a Christian one). But then the new belief arose that we can study the laws of nature without positing a Law-giver; that is, “the God hypothesis” is unnecessary. And yet God remains the elephant in the room of modern physics. Why else would they call the most recent discovery in particle physics – that of the Higgs Boson – “the God particle”? It would be hard to imagine a more inappropriate name. Or are they in fact still obsessed by “the God hypothesis”, and are subconsciously trying to reduce the massive invisible elephant behind their back to the smallest visible particle in front of their nose?

Be that as it may, the fact is that science before the advent of quantum theory believed only in fate, absolute, iron necessity and determinism at every level of reality, a necessity that was lawful (and awful) but did not presuppose (in the scientists’ opinion) a Law-giver.<sup>293</sup> That is why the recent enthronement of chance, the exact opposite of fate, at the centre of physics is such a shock to the whole system. But it is no shock to the Christian scientist. For if an electron is not obliged to move to the right or to the left by any law – in fact, the laws we have suggest that such predictions and prescriptions are in principle impossible – why should that be a problem for the Law-giver, Who is above all law and necessity, being Himself supreme Freedom? Thus the discovery of chance at the base of the fate-based system of pre-quantum theory physics actually restores God to the heart of that system...

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<sup>293</sup> Actually, it was the Roman philosopher Lucretius, in his *On the Nature of Things* (50 BC) who first posited a world wholly ruled by chance and the movement of atoms, without the existence of God. "Happy is he," wrote Virgil of Lucretius, "who has discovered the causes of things and has cast beneath his feet<sup>[a]</sup> all fears, unavoidable fate, and the din of the devouring Underworld." (*Georgics*, book II).

For those with eyes to see, the revolution in physics, and its sheer incomprehensibility in human terms, pointed to something beyond physics, to God Himself. And some, including Einstein, were ready to admit that. For, as St. Paul said, “In Him we live and move and have our being” (Acts 17.28)

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Let us try and summarize the mini “Theory of Everything” to which modern physics seems to lead:-

- I. At the lowest, most reductionist level of reality, there is the realm of *sub-nature* or indeterminacy or chance, fortuna as the Romans called it, or “the din of the devouring Underworld”, as Virgil called it. It is the chaos of potentiality out of which God created the actual world of nature on the first day of creation.
- II. At the higher level, there is the realm of law-governed *nature*, or fatum as the Romans called it, when the Word and Wisdom of God, “Who commanded light to shine out of darkness” (II Corinthians 4.6), created law and order everywhere. To this law and order most scientists usually admit no exceptions in the form of miracles, although the whole of law-governed *nature* actually rests on the teeming realm of *sub-nature*, or indeterminacy or chance – and if everything rests on chance, then exceptions to the laws of nature *must be possible* and cannot be excluded a priori.
- III. The highest level is that of *supra-nature*, which binds the dark, indeterminate and formless potentiality of sub-nature to the law-governed harmony of actuality, of nature as we know it. The principle of supra-nature that brings into being and binds together *into one universe* all things, both at the sub-atomic and the galactical levels, is *the Will of God*.

The idea that the Divine Will is higher than both law-governed nature and lawless sub-nature has implications in other spheres. Thus in the theology of politics a political order that reflects the cosmic order must postulate a ruler who is *above the law* (not to speak of the lawless), overturning the laws that his own will brought into being just as the Cosmic Ruler overturns the laws of nature when He wills.

A final reflection. The Holy Fathers from St. Basil the Great to St. Ignaty Brianchaninov and St. Nikolai Velimirovich explicitly and categorically *deny the existence of chance*. Does this mean that *sub-nature*, where the principle of indeterminacy reigns according to the physicists, does not exist? By no means. It means only that chance is an illusion except in a statistical sense; it means that pure potentiality is not actuality, not *reality* in the full sense. What is real is *what God wills*, from the movements of the galaxies to the tiniest movements of the electrons, and in Him there is no hesitation or uncertainty, only REALITY. And if we cannot see the order and reason for this or that movement, this is because “we know in part and we prophecy in part. For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know as also I am known” (I Corinthians 13.9, 12).

August 17/30, 2021.

## 28. THE DIVINE LITURGY AND THE LAST TIMES

“In the midst of the week My sacrifice and drink-offering shall be taken away” (Daniel 9.27). Does this mean that the Body and Blood of Christ will not be offered during the reign of the Antichrist? The evidence is conflicting.

St. Hippolytus of Rome writes that “the honourable Body and Blood of Christ will not be offered in those days. Public Divine services will be discontinued.”

However, Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow, commenting on I Corinthians 11.26, "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 a 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 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.'"<sup>294</sup>

Again, St. Seraphim of Sarov prophesied: “The monasteries will be destroyed, but at poor Seraphim’s in Diveyevo until the very day of the Comng of Christ the bloodless Sacrifice will be performed.”<sup>295</sup>

And Hieromartyr Nikon of Optina writes: “I will build My Church and the gates of hell will not prevail against it’, it says in the Gospel. The Apostle says that the breaking of bread, that is, the sacrament of the Eucharist, will be celebrated until the Second Coming of the Lord. St. Ephraim the Syrian says that there will come a time when the Bloodless Sacrifice will cease. There would appear to be a contradiction here. But no, one must understand it in this way: there will be no open serving in church, but the sacrament of the Eucharist itself will continue until the Second Coming of the Saviour.”<sup>296</sup>

*August 19 / September 1, 2021.*

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<sup>294</sup> Trepatschko, "The Church of Christ in the Time of the Antichrist", *Orthodox Life*, vol. 41, no. 2, March-April, 1991, p. 40.

<sup>295</sup> St. Seraphim, in Sergius Fomin and Tamara Fomina, *Rossia pered Vtorym Prishestviem* Moscow, 1994, vol.1, p. 318).

<sup>296</sup> St. Nikon, in *Nadezhda*, 8, 1981, Frankfurt, p. 233.

## 29. MOSES THE GOD-SEER

Moses is the only Old Testament figure who is called "God-seer". With the holy prophet Elijah, he is the only Old Testament figure chosen to stand and talk with Christ at the Transfiguration. And, taken as a whole, his life is the clearest prefiguring of the Life of Christ. His pre-eminence among the Old Testament saints is indisputable. So who was he?

After Joseph, the Hebrews lived as slaves of the Egyptian pharaohs. Then in about 1450 BC, God called the Hebrews out of the Egyptian despotism as he had called them out of the despotism of Babylon in the time of Abraham. The first battle between Church and State in history had been Abraham's battle with the Babylonian kings. The second took place between Moses and the Egyptian Pharaoh. This was the first "war of national liberation" in history. The Hebrews won. However, the Egyptians did not record the fact of Pharaoh's defeat in their monuments, since gods, according to the Egyptian conception, could not fail.

Moses had been brought up in Pharaoh's family in a near-miraculous manner, by being found as a baby among the rushes and given to the daughter of Pharaoh to be raised as her son. And so he acquired an Egyptian education - an ideal preparation for war against Pharaoh. The story of the Exodus of the Hebrews from Egypt under Moses' leadership is the foundation story of the Hebrew people. But, as the Church sings, Moses was as much a religious as a political leader: "Thou, O Moses, didst preserve the order of sacrifice precious to God, and the kingdom and the priesthood." After wandering for forty years in the desert, the Israelites' embryonic state-cum-religion finally acquired a territorial base in Israel under Kings Saul and David...

Moses added a fifth element, besides faith, sacrifices, the kingdom and circumcision (which Abraham had practised), to the life of Israel: the law. Josephus says that Moses "invented the very word 'law', then unknown in Greek, and was the first legislator in world history. Philo accused both philosophers and lawgivers of copying his ideas, Heraclius and Plato being the chief culprits." The law was necessary for several reasons. First, by the time of Moses, the Israelites were no longer an extended family of a few hundred people, as in the time of Abraham and the Patriarchs, which could be governed by the father of the family without the need of any written instructions or governmental bureaucracy. Since their migration to Egypt in the time of Joseph, they had multiplied and become a nation of four hundred thousand people, which no one man could rule unaided. Secondly, the sojourn of the Israelites in Egypt had introduced them again to the lures of the pagan world, and a law was required to protect them from these lures. And thirdly, in order to escape from Egypt, pass through the desert and conquer the Promised Land in the face of many enemies, a quasi-military organization and discipline was required.

Written Scriptures had also become necessary because the spiritual condition of men had deteriorated, as St. John Chrysostom explains: "Those ancient men of God who lived before the Law were not taught by words or writings; being pure in heart, they were enlightened by spiritual illumination, and thus they learned and were assured of the will of God. God Himself spoke with them, giving them information

and commandments with His own lips. Such men were Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and their descendants Job and Moses. But because men grew weaker and became unworthy of receiving assurance and instruction (directly) from the Holy Spirit, God, in His love for mankind, bestowed the Scriptures, that at least through them men might remember (Him) and learn His will. Likewise, Christ also spoke to His disciples personally and sent them His grace as a teacher. But because heresies were later to spring up and spread, and because our morals were to become corrupt, He designed to have the Gospels written down, that from them we might learn the truth, that we might not be led astray by the falsehoods of heresy, and that our morals might not be utterly corrupted." <sup>297</sup>

But the law was useless without knowledge of the lawgiver, God; so even before the beginning of the Exodus, God revealed His name for the first time to Moses in the vision of the Burning Bush on Mount Horeb (the bush can still be seen at the monastery of St. Catherine). The bush that burned without being consumed was a type, or prefiguring, of the Incarnation of Christ from the Mother of God, whose flesh was not consumed by the fire of the Divinity that was in her. God sent Moses to the people of Israel to announce to them their coming deliverance from slavery through the Exodus, and when Moses asked for God's name so that he could identify Who it was that was sending him, "God said unto Moses, 'I AM THAT I AM', and He said: 'Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, "I AM hath sent me unto you'." (Exodus 3.13). Up to that point, God had referred to Himself only as "God Almighty" or "the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob" - that is, without a specific allusion to the Second Person of the Trinity or His role in the salvation of mankind. But now that salvation was being brought to the Hebrews it was necessary to point to the Saviour, that is, Jesus Christ, the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, by the name by which He is known in the Old Testament - Jehovah, "I AM THAT I AM", or "He Who Exists" (in the Greek translation of the Septuagint). For it is the unanimous witness of the Holy Fathers that Jesus Christ, the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, is indeed Jehovah, "He Who Exists" from all eternity, Who saved the Israelites from Egypt and later the whole of humanity from sin, death and the devil on the Cross. This is confirmed a little later, when "God spake unto Moses, and said unto him, 'And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of God Almighty; but by the name JEHOVAH was I not known to them. And I have established My covenant with them, to give them the land of Canaan, the land of their pilgrimage, wherein they were strangers.'" (Exodus 3.2-3).

The name "He Who Exists" points to the complete independence of God from everything created. For He does not exist in dependence on any other existing thing, which is the case with every other being, but is absolute being, being itself. This was in sharp distinction from pagan religion - of which Egyptian religion was the most developed kind in that period - which could never conceive of God as wholly independent of created beings, but always identified God or the gods with a part or the whole of created being.

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<sup>297</sup> St. John Chrysostom, *Homily for the Sunday of the Forefathers*.

The name also points, according to Archbishop Theophan of Poltava, to the fullness of life, which cannot be identified with any created condition, but only with the life of God Himself.<sup>298</sup> Being absolute being and the fullness of life, God wishes to save mankind from the false life that identifies itself with created being, as did Egypt. Thus it is in the Exodus from Egypt that God manifests Himself as the Saviour for the first time.

The law was given by God to Moses on Mount Sinai. Its God-giveness was vital. It meant, as Paul Johnson points out, that “the Israelites were creating a new kind of society. Josephus later used the word ‘theocracy’. This he defined as ‘placing all sovereignty in the hands of God’... The Israelites might have magistrates of one kind or another but their rule was vicarious since God made the law and constantly intervened to ensure it was obeyed. The fact that God ruled meant that in practice his law ruled. And since all were equally subject to the law, the system was the first to embody the double merits of the rule of law and equality before the law. Philo called it ‘democracy’, which he described as ‘the most law-abiding and best of constitutions’. But by democracy he did not mean rule by all the people; he defined it as a form of government which ‘honours equality and has law and justice for its rulers’. He might have called the Jewish system, more accurately, ‘democratic theocracy’, because in essence that is what it was.”<sup>299</sup>

To repeat: this was no democracy in the modern sense. Although every man in Israel was equal under the law of God, there were no elections, every attempt to rebel against Moses’ leadership was fiercely punished by God (Numbers 16), and there was no way in which the people could alter the law to suit themselves, which is surely the essence of democracy in the modern sense. Even when, at Jethro’s suggestion, lower-level magistrates and leaders were appointed, they were appointed by Moses, not by any kind of popular vote (Deuteronomy 1).

One of the major characteristics of the Mosaic law, notes Johnson, is that “there is no distinction between the religious and the secular – all are one – or between civil, criminal and moral law. This indivisibility had important practical consequences. In Mosaic legal theory, all breaches of the law offend God. All crimes are sins, just as all sins are crimes. Offences are absolute wrongs, beyond the power of man unaided to pardon or expunge. Making restitution to the offended mortal is not enough; God requires expiation, too, and this may involve drastic punishment. Most law-codes of the ancient Near East are property-orientated, people themselves being forms of property whose value can be assessed. The Mosaic code is God-oriented. For instance, in other codes, a husband may pardon an adulterous wife and her lover. The Mosaic code, by contrast, insists both must be put to death...

“In Mosaic theology, man is made in God’s image, and so his life is not just valuable, it is sacred. To kill a man is an offence against God so grievous that the ultimate punishment, the forfeiture of life, must follow; money is not enough. The horrific fact of execution thus underscores the sanctity of human life. Under Mosaic

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<sup>298</sup> Theophan, *Tetralemma*, St. Petersburg, 1905, p. 61.

<sup>299</sup> Johnson, *op. cit.*, pp. 40-41.

law, then, many men and women met their deaths whom the secular codes of surrounding societies would have simply permitted to compensate their victims or their victims' families.

"But the converse is also true, as a result of the same axiom. Whereas other codes provided the death penalty for offences against property, such as looting during a fire, breaking into a house, serious trespass by night, or theft of a wife, in the Mosaic law no property offence is capital. Human life is too sacred where the rights of property alone are violated. It also repudiates vicarious punishment: the offences of parents must not be punished by the execution of sons or daughters, or the husband's crime by the surrender of the wife to prostitution... Moreover, not only is human life sacred, the human person (being in God's image) is precious... Physical cruelty [in punishment] is kept to the minimum."<sup>300</sup>

Now the Holy Church in her service to Moses makes what at first sight looks like an extraordinary claim: that he was the very first "God-seer", who saw God face-to-face: "Let Moses, the first among the prophets, be praised, for he was the first to converse openly with God, face to face, not in indistinct images, but beholding Him as in the guise of the flesh." "Not in indistinct images", and "in the guise of the flesh". So he must have had a clear vision of the God-man, the Lord Jesus Christ, in His Humanity. But how was that possible, seeing that Christ was not yet incarnate? The answer is: only by seeing Him in an image, or icon – but one not made with hands.

And yet, one will argue, was it not precisely to Moses that God emphasized the complete invisibility and unknowability of God? And did He not, in His Ten commandments inscribed on tablets of stone for Moses, forbid the making of images and say: "Thou shalt have no other gods beside Me. Thou shalt not make thyself an idol (εἰδωλον), nor likeness (ομοιωμα) of anything, whatever things are in the heaven above, and whatever are in the earth beneath, and whatever are in the waters under the earth. Thou shalt not bow down (προσκυνησεις) to them, nor worship (λατρευσεις) them" (Exodus 20:2-5 (LXX))? True, but Moses did not make any idols, nor did he bow down in order to worship anything created. However, on Sinai, as St. Gregory of Nyssa writes in his *Life of Moses*, "he sees that tabernacle not made with hands, which he shows to those below by means of a material likeness". So it is not too bold to suggest that it is precisely Moses who lays a beginning to the contemplation of visible icons of God incarnate, and even to the creation of material icons of heavenly things. The tabernacle, the ark, and later the Temple, were such icons, visible channels of the invisible Deity.

Indeed, so holy were these icons considered that God struck down those who treated them disrespectfully, as Patriarch Nikon of Moscow pointed out in his polemic against the attempts of the tsar to confiscate church lands: "Have you not heard that God said that any outsider who comes close to the sacred things will be given up to death? By outsider here is understood not only he who is a stranger to Israel from the pagans, but everyone who is not of the tribe of Levi, like Kore, Dathan and Abiram, whom God did not choose, and whom, the impious ones, a flame

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<sup>300</sup> Johnson, *op. cit.*, pp. 33, 34.

devoured; and King Uzziah laid his hand on the ark to support it, and God struck him and he died (II Kings 6.6,7)." <sup>301</sup>

In this commandment, moreover, a distinction is made between veneration (προσκύνησις) and worship (λατρεία) that was to become very important in the iconoclast controversy of the eighth and ninth centuries. Icons are to be venerated, but not worshipped; they are holy, but they are not idols. Thus an icon of Christ God, though holy and worthy of veneration, is not the same as Christ Himself, although we do truly see Him through the icon. For an icon, according to St. Stephen the Younger, is a "door" into heaven. A door is not part of a room, but it makes possible access to the room. In the same way an icon of Christ is not Christ Himself, but it facilitates our access to Him. Therefore insofar as, in the words of St. Basil the Great, the honour given to an icon is ascribed to its Prototype, when we bow down and venerate an icon of Christ, we are offering honour and worship to Christ Himself. Thus the commandment asserts both the essential difference between the Creator and creation, between spirit and matter, and the possibility of matter becoming a bridge to spirit, of the Creator becoming accessible through His creation.

In another passage, Moses was told that He could not see God face-to-face, but had to hide behind a cleft in the rock, from behind which He could see, not His face, but only His back parts. Does this contradict what has just been said? No, it clarifies it; for it explains to us that Moses was able to see God face-to-face, not in the sense that He saw His essence, which is unknowable, but in the sense that He recognized Him in His incarnation, in His visible Humanity. "Sheltered by the stone, thou didst not see the face of God, for it was hidden, O God-seer, but didst recognize the incarnation of the Word in His back parts." Or, to be more precise, since Christ was not yet incarnate, Moses saw Him in an icon of His humanity, an icon not made with hands.

A major part of the Mosaic law concerned a priesthood and what we would now call the Church with its rites and festivals. The priesthood was entrusted to Moses' brother Aaron and one of the twelve tribes of Israel, that of the Levites. As St. Cyril of Alexandria writes: "Moses and Aaron... were for the ancients a fine forefigure of Christ... Emmanuel, Who, by a most wise dispensation, is in one and the same Person both Law-Giver and First Priest... In Moses we should see Christ as Law-Giver, and in Aaron - as First Priest."<sup>302</sup> Moses is also a forefigure of *kingship* (although he himself was a priest), as Aaron is of the priesthood. Thus already in the time of Moses we have the beginnings of a separation between Church and State, and of what the Byzantines called the "symphony" between the two powers, as represented by Moses and Aaron.

As Moses lay dying on Mount Pisgah in Moab (modern-day Jordan) he stretched out his eyes over the Promised Land on the other side of the Jordan (which not he,

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<sup>301</sup> Nikon, in M.V. Zyzykin, *Patriarkh Nikon* (Patriarch Nikon), Warsaw: Synodal Typography, 1931, part II, p. 36.

<sup>302</sup> St. Cyril, in Vyacheslav Manyagin, *Apologia Groznogo Tsaria* (Apology for the Awesome Tsar), Moscow, 2004, p. 167.



but his successor Joshua (Jesus) was destined to enter and occupy), and prophesied to Israel: "When thou shalt beget children, and children's children, and ye shall have been long in the land, and shall do that which is evil in the sight of the Lord thy God, to provoke Him to anger, I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day, that ye shall soon perish from off the land whereunto you go over Jordan to possess it; ye shall not prolong your days upon it, but shall be utterly destroyed. And the Lord shall scatter you among the peoples, and ye shall be left few in number among the nations, whither the Lord shall lead you away. And from thence ye shall seek the Lord thy God, and thou shalt find Him, because thou shalt search after Him with all thy heart and soul when thou are in tribulation and all these things are come upon thee. In the latter days thou shalt return to the Lord thy God, and hearken unto His voice: for the Lord thy God is a merciful God, He will not fail thee, neither destroy thee, not forget the covenant of thy fathers which He sware unto them" (Deuteronomy 4.25-31).

Here the great prophet and God-seer lays out in summary form the whole history of the Jews after they would have been "long in the land": their falling away from God, followed by their expulsion from the land (first in the exile to Babylon, then more terribly and long-lastingly in the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans and the dispersal of the Jews all over the world), and finally their conversion to God "in the last days".

The last part of the prophecy has yet to be fulfilled, but it is confirmed by several Old and New Testament prophets and apostles (especially Romans 11). But the first two parts have been confirmed with exactitude, providing yet another testimony that the central thread of human history, that illumines all the rest of it, consists in the history of Israel. But by "Israel" we mean both the Old Testament Jews and, especially, the "new" Jews, "the Israel of God, the Church of Christ" (Galatians 6.16).

*September 4/17, 2021.  
Holy Prophet and God-Seer Moses.*

### 30. FROM DEMOCRACY TO DESPOTISM - IN RUSSIA AND AMERICA TODAY

It used to be thought, even by very intelligent men such as Winston Churchill and C.S. Lewis, that in spite of all its manifest flaws, Democracy was still the best system of government. Not because it was particularly good in itself, but because it was the least bad. And because it prevented the worst - Despotism.

Orthodox thinkers from St. Gregory the Theologian to Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow did not buy this argument. And the history of politics has provided many serious grounds for their scepticism since the time of Socrates - the best of Athenians, who was executed by Athenian democracy. Perhaps the most vivid recent proof that Democracy by no means prevents Despotism, but, as Socrates' disciple Plato warned, prepares the way for it, is to be found in the period 1917 to 1945, when the two worst despots in world history came to power through, - or were at any rate confirmed in power by, - democratic elections: Lenin in 1917 and Hitler in 1933.

The most recent period of history, since the beginning of the third Christian millennium, has provided further evidence for this scepticism. For in 2000 Putin - a despot for all those with eyes to see - came to power on the back of the democratic regime of his patron, Yeltsin. And the United States of America, the most democratic state in the world, now appears to be descending into despotism, not the conventional one-man despotism of the Soviet Union or Nazi Germany, but the anarchy and paralysis of institutions combined with anti-democratic coercion from above whose source we shall call, following the Berlin Committee on Coronavirus, "Mr. Global".

A recent article in *Foreign Affairs* by Fiona Hill, deputy assistant to President Trump and senior director for European and Russian affairs on the National Security Council, confirms this analysis.<sup>303</sup> Hill's article provides some brilliant insights; but it also has some serious flaws (for example, that the present disaster is mainly the fault of Trump and can be put right by Biden). And its proposed remedy - more democracy - is very far from flawless...

Hill's essential insight is correct: that Russia and America, politically speaking, are not so different, and that it is not Russia that is moving closer to America, but the other way round: America is moving closer to Russia - that is, towards despotism: "In the very early years of the post-Cold War era, many analysts and observers had hoped that Russia would slowly but surely converge in some ways with the United States. They predicted that once the Soviet Union and communism had fallen away, Russia would move toward a form of liberal democracy. By the late 1990s, it was clear that such an outcome was not on the horizon. And in more recent years, quite the opposite has happened: the United States has begun to move closer to Russia, as populism, cronyism, and corruption have sapped the strength of American democracy. This is a development that few would have foreseen 20 years ago, but

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<sup>303</sup> Hill, "The Kremlin's Strange Victory. How Putin Exploits American Dysfunction and Fuels American Decline," *Foreign Affairs*, November/December, 2021.

one that American leaders should be doing everything in their power to halt and reverse.

“Indeed, over time, the United States and Russia have become subject to the same economic and social forces. Their populations have proved equally susceptible to political manipulation. Prior to the 2016 U.S. election, Putin recognized that the United States was on a path similar to the one that Russia took in the 1990s, when economic dislocation and political upheaval after the collapse of the Soviet Union had left the Russian state weak and insolvent. In the United States, decades of fast-paced social and demographic changes and the Great Recession of 2008–9 had weakened the country and increased its vulnerability to subversion. Putin realized that despite the lofty rhetoric that flowed from Washington about democratic values and liberal norms, beneath the surface, the United States was beginning to resemble his own country: a place where self-dealing elites had hollowed out vital institutions and where alienated, frustrated people were increasingly open to populist and authoritarian appeals. The fire was already burning; all Putin had to do was pour on some gasoline...”

This analysis is confirmed in spades by the latest political, or rather geopolitical, global crisis: the covid-19 “pandemic”. Hill misses the point when she writes: “Partisan spectacles during the global covid-19 pandemic have undermined the country’s international standing as a model of liberal democracy and eroded its authority on public health”. America’s “standing as a model of liberal democracy” has been undermined, not by the right-left stand-off, but because *it has closed down democracy during the crisis*; and it has “eroded its authority on public health” because *it has destroyed the nation’s public health* by obeying a new global master.

For the transformation that has taken place during the covid crisis has been not so much from American democracy into Russian despotism, but of both countries *into a new global despotism*. For in both countries, and throughout the world, governments have, in a strikingly coordinated manner, ridden roughshod over democratic and ecclesiastical institutions in their determination to control their populations politically, economically, financially, judicially, culturally - and medically. Traditional, effective methods of controlling the virus have been banned; essentially untested and harmful experimental vaccines have been introduced and more or less forced on the populations; open discussion of what these so-called “vaccines” are (they are in fact modes of genetic manipulation), and whether they should be introduced, has been banned, even among scientists. And the most surprising and alarming aspect of the whole crisis is the degree to which governments appear to be coordinating their actions, singing from the same hymn-sheet, as if on the instructions of some “Mr. Global”. As to who “Mr. Global” is, this remains a mystery for the time being; but the at any rate partial participation in the New World Order of the United Nations, which is now a largely Marxist or neo-Marxist organization, seems undoubted<sup>304</sup>; and it seems clear that not only the American government under

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<sup>304</sup> <https://youtu.be/l9NvYfQ1sd4>.

Biden, but also the Russian government under Putin appear to be obeying “Mr. Global’s” instructions....

Hill does not discuss this subordination of both the American and the Russian leaders to the behind-the-scenes global government. She seems to believe that the solution to the complete dissolution of democracy in the world today is – more democracy, and that American democracy can be revived through a clean-up of American institutions by President Biden. But it is too late. Democracy is destroyed, not only in the East but also in the West.

The prophecy of the great Russian elder Ignaty of Harbin in the 1930s has been fulfilled: “What began in Russia will be completed in America...” Lenin always insisted that the revolution would fail if it was not global. It seemed to have failed in 1991 with the fall of the Soviet Union; but now, in an increasingly global and socialized world, it looks again like a real possibility.

According to Alex Newman, both Russia and America are regional parts of the New World Order. “Despite the saber rattling, globalists on both sides of the East-West divide refer to their goal as the creation of a ‘New World Order.’ This ‘order’ they speak of, as we shall show, represents, essentially, a global system of political and economic control over humanity. And Putin, a former KGB boss, is following precisely the strategies toward world order outlined openly by the same Western establishment he purportedly stands as a bulwark against. He often refers to his vision as the imposition of a new, ‘multi-polar’ world order. But a growing amount of evidence shows that it is exactly the same order sought by globalist Western powerbrokers.

“One of the keys to understanding Putin’s crucial role in imposing the ‘New World Order’ on humanity is a grasp of how its proponents plan to build it. Rather than aiming to foist a full-blown totalitarian global government on the world all at once, top globalists around the world have outlined a different strategy. In essence, the plot aims to divide the planet’s people and nations into massive ‘regions’ ruled by supranational institutions – such as the European Union, which is now responsible for the bulk of European laws – virtually free of public control or oversight. The outline of that plan is now in full public view.

“Indeed, former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger – one of the most visible and outspoken globalist ‘New World Order’ schemers – has explained the strategy openly on numerous occasions. Most recently, writing in the *Wall Street Journal* on August 29, Kissinger, using opaque and rather unexciting writing, explained how the process should work. ‘The contemporary quest for world order will require a coherent strategy to establish a concept of order *within* the various regions and to relate these regional orders to one another,’ he explained in the op-ed, headlined ‘Henry Kissinger on the Assembly of a New World Order.’

“But the strategy is nothing new. In 1995, fellow globalist and ex-National Security Advisor Zbigniew Brzezinski, architect of David Rockefeller’s infamous Trilateral Commission, outlined essentially the same plan. ‘We do not have a New World

Order.... We cannot leap into world government in one quick step,' he said in 1995 at the 'State of the World Forum,' convened by former Soviet dictator Mikhail Gorbachev and backed by the Rockefellers and other establishment forces in the West. 'In brief, the precondition for eventual globalization – genuine globalization – is progressive regionalization, because thereby we move toward larger, more stable, more cooperative units.'

"Among the most obvious examples highlighting the trend is the European Union, which is further along than any other regional regime in crushing national sovereignty and ruling over diverse nations by bureaucratic decree. Former Soviet dictator Gorbachev, an outspoken proponent of the 'New World Order,' approvingly referred to the Brussels-based super-state as 'the new European Soviet' – under communism, of course, a 'Soviet' 'was a governmental council used to control the people and prevent counterrevolution. Gorbachev was correct in more ways than one.

"While the Sovietesque EU serves as a model for other areas of the world, it is hardly alone. Closer to home in North America, top globalists such as former general and CIA chief David Petraeus, a member of the globalist-minded Council on Foreign Relations and the shadowy Bilderberg group, openly acknowledged what comes next earlier this year. 'After America comes North America,' Petraeus said confidently in answering the question about what comes after the United States, the theme of a panel discussion he participated in. 'Are we on the threshold of the North American decade, question mark? I threw that away – threw away the question mark – and boldly proclaimed the coming North American decade, says the title now.' As in Europe, the foundation of it all was a misnamed 'free trade' agreement....

"The other key element of globalist strategy, also outlined in the recent *Wall Street Journal* piece written by Kissinger in late August, involves the imposition of what he described as a 'structure of international rules and norms' that 'must be fostered as a matter of common conviction.' In other words, alongside the "regionalization" approach to global governance, truly global structures must be built in tandem to eventually run the emerging 'New World Order' as the regional blocs become integrated.

"A crucial component of the globalist New World Order is the eventual creation of truly global monetary and financial governance. On both fronts, Putin has helped lead the charge. In 2009, the Kremlin even published a statement outlining its priorities ahead of the G20 summit, demanding the creation of a 'supranational reserve currency to be issued by international institutions as part of a reform of the global financial system.' The IMF, the Kremlin statement said, should consider using its proto-global currency known as 'Special Drawing Rights,' or SDRs, as a 'super-reserve currency accepted by the whole of the international community.' The basket of national currencies undergirding the SDR would be expanded, too.

"The same year, Putin protégé Dmitry Medvedev, then serving as Russia's 'president,' pulled what he called a 'united future world currency' coin out of his pocket at a G8 summit. The coin featured the words 'unity in diversity.' Then, he

explained to the audience that it ‘means they’re getting ready. I think it’s a good sign that we understand how interdependent we are.’ In June of 2010, Medvedev was at it again. ‘We are making plans for the future,’ he gushed at an international economic forum in St. Petersburg, Russia. ‘We are talking about creating other reserve currencies, and we are counting on other countries to understand this.’

“Unsurprisingly, other ‘countries’ – Western governments and politicians, really – did understand that. Then-French President Nicolas Sarkozy, for instance, said at the same forum that world powers ‘should think together about a new international currency system’ at the upcoming G20 summit. He also said the world’s financial system was ‘outdated’ and should be replaced. ‘We all need to think about the foundations for a new international financial system,’ Sarkozy urged. ‘We’ve been based on the Bretton Woods institutions of 1945, when our American friends were the only superpower. My question is: Are we still in 1945? The answer here is, “no.”’

“What about American globalists? They are fully on board, too. Former Fed boss and then-chairman of Obama’s ‘Economic Recovery Advisory Board’ Paul Volcker, for example, has long been a strong proponent of a global fiat currency and a global central bank. He is widely reported to have said, ‘A global economy needs a global currency.’ And he has repeatedly called for such a system, hoping to see it emerge during his lifetime.

“In China, George Soros’ proposed leader of the world order, the ‘people’s’ central-bank boss Zhou Xiaochuan has also frequently called for a new reserve currency – in addition to frequent calls by the communist regime in Beijing for a ‘de-Americanized’ New World Order. In a 2009 report published on the central bank’s website entitled ‘Reform the International Monetary System,’ Xiaochuan explained that ‘the desirable goal of reforming the international monetary system, therefore, is to create an international reserve currency that is disconnected from individual nations and is able to remain stable in the long run, thus removing the inherent deficiencies caused by using credit-based national currencies.’

“When asked about the Communist Chinese regime’s idea at a Council on Foreign Relations event, Obama’s tax-dodging U.S. Treasury Secretary Timothy ‘TurboTax’ Geithner, a regular proponent of global regulation and an important globalist, after acknowledging that he had not read it yet, said, ‘We’re actually quite open to that.’”<sup>305</sup>

So the whole world is moving from the regime of democratic nation-states that became the norm after 1991 to a world divided up into regional administrations, of which the European Union, really formed in 1992, is the model, to a single world government with a single global currency. Only this global government will, of course, not be democratic, but despotic... This could have been predicted – and was predicted – centuries ago. The Founding Fathers of the American Constitution recognized that their Constitution could not operate without a minimum level of

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<sup>305</sup> Newman, “Putin: Key Player in the ‘New World Order’”, *New American*, May 8, 2021.

Christian faith and morality in the American people. As President John Adams said: *"We have no government capable of contending with human passions, unbridled by morality and religion... Our constitution was made only for a moral and religious people..."*

So what is the solution? There is no shortcut to good governance. A restoration of Democracy will not deliver from Despotism when an excess of Democracy, and consequent deficit of faith and morality, has been the enslavement of all. Orthodox Christians will long for a return of the Orthodox Autocracy. But it must be remembered why we lost the Autocracy in the first place - because of the drastic decline in faith and morality in the pre-revolutionary Russian people, who were seduced by democratism and socialism because they no longer understood or believed in Christianity... So we come back to the basics: "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all things shall be added to you" (Matthew 6.33) - including good governance, peace, justice and true (which is not the same as democratic) freedom.

*September 19 / October 2, 2021.*

## 31. THE REVOLUTION IN PHYSICS

After the Great War the wrath of God was threatening a world that was careering, not only into luxury and debauchery, but also into atheism. And yet, for the sake of those few who are being saved, and as a rebuke to the majority who are not, God always provides new evidence of His existence, very often in just those spheres that seem to be the breeding-grounds of atheism, such as science. Thus in the inter-war years (1918-45) some developments in physics seemed to undermine atheism and suggest that the universe had a beginning, which could only have been in God...

The years after the Great War were a period of extraordinary experimentation in morality, in politics, in art – and especially in physics. The advances in physics overthrew the whole understanding of the physical world that had prevailed since Newton. Einstein's theories of Special and General Relativity transformed our ideas of the inter-relationship of space, time and gravity, and of the larger-scale objects and events, while in a similar way, quantum mechanics transformed our ideas of the smallest-scale objects and events.

Stephen Meyer writes: "Whereas Newton viewed gravity as a force between objects having mass, Einstein reconceived gravity as a geometric property of spacetime, something he saw as a multidimensional 'fabric' that objects having mass could warp.

"Just as a bowling ball set down on a large trampoline makes a depression on its surface, a large mass such as the sun will curve or depress the fabric of spacetime. The more mass an object has, the larger the warp or depression. Objects having less mass 'fall into' the depression in space-time caused by objects with larger mass, just as tennis balls at the edge of a trampoline will roll into the depression created by a bowling ball placed in its center. Thus, general relativity, and Einstein's field equations expressing the theory mathematically, describe how curved space affects the movements of massive objects and how massive objects curve space. Or as the physicist John Archbald Wheeler cleverly summarized the theory, 'Space tells matter how to move, and matter tells space how to curve.'"<sup>306</sup>

Unlike those other enormously influential supposed discoveries - Darwin's evolutionism and Freud's psychoanalysis, - Einstein's theory of Relativity was verified in a strictly scientific manner.

In 1915 his paper on General Relativity was completed and, as Paul Johnson writes, was smuggled out of Germany to Cambridge, "where it was received by Arthur Eddington, Professor of Astronomy and Secretary of the Royal Astronomical Society.

"Eddington publicized Einstein's achievement in a 1918 paper for the Physical Society called 'Gravitation and the Principle of Relativity'. But it was of the essence of Einstein's methodology that he insisted his equations must be verified by empirical

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<sup>306</sup> Meyer, *Return of the God Hypothesis*, New York: HarperOne, 2021, p. 89.



observations and he himself devised three specific tests for this purpose. The key one was that a ray of light just grazing the surface of the sun must be bent by 1.745 seconds of arc – twice the amount of gravitational deflection provided for by classical Newtonian theory. The experiment involved photographing a solar eclipse. The next was due on 29 May 1919. Before the end of the war the Astronomer Royal, Sir Frank Dyson, had secured from a harassed government the promise of £1,000 to finance an expedition to take observations from Principe and Sobral.

“Early in March 1919, the evening before the expedition sailed, the astronomers talked late into the night in Dyson’s study at the Royal Observatory, Greenwich, designed by Wren in 1675-6, while Newton was still working on his general theory of gravitation. E.T. Cottingham, Eddington’s assistant, who was to accompany him, asked the awful question: what would happen if measurement of the eclipse photographs showed not Newton’s, nor Einstein’s, but *twice* Einstein’s deflection? Dyson said, ‘Then Eddington will go mad and you will have to come home alone.’ Eddington’s notebook records that on the morning of 29 May there was a tremendous thunder-storm in Principe. The clouds cleared just in time for the eclipse at 1.30 p.m. Eddington had only eight minutes in which to operate. ‘I did not see the eclipse, being too busy changing plates... We took sixteen photographs.’ Thereafter, for six nights he developed the plates at the rate of two a night. On the evening of June 3, having spent the whole day measuring the developed prints, he turned to his colleague, ‘Cottingham, you won’t have to go home alone.’ Einstein had been right.

“The expedition satisfied two of Einstein’s tests, which were reconfirmed by W.W. Campbell during the September 1922 eclipse. It was a measure of Einstein’s scientific rigour that he refused to accept that his own theory was valid until the third test (the ‘red shift’) was met. ‘If it were proved that this effect does not exist in nature,’ he wrote to Eddington on 15 December 1919, ‘then the whole theory would have to be abandoned.’ In fact the ‘red shift’ was confirmed by the Mount Wilson observatory in 1923...”

The impact was huge. “It was grasped that absolute time and absolute length had been dethroned; that motion was curvilinear. All at once nothing seemed certain in the movements of the spheres. ‘The world is out of joint’, as Hamlet sadly observed. It was as though the spinning globe had been taken off its axis and cast adrift in a universe which no longer conformed to accustomed standards of measurement. At the beginning of the 1920s the belief began to circulate that there were no longer any absolutes of time and space, of good and evil, of knowledge, above all of value. Mistakenly but perhaps inevitably, relativity became confused with relativism...”<sup>307</sup>

Relativity theory combined with a hardly less important discovery of 1920s astronomy – that the universe is expanding, and that galaxies, including our own, are accelerating away from each other. This produced a theory of the origins of the universe, the so-called “Big Bang Theory”, which seemed – to the dismay of many physicists, including Einstein himself – to be consistent with the Christian belief that the universe had a beginning in time (although physicists and Christians still do not

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<sup>307</sup> Johnson, *Modern Times*, New York: Harper Perennial, 1990, pp. 2-3, 4.

agree on how long ago) and that God created the heavens and the earth. For [the American astronomer Edwin] “Hubble’s discovery of an expanding universe was fraught with theoretical and philosophical significance. If the various galaxies are moving away from our galaxy and from each other in the forward direction of time, then at any time in the finite past the galaxies would have been closer together than they are today. As one extrapolates backward to determine the position of the galaxies at any given time in the past, not only would the galaxies have been closer and closer together, but eventually all the galaxies would have converged, bunching up on each other at some moment in the past. The moment where the galaxies converge marks the beginning of the expansion of the universe and, arguably, the beginning of the universe itself.”<sup>308</sup>

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Still more fundamental and paradoxical than the impact of Relativity theory and the Big Bang theory was that of Quantum mechanics.

Now the pagan Greeks and Romans believed in the goddess Chance (*Tyche* in Greek, *Fortuna* in Latin), as well as what would appear to be its precise opposite, Fate (*Fatum*). More precisely, they believed in the Fates (plural), the three goddesses, Atropos, Clotho, and Lachesis, who were supposed to determine the course of human life in classical mythology. Christianity rejected this belief. Thus St. Basil the Great, probably the most learned man of his time, wrote: “Do not say, ‘This happened by chance, while this came to be of itself.’ In all that exists there is nothing disorderly, nothing indefinite, nothing without purpose, nothing by chance... How many hairs are on your head? God will not forget one of them. Do you see how nothing, even the smallest thing, escapes the gaze of God?” Again, in the nineteenth century, the scientifically trained St. Ignaty Brianchaninov wrote: “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.”<sup>309</sup>

However, modern physics has the same combination of faith both in determinism and in indeterminism – both fate and chance – as did the ancient Greeks and Romans. For on the one hand, it believes in fate, that is, there reigns the most absolute, iron-like dominion of natural law without any exceptions in the form of miracles. On the other hand, it believes in chance, that is, with regard to the smallest units of matter and energy, no determinist laws in fact exist, but only indeterminism. This creates a radical schism, an unbridgeable gulf, between the two halves of what has been called “the Theory of Everything” (TOE).

“The two pillars of twentieth-century physics,” writes the physicist Carlo Rovelli, “– general relativity and quantum mechanics – could not be more different from each other. General relativity is a compact jewel: conceived by a single mind, based on

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<sup>308</sup> Meyer, op. cit., p. 85.

<sup>309</sup> Brianchaninov, “Sud’by Bozhii” (The Judgements of God), *Polnoe Sobranie Tvorenij* (Complete Collection of Works), volume II, Moscow, 2001, p. 72.

combining previous theories, it is a simple and coherent vision of gravity, space and time. Quantum mechanics, or quantum theory, on the other hand, emerges from experiments in the course of a long gestation over a quarter of a century, to which many have contributed; achieves unequalled experimental success and leads to applications which have transformed our everyday lives...; but, more than a century after its birth, it remains shrouded in obscurity and incomprehensibility..."

The reality this theory has unveiled, continues Ravelli, three aspects: granularity, indeterminism and relationality. Granularity is not directly relevant to our theme: we shall come to the relationality of quantum theory later. With regard to indeterminism, the problem for the physicists lies in the following. The British physicist Paul Dirac discovered the equations enabling us to compute the velocity, energy, momentum and angular momentum of an electron with great accuracy. However, these equations are statistical and probabilistic in nature: in spite of their accuracy, they provide us with no certain knowledge of what will be. And not only because all scientific hypotheses are uncertain and provisional, but in principle. Thus quantum physics, the most successful theory in the history of science, declares that reality at the most basic, fundamental level does not follow law; it is lawless. Thus "we do not know with certainty where the electron will appear, but we can compute the probability that it will appear here or there. This is a radical change from Newton's theory, where it is possible, in principle, to predict the future with certainty. Quantum mechanics bring probability to the heart of the evolution of things. This indeterminacy is the third cornerstone of quantum mechanics: the discovery that chance operates at the atomic level. While Newton's physics allows for the prediction of the future with exactitude, if we have sufficient information about the initial date and if we can make the calculations, quantum mechanics allows us to calculate only the probability of an event. This absence of determinism at a small scale is intrinsic to nature. An electron is not obliged by nature to move towards the right or the left; it does so by chance. The apparent determinism of the macroscopic world is due only the fact that microscopic randomness cancels out on average, leaving only fluctuations too minute for us to perceive in everyday life."<sup>310</sup>

The greatest minds in science wrestled with this problem, trying to get rid of it if they possibly could. Even Einstein, who considered Dirac a great genius, albeit one bordering on madness, could not be reconciled with the theory at first. As he wrote to Born: "You believe in a God who plays dice, and I in complete law and order in a world which objectively exists and which I, in a wildly speculative way, am trying to capture. I firmly *believe*, but I hope that someone will discover a more realistic way or rather a more tangible basis than it has been my lot to find."<sup>311</sup> And yet Einstein, too, was finally, but reluctantly, reconciled with what appeared to be undeniable reality that the world is fundamentally *lawless*, which was confirmed by the extraordinary predictive accuracy of quantum physics.

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<sup>310</sup> Ravelli, *Reality is Not What it Seems*, London: Penguin, 2014, pp. 91, 103-104.

<sup>311</sup> "The scientist," said Einstein, "is possessed by the sense of universal causation. His religious feeling takes the form of a rapturous amazement at the harmony of natural law, which reveals an intelligence of such superiority that, compared with it, all the systematic thinking and acting of human beings is an utterly significant reflection" (in Montefiore, *Titans of History*, p. 471).

It took a non-scientist, an Oxford professor of medieval literature, the famous Christian apologist C.S. Lewis, to express the full, shattering implications of quantum indeterminism for the nature of science and scientific laws – and the possibility of miracles. “The notion that natural laws may be merely statistical results from the modern belief that the individual unit obeys no laws. Statistics were introduced to explain why, despite the lawlessness of the individual unit, the behaviour of gross bodies was regular. The explanation was that, by a principle well known to actuaries, the law of averages leveled out the individual eccentricities of the innumerable units contained in even the smallest gross body. But with this conception of the lawless units the whole impregnability of nineteenth-century Naturalism has, it seems to me, been abandoned. What is the use of saying that all events are subject to laws if you also say that every event which befalls the individual unit of matter is not subject to laws. Indeed, if we define nature as the system of events in space-time governed by interlocking laws, then the new physics has really admitted that something other than nature exists. For if nature means the interlocking system then the individual unit is outside nature. We have admitted what may be called the sub-natural. After this admission what confidence is left us that there may not be a supernatural as well? It may be true that the lawlessness of the little events fed into nature from the sub-natural is always ironed out by the law of averages. It does not follow that great events could not be fed into her by the supernatural: nor that they also would allow themselves to be ironed out...”<sup>312</sup>

The great mystery is this: why should the essential lawlessness of every single microscopic subatomic event translates, at higher levels of macroscopic perception – those of atoms, molecules, organs, objects, planets, galaxies – into law-governed things and events? In other words, why does indeterminism become determinism, chance become fate – not in time, but simultaneously, and not only in some places but everywhere? The answer, I would suggest, can only be that God, Who is subject neither to chance nor to fate but is supremely free, being beyond all space and time, decrees every single event in the universe in order to give the impression of chance and indeterminism at one level of perception and fate at the other, when in fact “He spake and they came into being; He commanded and they were created” (Psalm 32.9). Thus Ravelli’s declaration: “An electron is not obliged by nature to move towards the right or the left; it does so by chance” should be changed to read: “An electron is not obliged by nature to move towards the right or the left; it does so by the command of God alone.”

So is God deliberately deceiving the scientists? By no means! They are deceiving themselves – and God allows this in order to expose their folly! For “the world by [scientific] wisdom knew not God” (I Corinthians 1.21) and “He catches the wise in their own craftiness” (Job 5.12; I Corinthians 3.1).

This is most obvious at the macroscopic level. Since ancient times human beings, even primitive, uneducated ones, have always known that nature is governed by laws, that it is *ordered*. Indeed, the great British philosopher Alfred North Whitehead wrote: “There can be no living science unless there is a widespread instinctive

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<sup>312</sup> Lewis, “Religion without Dogma?” (1946), in *Compelling Reason*, London: Fount, 1986, pp. 92-93.

conviction in the existence of an *Order of Things*. And, in particular, of an *Order of Nature*.”<sup>313</sup> And the great majority of them have drawn the obvious conclusion: that there is a Law-giver who commands things to happen in an orderly, lawful way - “He spake and they came into being; He commanded, and they were created” (Psalm 32.9). At the same time, it was obvious to all men in ancient times, both primitive and sophisticated, that there were exceptions to natural law - miracles. For if He speaks and they come into being, why should He not also at times *not* speak so that they do *not* come into being? Or change a law of nature for a longer or shorter period for reasons known to Him alone? Indeed, any unprejudiced observer of history will accept that while some “miracles” are fake, there is a vast number of well-attested events whose only explanation must be God’s temporary suspension of the laws He Himself created.

It was this belief in order, laws and the Law-giver, combined with intellectual curiosity, that was the main motivation of modern science from the seventeenth century onwards. Newton was such a believer (he also believed in the Holy Scriptures); even Einstein appears to have been one. But then the new belief arose that we can study the laws of nature without positing a Law-giver; that is, “the God hypothesis”, as Laplace said, is unnecessary. And yet God remains the elephant in the room of modern physics. Why else would they call the most recent discovery in particle physics - that of the Higgs Boson - “the God particle”? Or are they in fact still obsessed by “the God hypothesis”, and are subconsciously trying to reduce the massive invisible elephant behind their back to the smallest visible particle in front of their nose?

Be that as it may, the fact is that science before the advent of quantum theory believed only in fate, absolute, iron necessity and determinism at every level of reality, a necessity that was lawful (and awful, for it denied freedom) but did not presuppose (in the scientists’ opinion) a Law-giver. That is why the recent enthronement of chance, the exact opposite of fate, at the centre of physics is such a shock to the whole system. But it is no shock to the Christian scientist. For if an electron is not obliged to move to the right or to the left by any law - in fact, the laws we have suggest that such predictions and prescriptions are in principle *impossible* - why should that be a problem for the Law-giver, Who is above all law and necessity, being Himself Supreme Freedom? Thus the discovery of chance at the heart of the fate-based system of pre-quantum theory physics actually restores God to the heart of that system, destroying it from within and banishing both fate and chance in favour of the Providence of God.

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Let us now turn to the second major aspect of quantum theory: relationality... As we have seen, the quantum wave function that is the fundamental unit of the modern physicist's universe is not a thing or an event, but a spectrum of *possible* things or events. Moreover, it exists as such only while it is not being observed. When the wave

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<sup>313</sup> Whitehead, *Science and the Modern World*, New York: Free Press, 1925, pp. 3-4.

function is observed (by a physical screen or a living being), it collapses into one and one only of all the possibilities that define it.

Now this idea creates hardly less serious problems for the classical view of the world as the idea of indeterminism. For it suggests that the objective existence of the world is tied up to an extraordinary, almost solipsistic extent with the subjective perception of that world. The fundamental unit of objective reality, the quantum wave function, becomes real – that is, in a single actual event, as opposed to a multiple spectrum of possible events – only when it is observed, that is, when it becomes part of subjective reality, when it is in a relationship with an observer... But who could that observer be for most events if not God? Thus the multiple possibilities of being at a given point are reduced to one actually when God as it were *looks at it*.

That this continues to disturb the minds of scientists even to this day is witnessed by a very recent cover story in the prestigious scientific weekly *New Scientist*: “Before observation, such quantum objects are said to be in a superposition of all possible observable outcomes. This doesn’t mean that we exist in many states at once, rather that we can only say that all the allowed outcomes of measurement remain possible. This potential is represented in the quantum wave function, a mathematical expression that encodes all outcomes and their relative possibilities.

“But it isn’t at all obvious what, if anything, the wave function can tell you about the nature of a quantum system before we make a measurement. That act reduces all those possible outcomes to one, dubbed the collapse of the wave function – but no one really knows what that means either. Some researchers think it might be a real physical process, like radioactive decay. Those who subscribe to the many-worlds interpretation think it is an illusion conjured by the splitting of the universe into each of the possible outcomes. Others still say that there is no point in trying to explain it – and besides, who cares? The maths works, so just shut up and calculate.

“Whatever the case, wave function collapse seems to hinge on intervention or observation, throwing up some huge problems, not least about the role of consciousness in the whole process. This is the measurement problem, arguably the biggest headache in quantum theory. ‘It is very hard,’ says Kelvin McQueen, a philosopher at Chapman University in California. ‘More interpretations are being thrown up every day, but all of them have problems.’”<sup>314</sup>

This debate reminds the present writer of the work of the Swiss psychologist Jean Piaget, who hypothesized that children are not born with a belief in the continued existence of objects when they are not being observed. It is only from about the age of five that they acquire the belief that an object such as a ball continues to exist even when it is hidden behind a sofa so that they cannot see it any longer.<sup>315</sup> Can it be that contemporary scientists were regressing, as it were, to a state of childlike solipsism, of unbelief in the existence of reality when nobody is observing it? If they were, then

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<sup>314</sup> Philip Ball, “Reality? It’s What You Make of It”, *New Scientist*, November, 2017, p. 29.

<sup>315</sup> Actually, the present writer with C.C. Russell demonstrated in an undergraduate experiment at Oxford in 1970 that this ability is present in children much earlier, from at least the age of three.

there was and is a simple remedy for this form of madness: belief in God. For the existence of God is not merely a pious hope but a necessary assumption, not only of all science, but of the belief in the firm existence of anything whatsoever. For we exist only by God's observing all, and thereby bringing it out of potentiality into actuality. He continually upholds every particle in our body and every movement of our soul by the word of His power. If He withdrew this upholding of us, even for one moment, we would immediately revert to the nothingness from which we came.

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For those with eyes to see, the revolution in physics, and the sheer incomprehensibility in human terms of quantum physics, points to something beyond physics, to God Himself; for, as St. Paul says, "In Him we live and move and have our being" (Acts 17.28).

*October 2/15, 2021.  
St. Andrew the Fool-for-Christ.*

## 32. ON LOVING OTHERS AS ONESELF

St. Theophan the Recluse writes on today's Gospel: "Here is shown a degree of love that one can call boundless; for is there any limit to one's love for oneself. And is there any good which one would not want for himself from others? However, this injunction is not difficult to fulfil. The matter depends on having perfect compassion toward others, in order to fully transfer these feelings to yourself, to feel the way they feel. When this occurs, there will be no need to point out what you must do for others in a given situation: your heart will show you. Just take care to maintain compassion."<sup>316</sup>

Compassion is possible because we all come from one lump of clay, and our destinies are bound up with each other in a very profound way.

That is why, when Adam and Eve sinned, their sin, and its consequences, spread to all their children. And how this must have afflicted them as they sat groaning in the darkness of hell meditating on the consequences of their sin for their human family for thousands of years?

For nothing afflicts a parent so much as the suffering of their child, especially if it is undeserved. They would far rather take that suffering on themselves than see it in their children.

Consider the story in Genesis 9 of the sin of Ham, who saw the nakedness of his father Noah after he got drunk. When Noah awoke from his drunkenness and knew what Ham had done, and, unlike his brothers Shem and Japheth, did not hide himself from seeing his father's shame, he cursed - not Ham, the guilty one, but Ham's son Canaan. Many are puzzled by this. Why should the innocent suffer for the guilty? St. Augustine explains this very well: it was a much harsher punishment for Ham that his son should suffer for his, Ham's sin, than if he himself had suffered.

We find this principle often in life, when innocent children, even whole generations, suffer because of the sins of their fathers. Consider the sufferings of parents whose children turn out to be drug addicts or criminals. Or suffer from some painful incurable cancer. By allowing this, God may be purging both the parents of their children of their sins. But above all He is teaching men compassion by showing us that "we are all in it together".

Sometimes the sins of the fathers pursue the sons even "until the third and fourth generations". Just look at the history of Russia since 1917, how much she has suffered for the sin of the generation that renounced the Tsar. The holy Fathers of our Russian Church Abroad teach that the whole of Russia suffered, and will suffer, because we all, in one way or another, have participated in the sin of regicide, because successive generations are part of the flesh of that nation that once prided itself on its pursuit of holiness, but saw fit to abandon to his death the first and holiest among them, who

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<sup>316</sup> St. Theophan, *Thoughts for Each Day of the Year*, Moscow: Sretensky monastery, 2010, p. 219.



gave his life to leading his people to the Kingdom of heaven. The curse can be broken only when the nation as a whole repents of that sin.

Let us consider another example, from the life of today's saint, Ammon of Egypt:-  
"Once a child who had been bitten by a demon-possessed dog was brought to Ammon. Such were his fits of possession that the youth bit his own flesh. His parents fell down at Abba Ammon's feet and asked mercy of him, but the saint said, 'Why do you trouble me and ask of me what is beyond my power? The child's affliction and healing is in your hands, for you have stolen the bullock of a widow (whom he named) and have secretly slaughtered and eaten him. Return to her a live bullock and your son shall be healed.'

"When the parents of the possessed child heard this, they marvelled at how the saint knew their secrets, and they confessed what they had done, swearing with an oath to make amends for what they had stolen. The saint then prayed, healed the youth, and bade them depart in peace. They returned home rejoicing, and that very hour gave the widow a bullock to replace the one which they had secretly taken and eaten."<sup>317</sup>

When Adam gave birth to Eve, he cried out: "This is flesh of my flesh and bone of my bones!" Thus compassion began at the very birth of the human race in Paradise. But then the fall made us selfish, egoistic. We treasured our own flesh as opposed to our neighbours, which is why that flesh had to die and fall away from us. We did not feel our kinship, and so stopped feeling except for our miserable selves. Then we came to feel, as the atheist Jean-Paul Sartre famously put it, that "hell is other people". But the reverse is the truth. As St. Anthony the Great put it: Our neighbour is not out hell, but our salvation." If we feel his pain as our own, if we love our neighbour as we love ourselves, then we break the vicious curse of egoism and come out into the broad meadows of love. And then the angels, who are full compassion, will rejoice more over the sheep that was gone astray but is found, than over the ninety-nine that never strayed.

*October 4/17, 2021.  
St. Ammon of Egypt.*

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<sup>317</sup> St. Demetrius of Rostov, *The Great Collection of the Lives of the Saints*, vol II: October, House Springs, Mo.: Chrysostom Press, 2000, p. 77.

### 33. THE PSYCHOLOGICAL REVOLUTION

Modern developments in attitudes to human beings – notably, the idea that human beings are simply extremely sophisticated machines that can be programmed and re-programmed at will (perhaps by “vaccine” injections), and that free will is in fact an illusion – are so important that it is necessary to inquire where they came from. The answer is that they came from both East and West, both from the Communist East (no surprise there) and from the Capitalist West (more surprisingly) in the years after World War Two. It is there, on both sides of the Cold War, that the psychological revolution – no less than the political revolutions that had taken place in the pre-war decades – took its beginning.

If Stalinist Russia was hell on earth, then America in the early fifties must have seemed to many immigrants from the East like paradise, a land of happiness, opportunity, prosperity, freedom. But such a perception was deceptive. America in this period probably did indeed represent the highest point of worldly, material well-being yet achieved in history. But as the Lord said, “It is hard for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of heaven”. And beneath the glamour and optimism purveyed by the Hollywood film industry there was a darker side to American life, a side that was closely linked to the great popularity of the new science of psychology.

America’s constitution decreed that “the pursuit of happiness” was an inalienable human right, and Americans pursued this goal in two distinct ways, which may be called the liberal, left-wing way and the conservative, right-wing way. The liberal way was typified by the famous singer Frank Sinatra, a liberal in his politics and a libertine in his life, reputed to be a draft-dodger, a womaniser who regularly spent whole nights drinking and gambling in Las Vegas night clubs mixing with stars and Mafia criminals and presidents (John F. Kennedy was a particular fan of his). He pursued happiness with enormous energy and ambition, but remained unhappy to the end.

The conservative, right-wing way was typified by another actor, John Wayne, who also managed to avoid the draft, but compensated for this in the rest of his life through his ultra-patriotic films and activities. The average American of this period was more likely to be conservative than liberal: hard-working and honest, a church-goer and a fierce anti-communist, a faithful family man who loved his country, looked up to the president and the army and believed in “motherhood and apple pie”. The idealism and optimism and generosity that fuelled America’s vast overseas missions (military and otherwise) were characteristic of these small-town conservatives (typified in the movies by the character played by James Stewart in *A Wonderful Life* (1946)). If they were Baptists from the Deep South, they were likely to be fiercely opposed to the liberalism and atheism of people like Sinatra – but also to be racist.

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Such was the situation between the wars and in the first two decades or so after the Second World War. However, important negative changes in faith and morality

took place in North America after the war that were linked with the increasing popularity of psychology and psychotherapy as substitutes for faith among unbelieving liberals and semi-believing ministers of religion. Thus the Jewish rabbi Joshua Liebman, whose book *Peace of Mind*, published in 1946, topped the *New York Times* bestseller list for 58 weeks, a record, compared analysis and the confessional, and came to the conclusion that analysis was superior in producing peace of mind. "The confessional only touches the surface of a man's life," he said, while the spiritual advice of the church throws no light on the causes that lead someone to confession in the first place. Moreover, priestly strictures about confessants showing more 'willpower' were 'ineffective counsels'.

"On the other hand, psychotherapy was, Liebman said, designed to help someone work on his (or her) own problems without 'borrowing' the conscience of a priest, and 'offers change through self-understanding, not self-condemnation'. And this was the unique way to inner peace. The human self, Liebman insisted, was not a gift from God, as traditionally taught, but an achievement.

"The religion of the future, he declared, must poach from the psychotherapist's armoury. He told his readers that henceforth it should not be 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself' but 'Thou shalt love thyself properly and then thou wilt be able to love thy neighbour'."

We see here the beginning of that "psychology of self-worship" and self-obsession that became so dominant in the therapeutic culture of the 1960s and 70s. Liebman is as wrong as it is possible to be. First of all, it is the therapist, not the priest, who only touches the surface of a man's life. Deep in man, deeper even than his passions, is his God-given conscience, which is not a socially indoctrinated construct, but the eye of God in the soul of man. When a man transgresses his conscience he feels guilt, and no amount of psychotherapy can relieve him of that guilt but only the confession of his sins before God and a priest (whose conscience he does not "borrow", although he may occasionally check his conscience against the priest's).

Secondly, it is precisely *self-condemnation*, and not simply "self-understanding" that alone can relieve the penitent of his guilt, for "he who condemns himself will not be judged" - neither by his own conscience, not by God. Liebman regards the light of consciousness and rational discussion as the means of destroying the darkness of neurotic suffering. But the Christian regards the healing power to be the light of *God* Who alone forgives men their sins and grants them healing. The analyst does not heal so much as help the patient to heal himself by becoming conscious of his inner state. But for the Christian, consciousness of his inner state is not enough: he must also *condemn* that which is sinful in that state, *repent* of it, and ask God to *destroy* it.

By 1950, as Peter Watson writes, "thanks to Liebman's lead, four out of five theological schools had psychologists on their staff. 117 centres for clinical pastoral psychology had been established.

“At first the church showed resistance to, in particular, psychoanalysis. Ministers condemned it as an ‘unsatisfactory mix of materialism, hedonism, infantilism and eroticism’ and, in contrast to the confessional, therapy gave no norms or standards. This intransigence didn’t last, however, because in February 1954 Pope Pius XII gave pastoral psychology a tentative go-ahead.

“Other churches followed, and so one can say that the mid-1950s really marks the point at which a secular psychological model of ‘fulfilment’, ‘wholeness’ and ‘self-realisation’ in this life, began to outweigh a religious concept of ‘salvation’ in an afterlife. And it was this sanctioning of psychology by religious institutions that, as much as anything, encouraged the ‘therapy boom’ that blossomed in the 1960s. Psychotherapy was now proliferating internationally. It epitomized new ways of living and, for many, it replace religion.

“As the number of clergy plummeted – so much so that some people were predicting the extinction of the Anglican church within a generation – the ranks of counsellors snowballed. In fact, by the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the profusion of therapies constituted what the sociologist Frank Furedi identified as ‘therapy culture’.

“But therapy was only one of these developments that, for many people, replaced the role of religion following the Second World War. The other two were drugs and music – in particular, rock and roll. These together comprised what was called the counter-culture.

“It is worth pointing out that roughly one in four people born in the west after the Second World War has used illegal drugs – it is not a fringe activity. And it was against this background that, in 1960, Timothy Leary first ingested *Psilocybe Mexicana*, the mysterious magical mushroom of Mexico. As a result, Leary, a psychology lecturer at Harvard University, came to the view that these mushrooms – whose active ingredient was from the same family as LSD – could ‘revolutionise’ psychotherapy, bringing with it the ‘possibility of instantaneous self-insight’.”<sup>318</sup>

Now if therapy could take the place of religion, it was logical that therapy could also *become* a religion. Thus in 1950 L. Ron Hubbard published *Dianetics: The Modern Science of Mental Health*, “considered the seminal event of the century by Scientologists”, which later metamorphosed (perhaps for financial reasons) into the “religion” of Scientology... “Dianetics uses a counselling technique known as *auditing* in which an auditor assists a subject in conscious recall of *traumatic* events in the individual's past. It was originally intended to be a new *psychotherapy* and was not expected to become the foundation for a new religion. Hubbard variously defined Dianetics as a spiritual healing technology and an organized science of thought. The stated intent is to free individuals of the influence of past traumas by systematic exposure and removal of the *engrams* (painful memories) these events have left behind, a process called *clearing*. Rutgers scholar Beryl Satter says that ‘there was little that was original in Hubbard's approach’, with much of the theory having

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<sup>318</sup> Watson, “D-Day for God?”, *BBC History Magazine*, February, 2014, p. 46.

origins in popular conceptions of psychology. Satter observes that in 'keeping with the typical 1950s distrust of emotion, Hubbard promised that Dianetic treatment would release and erase psychosomatic ills and painful emotions, thereby leaving individuals with increased powers of rationality.' According to Gallagher and Ashcraft, in contrast to psychotherapy, Hubbard stated that Dianetics 'was more accessible to the average person, promised practitioners more immediate progress, and placed them in control of the therapy process.' Hubbard's thought was parallel with the trend of humanist psychology at that time, which also came about in the 1950s. Passas and Castillo write that the appeal of Dianetics was based on its consistency with prevailing values. Shortly after the introduction of Dianetics, Hubbard introduced the concept of the 'thetan' (or soul), which he claimed to have discovered. Dianetics was organized and centralized to consolidate power under Hubbard, and groups that were previously recruited were no longer permitted to organize autonomously."<sup>319</sup>

Even more ambitious and power-seeking than Hubbard was Ewen Cameron, Scottish-born president of the American Psychiatric Association, president of the Canadian Psychiatric Association and President of the World Psychiatric Association. Such a man might have been expected to insist on strictly human and humanitarian standards for his own work. But it was precisely Cameron who introduced *torture* into psychiatry, making Canada, after the Soviet Union and China, the pioneer in the use of psychiatry as an instrument of torture and brain washing in peacetime. If there is an excuse for his behaviour, it is that he was trying to understand the practice of brainwashing used by the Communists on American prisoners in the Korean War. This also explains the CIA's funding of his work.<sup>320</sup>

Nevertheless, his therapeutic methods can in no way be called beneficial for the patient; for, as Naomi Klein writes, "his ambition was not to mend or repair the patients but to re-create them using a method he invented called 'psychic driving'.

"According to his published papers from the time, he believed that the only way to teach his patients new behaviours was to get inside their minds and 'break up old pathological patterns'. The first step was 'depatterning', which had a stunning goal: to return the mind to a state when it was, as Aristotle claimed, 'a writing tablet on which as yet nothing actually stands written, a "tabula rasa". Cameron believed he could reach that state by attacking the brain with everything know to interfere with its normal functioning – all at once. It was 'shock and awe' warfare on the mind."<sup>321</sup>

Cameron's favoured methods were electric shock and drugs. Thus in order to "depattern" his patients, he "used a relatively new device called the Page-Russell, which administered up to six consecutive jolts instead of a single one. Frustrated that his patients still seemed to be clinging to remnants of their personalities, he further disoriented them with uppers, downers, hallucinogens, chlorpromazine,

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<sup>319</sup> <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scientology>.

<sup>320</sup> By "coincidence" the CIA also took an interest in Hubbard's Dianetics. For Scientology's links with the CIA, see Alexander Dvorkin's "Scientology and the CIA", *Espionage History Archive*, February 27, 2016.

<sup>321</sup> Klein, *The Shock Doctrine*, London: Penguin, 2007, p. 31.

barbiturates, sodium amotal, nitrous oxide, desoxyn, Seconal, Nembutal, Veronal, Melicone, Thorazine, largactil and insulin. Cameron wrote in a 1956 paper that these drugs served to 'disinhibit him [the patient] so that his defenses might be reduced.'

"Once 'complete depatterning' had been achieved, and the earlier personality had been satisfactorily wiped out, the psychic driving could begin. It consisted of Cameron playing his patients tape-recorded messages such as 'You are a good mother and wife and people enjoy your company'. As a behaviourist, he believed that if he could get his patients to absorb the messages on the tape, they would start behaving differently.

"With patients shocked and drugged into an almost vegetative state, they could do nothing but listen to the messages - for sixteen to twenty hours a day for weeks; in one case, Cameron played a message continuously for 101 days.

"In the mid-fifties, several researchers at the CIA became interested in Cameron's methods. It was the start of Cold War hysteria, and the agency had just launched a covert program devoted to researching 'special interrogation techniques'. A declassified CIA memorandum explained that the program 'examined and investigated numerous unusual techniques of interrogation including psychological harassment and such matters as "total isolation"' as well as 'the use of drugs and chemicals'. First code-named Project Bluebird, then Project Artichoke, it was finally renamed MKUltra in 1953. Over the next decade MKUltra would spend \$25 million on research in a quest to find new ways to break prisoners suspected of being Communists and double agents. Eight institutions were involved in the program, including forty-four universities and twelve hospitals."<sup>322</sup>

Since publication of these methods would have caused a scandal, the CIA preferred to work with Canadian researchers, meeting them at the Ritz hotel in Montreal. One of these was Dr. Donald Hebb, director of psychology at McGill University, who had been given a research grant by Canada's Department of National Defense "to conduct a series of classified sensory deprivation experiments. Hebb paid a group of sixty-three McGill students £20 a day to be isolated in a room wearing dark goggles, headphones playing white noise and cardboard tubes covering their arms and hands so as to interfere with their sense of touch. For days, the students floated in a sea of nothingness, their eyes, ears and hands unable to orient them, living inside their increasingly vivid imagination. To see whether this deprivation made them more susceptible to 'brainwashing', Hebb then began playing recordings of voices talking about the existence of ghosts or the dishonesty of science - ideas the students said they found objectionable before the experiment began.

"In a confidential report on Hebb's findings, the Defense Research Board concluded that sensory deprivation clearly caused extreme confusion as well as hallucination among the student test subjects and that 'a significant temporary lowering of intellectual efficiency occurred during and immediately after the period

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<sup>322</sup> Klein, op. cit., pp. 32-33.

of perceptual deprivation.' Furthermore, the students' hunger for stimulation made them surprisingly receptive to the ideas expressed on the tapes, and indeed several developed an interest in the occult that lasted weeks after the experiment had come to an end. It was as if the confusion from sensory deprivation partially erased their minds, and then the sensory stimuli rewrote their patterns..."<sup>323</sup>

These developments in North America paralleled developments in the Communist world, where psychological techniques of "brainwashing" and the planting of conditioned sleeper agents were revealed during the Korean War (as popularized in the 1962 film *The Manchurian Candidate*). This was another indication of the surprising similarities between the Communist and Capitalist worlds, especially in their use of science...

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It is well known that the main schools of psychoanalysis tended to see the root cause of all human unhappiness in neurosis – specifically, sexual neurosis caused by repression. This view was supported by the "scientific" research of Alfred Kinsey on sexual behaviour. Jonathan von Maren writes: "He is known as 'The Father of the Sexual Revolution,' and if you've ever taken a university course on 20<sup>th</sup> century history, you'll have heard his name: Alfred Kinsey.

"Kinsey was not only the 'father' of the Sexual Revolution, he set the stage for the massive social and cultural upheaval of the '60s, '70s and '80s with his 1948 *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male* and his 1953 *Sexual Behavior in the Human Female*.

"These books revealed to a shocked and somewhat titillated population things they had never known about themselves: That between 30-45% of men had affairs, 85% of men had had sex prior to marriage, that a staggering 70% of men had slept with prostitutes, and that between 10 and 37% of men had engaged in homosexual behaviour.

"Much less talked about were his other disturbing 'findings' - an in-depth study on the 'sexual behaviour' of children, as well as claims that nearly 10% of men had performed sex acts with animals (as well as 3.6% of women), and that this number rose to between 40-50% based on proximity to farms.

**Got that?**

"Kinsey's research portrayed people as amoral and sex-driven, and is credited as fundamentally changing the way our culture views sex.

"But was he right?

"To begin with, the integrity of much of his work has long since been called into question: among his questionable practices, Kinsey encouraged those he was working with to engage in all types of sexual activity as a form of research,

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<sup>323</sup> Klein, op. cit., p. 34.

misrepresented single people as married, and hugely over represented incarcerated sex criminals and prostitutes in his data.

“But beyond this is the simple fact that Kinsey himself was a pervert and a sex criminal.

“For example, where did he get all of his data on the “sexual behaviour of children”? The answer is nothing short of chilling. Dr. Judith Reisman (whose research has since been confirmed time and time again) explained in her groundbreaking work *Sex, Lies and Kinsey* that Kinsey facilitated brutal sexual abuse to get his so-called research:

“Kinsey solicited and encouraged paedophiles, at home and abroad, to sexually violate from 317 to 2,035 infants and children for his alleged data on normal ‘child sexuality.’ Many of the crimes against children (oral and anal sodomy, genital intercourse and manual abuse) committed for Kinsey’s research are quantified in his own graphs and charts...

“Kinsey’s so-called research was simply a quest to justify the fact that he himself was a deeply disturbed man. Dr. Reisman writes, ‘Both of Kinsey’s most recent admiring biographers confessed he was a sadistic bi/homosexual, who seduced his male students and coerced his wife, his staff and the staff’s wives to perform for and with him in illegal pornographic films made in the family attic. Kinsey and his mates, Wardell Pomeroy, Clyde Martin and Paul Gebhard, had ‘front’ marriages that concealed their strategies to supplant what they say as a narrow pro-creational Judeo-Christian era with a promiscuous ‘anything goes’ bi/gay paedophile paradise.’

“Got that? The Father of the Sexual Revolution was a sado-masochistic bi-sexual sex criminal who facilitated the sexual torture of infants and children. His goal was not just to engage in scientific research in order to see where the data took him, but rather, as one of his prominent biographers Michael Jones notes, to launch a crusade to undermine traditional sexual morality. He did so to wild success—Kinsey’s influence on sex education and law in the Western world is absolutely staggering...”<sup>324</sup>

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It is not difficult to see that the sexual and therapeutic revolutions in North America in the 1950s were leading to a new concept of man as a mere animal whose mental life could be erased and recreated at will by men in white coats. Men like Kinsey, Leary, Hubbard, Cameron and Hebb were the high priests of a new atheist religion that sexually abused, drugged and tortured their “patients”, all in the name of science and the further “progress” of the human race.

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<sup>324</sup> Von Maren, “Alfred Kinsey was a pervert and a sex criminal”, *Life Site*, August 25, 2014, <https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/alfred-kinsey-was-a-pervert-and-a-sex-criminal>.



Not coincidentally, in this period the extraordinarily primitive science of psychological behaviourism became dominant in the Anglo-Saxon countries. The whole emotional life of man was reduced to reflexes of an instinctual or learned kind. The high priest of psychological behaviourism was the American B.F. Skinner, whose book *Beyond Freedom and Dignity* (1971) drastically demeaned the freedom and dignity of man. For determinism was the new orthodoxy. Man was determined by learned reflexes and brain physiology.

Except, of course, the scientist himself. He must be a conditioner and controllers, and not conditioned and controlled, one of the “few conditioners who stand themselves outside morality”. As a character in his novel, *Walden Two*, says: “I’ve had only one idea in my life – the idea of having my own way. ‘Control’ expresses it – the control of human behavior.”<sup>325</sup>

But does this not sound very communist? Indeed, it does. And it should therefore not surprise us to hear Skinner expressing the following sentiment: “Russia after fifty years is not a model we wish to emulate. China may be closer to the solutions I have been talking about, but a Communist revolution in America is hard to imagine...”<sup>326</sup>

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And yet the root cause of this move to a purely atheist, animalian anthropology lay, not in science as such, but in profound *religious* changes in Western society as a whole...

For, as Joel J. Miller writes in his 2009 book *The Permissive Society*, “historian Alan Petigny makes the case that the upheavals of the sixties were just manifestations of religious changes from the forties and fifties...”

“Petigny describes what he calls the Permissive Turn, a liberalization of values that happened following World War II. Some of it came down to a ‘renunciation of renunciation.’ The war had demanded a great deal of austerity and self-sacrifice. But with Germany and Japan subdued, it was time to live it up. Americans plowed their prosperity into material self-gratification. But there was more.

“At the same time, the culture witnessed a shift in the way we viewed human nature. We swapped the traditional American view, grounded in a certain pessimism inherited from the Protestant understanding of original sin, for the newly refurbished and Americanized psychotherapy.

“Freud was no fan of faith, and the rivalry was both hot and clear in Europe. Not so in America, where advocates such as Joshua Liebman, Carl Rogers, Benjamin Spock, and others presented the benefits of psychotherapy without the thorny, antireligious aspects inherent to Freud’s vision. The effect was pronounced. Just two

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<sup>325</sup> Skinner, in Philip Darrell Collins and Paul David Collins, *The Ascendancy of the Scientific Dictatorship*, New York: iUniverse, 2004, p. 183.

<sup>326</sup> Skinner, in Collins and Collins, *op. cit.*, p. 183.

decades after WWII, sociology professor Philip Rieff could *look back* and talk about the ‘*triumph* of the therapeutic’ (emphasis added).

“No such triumph was obvious at the outset. In November 1949, Irving Kristol pointed to the incompatibility of psychotherapy and religion in an article for *Commentary*. The controversy was topical enough—and Kristol’s opinion notable enough—that *Time* magazine actually covered his article.

“How could Americans, particularly religious Americans, take psychotherapy’s rose and avoid the thorn? The answer, said Kristol, was to shift the conversation away from ultimate questions of truth and toward temporal questions of health and happiness:

“Most clerics and analysts blithely agree that religion and psychoanalysis have at heart the same intention: to help men ‘adjust,’ to cure them of their vexatious and wasteful psychic habits (lasting despair and anxiety), to make them happy or virtuous or productive. In so far as religion and psychoanalysis succeed in this aim, they are ‘true.’

“What’s the problem with that? We made truth a question of outcomes. Does *x* make you happy? Then it’s probably good. Does *y* make you anxious? Then it’s probably bad.

“John Crowe Ransom argued in *God Without Thunder* (1930) that most Americans had already traded away the traditional view of God and replaced it with varying degrees of enthusiasm about science, progress, and the like. Here was the most definitive proof of his thesis. Religion, morality, *even reality* were now questions of self-fulfilment—making truth subjective and traditional truth claims irrelevant and meaningless.

“Over the course of his book, Petigny shows how this mind-set swept the country, the culture, and the churches through the 1950s. ‘Americans,’ he says, ‘were coming to view the self as a boundless reservoir of inherent goodness and potentiality. . . .’ According to the new and prevailing view, ‘[T]he perspective of people who look inward to their hearts for moral guidance provides us with the best hope for the future of mankind.’

“Once self-fulfilment becomes the end towards which individuals are moving, then there is no longer any fixed council or direction to govern any particular individual’s choice—only what a person claims will lead to his personal betterment, as only he is entitled to determine. Individual autonomy and self-indulgence trump all else...”<sup>327</sup>

With “the gospel of self-fulfilment” as the end, it remained only to decide on means to that end. And the answer was: science, the science of psychology.

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<sup>327</sup> Miller, “Why the gay marriage debate was over in 1950,” June 29, 2015, <https://blogs.ancientfaith.com/joeljmiller/why-the-gay-marriage-debate-was-over-in-1950/>

Psychology told you that you were just an animal, that God, conscience and sin, including original sin, were myths; and that if you couldn't get satisfaction, you simply had to be "reprogrammed"!

The hunt for the means to "reprogramme" human beings was on...

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One of the most alarming aspects of the contemporary sciences, not only of psychology and psychiatry, but also of physics and biology, is that they appear *to rule out the possibility of freewill*. Psychology is unique in denying the existence of its own object, the *psyche* or soul – and therefore, of course, freewill. We have seen how the post-war science of behavioural psychology and psychiatry made a determined effort to reduce all human behaviour to conditioned reflexes, denying the existence of an autonomous inner world of the mind. Combined with biological determinism, it presented a picture of man as a machine, a highly complex but purely material mechanism.

In order to understand the origin of such a fundamental error, we have to distinguish three types of causality: *empirical, human* and *Divine*... Let us begin with *empirical* causality, which is the weakest, most insubstantial form of causality. For we never actually *see* an empirical causal bond. What we see is events of class A being regularly followed by events of class B. We then *infer* that there is something *forcing* this sequence of events, or *making it happen*; and this we call *causality*. But, as David Hume pointed out, we never actually *see* this force, this putative bond uniting A and B.<sup>328</sup>

In fact, our only direct experience of causality is when we cause *our own actions*. Thus when I decide to open the door, I have a direct experience of myself making my hand go towards the door-knob and turning it. This experience of causality is quite different from watching events of class A "causing" events of class B in empirical nature. I do not see the exercise of my will being constantly followed by the opening of doors. I *know* by direct, irrefutable, non-sensory (what the philosophers call *phenomenological*) experience that the cause of that door opening was *I*. This is the second type of causality, *human* causality; and our knowledge of it, unlike our knowledge of any empirical causality, is both direct and *certain*. Moreover, I know that my decision to open the door was *uncaused* in the scientific, empirical sense. Even if a man were standing behind me with a gun and ordering me to open the door, this would not take away from the uncaused nature of my action. It might explain *why* I decided to open the door at that moment; but, as the philosophers have demonstrated, to give *the reasons for an action* is not the same as describing *the causes*

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<sup>328</sup> To say that A *causes* B is to take a blind leap of faith. For it posits *an invisible something* that connects A with B. For, as C.S. Lewis writes, "the assumption that things which have been conjoined in the past will always be conjoined in the future is the guiding principle not of rational but of animal behaviour. Reason comes in precisely when you make the inference 'Since always conjoined, therefore probably connected' and go on to attempt the discovery of the connection. When you have discovered what smoke is you may then be able to replace the mere expectation of fire by a genuine inference" (*Miracles*, London: Collins, 2012, p. 30).

*of an event*; to confuse reasons with causes is a “category mistake”. Only if the man with a gun *took away my power of decision* – that is, hypnotized me to open the door, or took hold of my hand and placed it on the door-knob and then turned my hand, would it be true to say that my action was caused. Or rather, then it would no longer be *my* action, for *my* action can only be the free result of *my* will: it would be the action of another person: *he* would be the cause (the uncaused cause) of the action.

Both human and empirical causality are caused by God, Who brings all things, both rational and irrational, into being. Thus it is the Divine Causality which causes events of type A to be followed always (or almost always – the exception is what we perceive to be miracles) by events of type B: He is the Cause of all empirical causation. But Divine Causality is closer to human causality, in Whose image it was made, insofar as It, too, is (a) empirically uncaused, and (b) personal, whereas every empirical cause is (a) empirically caused (because God has caused it to be so), and (b) impersonal.

We experience Divine Causality in moments of grace. It has this effect on human causality that it does not violate the latter’s free and uncaused nature; It informs it without compelling it. Thus when a saint speaks under the influence of God’s grace, he retains complete control over his own words while submitting to the influence of God’s Word. This is incomprehensible within the scientific world-view. But since the scientists cannot see even the empirical causes they postulate, why should this concern us?...

One of the very few Orthodox thinkers who attempted really to come to grips with these issues was the Serbian Bishop Nikolai Velimirovich, who died in exile in America in 1956. A polymath with several doctoral degrees in Western universities, he was well qualified to challenge the underlying assumptions of western thought. One of his most important essays was on the nature of causality; in it he demonstrated that empirical causality as scientists understand it is insubstantial by comparison with the only true, *personal* causality, which belongs only to God, men and the angelic world:-

“One of the fundamental points of doctrine in which our Orthodox Faith differs from all the philosophical systems as well as from some non-Orthodox denominations is the conception of causality, i.e., of causes. Those outside are prompt to call our faith mysticism, and our Church the Church of mystics. By the unorthodox theologians we have been often rebuked on that account, and by the atheists ridiculed. Our learned theologians neither denied nor confirmed our mysticism, for we never called ourselves mystics. So, we listened in wonderment and silence, expecting the outsiders to define clearly their meaning of our so-called mysticism. They defined it as a kind of oriental quietism, or a passive plunging into mere contemplation of the things divine. The atheists of our time, in Russia, Yugoslavia and everywhere do not call any religion by any other name but mysticism which for them means superstition. We listen to both sides, and we reject both definitions of our orthodox mysticism, which is neither quietism nor superstition.

“It is true, however, that contemplative practice - not quietism though - is a recommendable part of our spiritual life, but it is not an all embracing rule. Among the great Saints we find not only the contemplative Fathers of the desert and seclusion, but also many warriors, benefactors, missionaries, sacred writers, sacred artists, and other persons of great activities and a sacrificial mode of Christian life. . . And what is our answer to the atheists who call our mystical Faith superstition? Least of all they have the right to call it superstition since, by denying God and the soul and all the higher intelligences, they are indeed bearers of a thoughtless and nefarious superstition which never existed in the history of mankind, at least not on such a scale and with such fanaticism. Now, while those who speak of our mysticism are unable to give a satisfactory explanation of this word, let us ourselves look to it and explain to them from our point of view how should they understand our so-called mysticism. Our religious mysticism is nothing misty, nothing nebulous, nothing obscure or mystified. It is our clear and perennial doctrine of causality. If we have to call this doctrine by an ism, we may call it personalism.

“Every day and everywhere people talk of causes. They say: ‘This is caused by that, and that is caused by this.’ That is to say: the next preceding thing, or event, or fact, or accident is the cause of the next succeeding one.

“This is indeed a superficial and short-sighted notion of causality. We don't wonder about this superficiality of some ignorant persons, especially of the busy people of great cities who have little time for deep and calm thinking. But we are astonished to find the same superficiality with the learned and philosophically minded, as the materialists, naturalists and even deists. And because we call their theory of causes naive and fatalistic, they call us mystics. We consider that all those persons, be they ignorant or learned, who believe in natural and physical causes as definite, are fatalists. Both naturalism and materialism are teaching a blind fatalism without a smallest door of escape or a smallest window for sunshine. We Orthodox Christians must resist this blind fatalism, as all Christians should do, and defend our intelligent doctrine of personal causality of and in the world.

“This doctrine means that all causes are personal. Not only the first cause of the world is personal (as the deists think), but personal are all the causes of all things, of all facts, of all happenings and changes in all the world. When we say personal, we mean intelligent, conscious and intentional. Yes, we mean that some sort of personal beings are causing all, or better to say, are the causes of all. That is what personal means. I know that at this my first statement some non-Orthodox would remark: ‘That doctrine you are probably drawing from your copious Orthodox tradition, for which we do not care, and not from the Holy Scripture, which we take as the only infallible source of all truths.’ To this I answer: no, not at all; this doctrine is so evident in the Holy Scripture, from the first page to the last, that I have no need this time to quote our tradition at all.

“On the first pages of the sacred Bible a personal God is specified as the First cause, or better to say the First Causer of the world visible and invisible. That God the Creator is personal, this is a professed and upheld dogma not only by all Christian denominations, but by some other religions too. We Christians, however, are

privileged to know the inner being of God, i.e., God as Trinity in persons and Oneness in essence. We have learned to know this mystery through the momentous revelation in the New Testament. The dogma of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost means that God is trebly personal, yes supremely personal.

“But not God alone is personal. Personal are also the angels, personal is Satan with his perverse hosts of demons, and finally personal are men. If you carefully read the Bible, without the prejudices of so-called ‘natural laws’ and the supposed ‘accidental causes’, you will find three causal factors, and all the three personal. They are: God, Satan and Man. They are, of course, not equal in personal attributes, and there is no parity among them. Satan has lost all his positive attributes of an angel of light, and has become the chief enemy of God and Man, but still he has remained a personal being, bent though to do evil. Man, since the original of sin, has darkened his glory and deformed God's image in himself; yet, he has remained a personal being, conscious, intelligent and purposefully active, wavering between God and Satan, with his free choice to be saved by the first or destroyed by the second.

“God is activity itself. Not only does he interfere now and then with His wonders and miracles in the life of men and nations, but He is constantly and unceasingly active in supporting and vivifying His creation. ‘Being near to everyone of us’, (Acts 17.27) and ‘knowing even the thoughts of man’ (Psalms 94.11) He eagerly acts and reacts in human affairs: gives or withholds children, gives or withholds good harvest, approves or threatens, grants peace to the faithful and excites war against the devil worshippers. He commands all the elements of nature, fire and water, hail and storms, either to aid the oppressed righteous or to punish the godless. He calls the locust, caterpillars and worms ‘my great army’ (Joel 2.25), which He orders to devour the food of the sinners. He ‘is able to destroy both soul and body in hell’ (Matthew 10.28) He knows ‘the number of our hairs’, and ‘not a sparrow shall fall on the ground’ without His will and His knowledge. All this is testified by many instances in the Bible. And this is not all. There is no page in the Scripture which does not refer to God, yea a personal God, His will and His diverse activities. The whole Bible affirms that God is not only the First Causer of the world but also that He is all the time the personal All-ruler - Pantokrator - of the world, as we confirm in the first article of our Creed.

“Another causal factor is Satan, God's adversary, with his hosts of fallen spirits. He is the personal causer of all evil. Ever since his fall as Lucifer from the glory of ‘an anointed cherub (Ezekiel 28, Isaiah 14) to the dark pit Hell’, he is unceasingly trying to infiltrate evil and corruption into every part of God's creation, specially into man. Envious of God and man, he is the hater of both. Christ called him ‘a murderer from the beginning’ (John 8.44) and also ‘a liar and the father of it [lies]’. He is a mighty ruler of evil and darkness, but still subordinate, unwillingly though, to the all-powerful God. Only with God's permission is he able to harm men and to cause illness, confusion, pain, discord, death and destruction. But the more a person or a people sin against God, the greater power Satan gets over that person or that people. At the Advent of our Lord Jesus Christ the whole world was lying in evil because of Satan's terrible grasp over the bedevilled mankind. The world then was teeming with

evil spirits as never before. Therefore, Satan dared to offer Christ all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them as his own. A robber and liar!

“The third causal factor in this world, according to the Bible, is man. With all his littleness and weaknesses man is the greatest prize for which Satan is relentlessly and desperately fighting, and for which God from the beginning was ready to die. Staggering between God and Satan, man is supported by God and beguiled by Satan, vacillating hither and thither, groping for light, life and happiness in his short span of existence on this planet. Yet, with all his seeming insignificance in this mammoth universe, man is able to change it by his conduct. Confucius said: ‘The clouds give the rain or give it not according to men's conduct’. Much more valid is this observation in Christianity with its belief in a personal God, the Giver of rain.

“By his faith and virtues, specially by his obedience to God, man regains the dominion over all the created nature which God in creating him entrusted to him. But by his apostasy and corruption he dethrones himself and comes under the dominion of physical nature and becomes its slave. Instead of commanding he is obeying the mute nature, and fighting it for his mere existence, as you see it still now happening in our own generation. And instead of having God as his only Master, he got two masters over himself, Satan and nature, both tyrannizing him... By his faith and virtue, man could have removed the mountains, tamed the wild beasts, defeated the aggressor, shut the heaven, stopped calamities, healed the sick, raised the dead. And by his sins and vices, specially by his apostasy from God, his only loving and powerful Friend, he could have caused the destruction of cities and civilizations, the earthquakes, floods, pestilence, eclipse of the sun, famine and all the innumerable evils, pleasing Satan and saddening God. Thus, following God man becomes god, and following the devil, he becomes devil. But be he with God or with God's adversary, man has been from the beginning and is now the focus point of this planet and one of the three most important causes of events and changes in the world. And thus, whatever happens on this world's stage, it happens either by God's benevolent will, or by Satan's evil will, or by man through his free choice between good and evil, right and wrong.

“Now, when we mention only these three causal factors: God, Satan, and Man, you should not think of mere three persons, but of terrific forces behind each of them. Behind God - a numberless host of angels of light, so much so that each man and nation has its own angel guardian; behind Satan - a horrible locust swarm of evil spirits, so much so that a whole legion of them are used to torment one single man, that one of Gadara; behind Man, since Christ's emptying of Hades and His Resurrection, there are by now billions of human souls who, from the other world, from the Church Triumphant, by their intercession and love, are helping us, the many millions of Christ's faithful; they are still fighting against the Satanic forces for Christ and our own salvation. For our chief fight in this world is not against natural and physical adversities which is by comparison a small fight befitting animals rather than men, but as the visionary Paul says: ‘Against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world’ (Ephesians 6.12) i.e., the satanic forces of evil. And we Christians have been, and always shall be, victorious over these satanic forces through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Why through Him? Because love is

a greater power than all other powers, visible and invisible. And Christ came to the earth and went down below to the very hellish nest of the satanic hosts to crush them in order to liberate and save men for sheer love of men. Therefore, He could at the end of His victorious mission say: 'All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth' (Matthew 28, 18) When He says 'all power', He means it literally, all power - in the first place the power over Satan and his satanic forces, then the power over sinners, sin and death. First of all over Satan, the causer of sin and death. 'For this purpose the Son of God was manifested that He might destroy the works of the devil' (I John 3.8) Therefore, we rejoice in our belief that our Lord Jesus Christ is the irresistible Lord. We are acknowledging this belief in every liturgy by stamping the sacred bread for the Holy Communion with the words IC-XC-NI-KA.

"Read and reread the Gospel as much as you like, you will find in Christ's words not the slightest suggestion of natural and physical causes of anything or any event. Clear as the shining sun is Christ's revelation and teaching, that there are only three causal factors in this world: God, Man and Satan. His chief obedience was to His heavenly Father; His chief loving work was the healing of men's bodies and soul, and His chief dispute with the Pharisees was about His power of driving the evil spirits out of men and the forgiving of sins. As to nature and the so-called natural order and laws, He showed an unheard-of absolute dominion and power. He vigorously impressed His followers that they were 'not of the world', but, said He, 'I have chosen you out of the world' (John 15.19). Now, since the Christians are not of this world, they certainly cannot accept the theory of the men of this world about the impersonal, unintelligent and accidental causes of the process of things and events. Also in our liturgical book you find the same three personal causal factors as in the Gospel. The same in the Life of Saints too. The same in the conviction and consciousness of the masses of our Orthodox people.

"Therefore, whoever speaks of impersonal causes of things, happenings and changes in this world, is limiting God's power, ignoring the powers of darkness, and despising the role and significance of man. The Scripture does not know, and does not mention any impersonal and blindly accidental cause of anything in the world. The Bible teaches us quite clearly, that the causes of all things, facts, events and changes, come from higher personal beings and personal intelligences. And we stick to this teaching of the Holy Book. Therefore we make no concessions to the secular, or scientific theories about impersonal, unintelligent, unintentional or accidental causality in the world. When I say we, I do not think only of the great Fathers of the Church, nor of the Doctors of Divinity, nor of the learned teachers of religion, but also of the masses of our Orthodox people all over the world. Our Orthodox people would not say: a wolf caused the death of somebody's sheep; nor: a falling stone caused the injury of a boy; nor: a tornado was the cause of the destruction of somebody's house; nor: good weather was the cause of an abundant crop. Our people look through the screen of the physical world into a spiritual sphere and there seek the true causes of those events. They always seek a personal cause, or causes. And though this is in accord with the Bible's teaching, some outsiders call us mystics, and our Faith mysticism or superstition. In fact, our mysticism is nothing else than a deeper insight into the spiritual realities, or intelligences, which are personally



causing whatever there is or happens, using the natural things and elements only as their instruments, tools, channels, symbols, or signals.

“All this leads us to the following conclusions. First of all, Christianity is a religion not so much of principles, rules and precepts, but primarily and above all of personal attachments, in the first place an affectionate attachment to the person of our Lord Jesus Christ, and through Him to other members of His Church, the living and the dead.

“Secondly, our Orthodox doctrine of personal causality on the whole range of nature and world's history is beyond any doubt the biblical doctrine. It was wholly adopted and explained by the Fathers of the Church, and it is kept lucidly in the consciousness of the Orthodox people.

“The benefits we draw from such personalism in the doctrine of causality are manifold. By it we stir our mind to pierce through the visible events into the realm of the invisible intelligences that caused and dominate the whole drama of the world. It sharpens more than anything else our thinking power, our own intelligence. By it we are constantly made aware of the presence of our Friend, Christ the Saviour, to whom we pray, and also of our arch-enemy, Satan, whom we have to fight and avoid. It helps us enormously towards educating and forming strong personal, or individual, characters. It inspires us with spirit of optimistic heroism in suffering, in self-sacrifice, and in the endurance of martyrdom for Christ's sake beyond description, as testified by our Church history.

“All these and other benefits are not possessed by the follower of the doctrine of impersonal causality; not even the greatest of all benefits - the knowledge of the truth.”<sup>329</sup>

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<sup>329</sup> Velimirovich, “The Orthodox Doctrine of Causality”, [https://stvladimirs.ca/the-orthodox-doctrine-of-causality-by-bishop-nikolai-velimirovich/?fbclid=IwAR1alp1uJODs-KCH4IXqwmRGzU\\_0k0eH34OPwiaHICGmgmvWznKRAMeunn4](https://stvladimirs.ca/the-orthodox-doctrine-of-causality-by-bishop-nikolai-velimirovich/?fbclid=IwAR1alp1uJODs-KCH4IXqwmRGzU_0k0eH34OPwiaHICGmgmvWznKRAMeunn4);  
<http://www.atlantaerbs.com/learnmore/library/TheOrthodoxDoctrineofCausality.html>.

## 34. THE CHURCH CULT OF STALIN

In his secret speech to the Communist Party in 1956 Khrushchev condemned Stalin's "cult of personality". Unfortunately, the Russian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate paid little heed to this admonition – although it obeyed the Communist Party in all other things. Let us look at the stages of this church cult.

From at least the time of the Second World War, the MP did not cease to glorify Stalin in the most shameful way, having truly become "the Soviet church", the State Church of the Bolshevik regime. The cult of Stalin, probably the greatest persecutor in the history of the Church, reached idolatrous proportions. He was "the protector of the Church", "the new Constantine", "the genius of geniuses". The first issues of the *Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate* were filled with oleaginous tributes to the "God-given Supreme Leader". And yet Stalin never changed his basic hostility to the Church. In 1947 he wrote to Suslov: "Do not forget about atheistic propaganda among the people". And the bloodletting in the camps continued...<sup>330</sup>

Together with the cult of Stalin went the enthusiastic acceptance of communist ideology and studied refusal to contemplate the vast scale of its blasphemies and cruelties. Thus just after the war the MP expressed itself as follows concerning the elections to the Supreme Soviet of the USSR: "On this day in all the cathedrals, churches and monasteries of our country there will be offered the bloodless Sacrifice, whose beginning was laid by Him Who brought into the world the ideas of love, justice and equality. Deeply moved church-servers will come out onto the ambons and bless their children to hurry from the churches to the voting urns. They will bless them to cast their votes for the candidates of the bloc of communists... They themselves will cast their votes... The ideal of such a person is – Stalin..."<sup>331</sup>

However, the apotheosis of the Moscow Patriarchate's cult of Stalin came on the occasion of his birthday in 1949, when a "Greeting to the Leader of the peoples of the USSR" was addressed to him in the name of the whole Church.<sup>332</sup>

"Without the slightest hesitation," write Fr. Gleb Yakunin and a group of Orthodox Christians, "we can call this address the most shameful document ever composed in the name of the Church in the whole history of the existence of Christianity and still more in the thousand-year history of Christianity in Rus'."<sup>333</sup>

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<sup>330</sup> Nikolai Savchenko, in *Vertograd-Inform*, September, 1998, Bibliography, pp. 1, 2.

<sup>331</sup> *Zhurnal Moskovskoj Patriarkhii* (The Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate), N 1, 1946; quoted in *Obnovlentsy i Moskovskaia Patriarkhia: preemstvo ili evoliutisia?* (The Renovationists and the Moscow Patriarchate: Succession or Evolution?), Suzdal, 1997, p. 13.

<sup>332</sup> *Zhurnal Moskovskoj Patriarkhii* (The Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate), N 12, 1949.

<sup>333</sup> Cited in Potapov, *What is False is also Corrupt*, p. 223. No less odious was the letter of congratulation sent by Catholicos Kallistrat of Georgia to Stalin: "On the day of your seventieth birthday, we, the believers and clergy of the Georgian Catholicosate, send you, our near and dear Joseph Vissarionovich, our ardent and heart-felt congratulations and wishes that your health remain unbroken and that you have a long life for the good of the whole of humanity. In the course of the first seventy years of your life, through unceasing activity and that immortal creation, your Constitution, you have strengthened in the hearts of the workers of the whole world the evangelical behests of brotherhood, unity and freedom, which elicits disagreement in those who consider themselves guides

Both ROCOR and the Catacomb Church condemned the MP's cult of Stalin. Thus in response to the MP's description of Stalin as "the chosen one of the Lord, who leads our fatherland to prosperity and glory", Metropolitan Anastasy, first-hierarch of ROCOR, wrote that this was the point "where the subservience of man borders already on blasphemy. Really – can one tolerate that a person stained with blood from head to foot, covered with crimes like leprosy and poisoned deeply with the poison of godlessness, should be named 'the chosen of the Lord', could be destined to lead our homeland 'to prosperity and glory'? Does this not amount to casting slander and abuse on God the Most High Himself, Who, in such a case, would be responsible for all the evil that has been going on already for many years in our land ruled by the Bolsheviks headed by Stalin? The atom bomb, and all the other destructive means invented by modern technology, are indeed less dangerous than the *moral disintegration* which the highest representatives of the civil and church authorities have put into the Russian soul by their example. The breaking of the atom brings with it only physical devastation and destruction, whereas the *corruption of the mind, heart and will* entails the *spiritual death* of a whole nation, after which there is *no resurrection*."<sup>334</sup>

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On March 5, 1953, Stalin was dying. "His face was discoloured," wrote his daughter Svetlana, "his features becoming unrecognizable... He literally choked to death as we watched. The death agony was terrible... At the last minute, he opened his eyes. It was a terrible look, either mad or angry, and full of the fear of death."

"Suddenly," continues Simon Sebag Montefiore, "the rhythm of his breathing changed. A nurse thought it was 'like a greeting'. He 'seemed either to be pointing upwards somewhere or threatening us all...' observed Svetlana. It was more likely he was simply clawing the air for oxygen [or pointing at the demons coming for his soul]. 'Then the next moment, his spirit after one last effort tore itself from his body.' A woman doctor burst into tears and threw her arms around the devastated Svetlana..."<sup>335</sup>

And therein lay the tragedy for Russia and the world: that so many still loved this most evil of men. For in the days that followed millions poured into Moscow to mourn over the destroyer of their country and their Church. The hysteria was so great that hundreds were crushed to death. Their grief was genuine – and therefore the

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of the blind, light for those in darkness and instructors of the ignorant, and who try to suppress the consciousness that has awakened in men of their lofty human dignity.

"Knowing firmly that it is difficult to kick against the pricks, we hope that in the first years of your second seventy years, the opponents of truth and justice will recover their sight and say: you are right, Joseph Vissarionovich most wise, and righteous are your judgements..." (*Zhurnal Moskovskoj Patriarkhii* (Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate), N 1, 1950.

<sup>334</sup> I.M Andreyev, *Is the Grace of God present in the Soviet Church?* Wildwood, Alberta: Monastery Press, 2000, pp. 32-33 (with some changes in the translation).

<sup>335</sup> Montefiore, *Stalin. The Court of the Red Tsar*, London: Phoenix, 2004, pp. 663-664.

punishment of the land continued. To this day the wrath of God over the Russian land continues unassuaged...

Chingiz Aitmatov tells the following story in partial explanation: Stalin called together his closest comrades-in-arms. "I understand you're wondering how I govern the people so that every last one of them ... thinks of me as a living god. Now I'll teach you the right attitude toward the people." And he ordered a chicken brought in. He plucked it live, in front of them all, down to the last feather, down to the red flesh, until only the comb was left on its head. "And now watch," he said, and let the chicken go. It could have gone off where it wished, but it went nowhere. It was too hot in the sun and too cold in the shade. The poor bird could only press itself against Stalin's boots. And then he tossed it a crumb of grain, and the bird followed him wherever he went. Otherwise, it would have fallen over from hunger. "That," he told his pupils, "is how you govern our people."<sup>336</sup>

Of course, there were many around the world, fellow-travellers who had made a good career out of Stalinism, who may not have loved him, but were not inclined to rejoice at his death. One such was the famous German playwright Bertolt Brecht, who, as Paul Johnson writes, "always, and often publicly, supported all Stalin's policies, including his artistic ones... When Stalin finally died, Brecht's comment was: 'The oppressed of all five continents... must have felt their heartbeats stop when they heard that Stalin was dead. He was the embodiment of their hopes.' He was delighted in 1955 to be awarded the Stalin Peace Prize. Most of the 160,000 roubles went straight into his Swiss account. But he went to Moscow to receive it and asked Boris Pasternak, apparently unaware of his vulnerable position, to translate his acceptance speech. Pasternak was happy to do this, but later - the prize having been renamed in the meantime - ignored Brecht's request that he translate a bunch of his poems in praise of Lenin. Brecht was dismayed by the circulation of Khrushchev's Secret Session Speech on Stalin's crimes and strongly opposed its publication. He gave his reasons to one of his disciples: 'I have a horse. He is lame, mangy, and he squints. Someone comes along and says: but the horse squints, he is lame and, look here, he is mangy. He is right, but what is that to me? I have no other horse. There is no other. The best thing, I think, is to think about his faults as little as possible...'"<sup>337</sup>

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<sup>336</sup> Cited in Potapov, *What is False is also Corrupt*, p. 223. Cf. *JMP*, 1949, N 12, pp. 5-11. No less odious was the letter of congratulation sent by Catholicos Kallistrat of Georgia to Stalin: "On the day of your seventieth birthday, we, the believers and clergy of the Georgian Catholicosate, send you, our near and dear Joseph Vissarionovich, our ardent and heart-felt congratulations and wishes that your health remain unbroken and that you have a long life for the good of the whole of humanity. In the course of the first seventy years of your life, through unceasing activity and that immortal creation, your Constitution, you have strengthened in the hearts of the workers of the whole world the evangelical behests of brotherhood, unity and freedom, which elicits disagreement in those who consider themselves guides of the blind, light for those in darkness and instructors of the ignorant, and who try to suppress the consciousness that has awakened in men of their lofty human dignity.

"Knowing firmly that it is difficult to kick against the pricks, we hope that in the first years of your second seventy years, the opponents of truth and justice will recover their sight and say: you are right, Joseph Vissarionovich. Most wise, and righteous are your judgements..." (*Zhurnal Moskovskoj Patriarkhii* (Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate), N 1, 1950)

<sup>337</sup> Paul Johnson, *Intellectuals*, London: Harper Perennial, 1988, 2007, p. 191.

One of the few who did not lament Stalin's death was Lavrenty Beria, the terrible Georgian executioner and head of the security services. It is possible that he killed Stalin, perhaps to save himself (Stalin had begun to suspect that he was a Jew.) According to Molotov, Beria actually said: "I did away with him, I saved you all."<sup>338</sup> Certainly, he openly rejoiced in Stalin's death, while even Molotov, whose beloved wife Polina was still in prison when Stalin died, genuinely mourned him. Ironically, Beria may have been the one satrap who really did not believe in communism – after all, he wanted his grandchildren to go to Oxford University! (If he had wanted them to deepen their knowledge of Marxism in a Marxist environment, he should have preferred Cambridge University, the main nest of Stalin's spies, or the London School of Economics.)

The Moscow Patriarchate was quite different: it showed no let-up in its worship of Stalin, even after his death. Thus in *Izvestia* on March 10, 1953, there appeared Patriarch Alexis' letter to the USSR Council of Ministers: "In my own name and in the name of the Russian Orthodox Church I express my deepest and sincerest condolences on the death of the unforgettable Joseph Vissarionovich Stalin, the great builder of the people's happiness. His death is a heavy grief for our Fatherland and all the peoples who dwell in it. His death has been taken with deep grief by the whole of the Russian Orthodox Church, which will never forget his benevolent attitude towards the needs of the Church. His radiant memory will never be erased from our hearts. Our Church intones 'eternal memory' to him with a special feeling of unceasing love." And in 1955 Alexis declared his church's continued loyalty to Stalin's successors: "The Russian Orthodox Church supports the totally peaceful foreign policy of our government, not because the Church allegedly lacks freedom, but because Soviet policy is just and corresponds to the Christian ideals which the Church preaches."<sup>339</sup>

In very sharp contrast, the Hierarchical Synod of ROCOR declared: "The death of Stalin is the death of the greatest persecutor of the faith of Christ in history. The crimes of Nero, Diocletian, Julian the Apostate and other rogues pale in the face of his terrible deeds. Nobody can compare with him, either in the quantity of his victims, or in his cruelty towards them, or in his cunning in the attainment of his goals. It seemed as if all satanic evil was incarnate in this man, and that, to a still greater degree than the Pharisees, he deserves the title *son of the devil*."<sup>340</sup>

Marxism-Leninism went out of fashion after the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991. But the communist spirit never died: by the end of the liberal era of the 1990s, it revived in the form of "National Bolshevism", an extreme nationalistic form of the old communism with some "Orthodoxy" added but without Marxism. This modernized form of the old ideology sought to justify the Soviet past in all its unprecedented evil, and rejected repentance for its sins as a betrayal of the nation.

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<sup>338</sup> Stone, *Europe*, p. 103.

<sup>339</sup> Quoted in Christopher Andrew and Vasili Mitrokhin, *The Mitrokhin Archive*, London: Allen Lane the Penguin Press, 1999, p. 635.

<sup>340</sup> *Tserkovnaia Zhizn'*, 1953, NN 3-4, pp. 63-65.

It was illustrated most vividly in an article entitled "The Religion of Victory" in which a new Russian religio-political bloc, "For Victory!" presented its programme. The victory in question was that of the Soviet forces in 1945, whose blood was considered by the bloc to have "a mystical, sacred meaning", being "the main emblem of the Russian historical consciousness". The political and economic aspects of the bloc's programme were communistic; but its nationalist and religious aspects were still more alarming. Yeltsin and his colleagues were accused of having betrayed '45 and the "truly genius-quality" achievements of post-war Sovietism.

"The enemy [which is clearly the West]," wrote Valentine Chikin, "has not succeeded in destroying our Victory. Victory is that spiritual force which will help us to be regenerated. From Victory, as from a fruitful tree, will arise new technologies, will grow new schools, defence will be strengthened, a world-view will be worked out. And a new communality embracing the whole nation will confirm the Victory of '45 in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

"Let us not forget: in the 40s a wonderful fusing together of Russian epochs took place. Of the pagan, with Prince Sviatoslav ['the accursed', as the Orthodox Church calls him], who defeated the Khazars. Of the Orthodox, in which the great Russian commanders and saints Alexander Nevsky and Dimitri Donskoj acted. Of the monarchist, with Peter, Suvorov and Kutuzov. In the smoke of the battles of the Fatherland war they combined with the brilliant 'reds' Zhukov, Vasilevsky and Rokossovsky, which Joseph Stalin so clearly and loudly proclaimed from the Mausoleum... Only the bloc 'For Victory' has the right to claim the breadth of the whole nation. The ideology of the bloc 'For Victory!' is the long awaited national idea... Victory is also that sacred word which overflows the Russian heart with pride and freedom."

Alexander Prokhanov continued the theme: "Victory is not simply the national idea. Victory is a faith, the particular religious cast of mind of the Russians. Under the cupola of Victory both the Orthodox and the Muslim and the atheist and the passionately believing person will find himself a place. Of course, in order to reveal this faith, it needs its evangelists, such as John the Theologian. It needs its builders and organizers. In the consciousness of this religious philosophy there is a place for artists and sculptors, sociologists and political scientists, historians and politicians.

"We still have to finish building this great Russian faith – Victory! In it the miracle expected for centuries, which was handed down from the sorcerers from mouth to mouth, from Kievan Rus' to the Moscow principedom, from the empire of the tsars to the red empire of the leaders (*vozhdej*). This is the hope of universal good, of universal love. The understanding that the world is ruled, not by the blind forces of matter, but by Justice and Divine righteousness...."<sup>341</sup>

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<sup>341</sup> V. Chikin, A. Prokhanov, "Religia Pobedy: Beseda", *Zavtra*, № 32 (297), 1999, p. 2.

Orthodox writers rushed to support this ideology. Movements began for the canonization of such “strong” leaders as Ivan the Terrible and Rasputin. “Icons” of Stalin have appeared.

And, most horrific and blasphemous of all, the anniversary of the Soviet victory on May 9, 1945 was described as a “feast of feasts” comparable to Pascha – even as Pascha itself! Thus in an article on an MP web-site we read: “The ‘atheist’ USSR, trampling down death by death, resurrected and saved the world. Only because ‘godly’ and ‘ungodly’ soldiers died in their millions do we live today and the whole population of the world, the whole of humanity, is alive. It would be no exaggeration to think that that terrible and great war and great Victory in that Great war caused the first sociologically large-scale micro-resurrection, a reproduction by the peoples of the USSR of the exploit of Christ. May 9, 1945 became the most convincing witness of the fact that 2000 years ago Christ was resurrected. Therefore our Great Victory is the feast of feasts, it is Pascha...”<sup>342</sup>

Again, the former idol of ROCOR’s liberals, Fr. Dmitri Dudko, wrote: “Now the time has come to rehabilitate Stalin. And yet not him himself, but the concept of statehood. Today we can see for ourselves what a crime non-statehood is and what a blessing statehood is! No matter how many cry that in Soviet times many perished in the camps – how many are perishing now, without trials or investigations... If Stalin were here, there would be no such collapse... Stalin, an atheist from the external point of view, was actually a believer, and this could be proved by facts if it were not for the spatial limitations of this article. It is not without reason that in the Russian Orthodox Church, when he died, ‘eternal memory’ was sung to him... The main thing is that Stalin looked after people in a fatherly manner. Stalin legitimately stands next to Suvorov!”<sup>343</sup>

“Ecclesiastical Stalinism” was the most horrific sign of the lack of repentance of the Moscow Patriarchate even now that it had been liberated from Soviet oppression. That lack of repentance has continued and intensified in the first decade of the twenty-first century. In 2010, it became the official ideology of the Moscow Patriarchate as preached by her new leader, Patriarch Cyril, who believes that “we must be penetrated with a special understanding of the redemptive significance of the Great Patriotic War – and this is a religious understanding”. Cyril glorifies the Soviet victory in 1945 as a victory of good over evil comparable to the victory of Christ over the devil at Pascha! He mocks those historians who think that the evil on the Soviet side was no less than that on the Nazi side: with their “primitive and sinful analysis”, he says, they fail to see “the Divine perspective”. The fact is, according to the patriarch, that Russia was spiritually regenerated in 1945 thanks to the blood of the millions of Soviet citizens who died in the war. That is why we must triumphantly celebrate May 9 as a general Church feast.<sup>344</sup>

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<sup>342</sup> Yuri Krupnov, “The Victory is Pascha”, <http://pravaya.ru/look/7580?print=1> (in Russian).

<sup>343</sup> Dudko, “Mysli sviaschennika”, <http://patriotica.narod.ru/history/dudko> (in Russian).

<sup>344</sup> “Bogoslovie ‘Pobedy’”, *Nasha Strana* (Buenos Aires), no. 2891, May 8, 2010 (in Russian).

Let us consider a few facts about what Stalin actually did from “the Divine-human perspective” of Christ from 1937 onwards.

First, according to Russian government figures, in 1937 alone 136,900 clergy were arrested, of whom 106,800 were killed.<sup>345</sup> Not content with destroying its own citizens on an unprecedented scale, the Soviet Union then entered into a pact with Nazi Germany, and proceeded, with the Nazis’ blessing, to invade Poland, the Baltic countries and Finland.

And so, as the Polish Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki has pointed out, the Molotov-Ribbentrop pact of August, 1939 was much more than a non-aggression treaty between the two powers. Only five days after the Soviets had invaded Poland on September 17, “a great military parade was held in Brest-Litovsk – a celebration of Nazi Germany’s and Soviet Russia’s joint defeat of independent Poland. Such parades are not organised by parties to non-aggression pacts – they are organised by allies and friends...”<sup>346</sup>

The Nazi invasion on the Sunday of All Saints of Russia, 1941 liberated Western Russia from the Soviet yoke, and was greeted with unfeigned enthusiasm by most of the inhabitants. The collective farms (slave-labour camps in all but name) were dissolved, the churches were reopened, and millions of people were baptized, enjoying free church life for the first time in a generation. Legitimate church hierarchies were re-established in the form of the Autonomous Orthodox Churches of Belorussia and the Ukraine, who joined ROCOR in 1946.

However, it was a different story for those who remained in the Soviet sphere. The miseries of war compounded the miseries created by the Soviets themselves, and there was no let-up in the persecution of the Christians, especially the Catacomb Christians who refused to recognize Soviet power or fight “for the achievements of October”. Many were shot for refusing to serve in the Red Army; thousands more were sent to the camps.

Moreover, in spite of the best efforts of the Soviet propagandists, there was no genuine revival of Russian patriotism, in spite of the peddling of the myth of “the Great Fatherland War” as a great victory for Russian patriotism over a foreign invader. For, as Anton Kuznetsov writes, “from the very beginning the Bolsheviks showed themselves to be an *anti-Russian power*, for which the concepts of Homeland, Fatherland, honour and duty do not exist; in whom the holy things of the Russian people elicit hatred; which replaced the word ‘Russia’ with the word ‘Internationale’,

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<sup>345</sup> A document of the Commission attached to the President of the Russian Federation on the Rehabilitation of the Victims of Political Repressions, January 5, 1996; *Service Orthodoxe de Presse*, № 204, January, 1996, p. 15 (in French). According to another source, from October, 1917 to June, 1941 inclusive, 134,000 clergy were killed, of whom the majority (80,000) were killed between 1928 and 1940. (“Nasha Strana’ – konechno zhe ne Vasha”, [http://catacomb.org.ua/modules.php?name=Pages&go=print\\_page&pid=771](http://catacomb.org.ua/modules.php?name=Pages&go=print_page&pid=771))

<sup>346</sup> “Statement by the Prime Minister of Poland Mateusz Morawiecki”, December 29, 2019, <https://premier.gov.pl/en/news/news/statement-by-the-prime-minister-of-poland-mateusz-morawiecki.html>.



and the Russian flag with the red banner; which even in its national composition was not Russian: it was dominated by Jews (they constituted a huge percentage, and at first it seemed as if it was a question of a purely 'Jewish power') and foreigners.

"During the 24 years of its domination the Bolshevik ('Soviet') power had had enormous successes in the annihilation of historical Russia. All classes were wiped out one by one: the nobility, the merchants, the peasantry, the clergy and the educated class (including all the Russian officers), and all the state institutions of what had been Russia were destroyed: the army, the police, the courts, local administration, charitable institutions, etc. A systematic annihilation of Russian culture was carried out - churches were blown up, museums were robbed, towns and streets were renamed, Russian family and everyday traditions were exterminated, Russian sciences and schools were liquidated, the whole of Russian history was blotted out and spat upon. In the place of the annihilated Russian element a red and Soviet element was created, beginning with the Red army and the Red professors and ending with Soviet orthography and Soviet sport. Our earthly Fatherland, Russia, was in fact destroyed, by terror; she was transformed into the Sovdepiia, which was a complete denial of Russia - it was anti-Russia. A Russian person has no right to forget that a consistent denial of Russian statehood is that on which the Soviet regime stood and on which it prided itself with emphasis.

"One has no right to call such a regime a national power. It must be defined as *an anti-national, occupying power, the overthrow of which every honourable patriot can only welcome.*

"... The antinational and antipopular essence of the Red (Soviet) army is clear to everyone who has come into more or less close contact with this army.

"Every Russian who has preserved his national memory will agree that the Workers and Peasants Red Army (RKKA) *never was either the continuer of the traditions, nor the successor by right, of the Russian Imperial Army* (that is what the White army was and remains to this day). The Red army was created by the Bolsheviks in the place of the Russian Army that they had destroyed. Moreover, the creators, leaders and backbone of the personal make-up of this army were either open betrayers of the Homeland, or breakers of their oath and deserters from the Russian Army. This army dishonoured itself in the Civil war by pillaging and the killing our Russian officers and generals and by unheard-of violence against the Russian people. At its creation it was filled with a criminal rabble, village riff-raff, red guards, sailors, and also with Chinese, Hungarians, Latvians and other 'internationalists'. In the make-up of the Red army the communists constituted: in 1920 - 10.5%, in 1925 - 40.8%, in 1930 - 52%, and from the end of the 30s all the command posts were occupied by communists and members of the Komsomol. This army was stuffed with NKVD informants and political guides, its destinies were determined by commissars, the majority of whom were Jews; it represented, not a national Army, but the party army of the Bolshevik Communist Party (B) - the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. The slogan of this army was not 'For the Faith, the Tsar and the Fatherland!', but 'Give us the Internationale!' This army was created from the beginning, not for the defence, but for the enslavement of our Fatherland and in order to turn it into 'the launch-pad

of world revolution'; it had to wage an aggressive war against it in order to spread antitheist communism throughout the world...

"But of course the most terrible blow at this myth is delivered by the Russian Liberation Army [ROA] in the Second World War, which is called 'the Vlasovites' by Soviet patriots. The very fact that at various times 1,000,000 (one million!) Soviet citizens served in the German Wermacht must cut off all talk of a 'great fatherland' war, for in fact: where, when and in what Fatherland war do people in such numbers *voluntarily* pass over to the side of the opponent and fight in his ranks? Soviet patriots find nothing cleverer to say than to declare these people innate traitors, self-seekers and cowards. This is a blatant lie, but even if it were true, it remains complete incomprehensible why Russia never knew such a massive 'betrayal' in her history. How many wars has Russia waged, and never have there been so many traitors, turncoats and 'self-seekers' among us. And yet it was enough for the 'Fatherland' war to begin and not just a simple one, but a 'Great' one, and hundreds of thousands of people with weapons in their hands passed over to the side of the enemy. Moreover, people were enlisting in the ROA even in 1945, when the fall of Hitler's Germany and the victory of Stalin was evident..."<sup>347</sup>

As the Bolsheviks retreated in 1941, "the NKVD carried out a programme of liquidation of all the prisoners sitting in their jails. In the huge Lukyanov prison in Kiev thousands were shot in their cells. But in Stavropol they still had time to take the 'contras', including several old priests and monks, out of the city. They were led out onto the railway line from Kislovodsk to Moscow. At the small station of Mashuk, where the poet Lermontov had his duel, the wagons containing the prisoners were uncoupled from the trains and shunted into a siding at Kamenolomnya. Then the priests and monks were taken out with their hands bound and their eyes covered. In groups of five they were led to the edge of a sheer cliff, and thrust over the edge. Then the bodies were lifted up with hooks and covered with crushed stone and sand before a tractor levelled the area for the next wagon-full..."<sup>348</sup>

The Germans were in general greeted with ecstatic joy. Thus Alexander Solzhenitsyn writes: "Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia gave the Germans a jubilant welcome. Belorussia, the Western Ukraine, and the first occupied Russian territories followed suit. But the mood of the people was demonstrated most graphically of all by the Red Army: before the eyes of the whole world it retreated along a 2,000-kilometre front, on foot, but every bit as fast as motorized units. Nothing could possibly be more convincing than the way these men, soldiers in their prime, voted

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<sup>347</sup> Kuznetsov, "O Sovietsko-Germanskoj Vojne", <http://catacomb.org.ua/modules.php?name=Pages&go=print> page&pid=570 pp. 3-4, 7-8 (in Russian). A. Soldatov writes: "The memory of the 'Vlasovtsy' 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' ("Radosti Paskhi i Skorb' Pobedy", *Moskovskie Novosti* and *Vertograd*, № 520, May 14, 2005 (in Russian)).

<sup>348</sup> Monk Epiphany (Chernov), "Tserkov' Katakombnaya na Zemle Rossijskoj" (MS, Woking, England).

with their feet. Numerical superiority was entirely with the Red Army, they had excellent artillery and a strong tank force, yet back they rolled, a rout without compare, unprecedented in the annals of Russian and world history. In the first few months some three million officers and men had fallen into enemy hands!

“That is what the popular mood was like – the mood of peoples some of whom had lived through twenty-four years of communism and others but a single year. For them the whole point of this latest war was to cast off the scourge of communism. Naturally enough, each people was primarily bent not on resolving any European problem but on its own national task – liberation from communism...”<sup>349</sup>

“In the years of the war,” writes Anatoly Krasikov, “with the agreement of the German occupying authorities, 7547 Orthodox churches were opened (as against 1270 opened in 1944-1947 with the permission of the Council for the Affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church).”<sup>350</sup> Even in fully Sovietized regions such as Pskov and the Eastern Ukraine, 95% of the population, according to German reports, flooded into the newly-opened churches.

However, the Germans’ stupidity and race-hatred towards the Slavs undermined the goodwill initially shown them, and towards the end of the war many Russians were glad to see the back of them. For the bitter fact is that Nazism and Sovietism are closely related spirits and ideologies, two branches of the single antichristian revolution. So the savage war between them was in no way a war between good and evil, but rather a war between two demon-possessed regimes. And the bigger demon won... Thus as the Red Army advanced westwards, one of the greatest exoduses in human history took place. Millions of people of various nations fled before the apocalyptic beast – especially Russians, who knew precisely what the return of Soviet power portended. These included almost the whole hierarchy of the Belorussian and Ukrainian Autonomous Churches, together with many future luminaries of the Russian Church Abroad such as Metropolitan Vitaly, Archbishops Vitaly and Averky of Jordanville, Leonty of Chile and Andrew of Rockland.

The behaviour of the Red Army soldiers was almost unbelievably bestial, cruel and lustful. This has been excused by Soviet propagandists on the grounds that it was natural for the soldiers to take vengeance on the Germans for their atrocities in Russia. Such an argument might convince a pagan or a communist, but hardly a Christian, still less an Orthodox Christian. In any case, what atrocities had the female population of the German provinces committed? And yet, as recent historical research has demonstrated, it was precisely this element of the population that suffered the most. For, as Richard Evans, Regius Professor of Modern History at Cambridge University, 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 or bludgeoned to death. The raging violence was indiscriminating. Often, especially in Berlin, women were

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<sup>349</sup> Solzhenitsyn, *The Mortal Danger*, London: The Bodley Head, 1980, pp. 39-40.

<sup>350</sup> Krasikov, “‘Tretij Rim’ i Bol’sheviki”, in L.M. Vorontsova, A.V. Pchelintsev and S.B. Filatov (eds.), *Religia i Prava Cheloveka*, Moscow: “Nauka”, 1996, p. 203 (in Russian).

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..."<sup>351</sup>

In this way, if Patriarch Cyril is to be believed, did the glorious Christian soldiers of the Red Army "redeem the sins of the Russian people" in the 1930s! In this way did Stalin "trample down death by death"! In this way was Christ glorified in a new Pascha, a new and unprecedentedly glorious propitiatory act!

But no: the results of the war were irredeemably evil for all the peoples who came within the Soviet sphere – and even outside that sphere, since Stalin bullied his allies into forcibly repatriating millions of Russians in accordance with the Yalta agreement. Thus "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."<sup>352</sup> However, according to Vitaly Shumilo, "more than 6 million 'Soviet' prisoners of war, 'Osty' workers, refugees and émigrés were forcibly repatriated to the USSR up to 1948. The majority of them perished within the walls of Stalin's NKVD."<sup>353</sup>

The largest category of those forcibly repatriated was composed of those who had fought in the Red army. Already during the war the authorities had executed 157,000 Red Army soldiers (the equivalent of fifteen divisions) and almost a million were arrested.<sup>354</sup> And there was no respite now for those who had spent the war in Nazi prisoner-of-war camps or had simply witnessed the prosperity of the West and therefore knew that Soviet propaganda about the West was a lie. Thus 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

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<sup>351</sup> Evans, *The Third Reich at War*, London: Penguin Books, 2009, pp. 710-711.

<sup>352</sup> Soldatov, *op. cit.*, p. 11, footnote 6.

<sup>353</sup> Shumilo, "Sovietskij Rezhim i 'Sovietskaia Tserkov'" v 40-e-50-e gody XX stoletia", <http://catacomb.org.ua/modules.php?name=Pages&go=page&pid=678> (in Russian)).

<sup>354</sup> Alexander Yakovlev, *A Century of Russian Violence in Soviet Russia*, Yale University Press, 2003.

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..."<sup>355</sup>

In 1945 a hand-picked selection of the most craven bishops in Russia were ordered to elect Alexis (Simansky) as patriarch of Moscow, and agreed to an unprecedentedly total control of the State over the Church. Shumilo writes: "An internal result of the Moscow council of 1945 that was positive for the Soviet regime was the fact that, thanks to the participation in it of the Eastern Patriarchs, the appearance of 'legitimacy' and 'canonicity' had been given to this Stalin-inspired undertaking. This led into error not only a part of the Orthodox clergy and hierarchy in the emigration, but also many of the True Orthodox Catacomb pastors in the USSR, who naively did not suspect that there might have been any anti-canonical crimes."<sup>356</sup>

The decisions of the council had direct and extremely unpleasant consequences for those Orthodox Christians who remained faithful to Christ. Thus Professor Ivan Andreev, who was a member of the Catacomb Church before the war, writes: "The Underground or Catacomb Church in Soviet Russia underwent her hardest trials after February 4<sup>th</sup>, 1945, that is, after the enthronement of the Soviet Patriarch Alexis. Those who did not recognize him were sentenced to new terms of imprisonment and were sometimes shot. Those who did recognize him and gave their signature to that effect were often liberated before their terms expired and received appointments... All secret priests detected in the Soviet zone of Germany were shot."<sup>357</sup> This fact, writes M.V. Shkarovsky, "is partly confirmed by documents in the archives of the security police. In 1944-45 in the camps a whole series of cases on counter-revolutionary organizations was fabricated. In these, many clergymen were sentenced to an increase in their sentence or were shot."<sup>358</sup>

Other consequences of Stalin's "redemption" included the enslavement of the Romanian, Bulgarian and Serbian Orthodox Churches to the KGB and its sister-organizations, as a result of which hundreds of bishops and clergy were killed while the survivors became obedient puppets of the collective Antichrist. Then began the terrorization and communization of the captive populations of Eastern Europe; and if the physical and spiritual devastation in these lands did not equal that in the Soviet Union, this was only because they were under the communist yoke for a shorter period, and most of that period took place after the death of Stalin... Meanwhile, as the "free" population of the Soviet Union suffered starvation conditions, the population of the Gulag swelled to its greatest-ever extent, making the period *after* the war still more terrible for Russia than the period before it...

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<sup>355</sup> Ardov, "Avoiding participation in the Great Victory Services", sermon given on May 8, 2005, *Vertograd*, May 18, 2005; translated in *The Hoffman Wire*, May 18, 2005.

<sup>356</sup> Shumilo, *op. cit.*

<sup>357</sup> I.M. Andreev (Andreevsky), "The Catacomb Church in the Russian Land".

<sup>358</sup> Shkarovsky, *Russkaia Pravoslavnaia Tserkov' pri Staline i Khrushcheve*, Moscow, 2005, p. 205 (in Russian).

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The MP's worship of Stalin, which extended from the Second World War to the last days of communism and beyond, is perhaps the clearest demonstration of that organization's gracelessness. Even Catholic and Protestant leaders acted with more courage and devotion to Christ than the hierarchy of the MP. Of course, there were always to be found courageous individual Orthodox laymen and even priests; but these acted *in spite of*, rather than in obedience to, or by the grace of, their ecclesiastical leaders, who, following *their* real leaders, Putin and Satan, continue to glorify the satanic victory of the militant atheists under Stalin in 1945...

*October 5/18, 2021.  
Synaxis of the First-Hierarchs of Moscow.*

## 35. AGAINST THE VAXXERS

Fr. Gregory Joyce is a senior clergyman of the East American diocese of ROCOR-MP, that branch of World Orthodoxy that has led its flock out of the True Church (ROCOR before 2007) and into the arms of the heretical (sergianist-ecumenist) “Russian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate”, as it likes to call itself. In a recent blog-article<sup>359</sup>, he has attacked those Orthodox who believe that the anti-covid vaccines are “the mark of the beast”. I do not believe that these vaccines are the mark of the beast, but I sympathize with those who do – much more than with Fr. Gregory, whose argument is not only fundamentally unsound but breathes the spirit of Pharisaism.

And so I take up his challenge to a “confrontation”... The nub of Fr. Gregory’s argument is that the people who believe that the vaccines are the mark of the beast are ignorant and disobedient because they do not listen to the voice of their hierarchs, among whom he mentions Metropolitan Hilarion of New York, the famous Judas-apostate who, with Metropolitan Lavr, led his flock into the arms of the heretics in 2007, and Patriarch Cyril of Moscow, the chief of those heretics who happens also to be a KGB agent (Agent Mikhailov). Fr. Gregory mocks the anti-vaxxers as the Pharisees once mocked the followers of Christ: “This crowd that does not know the law is accursed” (John 7.49). But can the prime violators of God’s law be taken as competent authorities whose instructions should be followed whatever the cost to soul and body? The answer is obvious...

Fr. Gregory also refers to some competent and Orthodox authorities, such as Archbishop Averky of Jordanville. But has the apostate any right to call on the authority of the faithful servant of Christ? None at all. After all, we must remember that Archbishop Averky was perhaps, with St. Philaret of New York, the most zealous opponent of the Moscow Patriarchate, and considered it graceless – that is, if he were alive today there is no doubt that he would have considered all the clergy of today’s ROCOR-MP, including Fr. Gregory, to be graceless apostates. There is nothing to be gleaned from his writings that could possibly support the taking of a “vaccine” distributed almost by force by Masonic and Communist authorities of the New World Order that has already killed, or seriously damaged the health of, many tens of thousands of people in Europe and America – and the death-toll continues to rise.

But the physical side-effects are as nothing compared to the spiritual side-effects. However, before coming to that, let us delve a little into eschatology... And let us begin by accepting that the vaccine is not literally “the mark of the beast” (while remembering that the language of Revelation is highly symbolical, and requires special wisdom to interpret (Revelation 13.18)). The reason is simple: the Antichrist of the very end times has not appeared yet, and according to the prophecies (both of

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<sup>359</sup> [https://blogtushka.blogspot.com/2021/10/is-covid-vaccine-mark-of-beast.html?fbclid=IwAR3hTpNEt4ylwpovsAEjh\\_qF0Kfc7pNvOYEDOfp2qbnrYBMpOYQzpEeDh\\_M](https://blogtushka.blogspot.com/2021/10/is-covid-vaccine-mark-of-beast.html?fbclid=IwAR3hTpNEt4ylwpovsAEjh_qF0Kfc7pNvOYEDOfp2qbnrYBMpOYQzpEeDh_M)

the Holy Scriptures and of the saints) many world-shaking events have to take place before his coming. All these things will happen – so the end is not yet.

Nevertheless, says the holy Apostle John, already “many antichrists have gone out into the world, by which we know that it is the last time” (I John 2.9. So we have to be vigilant, for we are much closer in our time to the last Antichrist than St. John was in his time. Indeed, many holy elders and saints and new martyrs of the Russian Church said that the Russian revolution of 1917 was “the beginning of sorrows”, the beginning of the reign of “the collective Antichrist”, who would precede the personal Antichrist and prepare the way for him...

As is well known, since apostolic times many true believing Christians have pointed to this or that evil political or religious figure and called him the Antichrist. Thus in the first century the Emperors Nero and Domitian were both pointed out in this way. In the nineteenth century St. Cosmas of Aitolia squarely called the Pope the Antichrist (you know, Fr. Gregory, that heretic with whom your patriarch is so friendly...). A little later, the Romanian hierarch St. Callinicus of Cernica was so convinced that the Antichrist was about to appear that he stopped building a church to St. George – until the saint appeared to him and told him that the Antichrist had not yet come so he could continue building. The Elders of Optina, St. Ignaty Brianchaninov, St. John of Kronstadt all spoke of the soon-to-come Antichrist. St. Barsanuphy of Optina told his spiritual children to read the Book of Revelation and try to understand it, because the times of the Apocalypse were coming soon. St. Tikhon of Moscow called Soviet power “an institution of the Antichrist”, and his confession was repeated, even under the threat of torture and death, by thousands and thousands of Catacomb new martyrs (you know, Fr. Gregory, those people whom your hierarchs condemned as “counter-revolutionaries, but whose tombs, like good Pharisees, you are now adorning). St. John Maximovich believed that the Antichrist had already been born in his lifetime...

Were all these truly believing Christians wrong? Or just loose in their language? Or were they so spiritually sensitive to evil that they realized that the Antichrist was indeed about to come – if the Lord in His great mercy did not put off the time “for the sake of the elect”?

Just as when we kiss an icon of Christ, we know perfectly well that the icon is not Christ Himself, but that the honour we pay to it goes to its Prototype, so when we reject an antichristian person or institution, calling him or it “the Antichrist”, we know perfectly well that we are not denouncing the personal Antichrist himself, but only *his icon or forerunner*. In the same way, those simple but intuitive people (and there are especially many of them in Russia, Fr. Gregory) who reject the so-called vaccine may or may not believe that it is literally the mark of the beast that will appear during the reign of the Antichrist. But in either case they are not wrong: spiritually and symbolically speaking, *it is the mark of the beast!*

But you say: no, this is a purely medical matter, nothing to do with theology or the spiritual life. Then why are you so fierce on these simple people, Fr. Gregory? If this is a purely medical matter, why do you label as “Protestants” those who are simply



following the insights and warnings of 200 years of ORTHODOX eldership and martyrdom? Or do you think we are not closer in time and spirit to the Antichrist than these Orthodox elders and martyrs? *Do you not see the signs of the times?*

Is it a purely medical matter when a substance falsely and illegally described as a vaccine is injected quite unnecessarily (because there are much better and cheaper forms of treatment against covid) into sick or (usually) perfectly healthy people on a global scale (and repeatedly now, with boosters), with the full cooperation of all the antichristian governments and global media and corporations of today, disrupting or banning the conducting of Divine services and filling people with ungodly fear of the death of the body while depriving them of the godly fear of the death of the soul? And now there is emerging the quite horrific fact that perhaps one in three of these “vaccines” (two out of three may be “placebos”) contains a device to change the genes of the patient – that is, change the code of our physical human nature as God created it, and contains conductor substances that enable a computer programme to be inserted into him in order to control him by outside agents. In fact, is it not obvious to all those with eyes to see that the real purpose of this vaccine is *global control* – that is, a socialist/totalitarian project whose details are not yet clear but whose essential antichristian aim is already obvious?

These are profoundly spiritual concerns whose essence is masked (no pun intended) by the medical propaganda. Not only should no Orthodox Christian be forced to accept the vaccine. No Orthodox Christian should be silenced by ecclesiastical authority, or bullied into accepting that his concerns are not spiritual – especially by those whose quasi-church organizations sold themselves to the Antichrist nearly a century ago...

*October 8/21, 2021.*

## 36. THE NEW TESTAMENT IN THE OLD

The Lord said that He came, not to destroy the Old Testament Law, but to fulfil it. Let us briefly see how He did this.

The New Testament priesthood, which is the priesthood of Christ “after the order of Melchisedek”, is the fulfilment of the Old Testament Levitical priesthood.

The Baptism of the New Testament Church is the fulfilment of the Old Testament ritual washings.

The Eucharist of the New Testament is the fulfilment of the Old Testament animal sacrifices.

The New Testament sacrament of confession is the fulfilment of the cleansed leper appearing before the Old Testament priest, who “certified” his cleansing. Notice that just as the cleansing from leprosy takes place *before* the certification of the priest in the Old Testament, so the cleansing from sin in the New takes place *before* the priest “certifies” his forgiveness through the prayer of absolution.

The New Testament coronation and anointing of kings is the fulfilment of the Old Testament anointing (as of Kings Saul and David by the Prophet and Priest Samuel).

However, the New Testament could not come into effect until the Old Testament had expired. That is why Christ Himself fulfilled the Old Law completely during the whole of His lifetime. But after He was crucified on the Cross, and the Veil of the Temple was torn, and the Holy Spirit, the Shekinah, had left the Holy of Holies, the Old Testament expired with His earthly life. He had to die first because “where there is a testament, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator” (Hebrews 9.18).

Then, ascending to the Throne of His Father, he fulfilled His New Testament priesthood, interceding for His people and offering His Body and Blood for the remission of their sins.

For “every [Old Testament] priest stands ministering daily and offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins once and for all, sat down at the right hand of God... For by one offering He has perfected those who are being sanctified” (Hebrews 10.11, 13).

Some important consequences follow from this:-

1. In every Divine Liturgy, the New Testament priest does not accomplish a different offering every time, but *one and the same offering* made by Christ Himself “once and for all” on the Cross.

2. The Blood in the Chalice offered by the New Testament priest is, as St. John Chrysostom says, *one and the same Blood as that which poured out of the Body of Christ on the Cross*.
3. The rites of the Jews, which had a certain prefigurative significance and value in the Old Testament, have none whatsoever now (even if they could be performed now, which they cannot, because the Temple has not been rebuilt, nor the Old Testament priesthood restored). Moreover, any attempt by a New Testament priest to go back to the rites and sacrifices and sacraments of the Old Testament is a blasphemy, which alienates him from the grace of Christ. For “if I build again those things which I have destroyed, I make myself a transgressor. For I through the law died to the law that I might live in Christ... For if our righteousness came through the law, then Christ died in vain” (Galatians 2.18-19, 21).

*October 13/26, 2021.*

## 37. THE SECOND ALL-DIASPORA COUNCIL OF ROCOR

The Russian diaspora numbered in the millions and was scattered all round the world, with particularly large concentrations in Western Europe, Serbia and China. In 1936 General Voeikov wrote: "Although our emigration is divided by personal disagreements and we are at odds both in political and in moral-religious questions, there are practically no people who are not dreaming of the day when we shall all return to our homeland.

"Understanding this, both individual persons, and whole organizations, are striving, by means of various deceptions, to enrol as many as possible adherents. Not a little effort in this direction has been contributed by the Masons, who have instilled the conviction that in the re-establishment of Russia the leading role will belong to them, as being now the only united and well organized union. However, even now the leading role belongs to them in certain states, where all the appointments, elections, reception of orders, etc., depend exclusively on that organization, which (according to information provided by the press and literature) number 4,252,910 members and have 556 billion francs at their disposal.

"Their brothers, the leaders of leftist society, who openly supported the revolution, are applying all their efforts to instil liberal ideas into the masses and to root out patriotism from the growing generation...

"Our émigré press, with few exceptions, instead of stirring up the feeling of patriotism, sings in unison with the Russophobe circles; they instil the thought that the re-establishment of a patriotic, national and, perhaps, also monarchical Russia is dangerous, and they do much to support quarrels in the emigration that have been strengthened as a consequence of the family disagreements that have arisen even among the members of our royal dynasty. Being exposed to publicity, these quarrels have been far from helping to raise their prestige."<sup>360</sup>

The political make-up of the Russian Diaspora was complex; every part of the political spectrum from monarchists to communists was represented. The monarchists continued the struggle against Bolshevism, but with very little success. At the end of 1921 a Monarchical Union of Central Russia (MUCR), known by the Cheka as "The Trust", was established in Moscow, with close links with the Diaspora. However, it was infiltrated by the Cheka, and its leaders inside the Soviet Union executed.

So in September, 1923, in Sremsky Karlovtsy in Serbia, General Wrangel established ROVS (the Russian Inter-Forces Union) – 25,000 veterans of the Civil War who recognized the Romanov Grand Duke Kyryl Vladimirovich as heir to the Throne of Russia.<sup>361</sup>

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<sup>360</sup> Voeikov, *So Tsarem i Bez Tsaria* (With and Without the Tsar), Moscow, 1995, pp. 331, 332.

<sup>361</sup> Roland Gaucher, *Opposition in the USSR 1917-1967*, New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1969.

After the death of General Wrangel, the leader of ROVS became General Eugene Karlovich Miller. He wrote: "For every victory it is necessary to strive for a single goal with maximum effort. For victory over Soviet power the Russian emigration must recognize that not one émigré can have the right to do or say anything that could harm another émigré, that is, a man who in one way or another fights Bolshevism, and not one émigré can have the right not to do what is in his power and he can do in one way or another to harm communism.

"With this thought in mind must he get up in the morning and go to sleep in the evening. From this point of view he must evaluate every step he makes, every work, sacrificing everything personal, secondary and factional to the main and only important thing. He must never do what could give joy to the common enemy. All his efforts must be directed against communism, the communists and the communist authorities in Moscow. Discipline and self-limitation will lead to victory."

On September 22, 1937 this noble warrior was kidnapped by NKVD agents from Paris to Moscow. He was sentenced by the Supreme Court of the USSR and shot in the inner prison of the NKVD on May 11, 1939.<sup>362</sup>

The Russian Diaspora contributed mightily to the culture of their host nations in Europe and America in such fields as philosophy, painting, music and ballet. But much more importantly, the Russian Church Outside Russia (ROCOR) brought the light of Orthodoxy to millions, both Russians and foreigners. It was from this time that Russian theology and theologians began to exert a powerful influence on western thought, with the centre being the church of St. Alexander Nevsky in Rue Daru, Paris, and the St. Serge theological seminary.

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On August 14, 1938 the Second All-Diaspora Council of ROCOR consisting of 13 bishops, 26 priests and 58 laymen was convened in Belgrade. The main question discussed was what attitude ROCOR should take to other Orthodox Churches.

Bishop John (Maximovich) of Shanghai said, in his report "The Situation of the Orthodox Church after the War": "We (the faithful of the Russian Church Abroad) must firmly stand on the ground of the Church canons and not be with those who depart from them. Formerly, in order to reproach canonical irregularities in a Local Church, canonical communion with her was broken. The Russian Church Abroad cannot act in this way since her position has not been completely determined. For

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<sup>362</sup> <http://pereklichka.livejournal.com/67964.html>). St. Philaret of New York wrote in 1975 to Protospesby, ter George Grabbe: "When [Ivan] Solonevich published his famous work "Russia in the Concentration Camp", the affair ended with his being murdered by a bomb. Kutepov, and Miller were liquidated. The Communists do not fear anyone. For more than half a century already they have regarded the so-called "public opinion of the Free World" with "utter contempt"... And they confidently stride towards their goal, by no means concealing what it is, and all the while attaining victory, first at one point, then at another. And the "Free World" is clearly and horribly decaying... And the stench of that decay is no less foul than the stench of Communism!"

that reason she must not break communion with other Churches if they do not take this step first. But, while maintaining communion, she must not be silent about violations of Church truth..."<sup>363</sup>

This "liberal" position was followed by a still more liberal declaration, Protocol number 8 for August 16, which stated: "Judgement was made concerning concelebrations with clergy belonging to the jurisdiction of Metropolitan Sergei and his Synod. Metropolitan Anastasy pointed out that clergy coming from Russia from the named jurisdiction were immediately admitted to communion in prayer, and cited the opinion of Metropolitan Cyril of Kazan in his epistle published in *Church Life* to the effect that the sin of Metropolitan Sergei did not extend to the clergy subject to him. It was decreed: to recognize that there is no obstacle to communion in prayer and concelebration with the clergy of Metropolitan Sergei."<sup>364</sup>

This was a dangerous declaration that threatened to put ROCOR at odds with the Catacomb Church, whose position in relation to Metropolitan Sergius was much stricter than ROCOR's. Moreover, it was not accurate in its assertions.

First, Metropolitan Cyril never expressed the view that "there are no obstacles to prayerful communion and concelebration with clergymen of Metropolitan Sergei". On the contrary, in his epistle of 1929, he wrote: "I acknowledge it as a fulfillment of our archpastoral duty for those Archpastors and all who consider the establishment of the so-called 'Temporary Patriarchal Synod' as wrong, to refrain from communion with Metropolitan Sergei and those Archpastors who are of one mind with him."

Nor did he ever declare that while it was wrong to have communion with the Sergianist bishops, it was alright to have communion with their priests – which would have been canonical nonsense in any case. True, he refrained – at that time – from declaring the Sergianists to be graceless. However, he *did* say, in his epistle of 1934, that Christians who partook of the Sergianist sacraments knowing of Sergei's usurpation of power and the illegality of his Synod would receive them *to their condemnation* – a point for all those contemplating union with the MP today to consider very carefully...

Moreover, we now know (as Metropolitan Anastasy did not know) that by 1937 Metropolitan Cyril's position had hardened considerably: "The expectations that Metropolitan Sergei would correct himself have not been justified, but there has been enough time for the formerly ignorant members of the Church, enough incentive and enough opportunity to investigate what has happened; and very many have both investigated and understood that Metropolitan Sergei is departing from that Orthodox Church which the Holy Patriarch Tikhon entrusted to us to guard, and

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<sup>363</sup> Monk Benjamin, *Letopis' Tserkovnykh Sobytij Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi nachinaia s 1917 goda* (A Chronicle of Church Events of the Orthodox Church beginning from 1917), <http://www.zlatoust.ws/letopis.htm>, part 2, p. 75.

<sup>364</sup> Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 2, p. 75.

consequently there can be no part or lot with him for the Orthodox. The recent events have finally made clear the renovationist [that is, heretical] nature of Sergianism..."<sup>365</sup>

The 1938 Council also discussed the Church's participation in the ecumenical movement. As we have seen, as early as 1920 the Ecumenical Patriarchate had declared the Catholics and Protestants to be "fellow heirs" of the promises of Christ together with the Orthodox; and the main purpose of the introduction of the new calendar into the Greek and Romanian Churches had been to facilitate union in prayer with the western heretics. In the inter-war years progress towards the unia with the heretics had been slow but steady. ROCOR had said little against this, and had sent representatives to ecumenical conferences in Lausanne, Edinburgh and Oxford.

In his report, Bishop Seraphim (Lyade) of Berlin defended this position, saying that the Orthodox had always expounded and defended the sacred dogmas. "Therefore the Orthodox delegates both in Lausanne and in Edinburgh considered it their duty to give and publish special declarations; in this way they clearly marked the Orthodox Church off from other confessions calling themselves 'churches'... We must dispense all perplexities and ideas about Orthodoxy that are often simply caricatures... To be reconciled with the existing situation of alienation of the larger part of the Christian world from the Orthodox Church, and an indifferent attitude towards the ecumenical seeking of the unity of the Church, would be an unforgiveable sin, for we must bear responsibility for the destiny of those who still remain beyond the boundaries of the Church and for the future destiny of the whole of the Christian world... But while participating in the ecumenical movement, we must beware of concessions and condescension, for this is extremely harmful and dangerous, and confirms the heterodox in the conviction that they are members of the true Church. In the sphere of dogmatics and other essential and basic questions we cannot diminish our demands..."

Bishop Seraphim's position was supported by Metropolitan Anastasy and Protopresbyter George Grabbe, chancellor of the ROCOR Synod. However, others took a more "rightist" position. Thus N.F. Stefanov read a report on the influence of Masonry on the Oxford conference. And Archbishop Seraphim (Sobolev) said: "Extra-ecclesiastical unity brings nothing but harm. Orthodox Truth is expressed in the grace of the Holy Spirit, which is precisely what the ecumenical movement does not want to know... Unity can take place only on the ground of grace-filled life. The aims of the ecumenical movement are unattainable. 'Blessed is the man who hath not walked in the council of the ungodly.'"

Metropolitan Anastasy said: "We have to choose between two dangers - a temptation or a refusal to engage in missionary work in the confession of Orthodoxy. Which danger is greater? We shall proceed from our premises. The grace-filled Church must carry out missionary work, for in this way it is possible to save some of those who waver. Beside the leaders who want to disfigure Orthodoxy, there are

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<sup>365</sup> Letter of Metropolitan Cyril to Hieromonk Leonid, February 23 / March 8, 1937, *Pravoslavnaia Rus'* (Orthodox Russia), N 16, August 15/28, 1997, p. 7. Italics mine (V.M.).

others, for example the young, who come to conferences with true seeking. Comparing that which they see and hear from their own pastors and from the Orthodox pastor, they will understand the truth. Otherwise they will remain alone. I have heard positive reviews from heterodox of Bishop Seraphim's speeches at conferences. We must also take into account that the Anglo-Saxon world is in crisis, and is seeking the truth. Protestantism is also seeking support for itself. Moreover, we have a tradition of participating in such conferences that was established by the reposed Metropolitan Anthony. To avoid temptation we must clarify the essence of the matter."

A resolution was passed that ROCOR members should not take part in the ecumenical movement. However, for the sake of missionary aims, bishops could instruct their representatives to attend conferences and explain without compromise the teaching of the Orthodox Church, without allowing the slightest deviation from the Orthodox point of view.<sup>366</sup> The lack of clarity in the definition of ROCOR's relationship to the Moscow Patriarchate, to the rest of World Orthodoxy and the Ecumenical Patriarchate, and to the ecumenical movement in general, continued to plague ROCOR in the post-war period, causing complications in her relations with other True Orthodox Churches. This problem was not really resolved until Metropolitan Philaret (Voznesensky) became first-hierarch in 1964; he firmly established that the only True Church inside the Soviet Union was the Catacomb Church, wrote a series of "sorrowful epistles" to the leaders of World Orthodoxy condemning their heresy, and finally, in 1983 secured the anathema against ecumenism – probably the most important ecclesiastical document of the second half of the twentieth century. The incorrupt body and many miracles of Metropolitan Philaret made it clear to all those with eyes to see that his position was the correct one, truly expressing the mind of Christ...

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Bishop John Maximovich's report also contained an assessment of the spiritual condition of the Diaspora as a whole that was not encouraging: "A significant portion of the Russians that have gone abroad belong to that intellectual class which in recent times lived according to the ideas of the West. While belonging to the Orthodox Church and confessing themselves to be Orthodox, the people of that class had strayed far from Orthodoxy in their world view. The principal sin of these people was that their beliefs and way of life were not founded on the teachings of the Orthodox faith; they tried to reconcile the rules and teachings of the Church with their own habits and desires. For this reason they had, on the one hand, very little interest in the essence of Orthodox teaching, often even considering the Church's dogmatic teaching completely unessential, and, on the other hand, they fulfilled the requirements and rites of the Orthodox Church but only insofar as this did not interfere with their more European than Russian way of life. This gave rise to their disdain for the fasts, to their going to church for only a short time (and then only to satisfy a more aesthetic than religious feeling) and to a thorough lack of understanding of religion as the principal foundation of man's spiritual life. Many,

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<sup>366</sup> Monk Benjamin, *op. cit.*, part 2, pp. 75-77.



of course, were inwardly otherwise disposed, but few possessed sufficient strength of spirit and the ability to manifest it outwardly in their way of life.

“In the social sphere this class also lived by the ideas of the West. Without giving any room at all to the influence of the Church, they strove to rebuild the whole life of Russia, especially in the realm of government, according to Western models. This is why in recent times an especially bitter struggle was waged against the government. Liberal reforms and the democratic structuring of Russia became, as it were, a new faith. Not to confess this idea meant that one was behind the times. Seized with a thirst for power and utilizing for their struggle with the monarchy widespread slander against the Royal Family, the intelligentsia brought Imperial Russia to its downfall and prepared the way for the Communist regime. Then, unreconciled to the thought of losing the power for which they had waited for so long, they declared war on the Communists, in the beginning mainly out of their unwillingness to cede them power. The struggle against Soviet power subsequently involved broad sectors of the populace, especially drawing in the youth to an outburst of enthusiasm to reconstruct a ‘United, indivisible Russia’, at the cost of their lives. There were many exploits which manifested the valor of the Christ-loved Russian army, but the Russian nation proved itself still unprepared for liberation, and the Communists turned out to be the victors.

“The intelligentsia was partially annihilated and partially it fled abroad to save itself. Meanwhile, the Communists showed their true colors and, together with the intelligentsia, large sections of the population left Russia, in part to save their lives and in part because of ideology: they did not want to serve the Communists. Finding themselves abroad, the Russian people experienced great spiritual shocks. A significant crisis occurred in the souls of a majority, which was marked by a mass return of the intelligentsia to the Church. Many churches abroad are filled primarily by these people. The intelligentsia took an interest in questions of spiritual life and began to take an active part in church affairs. Numerous circles and societies were formed for the purpose of religious enlightenment. Members study the Holy Scriptures, the works of the Holy Fathers, general spiritual life and theological questions, and many of them have become clergy.

“However, all these gratifying manifestations also had a negative aspect. Far from all of those who returned to the faith adopted the Orthodox teaching in its entirety. The proud mind could not be reconciled to the fact that, until then, it had stood on a false path. Many began to attempt to reconcile Christian teaching with their previous views and ideas. This resulted in the appearance of a whole series of new religious-philosophical trends, some completely alien to Church teaching. Among them Sophiology was especially widespread.<sup>367</sup> It is based on the recognition of man’s worth in and of himself and expresses the psychology of the intelligentsia.

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<sup>367</sup> Sophiology, or Sophianism, was invented by the Paris-based theologian Fr. Sergius Bulgakov. The heresy centred on the mythological, quasi-divine figure of Sophia, and was based, according to Archbishop Theophan of Poltava in a letter he wrote in 1930, “on the book of Fr. [Paul] Florensky, *The Pillar and Ground of the Truth*. But Florensky borrowed the idea of Sophia from V.S. Soloviev. And V.S. Soloviev borrowed it from the medieval mystics.

“As a teaching, Sophiology is known to a comparatively small group of people and very few openly espouse it. Nonetheless, a significant part of the immigrant intelligentsia is spiritually related to it because the psychology of Sophiology is based on the worship of man, not as a humble servant of God, but rather as a little god himself, who has no need for being blindly obedient to the Lord God. The feeling of keen pride, joined with faith in the possibility of man living by his own wisdom, is quite characteristic of many people considered to be cultured by today’s standards, who place their own reasonings above all else and do not wish to be obedient in everything to the teaching of the Church, which they regard favourably but with condescension. Because of this, the Church Abroad has been rocked by a series of schisms which have harmed her up till now and have drawn away even a part of the hierarchy. This consciousness of a feeling of personal worthiness is manifested also in social affairs, where each person who has advanced a little among the ranks, or thinks he has, puts his own opinion higher than everyone’s and tries to be a leader. As a result, Russian society is split into countless parties and groups irreconcilably at odds with each other, each trying to put forwards its own program, which is sometimes a thoroughly developed system and sometimes simply an appeal to follow this or that personality.

“With the hope of saving and resurrecting Russia through the realization of their programs, these social activists almost always lose sight of the fact that besides human activity making history, there moves the hand of God. The Russian people as a whole has committed great sins, which are the reasons for the present misfortunes; namely, oath-breaking and regicide. Civic and military leaders renounced their obedience and loyalty to the Tsar, even before his abdication, forcing the latter upon him, who did not want internal bloodshed. The people openly and noisily greeted this act, without any loud protest anywhere. This renunciation of obedience was a breach of the oath taken to the Emperor and his lawful heirs. On the heads of those who committed this crime fell the curses of their forefathers, the Zemsky Sobor of 1613, which imposed a curse on those who disobeyed its resolutions. The ones guilty

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“In V.S. Soloviev Sophia is the feminine principle of God, His ‘other’. Florensky tries to prove that Sophia, as the feminine principle of God, is a special substance. He tries to find this teaching in St. Athanasius the Great and in Russian iconography. Protopriest Bulgakov accepts on faith the basic conclusions of Florensky, but partly changes the form of this teaching, and partly gives it a new foundation. In Bulgakov this teaching has two variants: a) originally it is a special Hypostasis, although not of one essence with the Holy Trinity (in the book *The Unwaning Light*), b) later it is not a Hypostasis but ‘hypostasisness’. In this latter form it is an energy of God coming from the essence of God through the Hypostases of the Divinity into the world and finding for itself its highest ‘created union’ in the Mother of God. Consequently, according to this variant, Sophia is not a special substance, but the Mother of God.

“According to the Church teaching, which is especially clearly revealed in St. Athanasius the Great, the Sophia-Wisdom of God is the Lord Jesus Christ.

“Here, in the most general terms, is the essence of Protopriest Bulgakov’s teaching on Sophia! To expound any philosophical teaching shortly is very difficult, and so it is difficult to expound shortly the teaching of the ‘sophianists’ on Sophia. This teaching of theirs becomes clear only in connection the whole of their philosophical system. But to expound the latter shortly is also impossible. One can say only: their philosophy is the philosophy of ‘panentheism’, that is, a moderate form of ‘pantheism’. The originator of this ‘panentheism’ in Russia is V.S. Soloviev.”

In 1935 both the Moscow Patriarchate and ROCOR condemned Sophianism as heretical. (V.M.)

of the sin of regicide are not only those who physically performed the deed but the people as a whole, who rejoiced when the Tsar was overthrown and allowed his degradation, his arrest and exile, leaving him defenceless in the hands of criminals, which itself spelled out the end.

“Thus, the calamity which befell Russia is the direct result of terrible sins, and her rebirth is possible only after she has been cleansed from them. However, until now there has been no real repentance; the crimes that were committed have not been openly condemned, and many active participants in the Revolution continue even now to assert that at the time it was impossible to act otherwise.

“By not voicing an outright condemnation of the February Revolution, of the uprising against the Anointed One of God, the Russian people continues to participate in the sin, especially when they defend the fruits of the Revolution, for in the words of the Apostle Paul, those men are especially sinful who, ‘knowing... that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them’ (Romans 1.32).

“While punishing the Russian people, the Lord at the same time is pointing out the way to salvation by making them teachers of Orthodoxy throughout the world. The Russian Diaspora has acquainted the four corners of the earth with Orthodoxy, for a significant part of the Russian immigration unconsciously preaches Orthodoxy. Everywhere, wherever Russians live, they build little refugee churches or even majestic cathedrals, or simply serve in premises adapted for this purpose.

“The majority of Russian refugees are not familiar with the religious tendencies of their intelligentsia, and they are nourished by those spiritual reserves which they accumulated in the homeland. Large masses of refugees attend Divine services, some of them actively participate in them, helping with the singing and reading on cliros and serving in the altar. Affiliated organizations have been established which take upon themselves the responsibility of maintaining the churches, often performing charitable work as well.

“Looking at the faithful who pack the churches on feast days, one might think that in fact the Russian people have turned to the Church and are repenting of their sins. However, if you compare the number who go to church with the number of Russians who live in a given place, it turns out that about one-tenth of the Russian population regularly goes to church. Approximately the same number attend Divine services on major feasts, and the rest either very rarely – on some particular occasions – go to church and occasionally pray at home, or have left the Church altogether. The latter sometimes is a conscious choice under sectarian or anti-religious influences, but in most cases it is simply because people do not live in a spiritual manner; they grow hard, their souls become crude, and sometimes they become outright nihilists.

“The great majority of Russians have a hard life full of personal difficulties and material deprivation. Despite the hospitable attitude towards us in some countries, especially in our fraternal Yugoslavia, whose government and people are doing everything possible to show their love for Russia and to ease the grief of the Russian

exiles, still, Russians everywhere feel the bitterness of being deprived of their homeland. Their surrounding environment reminds them that they are strangers and must adapt to customs that are often foreign to them, feeding of the crumbs that fall from the table of their hosts. Even in those countries which are very well disposed towards us, it is natural that in hiring practices preference should be given to the country's citizens; and with the current difficult situations of most countries, Russians often cannot find work. Even those who are relatively well provided for are constantly made to feel their lack of rights in the absence of organizations which could protect them from injustices. Although only a comparatively insignificant number have been completely absorbed into local society, it quite often happens in such cases that they become totally alienated from their own people and their own country.

"In such a difficult situation in all respects, the Russian people abroad have shown a remarkable degree of patient endurance and self-sacrifice. It is as if they have forgotten about their formerly wonderful (for many) conditions of life, their service to their homeland and its allies in the Great War, their education and everything else that might prompt them to strive for a comfortable life. In their exile they have taken up every kind of work and occupation to make a living for themselves abroad. Former nobles and generals have become simple workmen, artisans and petty merchants, not disdaining any type of work and remembering that no work is degrading, provided it is not bound up with any immoral activity. The Russian intelligentsia in this respect has manifested an ability, whatever the situation, to preserve its vitality and to overcome everything that stands in the way of its existence and development. It has also shown that it had lofty spiritual qualities, that it is capable of being humble and long-suffering.

"The school of refugee life has morally regenerated and elevated many people. One has to give honor and credit to those who bear their refugee cross doing difficult work to which they are unaccustomed, living in conditions which previously they did not know or even think of. Remaining firm in spirit, they have maintained a nobility of soul and ardent love for their homeland, and, repenting over their former sins, they endure their trial without complaints. Truly, many of them, men and women, are now more glorious in their dishonour than in the years of their glory. The spiritual wealth which they have now acquired is better than the material wealth they left in the homeland, and their souls, like gold purified by fire, have been cleansed in the fire of suffering and burn like brightly glowing lamps..."<sup>368</sup>

Although the Serbs had invited the Russians to Serbia, by the beginning of the Second World War it became clear that the ROCOR Synod would have to move to another country sooner or later. Nevertheless, ROCOR always remained grateful to the Serbs for the protection they had been offered. Patriarch Barnabas defended ROCOR even in its split with the Moscow Patriarchate.<sup>369</sup>

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<sup>368</sup> St. John Maximovich, "The Spiritual Condition of the Russian People in the Diaspora", in *Man of God*, Redding, Ca.: Nikodemos Orthodox Publication Society, 1994, pp. 204-210.

<sup>369</sup> A.A. Kostriukov, "K istorii vzaimootnoshenij mezhdru Serbskoj Pravoslavnoj Tserkoviu i Arkhierejskim Sinodom v Sremskikh Karlovtsakh" (Towards a History of the Mutual Relations between the Serbian Orthodox Church and the Hierarchical Synod in Sremsky Karlovtsy),

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The 1935 ROCOR's Hierarchical Council approved a "Statute on the Orthodox Diocese of Berlin and Germany" which had been worked out in the ministry of ecclesiastical affairs of the Third Reich. This Statute envisaged the following demands: the agreement of the government on appointing the head of the diocese of Berlin and Germany; the agreement of the local State organs in the appointment to a parish of a priest "who is a foreigner or without citizenship", which affected almost all the clergy of ROCOR in Germany; and in the appointment by a bishop of members of the diocesan council and when forming new parishes or accepting old ones into the diocese.<sup>370</sup>

On February 14, 1936 the German government began to help ROCOR, seeing it was now a State-recognized institution: the German clergy of ROCOR began to receive regular salaries; subsidies were granted for various needs of the German diocese and its parishes; and the clergy and the diocese received various privileges.<sup>371</sup> On February 25, 1938 Hitler signed a law "On the land-ownership of the Russian Orthodox Church in Germany", according to which "the State in the person of the minister of ecclesiastical affairs received the right to dispose of the Russian ecclesiastical property in the country and in the territories joined to it." On the basis of this law the German State handed over all the pre-revolutionary property of the Russian Church in Germany into the possession of ROCOR, besides the church in Dresden.<sup>372</sup> However, it did not do this immediately. As Metropolitan Evlogy of Paris writes in his *Memoirs* (p. 648), for some time the government still retained parishes in Berlin, in Eastern Prussia and in Dresden. But on May 5, 1939 the law was extended to Dresden and the Sudetenland.

Why was the German government so favourably disposed to ROCOR? Part of the answer may lie in the fact that the authorities had a negative opinion of the Paris jurisdiction of Metropolitan Evlogy because of its links with the YMCA and other internationalist and Masonic organizations, and were therefore more favourably disposed to ROCOR, which had broken links with the Evlogians. Also, some of the churches in their possession had been built with the participation of German royalty who had family links with the House of the Romanovs, and ROCOR was, of course, the Orthodox jurisdiction with the closest links with the Romanovs. Perhaps also they were hoping in this way to elicit the sympathy of the Balkan Slavic peoples towards Germany.<sup>373</sup>

In 1938 Hitler gave ROCOR a plot of land in Berlin to build a church, for which

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*Pravoslavnaia Zhizn'*, N 2 (682), February, 2009, pp. 1-13.

<sup>370</sup> A.K. Nikitin, *Polozhenie russkoj pravoslavnoj obschiny v Germanii v period natsistskogo rezhima (1933-1945)* (The Position of the Russian Orthodox Community in Germany in the Nazi Period (1933-1945)), annual theological conference PSTBI, Moscow, 1998, pp. 321-322; Monk Benjamin, *op. cit.*, part 2, pp. 52-53.

<sup>371</sup> Monk Benjamin, *op. cit.*, part 2, p. 55.

<sup>372</sup> A.K. Nikitin, *op. cit.*; Monk Benjamin, <http://www.zlatoust.ws/letopis2.htm>, part 2, p.71.

<sup>373</sup> G.M. Soldatov, personal communication, March 19, 2006.

Metropolitan Anastasy thanked him. This formed the basis for “Patriarch” Alexis of Moscow to accuse him of sympathy for fascism, an accusation which has been repeated many times since then.

The truth of the matter was explained by Metropolitan Anastasy himself in October, 1945 as follows: “Soon after his coming to power Hitler learned that the Russian Orthodox people in Berlin did not have a church of their own after the church built by them had been removed from the parish because they could not pay the debts they had incurred for it. This led immediately to order the release of considerable sums of money for the building of a new Orthodox church on a beautiful plot of land set aside for this in the German capital. We should note that Hitler took this step without any deliberate request on the part of the Russian Orthodox community and did not attach any conditions to his offering that might have been compensation for it. The Hierarchical Synod as well as the whole of Russia Abroad could not fail to value this magnanimous act, which came at a time when Orthodox churches and monasteries were being mercilessly closed, destroyed or used for completely unsuitable purposes (they were being turned into clubs, cinemas, atheist museums, food warehouses, etc.), and other holy things in Russia were being mocked or defiled. This fact was noted in the address [given by the metropolitan], but the Synod of course gave no ‘blessing to destroy and conquer Russia’.”<sup>374</sup>

In fact, according to Bishop Gregory Grabbe, the address sent to Hitler was not composed by Metropolitan Anastasy, but by the president of the Russian colony in Berlin, General Biskupsky. When it was shown to the metropolitan, he found it too “flowery”. But it had already been sent to the ministry of the interior, and it was too late to compose a new, more moderate variant.<sup>375</sup>

As regards Metropolitan Anastasy’s attitude towards Fascism, he displayed, as Shkarovsy writes, “a negative attitude towards how some Russian émigré figures were toying with fascist ideas. Vladyka Anastasy said that ‘fascism is incompatible with Christianity because it suppresses personal spiritual freedom, without which the spiritual life of Christianity is not possible.

“Again, on July 15, 1936, the Metropolitan clearly stated his stance against fascism at the Saint Vladimir Festival in Belgrade: ‘Fascism as a type of state-political structure can never be our ideal. It is founded upon principles of compulsion which extend to a person’s very ideology. Yet without freedom, there can be no moral heroism nor moral responsibility. Without either of the latter a Russian Orthodox state is also unthinkable for us.’ In his 1939 Christmas encyclical, Vladyka Anastasy outlined, as a counterweight to the race theory of Nazism, the Church’s

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<sup>374</sup> Poslanie k russkim pravoslavnyim liudiam po povodu ‘Obraschenia patriarkha Aleksia k arkipastyriam i kliru tak nazyvaemoj Karlovatskoj orientatsii’ (Epistle to the Russian Orthodox people on the ‘Address of Patriarch Alexis to the archpastors and clergy of the so-called Karlovtsy orientation), in G.M. Soldatov, *Arkhiejskij Sobor Russkoj Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi Zagranitsej, Miunkhen (Germania) 1946 g.* (The Hierarchical Council of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad at Munich in 1946), Minneapolis, 2003, p. 13.

<sup>375</sup> Soldatov, *op. cit.*, pp. 12-13.

understanding of love for one's people and for one's native country: 'The very concept of our native country has, in our consciousness, never been crudely materialistic, and our national image has never been defined by purely outward zoological racial markers. What we call our Fatherland is not the physical air that we breathe, nor the vast expanses of forests, rivers and seas... but rather first and foremost our native spiritual atmosphere engendered by Holy Orthodoxy, the incorruptible moral values passed down to us by the past millennium of history.'"<sup>376</sup>

After the German annexation of Czechia and Moravia in March, 1939, the Germans tried to put all the Orthodox there in the jurisdiction of ROCOR's Archbishop Seraphim (Lyade), a German national. On November 3, Seraphim concluded an agreement with the Eulogian Bishop Sergius of Prague whereby his parishes were transferred, from a purely juridical point of view, into the jurisdiction of Archbishop Seraphim, but retained their real independence and submission to Metropolitan Evlogy.<sup>377</sup>

The influence of Archbishop (later Metropolitan) Seraphim in the German government was to prove useful again. On November 4, 1940 the Eulogian Archbishop Alexander (Nemolovsky) of Brussels was arrested after the liturgy and imprisoned as "enemy № 2" in Aachen. From there he was transferred to a prison in Berlin. It was Archbishop Seraphim who rescued Archbishop Alexander from prison and settled him at the Russian church in Tegel, where he remained until the end of the war.<sup>378</sup>

October 15/28, 2021.

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<sup>376</sup> Shkarovsky, "The Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia and the Holocaust", translated in *ROCOR Studies*, December 7, 2019, [http://www.rocorstudies.org/2019/12/22/the-russian-orthodox-church-outside-of-russia-and-the-holocaust/?fbclid=IwAR0vPWCrv\\_SZi9dWGVVvkYFAk9sbDw6CUWd9VQWskS0\\_VxNY\\_8TXBMwxJBY](http://www.rocorstudies.org/2019/12/22/the-russian-orthodox-church-outside-of-russia-and-the-holocaust/?fbclid=IwAR0vPWCrv_SZi9dWGVVvkYFAk9sbDw6CUWd9VQWskS0_VxNY_8TXBMwxJBY).

<sup>377</sup> M. Nazarov, *Missia russkoj emigratsii* (The Mission of the Russian Emigration), Moscow, 1994, vol. 1, p. 266; Monk Benjamin, *op. cit.*, part 3, p. 5; M.V. Shkarovsky, *Istoria Russkoj Tserkovnoj Emigratsii* (A History of the Russian Church Emigration), St. Petersburg, 2009.

The parishes of the Serbian Bishop Vladimir (Raich) in Transcarpathia and Slovakia also passed into Seraphim's jurisdiction after Vladimir was detained by the Hungarian authorities (Monk Benjamin, *op. cit.*, part 3, p. 1).

<sup>378</sup> M.V. Shkarovsky, in Monk Benjamin, *op. cit.*, part 3, p. 14-15.

## 38. THE MOLOTOV-RIBBENTROP PACT

As a result of Munich, writes Orlando Figes, “Stalin lost any belief in the alliance with the British and the French as a means of guaranteeing collective security. He began sending signals to the Germans with a view to offering a deal of Soviet neutrality in the event of a European war. The first sign came in his speech to the Eighteenth Party Congress in March 1939 in which he underlined that the Soviet Union would not get involved in conflicts between the capitalist states. Then, in May, Litvinov was replaced as Foreign Minister by Molotov, who in July gave a speech in which he clearly signaled Soviet disenchantment with the British and the French. He called them ‘crooks and cheats’ for delaying talks with the Soviet Union over a tripartite military alliance, the only guarantee the Soviets would accept to join the Western powers against Germany.”<sup>379</sup>

Let us remember, as Piers Brendon writes, that Stalin “had been excluded from the [Munich] conference – Lord Halifax claimed that there was no time to issue an invitation to Moscow<sup>380</sup> – and he now feared that the USSR would become the next item on Hitler’s menu. The Czechoslovak sop, Stalin said, had done nothing but ‘whet the aggressor’s appetite’. Moreover, the famous declaration of 30 September, in which Chamberlain and Hitler expressed the desire of their two peoples never to go to war with each other again, sounded ominously like a non-aggression pact directed against Russia. *Mein Kampf* was closely studied in the Kremlin, where the Führer’s expressed ambitions to carve *Lebensraum* out of Soviet territory were taken with utmost seriousness.”<sup>381</sup><sup>382</sup>

In fact, Stalin’s fear that Britain, France and Germany might unite against him, though understandable, was unfounded, especially because as 1938 turned into 1939 public opinion in Britain began to turn against appeasement. And the government too: “Chamberlain told the Commons... that ‘we must arm ourselves to the teeth’, and the government doubled defence spending from 1938 to 1939, further fuelling economic recovery. Although weakened by the Depression, and by earlier defence cuts, the aircraft, engineering and shipbuilding industries were among the strongest in the world. Production for exports was slashed. Air defences took shape, with a chain of radar stations being built covering the southern and eastern coasts, and by the summer of 1939 nearly all biplanes had been replaced by monoplanes, mostly Hawker Hunters. The navy was outbuilding every other in the world, and by 1939 it had more battleships, aircraft carriers and cruisers than any other country...

“... The Prime Minister surprised the Commons on 6 February with a sudden pledge of support to France – ‘Really Chamberlain is an astonishing and perplexing old boy,’ sighed the MP Harold Nicolson. ‘We have at last got on top of the dictators,’ wrote Chamberlain to his sister on 19 February. ‘Of course, that doesn’t mean I want

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<sup>379</sup> Figes, *Revolutionary Russia, 1891-1991*, London: Pelican, 2014, pp. 297-298.

<sup>380</sup> In fact Halifax, a fervent Anglican, considered the Soviet Union to be “the Antichrist” (Piers Brendon, *The Deep Valley*, p. 576). (V.M.)

<sup>381</sup> “The Reich,” wrote Hitler in *Mein Kampf*, “must again set itself on the march of the Teutonic knights of old, to obtain by the German sword sod for the German plough.” (V.M.)

<sup>382</sup> Brendon, *The Deep Valley*, p. 577. (V.M.)



to bully them.' Joint military planning belatedly began, and it was decided to expand the army's Field Force from two to nineteen divisions. Offers of support were showered on eastern Europe, especially Romania (important for its oil) and Poland. Poland was the crux, as the Nazis repeated their Sudetenland tactic, using as a pretext for aggression Danzig (an international city) and the corridor through German territory connecting Poland with the sea."

Nine days after entering Prague in March, Hitler seized Memel in Lithuania. Then, on March 28, he "denounced his 1934 pact with Poland, and preparations went ahead for its dismemberment. Poland was to him an unfortunate geographical anomaly. It contained large subject German populations and territories he believed ought to belong to him. But more important was that it barred his invasion route to Russia and so inhibited his plans to deal with the home of the 'bacillus'. It had to submit to him or be destroyed, He saw no reason why the British and the French should resist his plans. If they were not prepared to fight over Czechoslovakia, which made some kind of military sense for them, why should they fight over Poland, which made no sense at all? In any case, why should not these capitalist countries welcome his decision to move Eastwards, ultimately against the heartland of Bolshevism?"<sup>383</sup>

"Instead, only three days later, the British gave Poland a guarantee that if 'action was taken which clearly threatened the independence of Poland so that Poland felt bound to resist with her national forces, His Majesty's Government would at once lend them all the support in their power.' Chamberlain made this move without consulting the French government, although they were more or less bound to endorse it..."<sup>384</sup> He told the Commons that he still hoped to maintain peace through a combination of deterrence (rearmament) and appeasement.

On April 17 Stalin proposed an alliance with France and Britain that was obviously aimed defensively against Hitler. However, the British were never sceptical about the benefits of such an alliance and did not make a formal reply. The French followed the British line (as usual since Munich).

Stalin then changed course, sacking his Foreign Minister Litvinov, a man of European culture who had supported the concept of "collective security" against Hitler, and replacing him with the more "Asiatic" Molotov. The way was being prepared for an alliance with Hitler rather than the western democracies...

"On April 29 - two days after the British government had informed Berlin that it would not accept Soviet proposals for an alliance, the Fuhrer denounced his non-aggression declaration with Poland as well as the Anglo-German naval accord, blaming the two countries in a blistering two-hour speech at one of the fewer than a dozen Reichstag sessions since he had claimed power."<sup>385</sup>

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<sup>383</sup> Tombs, *The English and their History*, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2014, pp. 689-690.

<sup>384</sup> Johnson, *Modern Times*, p. 357.

<sup>385</sup> Kotkin, *Stalin*, vol. II, p. 630.

Poland was clearly under threat. But would Hitler invade it without any allies? Could Hitler enter into an alliance with the Soviet devil in order to protect himself from attack by it in the case of a German-Polish war?

Anti-Soviet propaganda suddenly tailed off, and “on May 3, 1939, General Karl Bodenschatz, Goring’s assistant, warned the French military attache in Berlin that ‘something is up in the East’. He repeated his warning to the Polish military attache. (The next day was Litvinov’s dismissal.) Four days later, Bodenschatz informed the French ambassador in Berlin, Robert Conlondre, that Hitler wanted an agreement with the Soviet Union...”<sup>386</sup>

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The summer was occupied with desultory preparations for the sending of a Franco-British delegation to Moscow. But Chamberlain, while never really abandoning his attitude of appeasement towards Germany, remained a steadfast enemy of Soviet power. Similarly, both Stalin and Molotov were Germanophiles and Anglophobes.<sup>387</sup>

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In August, after long delays the British and French sent a delegation to Moscow headed by a little-known diplomat with the unlikely name of Admiral Sir Reginald Ranfurly-Plunkett-Ernie-Erle-Drax, in order, writes Tombs, “to explore alliance with the Soviet Union, even today a controversial issue. The left had long been keen to cooperate with what it considered ‘the most peaceful Great Power’, and so was Churchill. Neither Chamberlain nor Stalin had any reason to trust the other. It was not clear – and is still not – what the crafty and paranoid Stalin really wanted and whether he would or could have provided effective aid in case of war, having recently slaughtered his senior military commanders. Moreover, for obvious reasons neither Poland nor Romania wanted the Red Army on their soil.”<sup>388</sup>

It emerged that Drax, a very low-level official, was not entitled to sign any major agreement with the Soviets, and that the British delegation was very ill prepared. Was their heart really in it, or were they just trying to forestall the Soviet-German negotiations which were taking place *at the very same time*? Certainly, the Soviets were not interested, and poured scorn on the western democracies’ feeble attempts. So the British envoy could do nothing except return home empty-handed. And the very next day, August 23, the foreign ministers of the Soviet Union and Germany, Molotov and von Ribbentrop, signed a very wide-ranging non-aggression pact, which astonished the world, turning diplomatic relations and popular conceptions upside-down. For it united two opposing poles of world politics in a way that caused consternation to the true believers on both sides.

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<sup>386</sup> Kotkin, *Stalin*, vol. II, p. 630.

<sup>387</sup> Stalin observed to Ribbentrop that “the Soviet government never had sympathy for England. It is only necessary to glance at the works of Lenin and his pupils to understand that the Bolsheviks always cursed and hated England above all” (Kotkin, *Stalin*, vol. II, p. 693).

<sup>388</sup> Tombs, *The English and their History*, New York: Alfred Knopf, 2014, pp. 689-690.

According to Richard Overy, the pact was signed “because, in 1939, neither wanted a war with the other. Hitler hoped that the pact would weaken the resolve of Britain and France to confront him over the German-Polish war, launched on 1 September 1939; when it did not, the pact helped to secure the German rear and supplied the German war economy with a large list of essential supplies. Stalin approved the pact, despite the shock it represented to the many thousands of communists worldwide who took Soviet anti-fascism for granted, because it allowed the Soviet Union to consolidate its security position in eastern Europe, acquire vanguard technologies from German industry, and, above all, to avoid war at the side of two capitalist empires, Britain and France, against another capitalist state, Germany.”<sup>389</sup>

As Professor Andrei Zubov writes, in spite of the Soviet Union’s huge advantage over Germany in tanks, airplanes and artillery, “he would still not be able to conquer all the other countries. So Stalin’s calculation was that he should push the Western Axis powers into conflict with the Atlantic democracies, which would lead to their mutual extermination in the fire of war.”<sup>390</sup>

Professor David Reynolds agrees with this assessment: “Stalin, for all his skill in wartime diplomacy, had an even greater capacity for self-deception. He entered into the Nazi-Soviet pact in the hope of gaining time for Soviet rearmament and of turning Germany west into another long war with France and Britain, akin to 1914-18. Instead, Hitler rolled over the French in five weeks in 1940 and was then free to turn east against Soviet communism years earlier than expected. Yet right up to 22 June 1941, Stalin refused to mobilise for fear this might provoke Hitler. What the Great Patriotic War myth still commemorates as Germany’s ‘surprise attack’ was a surprise only to Stalin.”<sup>391</sup>

This argument justifying the pact on the grounds that it would turn the imperialist powers against each other was also useful in convincing the various national communist parties to remain faithful to Stalin in spite of his change of course. Thus on September 7, 1939 Stalin said to the Bulgarian Communist and Comintern leader Giorgi Dimitrov: “We would like them to have a really bad fight and weaken each other.”<sup>392</sup>

As regards Hitler’s motivation for the pact, ultimately it was, as he put it, “a pact with Satan to drive out the devil” – the Jewish bacillus nesting in the Soviet Union. Moreover, as Timothy Snyder points out, it made the Holocaust attainable. For the large Jewish population of Western Poland now fell under Nazi control. Plans were made almost immediately for the final solution of the Jewish problem, with the main extermination camps being situated in German Poland...Before that, however as Brendon writes, the pact “ensured that he would not have to fight a war on two fronts

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<sup>389</sup> Overy, *The Dictators*, London: Penguin Books, 2005, pp. 484-485.

<sup>390</sup> Zubov, quoted on *Facebook* by Tatiana Spektor, May 8, 2017.

<sup>391</sup> Reynolds, “Confidence and Curve Balls”, *New Statesman*, 7 December, 2018, p. 57. Kotkin, agrees with this assessment.

<sup>392</sup> “He resisted the contrast between fascist and democratic states, and said that it would not be bad if Britain was undermined by Germany.” (Jonathan Glover, *Humanity. A Moral History of the Twentieth Century*, London: Jonathan Cape, 1999, p. 268).

by coming to terms with Stalin. He thus outmanoeuvred the Western democracies, who were making their own overtures to the Soviet Union. But whereas they hesitated to ally with the Bolshevik Bear, Hitler had no scruples about doing an ideological volte-face in the interests of Realpolitik. It could easily be reversed. The Führer confessed privately that he was 'in no wise altering his fundamental anti-bolshevik policies: one had to use Beelzebub to drive out Satan' ..."<sup>393</sup>

Hitler had another, economic motive: oil. He was about to attack Poland, and shortly after that Western Europe. His *blitzkrieg* tactics combining tank and air offensives required a great deal of oil. Stalin gave him that in exchange for German machinery, with the result that the Nazi conquest of Western Europe in 1940 was largely fuelled by Soviet oil – as was the invasion of the Soviet Union itself! For when Hitler came to launch Operation Barbarossa against Stalin in 1941, his armies were again running on Soviet oil. But since the two men were now enemies, not allies, he soon began to run out of it, which necessitated his conquering the region – the North Caucasus (Maikop and Grozny) and Azerbaijan (Baku) – that supplied it as soon as possible. He did conquer the North Caucasus, but failed to win the no less strategic region of the Lower Volga, suffering his worst defeat at Stalingrad in 1942.

Not only oil, but also grain and various metals were exported in large quantities from the Soviet Union to Germany. And of course it was the Russian people who suffered, as they suffered from all the acts of Stalin. Thus "on May 7, 1940 Victor Savinykh and nine of his pupils aged between 14 and 17 were arrested for writing a letter to Stalin about "the inadmissibility of sending grain to Germany when Soviet people are starving. The sentence of the court was 10 years in Kolyma for a counter-revolutionary conspiracy."<sup>394</sup>

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Max Hastings writes: "The secret protocols of the Nazi-Soviet pact, delineating the parties' territorial ambitions, were unknown in Western capitals until German archives were captured in 1945. But in September 1939, many citizens of the democracies perceived Russia and Germany alike as their foes. The novelist Evelyn Waugh's fictional alter ego, Guy Crouchback, adopted a view shared by many European conservatives: Stalin's deal with Hitler, 'news that shook the politicians and young poets of a dozen capital cities, brought deep peace to our English heart... The enemy at last was plain in view, huge and hateful, all disguise cast off. It was the Modern Age in arms.' A few politicians aspired to separate Russia and Germany, to seek the support of Stalin to defeat the greater evil of Hitler. Until June 1941, however, such a prospect seemed remote: the two dictatorships were viewed as common enemies of the democracies."<sup>395</sup>

Although the two dictatorships were indeed the common enemies of the democracies, still some further explanation is required why, after so many years of

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<sup>393</sup> Brendon, *The Deep Valley*, p. 467.

<sup>394</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/Historicanaru-исторические-фотографии-764285363598390/>

<sup>395</sup> Hastings, *All Hell Let Loose*, London: HarperPress, 2011, p. 8.

hating and fighting each other, they should now have formed an alliance that left so many of their supporters speechless in surprise and incomprehension – even despair...

Apart from the geopolitical and economic factors already discussed, an important psychological factor lies in the fact that “birds of a feather flock together”: the Nazis and the communists were more similar than many realized. For however much Hitler denounced Bolshevism to western diplomats, in private he freely acknowledged the debt of National Socialism to Marx, while Stalin only criticised Hitler publicly for the first time as late as March, 1936, declaring, relatively mildly, that while speaking about peace Hitler could not “avoid issuing threats”...<sup>396</sup> At the same time, Soviet-German talks never ceased... In fact, Stalin seems to have admired Germany, reserving his greatest contempt and mistrust for Britain...

The pact had the good effect of bringing many former Communists to their senses. *Betrayal of the Left* (full title: *Betrayal of the Left: an Examination & Refutation of Communist Policy from October 1939 to January 1941: with Suggestions for an Alternative and an Epilogue on Political Morality*) was a book of essays published on 3 March 1941 by the Left Book Club, edited and largely written by Victor Gollancz. The book had a preface by Harold Laski. Other contributions included two essays by George Orwell, "Fascism and Democracy" and "Patriots and Revolutionaries", that condemned the Communist Party of Great Britain for backing the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact. Orwell described the pact as an “eye-opener” because it revealed that “National Socialism is a form of socialism, is emphatically revolutionary.”

Again, Karl Albrecht, a disillusioned communist, now called Hitler “the greatest socialist of our times”.<sup>397</sup>

“At the conscious level,” writes Norman Davies, “communists and fascists were schooled to stress their differences. On the other hand, when pressed to summarize their convictions, they often gave strikingly similar answers. One said, ‘For us Soviet patriots, the homeland and communism became fused into one inseparable whole.’ Another put it thus: ‘Our movement took a grip on cowardly Marxism, and extracted the [real] meaning of socialism from it. It also took Nationalism from the cowardly bourgeois parties. Throwing them together into the cauldron of our way of life, the synthesis emerged as clear as crystal – German National Socialism.’ It is not for nothing that people treated to such oratory were apt to think of communists as ‘red fascists’ and of fascists as ‘brown communists’.”<sup>398</sup>

In fact, there was a deep similarity in the aims and outlooks of the two totalitarian regimes (if we except Hitler’s anti-semitism). It is therefore not surprising that the leaders of the two movements should have respected each other. “For the best part of a decade Stalin and Hitler had observed each other with a mixture of growing

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<sup>396</sup> Kotkin, *Stalin*, vol. II, p. 287.

<sup>397</sup> George Watson, “The Eye-Opener of 1939, or How the World Saw the Nazi-Soviet Pact”, *History Today*, August 2004, p. 48.

<sup>398</sup> Davies, *Europe*, p. 945.

wariness and grudging admiration. 'Hitler, what a great fellow!' Stalin exclaimed after the Night of the Long Knives. Hitler, for his part, found the Great Terror deeply impressive. But Stalin had read *Mein Kampf* carefully, including those passages where its author promised to erase Russia from the map. 'Never forget', Hitler had written. 'that the rulers of present-day Russia are bloodstained common criminals. We are dealing with the scum of humanity.'"<sup>399</sup>

And so, as the Polish Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki has pointed out, the pact was much more than a non-aggression treaty between the two powers. Only five days after the Soviets had invaded Poland on September 17, "a great military parade was held in Brest-Litovsk – a celebration of Nazi Germany's and Soviet Russia's joint defeat of independent Poland. Such parades are not organised by parties to non-aggression pacts – they are organised by allies and friends..."<sup>400</sup>

Each tyrant was more complimentary of the other than either was of the Western democrats. Thus "Hitler called Stalin 'one of the greatest living human beings'. The Soviet leader, he said, 'towered above the democratic figures of the Anglo-Saxon powers'."<sup>401</sup>

Towards the end, Hitler expressed the wish that he had purged his generals as Stalin had so wisely purged his! Stalin for his part considered Hitler to be "a very able man but not basically intelligent, lacking in culture and with a primitive approach to political matters"<sup>402</sup> – which was mild criticism by comparison with what he said of the great majority of his fellow men. Moreover, as Daniel Pipes points out, "Stalin facilitated the Nazi ascent to power in 1933 by refusing to let the German Communist party ally with the Social Democrats. Already in April 1936 the two sides signed an economic agreement; thereafter, Stalin worked hard to reach a political accord with Hitler. 'We must come to terms with a superior power like Nazi Germany,' an aide quotes him saying. In early 1938 Stalin initiated diplomatic contact with Hitler and did him more favors, completely staying out of the Czechoslovak crisis and letting collapse the Republican forces in Spain."<sup>403</sup>

Stalin had donned the mantle of appeasement, although *his* Munich gained for him much more than the Western powers ever gained from *their* Munich: not only a temporary peace, but also the ability to send more troops to Siberia to fight the Japanese (a major concern of his at the time that is sometimes forgotten<sup>404</sup>), and vast

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<sup>399</sup> Frank Diktötter, *Dictators*, London: Bloomsbury, 2020, p. 83.

<sup>400</sup> "Statement by the Prime Minister of Poland Mateusz Morawiecki", December 29, 2019, <https://premier.gov.pl/en/news/news/statement-by-the-prime-minister-of-poland-mateusz-morawiecki.html>.

<sup>401</sup> Jonathan Fenby, *Alliance*, London: Pocket Books, 2006, p. 16.

<sup>402</sup> Fenby, *op. cit.*, p. 239.

<sup>403</sup> Daniel Pipes, *Conspiracy*, New York: The Free Press, pp. 102-103.

<sup>404</sup> In late August, at the Halha River on the border between the Soviet satellite of Mongolia and the Japanese satellite of Manchukuo, the Soviets under Zhukov defeated the Japanese. "The Japanese suffered 18,000 casualties (8,000 killed, 8,800 wounded, 1,500 sick), but the Red Army, in victory, lost even more – 9,700 killed and 15,952 wounded, nearly 40 percent of its deployment. Still, the entire Halha River had been cleared of Japanese by industrialized brute force applied with no regard to cost." (Kotkin, *Stalin*, vol. II, p. 669). It was a bitter pill for the Japanese to swallow, made more bitter

territories in the Baltic, Poland, Bukovina and Bessarabia, together with time to prepare for war with the aid of German advanced technology. But there is an important difference between appeasement by a despotic dictator and appeasement by a democratic president or prime minister. The despot is not burdened by the need to please public opinion, or the need to cover his actions with a figleaf of morality (even if, for the sake of diplomacy, some such cover is usually provided); his motivation is pure *Realpolitik* – considerations of brute power, nothing but power...

*October 28 / November 10, 2021.*

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by the knowledge that their German partners in the Anti-Comintern Pact not only did not help them but were even forming a Pact with their Soviet enemies *at the very same time*.

### 39. FROM LENIN TO STALIN

Like Roman Catholicism, the religion of Leninism logically leads to the worship of one man as the infallible incarnation of the one truth. The truth is History, the vanguard of History is the Party, and the leader of the Party is the one true interpreter of its Will. All those who oppose him are deviants who miss the mark, being consigned, in Trotsky's phrase, "to the dustbin of History". Although this teaching had always been implicit in Leninism, and although the Tenth Congress in 1921 had gone a long way, through its banning of all factionalism, to prepare the way for its universal acceptance, it was not until the rise of Stalin as dictator that it was impressed upon the hearts as well as the minds of the Bolshevik faithful. For before that time, while Lenin was the undisputed *vozhd'*, it was not clear whether there could be Leninism without Lenin. After his death from a brain haemorrhage in January, 1924, the answer was clear: just as there can be no Catholicism without the Pope, so there can be no Leninism without Lenin, and the new Lenin was *Stalin*. For, as *Pravda* wrote in January, 1934: *Now when we speak of Lenin, / It means we are speaking of Stalin.*<sup>405</sup>

By that time Stalin's cult of personality, his elevation to equality (at least) with Lenin, was well-established. But, as Ian Kershaw writes, it "had to be built carefully. This was not just because the man himself was so physically unprepossessing – diminutive and squat, his face dominated by a big walrus moustache and heavily pitted from smallpox – or that he was a secretive, intensely private individual, who spoke in a quiet, undemonstrative voice, his Russian couched in a strong Georgian accent that never left him. The real problem was the giant shadow of Lenin. Stalin could not be seen to be usurping the legendary image of the great Bolshevik hero and leader of the revolution. So at first Stalin trod cautiously. The celebration for his fiftieth birthday in December 1929 brought public eulogies. But the cult was still in its embryonic stages. Stalin professed modesty, publicly disowning attempts to put him on a pedestal with Lenin, and disavowed expressions of personalized devotion. It was no more than a front. Tacitly, he allowed his own elevation – amid outright falsification of his role during the revolution, in reality a fairly minor one – first to equal status with Lenin in a sort of dual cult, then to outright supremacy.

"Untold numbers of minions, time-servers and sycophants rushed to embellish in myriad ways the heroic image of the 'people's leader'. By 1935 there were more than twice as many busts and images of Stalin to be seen in central Moscow than of Lenin. And by now Stalin, no notable philosopher of Marxism, had been elevated into its preeminent theorist, his works published in numbers far exceeding those of Marx and Engels, greater even than those of Lenin. When Stalin made a relatively rare public appearance, dressed as usual in his dull party tunic, at a Moscow congress in 1935, the frenetic applause by over 2,000 delegates lasted fifteen minutes. As it finally subsided, a woman shouted out 'Glory to Stalin', and it all began again..."<sup>406</sup>

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<sup>405</sup> Alan Bullock, *Hitler and Stalin: Parallel Lives*, London, 1991, p. 413.

<sup>406</sup> Kershaw, *To Hell and Back. Europe 1914-1949*, London: Penguin, 2015, p. 269.



How did it come to that? How did perhaps the most evil and murderous tyrant in history come to rule over the home of Holy Russia, "the Israel of God", the largest concentration of truly believing Christians in history?

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Stalin's colleagues, writes Piers Brendon, "had long been aware of his brutal propensities. The first head of the Cheka secret police, Felix Dzerzhinsky, took the job because otherwise it would have fallen to Stalin and 'he would nurse the baby with blood alone'. But throughout the 1920s Stalin had risen by guile more than force. He was secretive and self-sufficient and he had a memory like a machine. A supreme bureaucrat, nicknamed 'Comrade Card-index', he had climbed to power through committees. As General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, he had outmanoeuvred his rivals one by one. He had defeated Lev Kamenev, who called him a 'ferocious savage', and Grigori Zinoviev, who described him as a 'bloodthirsty Ossetian' with 'no idea of the meaning of conscience'. He had exiled the inspiring Trotsky, who denounced him as 'the grave-digger of the proletarian revolution'. He had isolated the intellectual Bukharin, who regarded him as a 'debased Genghis Khan'. By 1929 Stalin had established what Trotsky called 'the dictatorship of the secretariat'. He was thus able to initiate a revolution more far-reaching than Lenin's..."<sup>407</sup>

The rise to power of Stalin over the whole of Russia is one of the mysteries of Soviet history. Why should it have been the plodding, proletarian Stalin, and not Trotsky, the hero of 1905, of October and the Civil War, the brilliant writer and demagogue, the dynamic, cultivated and popular European internationalist, who conquered in their famous struggle for power in the 1920s? How did Stalin, the most undistinguished of the leading Bolsheviks from an intellectual point of view, the uncharismatic bureaucrat, the non-Russian, non-Slav, non-European ex-seminarian and bank robber, acquire, within ten years of the revolution, such ascendancy over the party and the nation?

As a provisional hypothesis to explain this fact we may apply to the Soviet situation the words of the ancient Greek historian Thucydides in his *History of the Peloponnesian War*: "Inferior minds were as a rule more successful; aware of their own defects and of the intelligence of their opponents, to whom they felt themselves inferior in debate, and by whose versatility of intrigue they were afraid of being surprised, they struck boldly and at once. Their enemies despised them, were confident of detecting their plots, and thought it needless to effect by violence what they could achieve by their brains, and so were caught off guard and destroyed."

In agreement with this hypothesis, there is plenty of evidence that Trotsky grossly underestimated Stalin, "the outstanding mediocrity of our Party", as he said to Sklyansky. Boris Bazhanov, Stalin's secretary during the mid-twenties, confirms Isaac Deutscher's opinion that "Trotsky felt it beneath his dignity to cross swords

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<sup>407</sup> Brendon, *The Dark Valley*, London: Pimlico, 2001, p. 197.

with a man as intellectually undistinguished and personally contemptible as Stalin.”<sup>408</sup>

Trotsky refused to indulge in the kind of political skulduggery that Stalin excelled in, especially the tactic of “divide and conquer”. Stalin’s very obscurity, the stealthy but steady way in which he acquired power, lulled his opponents into inactivity. Trotsky was like a hare, opening up a large lead very quickly but then sitting back and preening his whiskers, while Stalin the tortoise crept past him to the finishing-line. And indeed, we know that he was vain and arrogant, “treasuring his historic role”, in Lunacharsky’s words, in the looking-glass of his imagination. For, already in his teens, Trotsky had manifested this besetting weakness. “The fundamental essence of Bronstein’s personality,” explained G.A. Ziv, who knew him then, “was to demonstrate his will, to tower above everyone, everywhere and always to be first.”<sup>409</sup> Only to Lenin did he concede precedence (and that only from the summer of 1917 – before that, he had been a fierce critic of him). Stalin, too, was vain, but he hid this fault more carefully...

In any case, Stalin was far more talented than Trotsky supposed. He was a skilled and tenacious guerrilla fighter, bank-robber and organizer in the pre-revolutionary period; and during his numerous exiles and escapes from exile he acquired endurance, prudence and ingenuity. The Western leaders and diplomats who met him in the Second World War admired his toughness, realism and cleverness – sometimes even his supposed moral qualities!<sup>410</sup> And he outmanoeuvred them time and again... He was a good judge of character, and could be attractive, strange as it may seem, to women, without ever being controlled by them. He knew several languages, had a fine voice, composed poetry, liked to instruct people in art and music, and read voraciously.<sup>411</sup>

In the opinion of the diplomat-defector Fyodor Raskolnikov, Stalin’s “fundamental trait” was a “superhuman strength of will” that “suffocates, destroys the individuality of people who come under his influence”.<sup>412</sup> At the same time, if he judged that imposing his will was not good politics, he could take the slower, gentler method of patient persuasion, even making concessions to his opponent. That, for example, is what he tried to do with the stubborn Finns in 1939, invading their land only when persuasion failed.

He could not match Trotsky in oratory, and yet this, too, he turned to his advantage, since it marked him out as a genuine proletarian, which Trotsky certainly was not: in the eyes of rough Bolsheviks from the provinces, writes Sebastian Sebag Montefiore, “his flat quiet public speaking was an asset, a great improvement on

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<sup>408</sup> Bazhanov, “Stalin Closely Observed”, in G. Urban (ed.), *Stalinism*, Maurice Temple Smith, 1982; Deutscher, *The Prophet Outcast: Trotsky: 1929-1940*, Oxford University Press, 1963.

<sup>409</sup> Kotkin, *Stalin*, vol. I, p. 201.

<sup>410</sup> Jonathan Fenby, *Alliance*, London: Pocket Books, 2006, p. 16.

<sup>411</sup> According to Richard Overy, “in the 1930s his library counted 40,000 volumes. He wrote extensively both before 1917 and in the 1920s, works and speeches that ran to thirteen volumes when they were published” (*The Dictators*, London, p. 9).

<sup>412</sup> Kotkin, *Stalin*, vol. II, London: Penguin, 2018, p. 709.

Trotsky's oratorical wizardry. His very faults, the chip on the shoulder, the brutality and fits of irrational temper, were the Party's faults. 'He was not trusted but he was the man the Party trusted,' admitted Bukharin. 'He's like the symbol of the Party, the lower strata trust him.' But above all, reflected the future secret police chief, Beria, he was 'supremely intelligent', a political 'genius'. However rude or charming he was, 'he dominated his entourage with his intelligence'."<sup>413</sup>

In fact, Trotsky was more impressed by Stalin than he liked to admit, and foresaw his triumph earlier than most. As Norman Davies writes, "Trotsky saw it coming: in 1924 he was correctly predicting that 'the gravedigger of the Party of the Revolution' would take over: 'The dialectics of history have already hooked him and will raise him up. He is needed by all of them, by the tired radicals, by the bureaucrats, by the nepmen, by the kulaks [!], by the upstarts, by all the sneaks that are crawling out of the upturned soil of the revolution... He speaks their language, and knows how to lead them. Stalin will become the dictator of the USSR..."<sup>414</sup> As Montefiore writes: "Stalin impressed Trotsky, whose description reveals why he lost their struggle for power. 'Stalin was very valuable behind the scenes,' he wrote. 'He did have the knack of convincing the average run of leaders, especially the provincials.' He 'wasn't regarded as the official leader of the Party,' says Sagirashvili, another Georgian Menshevik in Petrograd throughout 1917, but 'everyone listened to what he had to say, including Lenin - he was a representative of the rank and file, one who expressed its real views and moods', which were unknown to émigrés like Trotsky. Soso [Stalin] was the 'unquestioned leader' of the Caucasians. Lenin, says Sagirashvili, 'felt that behind him stood countless leaders from the provinces'. While Trotsky was prancing on the stage at the Circus, Stalin was finding new allies such as the young man he had unceremoniously kicked off the Bureau, Molotov."<sup>415</sup>

There was another aspect to Trotsky's vanity that placed him at a disadvantage in relation to Stalin. As Edmund Wilson has shown, Trotsky was a deeply committed believer in History, and in the ultimate triumph of international Socialism under History's aegis.<sup>416</sup> But it was self-evident to him that such a great movement must have great leaders - educated, internationally minded men who had absorbed all the riches of bourgeois culture, decisive men of action who would jump to the forefront of the masses and be immediately accepted by them.

Lenin fitted this role, which is why Trotsky, from August, 1917 onward, accepted his leadership unquestioningly. But Stalin, the uncouth Asiatic, did *not* fit this role. Trotsky could not see how History could anoint *him*, of all people, to be the leader of the revolutionary movement. Perhaps this betrayed a certain lack of culture and historical acumen on Trotsky's part. After all, the ultimate victor in the great French revolution was the provincial, Napoleon. Stalin, too, was a provincial - and he had studied Napoleon...

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<sup>413</sup> Montefiore, *Stalin: The Court of the Red Tsar*, London: Phoenix, 2004, p. 50.

<sup>414</sup> Davies, *Europe*, London: Pimlico, 1997, p. 960.

<sup>415</sup> Montefiore, *Young Stalin*, London: Phoenix, 2007, pp. 333-334.

<sup>416</sup> Wilson, *To the Finland Station*, London: Fontana, 1940.

Trotsky's fanatical faith in History as a kind of substitute for God (he once spoke of "the great grace of History") was indeed a major bonus at those moments when History seemed to be at her most active – in 1905 and 1917-21.<sup>417</sup> At such times fiery ardour, disregard of obstacles and the infirmities of men, firm faith in the goal and hope in its attainment, are at a premium. And these were the times when the plodding, cautious Stalin did not shine – although he did not lose ground, either.

But in the ebb of revolutionary fervour, when History seemed to have hidden her face from her devotees, different qualities were required – patience above all, but also hard, detailed, unglamorous work. These were qualities possessed by Stalin, and these were the years – 1906-16 and 1921-27 – when he advanced most rapidly up the ladder of power. Moreover, he continued to show faith in his goddess even in the most difficult times, as during his Siberian exile during the First World War.

"Even this fanatical Marxist," writes Montefiore, "convinced that the progress of history would bring about revolution and dictatorship of the proletariat, must have sometimes doubted if he would ever return. Even Lenin doubted the Revolution, asking Krupskaya, 'Will we ever live to see it?' Yet Stalin never seems to have lost faith. 'The Russian Revolution is as inevitable as the rising of the sun,' he had written back in 1905 and he had not changed his view. 'Can you prevent the sun from rising?'"<sup>418</sup>

In 1919 the Central Committee created the "Orgburo" (Organizational Bureau) "to manage the apparatus under Stalin's command. Hence, even before becoming General Secretary in [April] 1922, Stalin controlled major appointments, including those of provincial party secretaries;<sup>419</sup> he thereby shaped the composition of party conferences and congresses, a crucial asset in the power struggle of the 1920s. Stalin was also the head of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspectorate (*Rabkrin*), another organ of paramount influence."<sup>420</sup>

From 1922, when Lenin and Kamenev engineered Stalin's appointment to the powerful post of General Secretary<sup>421</sup>, Trotsky frittered away the enormous

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<sup>417</sup> Bertram Wolff, *Three Who Made a Revolution*.

<sup>418</sup> Montefiore, *Young Stalin*, p. 305.

<sup>419</sup> Orlando Figes writes: "During 1922 alone more than 10,000 provincial officials were appointed by the Orgburo and the Secretariat" (*Revolutionary Russia, 1891-1991*, London: Pelican, 2014, p. 173). (V.M.)

<sup>420</sup> Daniel T. Orlovsky, "Russia in War and Revolution 1914-1921", in Gregory L. Frazee (ed.). *Russia. A History*, Oxford University Press, 2019, pp. 294-295.

<sup>421</sup> The attainment of this post was the critical step in Stalin's career. It meant, as Niall Ferguson explains, that "As the only person with positions on all three of the most powerful Party institutions – the politburo, orgburo and secretariat – and, as the apparatchik with by far the largest staff, Stalin set about establishing his control by a combination of administrative rigour and personal deviousness. He quickly established his loyalties in the localities and, crucially, in the secret police. He developed the list of senior functionaries known as the nomenklatura so that (as he told the Twelfth Party Congress in April 1923) 'people who occupy these position are capable of implementing directives, comprehending those directive, accepting those directives as their own and bringing them to life' The business directorate gave him power over much more than just officials' expenses; its 'secret department', hidden behind steel doors, became an agency for intra-party denunciation and investigations. And the government phone system – the *vertutshka* – and telegram cipher unit gave

advantage given him by his reputation as a war-leader by refusing to build up a political power-base, or appeal to the mass of the party against the growing centralization of power in the Politburo, or in any way to pander to the vanities and jealous susceptibilities of his colleagues. Thus he elicited their contempt by pointedly reading French novels while the Politburo was in session. Through his arrogance, Trotsky made enemies easily – and one of the first was Stalin. Thus when, at the London Congress of 1907, Trotsky attacked the bank robberies that Stalin had organized on Lenin’s behalf, Stalin was hurt, later talking about Trotsky’s “beautiful uselessness”. Trotsky again embittered Stalin by justly attacking his conduct at Tsaritsyn (later Stalingrad) in 1918 during the Civil War. Unfortunately for Trotsky, Stalin’s nature was not such as could shrug off personal insults. He was a bully; but, as Robert Service puts it, “he was an extremely sensitive bully”.<sup>422</sup>

And that gave him the defining trait of his nature: *vengefulness*. Thus “at a boozy dinner, Kamenev asked everyone round the table to declare their greatest pleasure in life. Some cited women, others earnestly replied that it was the progress of dialectical materialism towards the workers’ paradise. Then Stalin answered: ‘My greatest pleasure is to choose one’s victim, prepare one’s plans minutely, slake an implacable vengeance, and then go to bed. There’s nothing sweeter in the world.’...”<sup>423</sup>

This cynical vengefulness is the critical element in Stalin’s character, the element that truly distinguishes him from his colleagues. Not that vengefulness was not characteristic of the whole revolutionary movement. But Stalin possessed it to a quite exceptional degree. It appeared early in his life. He felt vengeful towards his father, who used to beat him. Again, Vershakov writes: “Stalin’s comrades in the seminary circle say that soon after his expulsion [from Tiflis seminary], they were in turn expelled as the result of a denunciation by Stalin to the rector. He did not deny the accusation, but justified the deed by saying that the expelled students, having lost their right to become priests, would become good revolutionaries...” Again, in 1930 the Georgian Menshevik newspaper, *Brdzolis Kkhma*, wrote: “From the earliest days of his activity among the workers, Djughashvili [Stalin] attracted attention by his intrigues against the outstanding Social Democratic leader, Sylvester Jibladze. He was warned but took no notice, continuing to spread slanders with the intention of discrediting the recognized representative of the local organization. Brought before a party tribunal, he was found guilty of unjust slander, and was unanimously excluded from the Tiflis organization.”

Again, Iremashvili relates what Stalin said to him on the death of his first wife, Ekaterina: “This creature softened my stony heart. She is dead, and with her have died my last warm feelings for all human beings.” Iremashvili comments: “From the day he buried his wife, he indeed lost the last vestige of human feelings. His heart filled with the unutterably malicious hatred which his cruel father had already

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him control over communications, including the power to eavesdrop on others” (*The Square and the Tower*, London: Penguin, 2018, p. 228).

<sup>422</sup> Service, *Stalin*, London: Pan, p. 247.

<sup>423</sup> Montefiore, *Young Stalin*, p. 309.

begun to engender in him while he was still a child. Ruthless with himself, he became ruthless with all people."

One should not discount the importance attached to the death of Stalin's first wife. It was after the death of Tsar Ivan IV's first wife, Anastasia Romanova, that he became "the Terrible", cruel and rapacious. Ivan's decimation of the boyars through his *oprichnina* in the 16<sup>th</sup> century bears a striking resemblance to Stalin's of the Communist Party through the NKVD in the 1930s; and Stalin showed great interest in the Terrible Ivan.

In the period 1923-26 Stalin and his cronies churned out endless propaganda against Trotsky, while the Opposition of Trotsky, Zinoviev and Kamenev proved itself inept and divided. Indeed, it was not their ineffective opposition, but, Lenin's Testament with its expressed plea that Stalin be removed as organizational secretary, that most disturbed the budding dictator. Several times he offered to resign, but each time the Central Committee, packed with his stooges, refused his request.

For these years we have the invaluable testimony of Bazhanov, a secretary of the Politburo. He said that Stalin's sole concern during this period "was to outwit his colleagues and lay his hands on the reins of unrestricted power". He accused Stalin of murdering Frunze and Sklyansky. "It was clear to me already in those early years that Stalin was a vindictive Asiatic, with fear, suspicion and revenge deeply embedded in his soul. I could tell from everything he said and left unsaid, his tastes, preferences and demeanour, that he would recoil from nothing, drive every issue to its absurd extreme and send men to their deaths without hesitation if they stood in his way."

Bazhanov considers Trotsky to have been potentially as ruthless as Stalin. But there was an important difference between the two kinds of ruthlessness. Trotsky's was not a personally directed emotion but a kind of impersonal passion stemming directly from his faith in the revolution. As David Deutscher said (perhaps over-generously): "His judgement remained unclouded by any personal emotion against Stalin, and severely objective." Stalin, on the other hand, had the great advantage of really hating his opponent. Deutscher suggests that Stalin must have had "better qualities and emotions, such as intellectual ambition and a degree of sympathy with the oppressed, without which no young man would ever join a persecuted revolutionary party"<sup>424</sup>. But he produces no evidence in support of this dubious statement. And even he had to admit that Stalin's betrayal of the Warsaw rising in 1944 could have been motivated, not by political expediency, but by nothing else than "that unscrupulous rancour and insensible spite of which he had given so much proof in the great purges"<sup>425</sup>.

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<sup>424</sup> Deutscher, *The Prophet Outcast*, p. 455.

<sup>425</sup> Deutscher, *Stalin: A Political Biography*, Oxford University Press, 1949, p. 524. This spite may have been linked with the defeat that the Poles inflicted on the Red Army near Warsaw in 1920, for which Stalin bore some responsibility.

But hatred and ambition, without intelligence, accomplishes little. And here we must revise the simplistic notion that Trotsky was intelligent and Stalin stupid. Kotkin sums up Stalin's "stupidity" well: "Stalin emerged as a leader of acute political intelligence and bottomless personal resentment..."

"His demonic disposition, which the experience of *this* kind of rule in *this* place heightened, never overwhelmed his ability to function at the highest level. Physically, he continued to suffer from frequent bouts of flue and fever, stomach ailments, dental problems, and severe pain in his joints, but he proved hearty enough to be a hands-on ruler of one-sixth of the earth's surface. His capacity to work was prodigious, his zeal for detail unquenchable. He received 100 or even 200 documents a day, some of substantial length, and he read many of them, often to the end, scribbling comments or instructions on them. He initiated or approved untold personnel appointments, goaded minions in relentless campaigns, attended myriad congresses and ceremonies bearing the burden of instruction, assiduously followed the public and private statements of cultural figures, edited novels and plays, and pre-screened films. He pored over a voluminous flow of intelligence reports and lengthy interrogation protocols of accused spies, wreckers, counterrevolutionaries, traitors. He wrote and rewrote the texts of decrees, newspaper editorials, and his own speeches, confident in his own abilities. Very occasionally he made grammatical mistakes in Russian, his second language, but he wrote accessibly, using rhetorical questions, catchphrases, enumeration. The fools were the ones who took him for a fool..."<sup>426</sup>

As for Trotsky, he was indeed a brilliant intellectual, one of the most acute judges of the national and international scene, not only in politics but also in culture. Not for nothing did Deutscher call him a "prophet". But he had his weaknesses apart from the vanity that we have already mentioned.

Bazhanov says that he was naïve with the naïveté that comes from fanaticism. Lunacharsky said that he was a bad organizer. These two faults were linked to a third, which may be called a kind of stupidity: his blindly optimistic faith in the infallibility of the party. As he wrote to Zinoviev: "The party in the last analysis is always right, because the party is the single historic instrument given to the proletariat for the solution of its fundamental problems... I know that one must not be right *against* the party."

It was because of this faith in the party – and in Lenin – that Trotsky accepted the ban on factionalism at the Tenth Party Congress in 1921 and refrained from any anti-Stalinist activity that might have been interpreted as factionalist, leaving the field open to Stalin's faction.

And yet he understood better than anybody what this "egocentrist" restriction of free speech within the party would lead to. (At the Thirteenth Party Congress in January 1924 Stalin used it to try to expel Trotsky from the Central Committee.) As he had declared several years earlier: "The organization of the party takes the place

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<sup>426</sup> Kotkin, *Stalin. Waiting for Hitler. 1929-1941*, vol. II, London: Penguin, 2018, p. 303.

of the party itself; the Central Committee takes the place of the organization; and finally the dictator takes the place of the Central Committee.”

Why, then, did he not protest when he saw Stalin attaining supreme power by precisely these means, using his position as General Secretary to fill the party with men loyal to himself alone? Partly because, as we have seen, he underestimated Stalin. And partly because, after Lenin’s death in 1924, he did not want to appear to be stepping too eagerly into Lenin’s shoes. But mainly because he simply trusted in the Party to get it right in the long run.

Stalin also believed in the Party. But the Party would become his own creation, and so be manipulated by him... The Party was always right because Stalin was always right...

This attitude of Trotsky’s persisted for a long time, even after he had been expelled from the country and the horrors of the First Five-Year-Plan had revealed the extent of Stalin’s “bureaucratic collectivist” heresy. As late as October, 1932, Trotsky refused to support a “Remove Stalin!” slogan because it might encourage counter-revolution. Instead, he proposed the formation of a Fourth International opposed to the Stalin-controlled Comintern – but only after Hitler (aided by the Comintern’s refusal to form a Popular Front with the other left-wing parties) had come to power in Germany. Even then he said that this new International should have jurisdiction only up to, but not beyond, the frontiers of the USSR. And it was only in October, 1933 that he declared that the Opposition should constitute a new party against the Bolshevik party within the country.

Indeed, it was not until the later 1930s that Trotsky began, in a letter to Angelica Balabanov, to rebel both against the Party and History herself: “History has to be taken as she is; but when she allows herself such extraordinary and filthy outrages [Stalin’s show-trials], one must fight back at her with one’s fists...”

Stalin had no such ideological scruples, no agonies of a revolutionary conscience. He was clever enough to become a follower of Lenin as early as 1903 and to stick to him, in spite of some disagreements, right up to the revolution. Not that he loved Lenin – he was delighted at the news of Lenin’s death, according to Bazhanov, whereas Trotsky fainted for two hours, according to Krupskaya. Nor was he a consistent Leninist thereafter, for all his propaganda to the contrary – Stalin’s career covers the most extraordinary range between extreme communism to near-convergence with capitalism, from strident Russian nationalism to the purest internationalism, from world revolutionary to “socialism in one country”.

What mattered to him was not ideological purity, but power; and while he did not underestimate the importance of ideology in the attainment and maintenance of power – in this respect Lenin trained him well, – he never mistook the means for the end. Thus he paid attention to organization and to the shifting patterns of alliances within the party. He did not wear his heart on his sleeve, and was capable of the most studied hypocrisy in the manner of Shakespeare’s Iago or Richard III. In October, 1917 Trotsky had impetuously condemned Zinoviev and Kamenev “to the dustbin of



history" for their refusal to back Lenin's call for an immediate putsch; but Stalin held his fire. Thus he was able to use Zinoviev and Kamenev against Trotsky, and then, when his own power base had been established, destroy all three of them. This combination of hatred with prudence, cunning with caution, made him a formidable politician.

Other objective aspects of the political situation in the mid-twenties favoured Stalin against Trotsky. Stalin's discovery (with Bukharin) of the slogan "Socialism in One Country" answered to the country's pride in itself, its weariness with the failure of European revolution and its longing for stability. The fact that Stalin later stole so many pages out of Trotsky's book – his emphasis on rapid industrialization, on militarization of the unions and on discipline within the party – does not contradict this thesis. In the early twenties, when Trotsky proposed these policies, the time was not yet ripe for their implementation; whereas in the late twenties and early thirties, when the New Economic Policy had run into the sands and political power was concentrated exclusively in Stalin's hands, they could be embarked upon with some prospect of success – according to Stalin's criteria, that is.

Have we then succeeded in explaining why Stalin triumphed over Trotsky? Can we say that Stalin's greater hatred, cunning, prudence and organizational ability, on the one hand, and Trotsky's vanity, naiveté, on the other, were bound to lead to Stalin's triumph in the conditions of ideological cooling-off and party sclerosis that prevailed in the mid-1920s? No, because the factors mentioned above do not help us to understand the extraordinary drama that took place over Lenin's will in the critical years 1922-24, when Stalin was very nearly catapulted from power, and in which it is difficult not to see another, metaphysical factor entering into the situation...

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In April, 1922 Stalin became General Secretary, the critical platform for his rise to supreme power. In May, Lenin suffered his first stroke, thereby removing the main obstacle to Stalin's exploiting the secretariat in his personal bid for power. Then, during the autumn, while he was slowly recovering from his stroke, Lenin fell out for the first time with the man whom, in 1913, he had called "the wonderful Georgian".

The quarrel seems to have been initially over Georgia, which the Second Army, on instructions from Stalin, had invaded in 1921. Contrary to Stalin, Ordzhonikidze and Dzerzhinsky, but in agreement with Mdivani Makharadze and others, Lenin believed that Georgia, like other autonomous, non-Russian regions, should have the right of secession from the Union because, as Figes writes, "he thought they would want to be part of the Soviet federation in any case. As he saw it, the revolution trumped all national interests.

"Stalin's plans were bitterly opposed by the Georgian Bolsheviks, whose power base depended on their having gained a measure of autonomy from Moscow for their country. The entire Central Committee of the Georgian Communist Party resigned in protest against Stalin's policy. Lenin intervened. He was outraged when he learned

[from Dzerzhinsky] that in an argument Sergo Ordzhonikidze, the head of Moscow's Caucasian Bureau and Stalin's close ally, had beaten up a Georgian Bolshevik. It made him see Stalin and his Georgian base in a different light. In his notes for the Congress Lenin called Stalin a 'rascal and a tyrant' who would only bully and subjugate small nations, whereas what was needed was 'profound caution, sensitivity, and a readiness to compromise' with their legitimate national aspirations, especially if the Soviet Union was not to become a new empire and was to pose as a friend and liberator of the oppressed nations in the colonial world.

"Because of Lenin's illness, Stalin got his way. The founding treaty of the Soviet Union was basically centralist in character, allowing the republics to develop cultural forms of 'nationhood' within a political framework set by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) in Moscow. The Politburo purged the Georgian Bolsheviks as 'national deviationists' - a label Stalin would use against many leaders in the non-Russian regions in the years to come..."<sup>427</sup>

"Seeking for an ally," writes Alan Bullock, "Lenin turned to Trotsky. Twice in the course of 1922 he had urged Trotsky to accept the post of a deputy chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, and twice Trotsky had refused, failing to see the opportunity Lenin was offering him to establish his political position as first among his deputies. In December, however, when Lenin opposed a move by Stalin to relax the government's monopoly of foreign trade, he was delighted to find that Trotsky was willing to put his views to the Central Committee, and even more delighted when the committee was persuaded to reverse its original decision. 'We have captured the position without a fight,' he wrote. 'I propose that we do not stop but press on with the attack.' In a private talk with Trotsky Lenin renewed his offer of the post of deputy chairman and declared he was ready to form a bloc to fight bureaucratism in both the state and the party. A few days later, however, Lenin suffered his second stroke and nothing more came of a proposal which could have had far-reaching consequences for Stalin."<sup>428</sup>

On March 4, there appeared in *Pravda* a blistering attack by Lenin on Stalin's work as Commissar of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspectorate. Deutscher wrote: "This was Lenin's first, publicly delivered blow. Behind the scenes he prepared for a final attack at the twelfth party congress, convened for April; and he agreed with Trotsky on joint action. On 5 March, the day after *Pravda* had at last published his criticisms of Stalin's Commissariat, he had a sharp exchange with Stalin. He then dictated a brief letter to Stalin, telling him that he 'broke off' all personal relations with him. The next day, 6 March, he wired a message to the leaders of the Georgian opposition, promising to take up their case at the congress: 'I am with you in this matter with all my heart. I am outraged by the arrogance of Ordzhonikidze and the connivance of Stalin and Dzerzhinsky.' He again communicated with Trotsky about their joint tactics in the Georgian business; and he briefed Kamenev who was to depart for Tiflis with a special commission of inquiry. Just in the middle of all these moves, on 9

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<sup>427</sup> Figes, *op. cit.*, p. 175.

<sup>428</sup> Bullock, *op. cit.*, p. 131.

March, he suffered the third attack of his illness, from which he was not to recover..."<sup>429</sup>

With Lenin *hors de combat*, the scene was set for a battle royal between Stalin and Trotsky at the 12<sup>th</sup> Party Congress in April, 1923. Before the Congress, Stalin had used his powers as party secretary to conduct a cull of Trotsky's supporters from the Central Committee.<sup>430</sup> Although Trotsky still had important supporters (notably Radek and Bukharin), he made the mistake of attacking the NEP, which Lenin had introduced. Even if many of the Communist leaders (including Stalin) agreed with him on this, it was not a politic thing to say at that time. On delivering the speech, he immediately left the hall...

This was Stalin's chance. He delivered a speech on nationalities, in which he, too, criticized Lenin – but much more subtly and respectfully. Stalin accurately demonstrated that, in spite of the recent Georgian crisis, Lenin had always been a centralizer-federalist at heart – which was just as well, because the creation of the federal USSR had just been agreed on at the recent plenum (which Lenin had not been able to attend). Moreover, Lenin stood for a single, integrated economy among all the republics. So “for Lenin the national question is a question subordinated to a higher question – the workers' question.” The vast majority of the delegates lined up behind Stalin, to thunderous applause. Stalin had pulled off an amazing victory: while actually opposing Lenin, he had successfully made himself out to be the true disciple of Lenin. And so at the new elections to the Central Committee, “Trotsky came in thirty-fifth place in the total number of positive votes, as opposed to second, where he had stood in the elections at the previous Party Congress. Kamenev came in twenty-fourth, Zinoviev thirty-second, and Stalin tied for first (384 votes out of 386) with Lenin...”<sup>431</sup>

Stalin had emerged as Lenin's likely successor...

But then a most unexpected bolt came out of the blue. In late May, 1923, Lenin's wife Krupskaya “bought forth a very short document purporting to be dictation from Lenin. She handed it to Zinoviev, with whom she had developed close relations dating back to the emigration in Switzerland. [Another secretary] Volodicheva, again, was said to have taken the dictation, over several sessions, recorded on December 24-25, 1922. But the purported dictation had not been registered in the documents journal in Lenin's secretariat. It was a typescript; no shorthand or stenographic originals can be found in the archives. Lenin had not initiated the typescript, not even with his unparalyzed left hand. According to Trotsky, the typescript had no title. Later, title would be affixed – Lenin's Testament or “Letter to the Congress’ – and an elaborate mythology would be concocted about how the dictation had been placed in a wax-sealed envelope with Lenin's instructions that it be opened only after his death. Of course, Krupskaya had given the document to Zinoviev while Lenin was still alive...

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<sup>429</sup> Deutscher, *Stalin*, pp. 252-253.

<sup>430</sup> Kotkin, *Stalin*, vol. I, p. 495.

<sup>431</sup> Kotkin, *Stalin*, vol. I, p. 497.

“These were extraordinary pieces of paper, consisting of barbed evaluations of six people. (When Stalin was handed and read the dictation, he is said to have exclaimed of Lenin: ‘He shit on himself and he shit on us!’”<sup>432</sup>

Commenting on each member of the Politburo in the Testament, Lenin wrote (supposedly): “Comrade Trotsky, as his fight against the Central Committee in connection with the issue of the people’s commissariat of railways, is distinguished by the highest qualities. He is personally perhaps the most able man in the present Central Committee, but he has displayed excessive self-assurance and shown excessive preoccupation with the purely administrative side of matters.”

Of Stalin he wrote: “Comrade Stalin, having become General Secretary, has concentrated enormous power in his hands; and I am not sure that he always knows how to use that power with sufficient caution...”

“I think that the hastiness and administrative clumsiness of Stalin played a fatal role here [in Georgia], and also his spite against the notorious ‘social chauvinism’. Spite in general plays the worst possible role in politics...”

Fairly mild criticism, perhaps (for Lenin). But a quarrel between Stalin and Krupskaya had led to a significant hardening in Lenin’s attitude in the few months remaining to him. It appears that the Politburo had banned Lenin from working more than ten minutes a day, a restriction which it was Stalin’s responsibility to enforce. This led to the quarrel with Krupskaya and then with Lenin himself.

“Stalin’s row with Lenin’s wife,” writes Sebag Montefiore, “outraged Lenin’s bourgeois sentiments. But Stalin thought it was entirely consistent with Party culture. ‘Why should I stand on my hindlegs for her? To sleep with Lenin does not mean you understand Marxism-Leninism. Just because she used the same toilet as Lenin...’ This led to some classic Stalin jokes, in which he warned Krupskaya that if she did not obey, the Central Committee would appoint someone else as Lenin’s wife. That is a very Bolshevik concept. His disrespect for Krupskaya was probably not helped by her complaints about Lenin’s flirtations with his assistants, including Yelena Stasova, the one whom Stalin threatened to promote to ‘wife’”<sup>433</sup>

On January 4, 1923, in a supposed postscript to his will, Lenin wrote: “Stalin is too rude, and this fault... becomes unbearable in the office of General Secretary. Therefore I propose to the comrades to find a way to remove Stalin from that position and appoint to it another man more patient, more loyal, more polite and more attentive to comrades, less capricious, etc. This circumstance may appear an insignificant trifle, but in view of what I have written above about the relations between Stalin and Trotsky, it is not a trifle, or it is such a trifle as may acquire a decisive significance.”

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<sup>432</sup> Kotkin, *Stalin*, vol. I, p. 498.

<sup>433</sup> Montefiore, *Stalin*, p. 3.

“The dictation warned that ‘these two qualities of the two outstanding leaders of the present Central Committee – Stalin’s incaution, Trotsky’ self-assured political daftness – ‘can inadvertently lead to a schism, and if our party does not take steps to avert this, the schism may come unexpectedly...’<sup>434</sup>

There is strong suspicion (although Stalin, surprisingly, never expressed it) that the “Testament” was a forgery by Krupskaya. She may have considered that she was conveying Lenin’s real feelings. Lenin’s sister, Maria Ulyanova, another of his secretaries, certainly thought so...<sup>435</sup>

At the Twelfth Congress in January, 1924, Stalin attacked Trotsky for attempting to create an illegal faction, “and threatened severe measures against anyone circulating secret documents, a possible reference to Lenin’s Testament”.<sup>436</sup> So the contents were not made known until just before the Thirteenth Congress in May, 1924. By that time, however, Stalin had worked hard to create a bloc with Zinoviev and Kamenev against Trotsky.

So when the matter came up before the Central Committee plenum, Zinoviev and Kamenev spoke in favour of Stalin and against the publication of the Testament, deciding instead “to read the document only to select delegates as opposed to the entire assembled congress. Trotsky, reluctant to appear divisive in his coming bid for power, did not intervene [for which he was rebuked by Krupskaya]. Stalin, pale as death, humbly asked for release from his duties, hoping that his show of contrition would prompt the Central Committee to refuse his request.<sup>437</sup> His gamble paid off, but left him seething with resentment. He was the disciple of a man who seemed to have demanded his removal...<sup>438</sup>

Stalin, though wounded, was saved... But Lenin’s hostile remarks about him in his “Testament” haunted him for the rest of his life...

“By the end of 1924 Stalin, with Kamenev and Zinoviev doing the dirty work, had created the heresy of ‘Trotskyism’ and related it to Trotsky’s earlier disputes with Lenin, who had been embalmed and put into his apotheosis-tomb five months earlier. In January 1925 Stalin was thus able to strip Trotsky of his army control with the full approval of the party. Party stalwarts were now informed that Trotsky’s part in the Revolution was very much less than he claimed and his face was already being blacked out of relevant photographs – the first instance of Stalinist re-writing of history.”<sup>439</sup>

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<sup>434</sup> Kotkin, *Stalin*, vol. I, p. 500.

<sup>435</sup> Kotkin, *Stalin*, vol. I, p. 501.

<sup>436</sup> Bullock, *op. cit.*, p. 146.

<sup>437</sup> “Stalin offered to step down. ‘Well, yes, I am definitely rude.’ Trotsky quoted Stalin as saying: ‘Ilich [Lenin] proposes to you to find another person who differs from me only in external politeness. Well, ok, try to find such a person.’ But in a hall packed with Stalin loyalists, a voice chanted out: ‘It’s nothing. We are not frightened by rudeness, our whole party is rude, proletarian.’ A neat trick, but the situation was extraordinary all the same.” (Kotkin, *Stalin*, vol. I, p. 541).

<sup>438</sup> Frank Dikötter, *Dictators*, London: Bloomsbury, 2020, p. 69.

<sup>439</sup> Johnson, *Modern Times*, p. 265.

Two years later, Stalin was stronger than all three – Trotsky, Zinoviev and Kamenev – put together. In November, 1927 Trotsky and Zinoviev were expelled from the party, and in December the Fifteenth Party Congress confirmed the decision... In January, 1928 Trotsky was bundled off (wearing only pyjamas, socks and a greatcoat) to internal exile in Kazakhstan; he never returned to Moscow. In 1936 Kamenev and Zinoviev were tried and executed, and in 1940 Trotsky was assassinated in Mexico with a pick-axe...

Bazhanov writes: "Trotsky's position in 1923-4 was strong. If he had used the cards history had dealt him, Stalin could have been stopped. Of course Stalin *was* an accomplished schemer, but with the support Lenin had given him Trotsky could have lined up the party behind him if his temperament had not stood in the way. But he failed to understand the nature of the Party machine, Stalin's use of it, and the full significance Stalin's position as General Secretary had acquired by the time of the Thirteenth Congress."

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And yet there was more to it than that. The vital factor was the timing of Lenin's strokes, and above all the fact that the last stroke incapacitated him without immediately killing him. Was this a product of blind Chance (as Bullock implies)? Or History's choice of Stalin (as Trotsky should have inferred, however reluctantly)? Or God's judgement on apostate Russia?

For a believer in the true God there can be only one possible answer to this question. God acted now as He had acted in seventh-century Byzantium when He allowed the cruel tyrant Phocas to murder the good Emperor Maurice and ascend the throne. "One contemporary," writes Alexander Dvorkin, "cites the story of a certain man who cried out to God: 'Why did You send Your people such a blood-thirsty wolf?' And the Lord replied to him: 'I tried to find someone worse than Phocas, so as to punish the people for its self-will, but was unable. But from now on don't you question the judgements of God...'"<sup>440</sup>

*October 28 / November 10, 2021.*

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<sup>440</sup> Dvorkin, *Ocherki po Istorii Vselenskoj Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi* (Sketches on the History of the Universal Orthodox Church), Nizhni-Novgorod, 2006, p. 439.

## 40. ROCOR AND METROPOLITAN SERGEI

Metropolitan Sergei (Stragorodsky) played a leading role in the first Church revolution in March, 1917 and in the second, renovationist one in 1922, when he officially declared the renovationists' Higher Church Authority to be "the only canonical, lawful supreme ecclesiastical authority, and we consider all the decrees issuing from it to be completely lawful and binding". In 1923 Metropolitan Sergei had supported the renovationists' defrocking of Patriarch Tikhon as "a traitor to Orthodoxy". True, on August 27, 1923, he was forced to offer public repentance for his betrayal of Orthodoxy in renovationism. But as Hieromartyr Damascene of Glukhov later pointed out, he had not been in a hurry to offer repentance...

In March, 1927 Sergei was released from a three-month spell in prison and given back the reins of the leadership of the Church by Archbishop Seraphim of Uglich.<sup>441</sup> As the Catholic writer Deinber points out, "the fact of the liberation of Metropolitan Sergei at this moment, when the repressions against the Church throughout Russia were all the time increasing, when his participation in the affair of the election of Metropolitan Cyril, for which a whole series of bishops had paid with exile, was undoubted, immediately aroused anxiety, which was strengthened when, on April 25 / May 8, 1927 a Synod was unexpectedly convoked in Moscow.

"It became certain that between Metropolitan Sergei, during his imprisonment, and the Soviet government, i.e. the GPU, some sort of agreement had been established, which placed both him and the bishops close to him in a quite exceptional position relative to the others. Metropolitan Sergei received the right to live in Moscow, which right he had not enjoyed even before his arrest. When the names of the bishops invited to join the Synod were made known, then there could be no further doubts concerning the capitulation of Metropolitan Sergei before Soviet power. The following joined the Synod: Archbishop Sylvester (Bratanovsky) - a former renovationist; Archbishop Alexis Simansky - a former renovationist, appointed to the Petrograd see by the Living Church after the execution of Metropolitan Benjamin [Kazansky]; Archbishop Philip [Gumilevsky] - a former beglopopovets, i.e. one who had left the Orthodox Church for the sect of the beglopopovtsi; Metropolitan Seraphim [Alexandrov] of Tver, a man whose connections with the OGPU were known to all Russia and whom no-one trusted..."<sup>442</sup>

On May 20, the OGPU officially recognized this Synod, which suggested that Metropolitan Sergei had agreed to the terms of legalization that Patriarch Tikhon and Metropolitan Peter had rejected. One of Sergei's closest supporters, Bishop Metrophan of Aksaisk, had once declared that "the legalisation of the church administration is a sign of heterodoxy" ... In any case, Metropolitan Sergei and his

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<sup>441</sup> In later years, after Sergei's betrayal of the Church, Archbishop Seraphim is reported to have reasserted his rights as patriarchal locum tenens. See Michael Khlebnikov, "O tserkovnoj situatsii v Kostrome v 20-30-e gody" (On the Church Situation in Kostroma in the 20s and 30s), *Pravoslavnaiia Zhizn'* (Orthodox Life), 49, N 5 (569), May, 1997, p. 19.

<sup>442</sup> M. E. Gubonin, *Akty Svjaeishago Patriarkha Tikhona* (Acts of his Holiness Patriarch Tikhon), Moscow, 1994, p. 407.

“Patriarchal Holy Synod” now wrote to the bishops enclosing the OGPU document and telling them that their diocesan councils should now seek registration from the local organs of Soviet power. Then, in June, Sergei wrote to Metropolitan Evlogy of Paris directing him to sign a declaration of loyalty to the Soviet power. He agreed... On July 14, in ukaz № 93, Sergei demanded that all clergy abroad should sign a formal pledge to cease criticizing the Soviet government. It also stated that any clergyman abroad who refused to sign such would no longer be considered to be a part of the Moscow Patriarchate. This ukaz, which completely contradicted his previous ukaz of September 12, 1926, which blessed the hierarchs abroad to form their own independent administration, even included the actual text of the pledge that was to be signed: “I, the undersigned, promise that because of my actual dependence upon the Moscow Patriarchate, I will not permit myself in either my social activities nor especially in my Church work, any expression that could in the least way be considered as being disloyal with regard to the Soviet government.”<sup>443</sup>

The clergy abroad were given until October 15 to sign this pledge. The Council of Bishops of the Russian Church Outside Russia (ROCOR), in their encyclical dated August 26, 1927, refused this demand and declared: "The free portion of the Church of Russia must terminate relations with the ecclesiastical administration in Moscow [i.e., with Metropolitan Sergei and his synod], in view of the fact that normal relations with it are impossible and because of its enslavement by the atheist regime, which is depriving it of freedom to act according to its own will and of freedom to govern the Church in accordance with the canons."

However, Metropolitan Evlogy of Paris, agreed to sign, “but on condition that the term ‘loyalty’ means for us the apoliticisation of the émigré Church, that is, we are obliged not to make the ambon a political arena, if this will relieve the difficult situation of our native Mother Church; but we cannot be ‘loyal’ to Soviet power: we are not citizens of the USSR, and the USSR does not recognise us as such, and therefore the political demand is from the canonical point of view non-obligatory for us...”

On July 5, 1928, the Hierarchical Synod of ROCOR decreed: “The present ukaz [of Sergei] introduces nothing new into the position of the Church Abroad. It repeats the same notorious ukaz of his Holiness Patriarch Tikhon in 1922, which was decisively rejected by the whole Church Abroad in its time.” In response to this refusal, Metropolitan Sergei expelled the ROCOR hierarchs from membership of the Moscow Patriarchate. On September 13, Metropolitan Evlogy wrote to Sergei asking that he be given autonomy. On September 24 Sergei replied with a refusal. So the first schism between the Russian Church inside and outside Russia took place as a result of the purely political demands of Sergei’s Moscow Patriarchate.

The refusal of ROCOR was supported by the Solovki bishops: “The epistle threatens those church-servers who have emigrated with exclusion from the Moscow Patriarchate on the grounds of their political activity, that is, it lays an ecclesiastical

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<sup>443</sup> Quoted in Protopriest Alexander Lebedeff, “Is the Moscow Patriarchate the ‘Mother Church’ of the ROCOR”, [Orthodox@ListServ.Indiana.Edu](mailto:Orthodox@ListServ.Indiana.Edu), 24 December, 1997.



punishment upon them for political statements, which contradicts the resolution of the All-Russian Council of 1917-18 of August 3/16, 1918, which made clear the canonical impermissibility of such punishments, and rehabilitated all those people who were deprived of their orders for political crimes in the past.”<sup>444</sup>

Meanwhile, ominous events were taking place in Georgia. “Between June 21 and 27, 1927,” writes Fr. Elijah Melia, “a Council elected as Catholicos Christopher Tsitskichvili. On August 6 he wrote to the Ecumenical Patriarch Basil III who replied addressing him as Catholicos. The new Catholicos entirely changed the attitude of the ecclesiastical hierarchy towards the Soviet power, officially declared militant atheist, in favour of submission and collaboration with the Government.”<sup>445</sup>

During a synodal session under the presidency of the new Catholicos, it was decided to introduce the new style into the Georgian Church. However, the reform was rejected by the people and the majority of the priests. So it fell through and was repealed within a few months. All this, according to Boris Sokolov, took place under the influence of the head of the Georgian KGB, Laurence Pavlovich Beria, who wrote in 1929: “By our lengthy labours we succeeded in creating an opposition to Catholicos Ambrose and the then leading group in the Georgian Church, and... in January, 1927 we succeeded in completely wresting the reins of the government of the Georgian Church from the hands of Ambrose, and in removing him and his supporters from a leading role in the Georgian Church. In April, after the death of Catholicos Ambrose, Metropolitan Christopher was elected Catholicos. He is completely loyal to Soviet power, and already the Council that elected Christopher has declared its loyalty to the power and has condemned the politics and activity of Ambrose, and in particular, the Georgian emigration.” There followed, as Fr. Samson Zateishvili writes, “the persecution of clergy and believers, the dissolution of monasteries, the destruction of churches and their transformation into warehouses and cattle-sheds... The situation of the Church in Georgia was, perhaps, still more tragic and hopeless [than in the Russian Church], insofar as the new trials were imposed on old, unhealed wounds which remained from previous epochs.”<sup>446</sup>

In October, 1930, ROCOR’s future Archbishop Leonty of Chile noted: “I arrived in Tbilisi in the evening,” he wrote in his Memoirs, and went straight with my letter to the cathedral church of Sion... The clergy of the cathedral were so terrified of the Bolsheviks that they were afraid to give me shelter in their houses and gave me a place to sleep in the cathedral itself.”<sup>447</sup>

As if taking his cue from the Georgians, on July 16/29, Metropolitan Sergei issued the infamous Declaration that has been the basis of the existence of the Sovietized Moscow Patriarchate ever since, and which was to cause the greatest and most

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<sup>444</sup> Regelson, op. cit., p. 436.

<sup>445</sup> Melia, "The Orthodox Church of Georgia", *A Sign of God: Orthodoxy 1964*, Athens: Zoe, 1964, p. 113.

<sup>446</sup> Zateishvili, "Gruzinskaia Tserkov' i polnota pravoslavia" (The Georgian Church and the Fullness of Orthodoxy), in Bessmertny and Filatov, op. cit., p. 422.

<sup>447</sup> A.B. Psarev, "Zhizneopisanie Arkhiepiskopa Leontia Chilijskogo (1904-1971 gg.)" (A Life of Archbishop Leonty of Chile (1904-1971)), *Pravoslavnaiia Zhizn'* (Orthodox Life), N 3 (555), March, 1996, p. 20.

destructive schism in the history of the Orthodox Church since the fall of the Papacy in the eleventh century.

First he pretended that Patriarch Tikhon had always been aiming to have the Church legalized by the State, but had been frustrated by the émigré hierarchs and by his own death. There is a limited truth in this – but it was not the émigré hierarchs that frustrated the patriarch, nor did he want the kind of legalization Sergius wanted... Then he went on: “At my proposal and with permission from the State, a blessed Patriarchal Synod has been formed by those whose signatures are affixed to this document at its conclusion. Missing are the Metropolitan of Novgorod, Arseny, who has not arrived yet, and Archbishop Sebastian of Kostroma, who is ill. Our application that this Synod be permitted to take up the administration of the Orthodox All-Russian Church has been granted. Now our Orthodox Church has not only a canonically legal central administration but a central administration that is legal also according to the law of the State of the Soviet Union. We hope that this legalization will be gradually extended to the lower administrative units, to the dioceses and the districts. It is hardly necessary to explain the significance and the consequences of this change for our Orthodox Church, her clergy and her ecclesiastical activity. Let us therefore thank the Lord, Who has thus favoured our Church. Let us also give thanks before the whole people to the Soviet Government for its understanding of the religious needs of the Orthodox population. At the same time let us assure the Government that we will not misuse the confidence it has shown us.

“In undertaking now, with the blessings of the Lord, the work of this Synod, we clearly realize the greatness of our task and that of all the representatives of the Church. We must show not only with words but with deeds, that not only people indifferent to the Orthodox Faith or traitors to the Orthodox Church can be loyal citizens of the Soviet Union and loyal subjects of the Soviet power, but also the most zealous supporters of the Orthodox Church, to whom the Church with all her dogmas and traditions, with all her laws and prescriptions, is as dear as Truth and Life.

“We want to be Orthodox, and at the same time to see the Soviet Union as our civil Fatherland, whose triumphs and successes are also our triumphs and successes, whose failures are our failures. Every attack, boycott, public catastrophe or an ordinary case of assassination, as the recent one in Warsaw, will be regarded as an attack against ourselves...”

Archpriest Lev Lebedev comments on this: “This murder in Warsaw was the murder by B. Koverdaya of the Bolshevik Voikoff (also known as Weiner), who was one of the principal organizers of the murder of the Imperial Family, which fact was well known then, in 1927. So Sergei let the Bolsheviks clearly understand that he and his entourage were at one with them in all their evil deeds up to and including regicide.”<sup>448</sup>

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<sup>448</sup> Lebedev, “Dialogue between the ROCA and the MP: How and Why?” Great Lent, 1998.

Metropolitan Sergei continued: "Even if we remain Orthodox, we shall yet do our duties as citizens of the Soviet Union 'not only for wrath but also for conscience's sake' (Romans 13.5), and we hope that with the help of God and through working together and giving support to one another we shall be able to fulfil this task.

"We can be hindered only by that which hindered the construction of Church life on the bases of loyalty in the first years of Soviet power. This is an inadequate consciousness of the whole seriousness of what has happened in our country. The establishment of Soviet power has seemed to many like some kind of misunderstanding, something coincidental and therefore not long lasting. People have forgotten that there are no coincidences for the Christian and that in what has happened with us, as in all places and at all times, the same right hand of God is acting, that hand which inexorably leads every nation to the end predetermined for it. To such people who do not want to understand 'the signs of the times', it may also seem that it is wrong to break with the former regime and even with the monarchy, without breaking with Orthodoxy... Only ivory-tower dreamers can think that such an enormous society as our Orthodox Church, with the whole of its organisation, can have a peaceful existence in the State while hiding itself from the authorities. Now, when our Patriarchate, fulfilling the will of the reposed Patriarch, has decisively and without turning back stepped on the path of loyalty, the people who think like this have to either break themselves and, leaving their political sympathies at home, offer to the Church only their faith and work with us only in the name of faith, or (if they cannot immediately break themselves) at least not hinder us, and temporarily leave the scene. We are sure that they will again, and very soon, return to work with us, being convinced that only the relationship to the authorities has changed, while faith and Orthodox Christian life remain unshaken..."<sup>449</sup>

An article in *Izvestia* immediately noted the essence of the declaration - a return to renovationism: "The far-sighted part of the clergy set out on this path already in 1922". So "sergianism", as Sergei's position came to be known, was "neo-renovationism", and therefore subject to the same condemnation as the earlier renovationism of "the Living Church". Metropolitan Cyril of Kazan also defined the essence of Sergianism as "renovationism". And as recently as November, 2008 the True Orthodox Church of Russia defined sergianism in council as "a neo-renovationist schism".<sup>450</sup>

The radical error that lay at the root of this declaration lay in the last sentence quoted, in the idea that, in an antichristian state whose aim was the extirpation of all religion, it was possible to preserve loyalty to the State while "faith and Orthodox Christian life remained unshaken". This attitude presupposed 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 impossible to draw. For the Bolsheviks, there was no such dividing line; for them, everything was ideological, everything had to be in accordance with their ideology, there could be

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<sup>449</sup> Regelson, *Tragedia Russkoj Tserkvi, 1917-1945* (The Tragedy of the Russian Church, 1917-1945), Paris: YMCA Press, 1977, pp. 431-32.

<sup>450</sup> This Council took place in Odessa under the presidency of Archbishop Tikhon of Omsk and Siberia.

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, 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 (Darwinism, 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. Metropolitan Sergei's identification of his and his Church's joys and sorrows with the joys and sorrows of Soviet communism placed the souls of the millions who followed him in the most serious jeopardy.

The publication of the Declaration was greeted with a storm of criticism. Its opponents saw in it a more subtle version of renovationism. Even its supporters and neutral commentators from the West have recognized that it marked a radical change in the relationship of the Church to the State.<sup>451</sup>

Probably late in 1927, Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) of Kiev, first-hierarch of the Russian Church Abroad (ROCOR), wrote: "Now everywhere two epistles are being published in the newspapers and are being read in many churches which until recently were Orthodox - epistles of two, alas, former beloved pupils of mine with whom I was once in agreement, Metropolitans Sergei and Eulogy, who have now fallen away from the saving unity of the Church and have bound themselves to the enemies of Christ and the Holy Church - the disgusting blaspheming Bolsheviks, who have submitted themselves in everything to the representatives of the Jewish false teaching which everywhere goes under the name of communism or materialism... Let these new deceivers not justify themselves by declaring that they are not the friends of the Bolsheviks and Jews who stand at the head of the Bolshevik kingdom: in their souls they may not be their friends, but they have submitted, albeit unwillingly, to these enemies of Christ, and they are trying to increase their power not only over the hapless inhabitants of Holy Russia, but also over all Russian people."

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<sup>451</sup> Thus Professor William Fletcher comments: "This was a profound and important change in the position of the Russian Orthodox Church, one which evoked a storm of protest." (*The Russian Orthodox Church Underground, 1917-1971*, Oxford University Press, 1971, p. 57) Again, according to the Soviet scholar Titov, "after the Patriarchal church changed its relationship to the Soviet State, undertaking a position of loyalty, in the eyes of the believers any substantial difference whatsoever between the Orthodox Church and the renovationists disappeared." (Fletcher, op. cit., p. 59) Again, according to Archimandrite (later Metropolitan) John (Snychev), quoting from a renovationist source, in some dioceses in the Urals up to 90% of parishes sent back Sergei's declaration as a sign of protest." (in Regelson, op. cit., p. 434) Again, Donald Rayfield writes: "In 1927... Metropolitan Sergei formally surrendered the Orthodox Church to the Bolshevik party and state." (*Stalin and his Hangmen*, London: Viking, 2004, p. 123)

In an encyclical of August 27, 1927 the ROCOR council of Bishops pointed out that “the higher church authority in Russia finds itself in grave captivity to the enemies of the Church”; the council has decided to sever relations with the Moscow church authorities ‘in view of the impossibility of having normal relations with it and in view of its captivity to the God-fighting authorities, which are depriving it of freedom in the expression of its will and in the canonical government of the Church’”.

On September 1, 1927, Archbishop Theophan of Poltava wrote: “It is impossible to recognize the epistle of Metropolitan Sergei as obligatory for ourselves. The just-completed Council of Bishops rejected this epistle. It was necessary to act in this way on the basis of the teaching of the Holy Fathers on what should be recognized as a canonical power to which Christians must submit. St. Isidore of Pelusium, having pointed to the presence of the God-established order of the submission of some to others everywhere in the life of rational and irrational beings, draws the conclusion: ‘Therefore we are right to say that the thing in itself, I mean power, that is, authority and royal power, have been established by God. But if a lawless evildoer seizes this power, we do not affirm that he has been sent by God, but we say that he, like Pharaoh, has been permitted to spew out this cunning and thereby inflict extreme punishment on and bring to their senses those for whom cruelty was necessary, just as the King of Babylon brought the Jews to their senses.’ (*Works*, part II, letter 6). Bolshevik power in its essence is an antichristian power and there is no way that it can be recognized as God-established.”<sup>452</sup>

On September 5, the Hierarchical Council of ROCOR declared:

“1. The abroad part of the all-Russian Church must cease relations with the Moscow church authorities in view of the impossibility of normal relations with them and in view of its enslavement to the atheist Soviet power which deprives it of its freedom in its administration of the Church.

“2. So as to free our hierarchy in Russia from responsibility for the non-recognition of Soviet power by the abroad part of our Church, until the re-establishment of normal relations with Russia and until the liberation of our Church from the persecutions of Soviet power, the abroad part of our Church must administer itself in accordance with the sacred canons, the definitions of the Sacred Council of the All-Russian Local Orthodox Church of 1917-18 and the decree of his Holiness Patriarch Tikhon and the Higher Administrative Council of November 7/20, 1920, with the help of the Hierarchical Synod and the Council of Bishops, under the presidency of Metropolitan Anthony of Kiev.

“3. The abroad part of the Russian Church considers itself to be an inseparable, spiritually-at-one branch of the Great Russian Church. It does not separate itself from its Mother Church and does not consider itself autocephalous. As before, it considers

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<sup>452</sup> Archbishop Theophan, *Pis'ma* (Letters), Holy Trinity Monastery, Jordanville, 1976; translated in *Selected Letters*, Liberty, TN: St. John of Kronstadt Press, 1989.

its head to be the Patriarchal Locum Tenens Metropolitan Peter and commemorates his name in Divine services.

“4. If there will come a decree of Metropolitan Sergei and his Synod on the exclusion of the abroad bishops and clergy who do not want to sign their loyalty to the Soviet government from the clergy of the Moscow Patriarchate, this decree will be uncanonical.”

On May 9, 1928 Metropolitan Sergei threatened to ban the ROCOR hierarchs if they did not dissolve their Administration. On June 20, his Synod issued another ukaz to the Church Abroad declaring that any clergyman who recognized the Moscow Synod but did not accept Soviet citizenship would be removed from his post. Nobody obeyed this ukaz...

On August 28, 1928, Metropolitan Anthony issued “the completely definitive declaration of our Synod of Bishops that the Moscow Synod has deprived itself of all authority, since it has entered into agreement with the atheists, and without offering any resistance it has tolerated the closing and destruction of the holy churches, and the other innumerable crimes of the Soviet government... That illegally formed organization which has entered into union with God’s enemies, which Metropolitan Sergei calls an Orthodox Synod – but which the best Russian hierarchs, clergy and laymen have refused to recognize - ... must not be recognized by our Orthodox Churches, nor by our Synod of Bishops with its flock here abroad. Furthermore, the organization of the Moscow Synod must be recognized to be exactly the same sort of apostates from the Faith as the ancient libellatici, that is, Christians who although they refused to blaspheme openly against Christ and offer sacrifices to the idols, nevertheless still received from the priests of the idols false documents verifying that they were in complete accord with the adherents of pagan religion...”<sup>453</sup>

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Unfortunately, however, this “completely definitive” statement did not prove to be completely definitive for the ROCOR hierarchs in years to come; their attitude to the Moscow Patriarchate wavered between strictness and condescension, and finally, in 2007, they fell away from the faith completely and joined the MP...

Early in 1930, just after Sergei had given his interview denying that there had ever been persecutions against the faith in Soviet Russia, the archbishop of Canterbury invited Metropolitan Evlogy of Paris to go to London for one day of prayers for the suffering Church of Russia. “I decided to go,” he wrote. “The whole of England will pray for us, and I will remain in Paris as a witness of the unanimous sympathy of all

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<sup>453</sup> *Pis'ma Blazhenneishago Mitropolita Antonia (Khrapovitskogo)* (The Letters of his Beatitude Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky), op. cit., pp. 105-106, and *Zhiznopolisaniye Blazhenneishago Mitropolita Antonia*, vol. 7, pp.218-223, quoted in the *Archpastoral Epistle of the Synod of Bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia*, 1969 and translated in *Orthodox Christian Witness*, March 8/21, 1982. Metropolitan Anthony secretly distributed this encyclical with an appeal to the archpastors to join ROCOR; it was widely read among the Josephites (Shkarovsky, M.B. “Iosiflianskoe dvizhenie i ‘Sviataia Rus’” (The Josephite Movement and ‘Holy Russia’), *Mera* (Measure), 1995, # 3, p. 101).

the Churches for our suffering Church, but not take part? Impossible! My conscience ordered me to take part in these prayers; and my flock undoubtedly felt the same way.

“I spent about a week in England. It is a long time since I experienced such a radiant feeling of brotherly Christian love between the Churches as I experienced in those unforgettable days, when the whole of ecclesiastical and believing England prayed on her knees for a cessation of the terrible sufferings of our Russian Orthodox Church... I pursued no political aims in England, and nowhere gave political speeches. Everywhere that I had to give speeches I only gave thanks for their sympathy and asked them to support our suffering Mother Church by their prayers. And now these speeches have served as an excuse for a strict inquiry from Metropolitan Sergei in Moscow: on what basis could I allow myself to go round England calling people to protest against the USSR? Then it was demanded that I condemn my journey and give an undertaking not to repeat such speeches... It was bitter for me to read these unjust reproaches, which were dictated by Soviet power, and I replied sharply to Metropolitan Sergei that my prayers in England did not have a political, but only a religious character: it was a protest of the religious and in general the human conscience against the terrible persecutions against the Church in Soviet Russia...”<sup>454</sup>

On June 10, 1930, Sergei retired Metropolitan Evlogy from his post administering the Russian parishes in Western Europe. On July 10 Evlogy broke communion with the Moscow Patriarchate, and in February was received by Constantinople...

On May 6, 1933 Metropolitan Anthony wrote to Sergei, who had reproached the ROCOR bishops for abandoning their sees: “... It is not from you and not for us to hear an exhortation to martyrdom, which we would not have avoided if we had stayed in the South of Russia. We are ready to listen to it and to many such reproaches, if we deserve them, from those who even now display an example of confession, and have not, like you, sold the purity of the faith for a mess of pottage of seeming freedom, which is in fact the most heavy and shameful slavery...”

“What divides you from us is the fact that you, in your desire to guarantee a secure existence for your ecclesiastical centre, have tried to unite light with darkness. You have fallen into the temptation whose essence was revealed in the holy Gospel. Once the spirit of evil tried to draw even the Son of God Himself by a picture of external easy success, placing as a condition His worship of him, the son of destruction. You

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<sup>454</sup> Monk Benjamin, *Letopis' Tserkovnykh Sobyij* (Chronicle of Church Events), part 2, p. 13. If Metropolitan Sergei had been thinking ecclesiastically rather than politically, he would have protested, not at the supposedly political character of Metropolitan Evlogy's visits to England, but at his violation of the canons by his recognizing the Anglican clergy. Thus on May 16, 1935, on the initiative of the Russian Clergy and Church Aid Fund, a prayer service was arranged in London for the cessation of the persecutions against the faith in Soviet Russia. Metropolitan Evlogy came again, together with ROCOR's Archbishops Anastasy and Seraphim. During the service in the Anglican church the Orthodox hierarchs stood with their mantias on. Then, at a liturgy and moleben in the Russian church many Anglican clergy stood and prayed in their vestments. (*Tserkovnaia Zhizn'* (Church Life), 6, 1935, pp. 100-101; Monk Benjamin, *op. cit.*, part 2, p. 47)

have not followed the example of Christ, the holy martyrs and confessors, who rejected such a compromise, but have bowed down to the age-old enemy of our salvation, when, for the sake of an illusory success, for the sake of the preservation of an external organization, you declared that the joys of the godless authorities are your joys and its enemies your enemies. You even tried to remove the crowns from the recent martyrs and confessors (including yourself, for I know that once you showed firmness and were in prison), affirming that they are suffering imprisonment, exile and torments not for the name of Christ, but as counter-revolutionaries. In this way you blasphemed against them. You denigrated their exploit, and dampened the enthusiasm of those who could have been numbered to the ranks of the martyrs for the faith. You excommunicated them from the flower and adornment of the Russian church. In this neither I nor my brothers abroad will ever follow you... We have no intercourse with the Orthodox archpastors, pastors and laymen who are imprisoned in Russia, except that we pray for them and know that they suffer only for the faith, though the persecutors charge them with State crimes which are alien to them, as the enemies of the Christians loved to do in ancient times... For you the way of the cross is now madness like it was to the Greeks contemporary with the Apostles (I Corinthians 1.23). I implore you, as a pupil and friend, free yourself from this temptation, renounce publicly every lie which Tuchkov and other enemies of the Church have put into your mouth, do not yield in the face of probably tortures. If you are counted worthy of a martyr's crown, the earthly and heavenly Churches will combine in glorification of your courage and of the Lord Who strengthened you; but if you stay on this wide path leading you to perdition (Matthew 7.13), on which you stand now, you will be ignominiously led to the pit of hell and until the end of its earthly existence the Church will not forget your betrayal. I always think of this when I look at the panagia of the Vladimir Mother of God with the engraved inscription which you presented to me twenty years ago: 'To a dear teacher and friend.' Your further words in this inscription are: 'give us some of your oil, for our lamps are fading.' Here we offer you the salutary oil of faith and loyalty in the Holy Church. Do not refuse it, but reunite with it as in 1922 when you solemnly declared to Patriarch Tikhon your repentance for your former wavering loyalty. Do not refuse the friendly appeal of one who tenderly loved you and continues to love you. Metropolitan Anthony." <sup>455</sup>

On July 8, 1933 the Hierarchical Council of ROCOR issued an encyclical to the Russian Orthodox flock with regard to Sergei's epistle of March 23: "His appeal in its essence remains the same as it was in 1927 and can be formulated in the words: he who is with Soviet power is with the Russian Church; he who is against the former cannot be with the latter. In this way the link with the Mother Church can be realized for us in no other way than by accepting the God-fighting authorities that now rule in Russia. Before stretching out the hand of communion with Metropolitan Sergei, we must stretch it out first to the Bolsheviks and receive from them attestation of our

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<sup>455</sup> *Tserkovnaia Zhizn'* (Church Life), № 8, 1933; in *Orthodox Life*, vol. 27 (2), March-April, 1977; Archbishop Nikon, *Zhizneopisanie Blazhenneishago Antonia, Mitropolita Kievsago i Galitskago* (Biography of His Beatitude Anthony, Metropolitan of Kiev and Galich), New York, 1960, vol. 6, pp. 263-269; Monk Benjamin, *op. cit.*, part 2, pp. 24-27.



political reliability, without which the deputy of the locum tenens cannot re-establish fraternal and canonical union with us..."<sup>456</sup>

At the same time, this encyclical, - penned, according to Archbishop Nikon, by Metropolitan Anastasy, - declared: "As regards relations toward the Mother Church, the Russian ecclesial organization abroad has considered itself no more than a branch of the latter, bound organically to the whole body of the Church of Russia, even though temporarily deprived only of outward unity with the latter in ecclesiastical administration.

"To the present day the entire Church organization abroad has considered and still considers itself an extraordinary and temporary institution, which must be abolished without delay after the restoration of normal social and ecclesiastical life in Russia.

"We are taking fully into account the extraordinary difficulties of the position of Metropolitan Sergei, who is now the de facto head of the Church of Russia, and are aware of the heavy burden of responsibility for the fate of the latter, which lies upon him. No one, therefore, has the audacity to accuse him for the mere attempt to enter into dialogue with the Soviet regime so as to obtain legal standing for the Church of Russia. Not without foundation does the deputy locum tenens of the Patriarchal Throne say in his aforementioned Declaration that only 'armchair dreamers can think that such a vast community as our Orthodox Church, with all its organization, can exist peacefully in a country while walling itself off from the authorities.' While the church exists on earth, it remains closely bound up with the fates of human society and cannot be imagined outside time and space. It is impossible for it to refrain from all contact with a powerful societal organization such as the government; otherwise it would have to leave the world."<sup>457</sup>

However, in his 1934 Paschal encyclical Metropolitan Anthony was stricter: "It is noteworthy that several hierarchs and their flocks, for the most part Russians, have already fallen away from Ecumenical unity, and to the question: 'What do you believe?', reply with references to self-proclaimed heads of all sorts of schisms in Moscow, America, and Western Europe. It is clear that, without admitting it, they have ceased to believe in the unity of the Church throughout the world. They try to bear calmly the refusal of the true Church to have relations with them, and imagine that one can save one's soul even without communion with Her... Unfortunately, some Orthodox laymen, even, alas, many priests (and hierarchs) have subjected themselves to this state of gracelessness, although still retaining the outward appearance of the church services and the apparent performance of the Mysteries..."<sup>458</sup>

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<sup>456</sup> Monk Benjamin, *op. cit.*, part 2, p. 27.

<sup>457</sup> <http://www.russianorthodoxchurch.ws/english/pages/history/1933epistle.html>;  
<http://www.russianorthodoxchurch.ws/Poslania/poslanie.sobor.1933.html>.

<sup>458</sup> On November 26 / December 9, 1979, Metropolitan Philaret of New York wrote to Abbess Magdalina of Lesna convent: "Ponder these last words of the great Abba: the apparent performance of the Mysteries... What horror! But these words of his concur totally with my own conviction regarding the gracelessness and inefficacy of schismatic Mysteries" - and he went on to make clear

On July 5, 1934, Metropolitan Sergei banned the ROCOR hierarchs from serving. On August 7, Metropolitan Anthony wrote to Metropolitan Eleutherius of Lithuania explaining that he could not accept this ban because “a hierarch cannot be removed from his see except through a trial”.<sup>459</sup>

Now Eleutherius was a supporter of Sergei, and on the departure of Metropolitan Evlogy for Constantinople was entrusted with oversight of the patriarchal parishes in Western Europe. In 1935 he published a book defending the MP against ROCOR and Metropolitan Anthony, in which he argued that while Soviet power acted in the religious sphere “by the inspiration of Satan”, Christians were still bound to obey it, because “all power is from God”. If they obeyed Soviet power, as God commanded, then Soviet power, “would see this, and the Spirit of God would proclaim good things for the Church through it”.<sup>460</sup>

Professor Ivan Ilyin subjected this argument to detailed criticism. The communists could not be simultaneously servants of God and servants of Satan. If they were acting “by the inspiration of Satan”, as was clearly the case, then they had to be opposed. In any case, Church history contained many examples of hierarchs refusing to obey the secular authorities, beginning with the apostles who told the Sanhedrin: “we must obey God rather than men” (Acts 5.29).

Ilyin quotes “the law of freedom” (James 1.25; I Peter 2.16) to illumine the meaning of the words “all power is from God”. They “signify not that power is unrestrained, but that it is bound and limited. ‘Being from God’ means being called to the service of God and undertaking this service; it binds and limits this power. It does not mean that the power is free to do any baseness or abomination, sin or iniquity, and that, whatever it does, it will always ‘come from God’, and that obedience in conscience will be demanded by it from its subjects as if it were the voice of God. But it means that the power is established by God for the doing of good and the overcoming of evil; that it must rule precisely in this way, and not otherwise. And if it does rule in this way, the subjects are obliged to obey it out of conscience.

“Thus the calling of the power by God becomes for it a rule and obligation, as if it were a court before the face of God. While the free obedience of subjects according to

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that he regarded the sacraments of the Moscow Patriarchate, and of the American and Parisian jurisdictions, to be graceless.

<sup>459</sup> Monk Benjamin, op. cit., part 2, p. 40. It is interesting to note that Metropolitan Chrysostom of Florina said the same thing when clarifying a pastoral epistle of his: “no clergyman, and certainly no hierarch, is to be deposed for wrong belief and excised from the universal body of the Eastern Orthodox Church without a prior trial and defense... For the age-old history of the Orthodox Church teaches us that no wrong-believing person who is liable to deposition and excision has ever been declared heretical or schismatic by Hierarchs acting in isolation, without any trial or defense, but by a valid and canonical Synod, coming together and taking counsel with the aid of the Holy Spirit and putting forth its vote of condemnation only after the defendant has stood trial and defended himself, and after all means of enlightenment and admonition have been exhausted...” (Letter of January 18, 1945; [http://www.trueorthodoxy.org/schismatics\\_matthewites\\_postings.shtml](http://www.trueorthodoxy.org/schismatics_matthewites_postings.shtml))

<sup>460</sup> Metropolitan Eleutherius, *Moj Otvjet Mitropolitu Antoniu* (My Reply to Metropolitan Anthony), Kovno, 1935, pp. 18, 67.

conscience turns out to be strengthened, but also limited, by this law. But how far is it 'limited'? To the extent that the law of Christian freedom calls them to loyalty or forbids them to show loyalty.

"And it is precisely to this freedom, infused with love, conscience and clear perception of its object, that we must turn for an exit when the power turns out to be in the hands of Satan, whom we can in no way serve or want to serve – neither out of fear, nor for conscience's sake. We can and must serve only God, for we are 'servants of God' (I Peter 2.16); we are called to serve Him in freedom, speaking and acting as people who must be judged, not according to the letter of the Scripture, but according to the law of freedom. And if it turns out that according to our free and object-directed Christian conscience (not out of arbitrariness or passion!), this power is satanic, then we are called to condemn it, refuse to obey it and conduct a struggle against it in word and deed, by no means using our Christian freedom in order to cover up evil, that is, without distorting the voice of our Christian conscience, and not embellishing the words of Satan and not ascribing them in crookedness of soul to Christ..."<sup>461</sup>

The issue dividing ROCOR and Metropolitan Sergei is often described by the supporters of Sergei as "political" – a question only of the political recognition of the Soviet regime. However, as the Catacomb confessor Professor Ivan Andreyev pointed out: "To dissociate oneself in principle from any politics is impossible for an Orthodox person, for religion and politics are at the present time organically blended. The question: to be with Christ or against Him, has a political meaning today, because it commits one to protesting against those political systems which have as their main goal the destruction of Christianity. Whoever at the present time denies the necessity of political discussions (reasoning) and jurisdictional explanations (interpretations) denies the necessity of distinguishing the wolves in sheep's clothing and finding out where Christ is and where the Antichrist..."<sup>462</sup>

In this connection, it is worth recalling the following decree issued by Metropolitan Sergei and his Synod on July 25, 1935 recently discovered by researchers: "The decision of the former Most Holy Governing Synod of April 20, 1813 to deprive Archbishop Barlaam (Shishatsky) of Mogilev of his rank and priesthood, is to be completely rescinded as being issued for political reasons and under pressure of political circumstances. His Eminence Archbishop Barlaam Shishatsky is to be recognized as having died in his hierarchical rank. Therefore he is to be commemorated among those who have reposed as an Archbishop." Deacon Alexander Mazyrin comments on this: "Archbishop Barlaam was defrocked in his time because in the summer of 1812, after the French took Mogilev, he swore allegiance to the Emperor Napoleon. In rescinding the indicated decree of the Most Holy Synod, 'as being issued for political reasons and under pressure of political

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<sup>461</sup> Ilyin, "O 'Bogoustanovlennosti' sovietskoj vlasti" (On the 'God-establishedness' of Soviet Power), <http://www.portal-credo.ru/site/print.php?act=lib&id=2711>

<sup>462</sup> Andreev, *Is the Grace of God Present in the Soviet Church?*, Wildwood, Alberta: Monastery Press, 2000, p. 54.

circumstances', Metropolitan Sergei clearly let us understand how we should relate to his own decrees, at the base of which there also lay political motives.'" <sup>463</sup>

True; and yet there is a still more pertinent conclusion to be drawn from this. Archbishop Barlaam was undoubtedly justly defrocked by the Most Holy Synod in 1813, because he swore allegiance to a man, Napoleon, who had been anathematized by the Synod. That being the case, Metropolitan Sergei was no less justly defrocked for swearing allegiance to the Bolsheviks, who were also under the Russian Church's anathema and whose enmity to Orthodoxy was still more obvious. For the fact that both acts were committed "under political pressure" is strictly irrelevant. Both acts, although clothed as concessions to political necessity, were acts of ecclesiastical betrayal; both men betrayed Christ and His Holy Church, and were therefore subject to anathema and expulsion from the Church.

From distant China, Metropolitan Innocent of Peking (Figurovsky) (+1931) summed up the situation: "Metropolitan Sergei had ordered a prayer to be offered for the Soviet power before the throne of God and recognized its joys as his joys and her sorrows as his sorrows.

"It is difficult to think of a more terrible blasphemy against Orthodox hierarchs and the Orthodox people. Is it really still necessary to prove now that the government that openly fights with God, which turned more than 3,000 churches into temples of their satanic religion, which brutally destroyed thousands of hierarchs and priests, ruined more than 20 million by executions and starvation. the Russian people - that this power is not from God, but from the devil. Is it really necessary to convince someone that we cannot rejoice in the joys of the government, which has decided to wipe the very name of the Russian people from the face of the earth, which cripples and corrupts the souls of children and youth, inoculating them with vile vices and disgusting diseases! To argue otherwise, one must lose either reason or conscience.

"After 12 years of bloody terror, it is clear to everyone except those who deceive themselves that one cannot speak of any power in Russia in the human sense of the word, there are no laws and human rights; for where a wild beast reigns, instead of law, disgusting arbitrariness reigns! And this satanic power you, Your Eminence, together with Metropolitan Sergei, now you want to recognize the power as legitimate. How do you not feel the horror of such blasphemy? Do you really want, together with him and his Synod, to persecute the Orthodox Church, whose true hierarchs are now not in cities and not in royal palaces, but in prisons and in exile. Do you really want, together with Metropolitan Sergei and the Chekists to plant the abomination of desolation in the holy place, do you want to join with the Antichrist and do his work?

"Do not try to deceive yourself and others with words of guile. By recognizing Metropolitan Sergei as your head - does this not mean fulfilling all his orders,

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<sup>463</sup> Mazyrin, "K istorii vysshevo upravlenia Russkoj Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi v 1935-1937 gg.", 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Theological Conference of PSTGU, Moscow, 2006, vol. 1, p. 166, <http://pstgu.ru/download/1269284749.mazyrin.pdf>

following the path along which he himself is going? To be loyal to the Bolsheviks, to renounce any active struggle with them, which is demanded by Metropolitan Sereis from all who recognize him - is not this a renunciation of Christ, the acceptance of that seal of the Antichrist, about which St. John the Evangelist speaks in his Revelation?

“You are trying in vain to play on the tender family feelings of the emigration for our brothers, who were captured in the USSR. Believe me, many of them preferred prison and exile to the confession of Metropolitan Sergei. The time is coming in the USSR, and it has already come, when all who have not accepted the seal of the antichrist will be deprived of the right to life, the right to sell and buy. You, no doubt, have read about the persecution of the Bolsheviks against the "kulak" - honest workers who earn their bread by their labor and are guilty only of not going into slavery to satanic power. For this, their property is taken from them; many of them are killed. But they continue to fight and suffer for the Orthodox faith and Holy Russia, sacrificing everything. And here, at large, will we calmly look at their torment, will we refuse to fight their executioners in our cowardice? Or do you not feel that we will join the crimes of the Chekists, we will be guilty of the death of those tortured by them, if we do not fight with all our might against the army of Satan, which is oppressing our Motherland? The fight against the communists ... is our sacred duty.”

*November 11/24, 2021.*

## 41. "THE SECOND OCTOBER REVOLUTION"

The falling away of ROCOR from the True Church is usually dated to 2007, when they officially joined the apostate Moscow Patriarchate. However, as in every church apostasy, there were stages in the process. One of the most important was the Hierarchical Council of ROCOR that took place in New York in October, 2000. Its most important acts were three conciliar epistles addressed: the first to the Serbian Patriarch Paul, the second "To the Beloved Children of the Church in the Homeland and in the Diaspora" and the third "To the Supporters of the Old Rites".

The first of these epistles, dated October 26, declared that ROCOR and the Serbs were "brothers by blood and by faith" and that "we have always valued the eucharistic communion between our sister-Churches and the desire to preserve the consolation of this communion to the end of time". And towards the end of the Epistle we read: "We beseech your Holiness not to estrange us from liturgical communion with you".

It should be remembered that this was written only two years after ROCOR had officially reissued its anathema on ecumenism, and only a few months after the Serbian Patriarch himself had said that there was *no* communion between his Church and ROCOR, calling ROCOR a "church" only in inverted commas! Moreover, as recently as September, 2000, the official publication of the Serbian Church, *Pravoslav'e*, had reported that, at the invitation of the patriarchate there had arrived in Belgrade a Catholic delegation, which had made a joint declaration witnessing to the fact that Serbian hierarchs had been praying together with the Catholics for the last three weeks!<sup>464</sup> So, having justly anathematised the Serbs as heretics, and having witnessed the continuation of their heretical activity, ROCOR was now *begging* to be brought back into communion with the heretics!

Why? The reason became clear later in the Epistle: "A miracle has taken place, the prayers of the host of Russian New Martyrs have been heard: the atheist power that threatened the whole world has unexpectedly, before our eyes, fallen! Now we observe with joy and hope how the process of spiritual regeneration foretold by our saints has begun, and in parallel with it *the gradual return to health of the Church administration in Russia*. This process is difficult and is not being carried forward without opposition. Nevertheless, a radiant indicator of it is the recent glorification of the New Martyrs of Russia headed by the slaughtered Royal Family and the condemnation of the politics of cooperation with the godless authorities which took place at the last Council of the Russian Church in Moscow.

"There still remain other serious wounds in the leadership of the Russian Church which hinder our spiritual rapprochement. Nevertheless, we pray God that He may heal them, too, by the all-powerful grace of the Holy Spirit. Then there must take

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<sup>464</sup> The Serbian bishops declared that "during these three days our sense of brotherhood in Christ was deepened through our [joint] prayer and work."

Also in 2000 the Catholic Archbishop of Zagreb celebrated a mass in a suburb of Novi Sad in northern Serbia which was attended by the local Orthodox bishop.

place the longed-for rapprochement and, God willing, the spiritual union between the two torn-apart parts of the Russian Church – that which is in the Homeland, and that which has gone abroad. *We pray your Holiness to grant your assistance in this.*”

So the ROCOR bishops – this letter was signed by all of them – were asking a heretic anathematised for ecumenism to help them to enter into communion with other anathematised ecumenists – their old enemies in Moscow, whom they now characterised in glowing and completely false terms as if they had already returned to Orthodoxy! Why, then, should the ROCOR bishops continue to speak of ecumenism as an obstacle to union with the MP? As the Kursk clergy pointed out: “It is not clear how long, in view of the declared unity with the Serbian patriarchate, this last obstacle [ecumenism] to union with the MP will be seen as vital.”<sup>465</sup>

The second of the epistles, dated October 27, made several very surprising statements. First, it again spoke of “the beginning of a real spiritual awakening” in Russia. Considering that less than 1% of the Russian population went to the MP, then, even if the spiritual state of the MP were brilliant, this would hardly constitute “awakening” on any significant scale. Moreover, as Demetrius Kapustin pointed out, the supposed signs of this awakening – the greater reading of spiritual books, the greater discussion of canonical and historical questions in the MP – are not good indicators of real spiritual progress: “It is evident that the reading of Church books can bring a person great benefit. However, a necessary condition for this is love for the truth. The Jews also saw Christ, and spoke with Him, but they did not want humbly to receive the true teaching, and not only were they not saved, but also took part in the persecutions and destroyed their own souls. It is the same with many parishioners of the MP. On reading books on the contemporary Church situation, many of them come to the conclusion that sergianism and ecumenism are soul-destroying. However, these doubts of theirs are often drowned out by the affirmations of their false teachers, who dare to place themselves above the patristic tradition. Satisfying themselves with a false understanding of love (substituting adultery with heretics and law-breakers for love for God, which requires chastity and keeping the truth) and obedience (substituting following the teaching of false elders for obedience to God and the humble acceptance of the patristic teaching, and not recognizing their personal responsibility for their own Church state), they often take part in the persecutions and slander against the True Orthodox. In a word, even such good works as the veneration of the Royal Martyrs are often expressed in a distorted form (by, for example, mixing it with Stalinism, as with the ‘fighter from within’ Dushenov)”.

Kapustin then makes the important point that “an enormous number of people... have not come to Orthodoxy precisely because they have not seen true Christianity in the MP (alas, in the consciousness of many people in Russia the Orthodox Church is associated with the MP). In my opinion, the MP rather hinders than assists the spiritual awakening of the Russian people (if we can talk at all about any awakening

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<sup>465</sup> “Obraschenie kurskogo dukhovenstva k mitropolitu Vitaliu” (Address of the Kursk Clergy to Metropolitan Vitaly), *Otkliki*, op. cit., part 3, p. 79.

in the present exceptionally wretched spiritual condition of Russia)."<sup>466</sup>

Secondly, ROCOR's epistle welcomed the MP's glorification of the New Martyrs, since "the turning of the whole Russian people in prayer to all the holy New Martyrs of Russia and especially the Royal new martyrs... had become possible now thanks to the recognition of their holiness by the Hierarchical Council of the Moscow Patriarchate". As if the Russian people had not already been praying to the Holy New Martyrs in front of icons made in ROCOR for the past twenty years!

Moreover, as Protopriests Constantine Fyodorov and Benjamin Zhukov wrote, "the possibility of turning in prayer to the Russian New Martyrs was opened to the people *not by the Moscow Patriarchate (as is written in our Hierarchical Council's Epistle), but by the martyric exploit of these saints themselves, who were glorified by our Church in 1981. The prayer of the Russian people to these saints never ceased from the very first day of their martyric exploit, but was strengthened and spread precisely by the canonization of the Church Abroad.*"<sup>467</sup>

Thirdly: "We are encouraged by the acceptance of the new social conception by this council, which in essence *blots out* the 'Declaration' of Metropolitan Sergius in 1927"<sup>468</sup> And yet in the MP's "social conception" Sergius' declaration was not even mentioned, let alone repented of. In any case, how could one vague phrase about the necessity of the Church disobeying the State in certain exceptional cases (which was contradicted on the same page, as we have seen) *blot out* a Declaration that caused the greatest schism in Orthodox Church history since 1054 and incalculable sufferings and death?! Two years later, as we have seen, in July, 2002, the Synod of the MP, far from "blotting out" the declaration, said that Sergius' relationship to the Soviet authorities was "not blameworthy", so not only has the MP *not* repented for sergianism, but it has continued to *justify* it, contradicting the position of the Catacomb new martyrs whom it has just glorified and who gave their lives because of their opposition to sergianism.

As Metropolitan Vitaly wrote: "The so-called 'Social Doctrine' of the Moscow Patriarchate is a purely Roman Catholic concept which is foreign to the Orthodox Church and which, regardless of its possibly well-meaning intentions, holds nothing profitable for the Orthodox Christian. This Doctrine does not reflect any repentance for the past mistakes and in no manner can it cross out the treacherous Declaration of 1927."

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<sup>466</sup> Kapustin, "Raz'iasnenia Episkopa usilili somnenia" (The Explanations of the Bishop have Increased Doubts), *Otkliki*, *op. cit.*, part 3, p. 66. Kapustin was actually commenting on Bishop Evtikhy's report to the Council. However, since the Council in its epistle accepted Evtikhy's report almost *in toto*, and repeated many of his points, the remarks on the bishop's report apply equally to the conciliar epistle.

<sup>467</sup> Fyodorov, Zhukov, "Ispovedanie iskonnoj pozitsii RPTsZ" (The Confession of the Age-Old Position of the ROCOR), *Otkliki*, *op. cit.*, part 3, p. 46.

<sup>468</sup> Again, it was Bishop Evtikhy's report that played the vital role here: "We simply no longer notice it, one phrase from the Social Doctrine is sufficient for us" (A. Soldatov, "Sergij premudrij nam put' ozaril" (Sergius the Wise has Illumined our Path), *Vertograd*, № 461, 21 May, 2004, p. 4).



The epistle, which was signed by all the bishops except Barnabas, obliquely recognised this fact when it later declared: "We have not seen a just evaluation by the Moscow Patriarchate of the anti-ecclesiastical actions of Metropolitan Sergius (Stragorodsky) and his Synod and their successors". If so, then how can we talk about Sergius' Declaration being *blotted out*?!

The third epistle, addressed to the Old Ritualists without distinguishing between the Popovtsi and Bespopovtsi, was similarly ecumenist in tone, beginning with the words: "To the Believing children of the Russian Orthodox Church in the Homeland and in the diaspora, who hold to the old rite, the Council of bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church Abroad sends greetings! Beloved brothers and sisters in our holy Orthodox faith: may the grace and peace of the Man-loving Saviour be with you to the ages!"

It was one thing to remove the bans on the old rites, as ROCOR had done in its Council in 1974: it was quite another to recognise the schismatics as Orthodox. And in such terms! For later in the epistle ROCOR compares the persecutions of the Old Ritualists to the persecutions of St. John Chrysostom, and begs forgiveness of the Old Ritualists as the Emperor Theodosius the Younger had begged it of the holy hierarch! But, as Bishop Gregory Grabbe pointed out after the 1974 Council, the sins of the Russian State in persecuting the Old Ritualists in the 17<sup>th</sup> century should not all be laid on the Church of the time, which primarily condemned the Old Ritualists not for their adherence to the old rites (which even Patriarch Nikon recognised to be salvific), but for their disobedience to the Church. To lay all the blame for the schism, not on the Old Ritualists but on the Orthodox, even after the Old Ritualists had proudly refused to take advantage of the many major concessions made by the Orthodox (for example, the edinoverie) while stubbornly continuing to call the Orthodox themselves schismatics, was to invert the truth and logically led to the conclusion that the Orthodox Church was not the True Church!

As clergy of the Kursk diocese pointed out: "The conciliar epistle to the Old Ritualists, in our opinion, is not only an extremely humiliating document for the Orthodox Church, but also contains signs of a heterodox ecclesiology. Effectively equating the Old Ritualists with the confessors of Orthodoxy, the Hierarchical Council, first, leaves them with their convictions, thereby blocking the path to repentance, and secondly, either teaches that outside the Orthodox Church there can exist true confession, or considers that the Church can be divided into parts which for centuries have not had any eucharistic communion between themselves. Both in form and in spirit the epistle in question represents a complete break with the patristic tradition of the Orthodox Church.... It seems that all that remains to be added is the request: 'We humbly beseech you to receive us into your communion and be united to the Holy Church.'<sup>469</sup>

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<sup>469</sup> "Obraschenie kurskogo dukhovenstva k mitropolitu Vitaliu" (Address of the Kursk Clergy to Metropolitan Vitaly), *Otkliki*, op. cit., part 3. pp. 81-82, 76. A fuller extract from this address: "... But now it is necessary to touch upon another document issued by our Sobor. In it, eucharistic unity with our erring brethren the Old Ritualists is discussed. Most certainly, we welcome this possibility. What could bring greater joy to the heart of any Russian Orthodox person, than the return to the Russian Church, after three-and-a-half centuries, of Russian people who have fallen away from the Church,

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but remained faithful to Orthodox ecclesiastical and Russian national traditions! That is, if only our archpastors viewed the matter precisely in this light: as the return to the Church of those who have fallen away from her. Unfortunately, the Sobor's appeal to the representatives of Old Ritualism is couched in terms that leave it uncertain just who is in schism from the Church, we or our erring brethren the Old Ritualists.

Truly, the self-abasement of the Sobor of Bishops knows no bounds! In the name of our entire Church it does not merely ask the Old Ritualists' forgiveness for past offenses and cruelties (a request that would be altogether justifiable and with which we would entirely concur), but literally proclaims the schismatics great confessors of Orthodoxy. This could not be expressed more plainly than in the Sobor's epistle: "In this we wish to follow the example of the holy Emperor Theodosius the Lesser, who translated the relics of St John Chrysostom to Constantinople from the town where his parents had mercilessly exiled the saint. Paraphrasing his words, we cry to the persecuted, 'Forgive, brethren and sisters, the sins committed against you out of hatred. Do not regard us as guilty of the transgressions of our forebears; do not hold us responsible for their rash deeds. Although we are children of your persecutors, we have done you no evil. Forgive their trespasses, that we may escape the blame they deserve. We cast ourselves at your feet and entrust ourselves to your prayers. Pardon the reckless violence of those who wronged you, for through our lips they repent for what they have done to you and ask forgiveness...' For this passage to be completely comprehensible, it would seem necessary only to add, 'We humbly beg you to receive us into communion and unite us to the Holy Church.' How so? If the Old Ritualists are true spiritual heirs to the holy hierarch John Chrysostom, then they are true confessors of Orthodoxy. In this case we, the Orthodox, are true spiritual heirs of the lawless persecutors of the father and teacher of the Church, heirs of impious apostates. As for the Emperor Theodosius II (408-450)\* mentioned in the epistle, he is no saint of the Orthodox Church, as anyone can learn by examining the list of saints in the Jordanville calendar. Rather, he is infamous in ecclesiastical history for having convened the "Robber Council" of 449, immediately before his death.

The bizarre self-flagellation of our bishops (may Your Eminence forgive us for using such a phrase!) reaches its apogee with this astounding statement: "We sorrowfully admit that the fierce persecution of our Church during the past decades may, at least partially, be God's punishment for the persecution of the children of the Old Rite by our predecessors." Thus the holy hierarchs glorified by the divine Spirit, for example Tichon and Metrophanes of Voronezh, Demetrius of Rostov, and Joasaph of Belgorod, become in part responsible for the grievous woes that befell the Russian Orthodox Church! After all, they had recourse not only to ecclesiastical-disciplinary measures, but to governmental-administrative ones as well in battling the Schism. Furthermore, guilt may be imputed to all the saints who lived after the schism, as not having come to the defense of the unjustly persecuted "Orthodox confessors." In the end it follows that the New Martyrs and Confessors of Russia suffered to a considerable degree deservedly, paying with their blood for the sins of the Church! For some reason, however, our archpastors chose to make no mention of the fact that the gory bacchanalia which was the Russian Revolution was in no small measure financed by Old Ritualist capital.

We ask you to understand us, revered Vladiko: we do not regard every action even of men adorned by God with holiness as correct and infallible. Perhaps they were too severe in dealing with the Old Ritualists. Notwithstanding, we believe it is important to consider the general stance of the saints and the Church of Russia. Whatever economy they employed, they always regarded the Old Ritualists as outside the Church. We can also understand that pastoral compassion, condescension to human weakness, and the development of an historical understanding call, not for accusations or theological polemics against the devotees of the Old Ritual, but for a delicate call to unity through mutual forgiveness of offenses (and indeed, the Old Ritualists have sinned against us and thus given us reason to forgive). We cannot, however, reconcile ourselves to unity with the Old Ritualists on the basis of total spiritual capitulation. We are sincerely convinced that the maximal concession possible on our part is to lift all the bans and the anathema on the pre-reform divine services and to request forgiveness for persecutions and cruelty. This, but not in the form it takes in the epistle issued by the Bishop's Sobor."

\*It seems the clergy of Kursk were mistaken in this. For the feastday of St. Theodosius the Younger is on the 29th of July.

The feelings of the protestors were summed up by Fr. Stefan Krasovitsky and Roman Vershillo, who said that a “revolution” had taken place, and that “if we are to express the meaning of the coup shortly, then there took place, first, a moral disarmament, and secondly, the self-abolition of ROCOR as a separate part of the Russian Local Church... Alas, [it] is composed in such a way that it is not actually clear who has really fallen into schism from the Church: we or our errant Old Ritualist brothers!”<sup>470</sup>

For ROCOR the writing was now on the wall. The October, 2000 Council constituted a clear break with the traditional attitude towards the MP and World Orthodoxy adopted by Metropolitans Anthony, Anastasy and Philaret, as well as Vitaly in his last years, not to mention the Church’s attitude towards the Old Ritualists since before the revolution. Only a clear renunciation of that clear break could keep the children of ROCOR within the Church and Faith of their fathers...

*November 4/17, 2021.*

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<sup>470</sup> Krasovitsky, Vershillo, “Esche raz o sergianstve” (Once More about Sergianism), *Otkliki*, op. cit., part 2, p. 52.

## 42. THE NAME-WORSHIPPING HERESY - AGAIN

A certain Anastasia Nikki has revived the name-worshipping heresy. It is not clear which version of the theory she adheres to because she has disassociated herself even from the most recent champion of it – “Bishop” Gregory Lurye. Nevertheless, as one who was commissioned by the ROAC Synod in 2001 to investigate this matter, it may be worth my saying a few words on the subject.

There are three main versions of the theory: that the Name of God is (a) the Essence of God, (b) the Energies of God, and (c) the written letters or sounds of the name. All three versions are false. An early version of the heresy was preached by Eunomius in the fourth century, and was condemned by the brother-bishops SS. Basil the Great and Gregory of Nyssa. A later version of the heresy was preached by the Russian Athonite monks Iliarion and Anthony Bulatovich, and was condemned by both the Constantinopolitan and Russian Synods in 1912-13. Other versions were preached by Bulgakov, Florensky, Losev and others. In our days, “Metropolitan” Ilarion Alfeyev, second hierarch of the Moscow Patriarchate, appears to have adopted it.

The Name of God cannot be God for a very simple reason: that in the normal use of language, a name is distinct from that which it names. Peter is not the same as the name “Peter”, Paul is not the same as the name “Paul”, and God is not the same as the name “God”. In 1912 St. Varsanouphy of Optina put it as follows: “Remember, the power is not in the word, in the name, but in Christ Himself, Who is named” (Помни, сила не в слове, не в имени, а в Самом Христе, именуемом).

However, there are unusual, specialised uses of the word “name” in the patristic literature, and the heretical name-worshippers have seized hold of these in order to sow confusion. One was employed by St. Maximus the Confessor in his commentary on the Lord’s Prayer, where he identifies the “Name” in “Hallowed by Thy Name” with Christ, the Second Person of the Holy Trinity. A second was employed by St. Dionysius the Areopagite in his treatise “On the Divine Names”, in which he calls the attributes of God such as Wisdom, Justice, Love, etc., “Divine Names”. Now it is obvious that the Wisdom, Justice and Love of God are all Energies of God and therefore God Himself, as the Church, following St. Gregory Palamas teaches. However, it is also obvious that this is a specialised use of the word “name”...

The fact that the Name of God is not God Himself does not mean that it is not holy - that is, filled with His Divine Grace and Energies. The experience of holy ascetics down the ages has witnessed to its power (even if uttered blasphemously, in unbelief, see Acts 19.13-17). This was fully acknowledged in the official condemnation of name-worshipping issued by the Russian Holy Synod in 1913. A few years later, Archbishop Theophan of Poltava, author of a major treatise on the Name of God in the Old Testament and head of the sub-commission on name-worshipping at the Russian Local Council of 1917-18, put it this way: “The Divinity *abides in* the Name of God (Во Имени Божиим почитет Божество). But “abides in” is not the same as “is the same as”... If the Name of God were God, it would be eternal, but St. Isaac the Syrian says: “There was a time when God had no name, and there will be a time when

He will not have any” (Было, когда у Бога не было имени, и будет, когда у Него не будет никакого).

*November 18 / December 1, 2021.*

## 423 THE SEVENTY WEEKS PROPHECY OF DANIEL

The full text (in the Septuagint translation) of this rather complex but astonishingly accurate prophecy so far (Daniel chapter 9) is as follows:-

- 9.1. In the first year of Darius the son of Xerxes, of the seed of the Medes, who reigned over the kingdom of the Chaldeans –
- 9.2. in the first year of his reign I, Daniel, understood in the books the number of years when the word of the Lord to Jeremiah the prophet would be fulfilled for the desolation of Jerusalem, and it came to seventy years.
- 9.3. Then I set my face toward the Lord God to seek Him in prayer and supplication, with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes.
- 9.4. So I prayed to the Lord my God and made confession. I said, “O Lord God, great and marvelous, who keep Your covenant and mercy with those who love You and keep Your commandments –
- 9.5. we sinned and did wrong. We acted lawlessly, fell away, and turned away from Your commandments and judgments.
- 9.6. Neither did we obey Your servants the prophets who spoke in Your name to our kings, our rulers, our fathers, and to all the people in the land.
- 9.7. O Lord, righteousness belongs to You, but shame of face belongs to us, as it is today, to the men of Judah, to those who dwell in Jerusalem, and to all Israel, those near and far in all the earth, wherever You scattered them in their faithlessness by which they rejected You.
- 9.8. O Lord, shame of face belongs to us, our kings, our rulers, and to our fathers who sinned against You.
- 9.9. To the Lord our God belong mercy and forgiveness, whereas we fell away.
- 9.10. We have not obeyed the voice of the Lord our God, to walk in His laws, which He set before us by the hands of His servants the prophets.
- 9.11. Yes, all Israel transgressed Your law and turned aside, so as not to obey Your voice. Therefore the curse and the oath written in the Law of Moses the servant of God has come upon us, because we sinned against You.
- 9.12. So He confirmed His words which He spoke against us and against our judges who judged us, by bringing upon us great calamities; for under the whole heaven such has not taken place, as the things that happened in Jerusalem.
- 9.13. As it is written in the Law of Moses, all these calamities came upon us, yet we have not entreated the Lord our God so as to turn from our wrongdoings, and to gain insight into all Your truth.
- 9.14. Therefore the Lord watched and brought all these things upon us, for the Lord our God is righteous in every work He does, though we have not obeyed His voice.
- 9.15. So now, O Lord our God, who brought Your people from the land of Egypt with a strong hand, and who made Yourself a name as it is this day, we have sinned and acted lawlessly.
- 9.16. O Lord, in all Your mercy, let Your anger and Your wrath be turned away from Your city of Jerusalem, Your holy mountain, though we have sinned; for in our wrongdoings and those of our fathers, Jerusalem and Your people have become a disgrace among all those around us.
- 9.17. So now, O Lord our God, listen to the prayers of Your servant and his

supplications, and cause Your face to shine on Your sanctuary, which is deserted because of You, O Lord.

9.18. O my God, incline Your ear and hear; open Your eyes and see our destruction and that of Your city, in which Your name is called upon; for not on the basis of our righteous deeds do we bring our prayer for mercy before You, but on the basis of Your abundant mercy.

9.19. O Lord, hear! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, give heed and act! Do not delay for Your sake, O my God, for Your city and Your people are called by Your name."

9.20. Now while I was still speaking, praying, and declaring my sins and the sins of my people Israel, and bringing my cry for mercy before the Lord my God concerning the holy mountain of my God,

9.21. while I was speaking in prayer, then the man Gabriel, whom I saw in my vision at the beginning, flew and touched me about the time of the evening sacrifice.

9.22. He caused me to understand, and spoke with me and said, "O Daniel, I have now come forth to guide you with insight.

9.23. At the beginning of your prayer, the word went out, and I have come to tell you, for you are a man of desires. Therefore, consider the matter and understand the vision.

9.24. Seventy weeks are determined for your people and for your holy city to finish sin, to set an end to sin, to wipe out lawlessness, to atone for wrongdoings, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Holy of Holies.

9.25. You shall know therefore and understand that from the going forth of the word to be answered and to build Jerusalem, until Christ the Prince, there shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks. Then the time shall return, and the streets and the wall shall be built; the times shall be left desolate.

9.26. After the sixty-two weeks, the Anointed One shall be put to death, yet there shall be no upright judgment for Him; and he shall destroy the city and the sanctuary with the prince who is coming, and they shall be cut off with a flood, and to the end of the war, which will be cut short, he shall appoint the city to desolations.

9.27. Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week, and in the middle of the week, My sacrifice and drink-offering will be taken away; and there shall be in the temple the abomination of desolations, and to the end of the time, an end to the desolation shall be appointed."

To put this prophecy into historical perspective, we need to remember that the Prophet Jeremiah said that the Temple would be desolate for 70 years (25.11, 12; 29.10). The Temple was destroyed in 606 BC. So in 536, seventy years later, Daniel, knowing that Jeremiah's prophecy was about to be fulfilled, began to fast and pray. In that year, King Cyrus of Persia conquered Babylon and immediately gave the order for the Jews to return to Jerusalem.

Rebuilding of the Temple began in 520 under Zerubbabel ([Haggai 2](#) and [Zechariah 3](#) and 4), but it had to be abandoned because of local opposition in Judaea. It began again several decades later under the priest Ezra ([Ezra 4](#) and 5). However, the city of Jerusalem remained in ruins, and rebuilding there did not begin until, following the

petition of Nehemiah, a fresh decree was issued by the Persian King Artaxerxes in 444BC.

As John Lennox, professor of Mathematics at Oxford University, writes, "It was a historic moment. God's plans for Jerusalem took a major leap forward: the city would be rebuilt, and the seventy weeks began to run..."

"Hence, on a first approximation...  $490-7=483$  years from the decree brings us to what we call the first half of the first century AD. In fact, it brings us to the 30s AD [39], which is remarkable since Daniel says that at that time an anointed one shall be cut off. Surely this was fulfilled when Jesus of Nazareth, who claimed to be the anointed one (Messiah) of God was 'cut off' by being crucified in Jerusalem - in or around 30 AD."<sup>471</sup>

In more detail... The order to rebuild Jerusalem (an earlier decree of King Artaxerxes to rebuild both the city and the temple having been rescinded) was given in the twentieth year of the reign of Artaxerxes in the month of Nisan (March 444 BC). Let us assume that a "day" in this prophecy signifies a year; so a week of days is seven years and seventy weeks of years is  $70 \times 7$ , or 490 years; so sixty-nine weeks of year is  $69 \times 7$ , or 483 years. Then sixty-nine weeks of years, or 483 years, from 444 BC brings us to 39AD as the year in which "the Anointed One shall be put to death" (9.26).

This brings us remarkably close to the traditional date of Christ's Crucifixion, 33 AD, though not perfectly so - it is out by six years. But Lennox points out that this calculation has been using the Grigorian calendar, which "may not be appropriate for the calculation. One way of seeing this is to notice that Daniel says that the sacrifices and offerings are to be banned for half of the final week - that is, for three-and-a-half years... We saw that a limit was set for the power of the fierce beast to trample the holy place, to a *time, times, and half a time*, and we noted that the book of Revelation says that the holy city is to be trampled on for a period of *forty-two months* (Revelation 11.2). The very next verse in Revelation speaks of two witnesses who, against all attempts to destroy them, are given power to prophesy for *1,260 days*. In the next chapter of Revelation we read of a woman who is protected from the serpent's power for *1,260* (Revelation 12.6). Subsequently the period of time is said to be *forty-two months* (13.5). If, as seems reasonable, these periods are identical in length, then a *time* would be a year of 360 days, i.e. a lunar year.

"This accords with both Babylonian and Jewish reckoning. For example, as early as the book of Genesis we find it stated that from the seventeenth day of the second month to the seventeenth day of the seventh month it was 150 days (Genesis 7.11; 8.3-4). Interestingly, Sir Isaac Newton refers to this matter.

"All nations before the just length of the solar year was known, reckoned months by the course of the moon and years by the return of winter and summer, spring and

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<sup>471</sup> Lennox, *Against the Flow. The Inspiration of Daniel in an Age of Relativism*, Oxford: Monarch, 2015, pp. 297-298.



autumn; and in making calendars for their festivals and twelve lunar months to a year, taken to the nearest round numbers, whence came the division of the ecliptic into 360 degrees.'

"We note that Newton says 'taken to the nearest round numbers'. That is because the lunar year is just over eleven days shorter than the solar year, and it would appear that around the time of the Babylonian captivity an extra intercalary thirty-day months (*Veladar*) was added to make the necessary correction (just as we have a leap year of 366 days every four years, since the solar year is actually a little over 365 days long). We should also note in passing that the English word 'month' is related to the word 'moon'. Its Hebrew equivalent, *hodesh*, means 'new moon'.

"On this basis, then:

- The 69 sevens - or 483 years of 360 days, each amount to 173,880 days;
- 1 solar year = 365.24219879 days;
- So 173,880 days = 476,067663 solar years = 476 years = 24.7 days.

Using the familiar Gregorian calendar, if we start from the beginning of the month Nisan in 444BC, and 476 years plus 25 days, then we get to the month Nisan in AD 33.

"The two dates for the crucifixion of Jesus that appear most often in scholarly writings are AD 30 and 33. One reason for this is that in those two years 14 Nisan, on which the passover lamb was killed, fell on a Friday. Recently Cambridge scientist Sir Colin Humphreys, working with astrophysicist Graeme Waddington of Oxford, calculated that Jesus died on 3 April 33. Humphreys' work involves the idea that Jesus would have used the lunar calendar, invented in the time of the captivity as mentioned above. These findings have been widely accepted, and they show that Daniel's sixth-century BC prophecy turns out to be a phenomenally accurate prediction of the time when 'Messiah the Prince' would be *cut off* (Daniel 9.26)."<sup>472</sup>

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Let us look at more details of the prophecy. "**Seventy weeks have been determined upon thy people and for thy holy city**". That is, seventy weeks of years, 490 years, must pass. "**To finish sin, to set an end to sin, to wipe out lawlessness, to atone for wrongdoings, to bring in everlasting righteousness.**" "**To set an end to sin**" (or "sealing" it in the Hebrew) means, according to the teachers of the Church and A.P. Lopukhin, the redemptive sacrifice of Christ, "as a result of which original sin is destroyed and man's separate sinful desires are muzzled", bringing in the "eternal righteousness" of life according to God's commandments.<sup>473</sup>

All this is accomplished through the Death of Christ. For "**He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world**" (I John 2.2).

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<sup>472</sup> Lennox, *op. cit.*, pp. 298-300.

<sup>473</sup> Lopukhin, *Tolkovaia Biblia*, vol. II, St. Petersburg, 1904-1913, p. 61.

**“To seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Holy of Holies”.** That is, the coming of **“everlasting righteousness”** “must be accompanied by the ceasing of the further development of the prophetic gift, the Old Testament prophetic predictions and visions, the subject of which was the annihilation of evil on earth and the implanting of righteousness. The bearers and proclaimers of the Old Testament revelations were anointed. But with the ceasing of the prophecies there ceased also the anointing of those who proclaimed them; it was replaced by the anointing of **“the Holy of Holies”**... By “the Holy of Holies” most interpreters of the patristic period understood the Messiah, and by the anointing – either His Divinity (Eusebius of Caesarea, Athanasius the Great), or the anointing of His Humanity by the Holy Spirit (Clement of Alexandria, Theodoretus of Cyr, Ammon).”<sup>474</sup>

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The biggest problem of interpretation for this prophecy relates to the **“seventieth week”** of years, that is, some period of seven years after the death of Christ. The question is: which seven years? The period immediately after Christ’ death (i.e. 33-40)? Or some later one?

Before answering that question, let us look at 9.26-27 again: **The Anointed One shall be put to death, yet there shall be no upright judgment for Him; he shall destroy the city and the sanctuary with the prince who is coming, and they shall be cut off with a flood, and to the end of the war, which will be cut short, he shall appoint the city to desolations. Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week, and in the middle of the week, My sacrifice and drink-offering will be taken away; and there shall be in the temple the abomination of desolations, and to the end of the time, an end to the desolation shall be appointed.**

It is very difficult to see how this could be a description of the years 33-40. St. Nectarios of Aegina in his *Gospel History* tries to solve the problem by seeing the last seven-year period as beginning, not with Christ’s death but with His Baptism in the Jordan: “Then, the prophecy says, ‘the Messiah will be cut off’, that is, will be killed, and a prince will come who will ‘cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease’ and ‘make it desolate, even until the consummation’. In other words, after Christ’s death the Romans will come, destroy the Temple and its sacrifices and make it desolate ‘until the end of the war’, which took place from 66 to 70 AD.

“Before that, however, Christ will have ‘confirmed the covenant with many’, that is, converted them to the Holy Faith of the New Covenant. And then in the middle of the week,’ that is, three-and-half years into the seventieth week of years of the prophecy, ...Christ will ‘cause the sacrifice and oblations to cease’ and allow ‘the abomination of desolation’ to take place ‘until the consummation’, that is, His Second Coming. For at the moment of His death in 33 AD, three-and-a-half years after His Baptism, the veil of the Temple was rent in twain and the Holy Spirit left it, making all the sacrifices and oblations as nothing in God’s sight.

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<sup>474</sup> Lopukhin, *op. cit.*, p. 62.

“After three-and-a-half years Christ shall be cut off; that is, at the age of 33; and He will firmly establish His Covenant; and half-way through the week the sacrifice and the holy offering will cease, and the abomination of desolation shall be on the pinnacle of the Temple [the Roman standards? A statue of Jupiter?] The second half of the week denotes the time after Christ’s crucifixion, that is, after the offering of the Most High Sacrifice, after whose accomplishment there came the definitive end of the sacrifices and offerings stipulated by the law, which both prefigured and symbolized the Great Sacrifice. And after the completion of the years of the seventy weeks, the Jewish nation and their country were delivered to desolation, which desolation was imposed by the Roman troops that set up the abomination of desolation on the pinnacle of the Temple, which they destroyed together with the city.”

This interpretation accounts for many of the details of the prophecy, but creates new problems. First, if the end of the sixty-ninth week of years is now interpreted to be the Baptism of Christ in January, 30 instead of March, 33, then the beginning of the prophecy will have to be brought back three and a half years correspondingly, from 444BC to 447BC - in other words, from the date of Artaxerxes’ decree of 444, which referred to the reconstruction of the city, to his rescinded decree of 447, which referred to the reconstruction of the city *and the temple*. (Permission to rebuild the temple too was rescinded because of local opposition in the Holy Land.)

This may seem to be an acceptable adjustment to the calculation. But there are more serious problems with regard to the second half of the last week of years, that is, from the death of Christ in 33 to 37. In this period, if this interpretation is correct, **“he shall destroy the city and the sanctuary with the prince who is coming, and they shall be cut off with a flood, and to the end of the war, which will be cut short, he shall appoint the city to desolations.”** But almost all interpreters, St. Nectarios included, interpret **“the prince who is coming”** to refer to the Emperor Titus, and the later words to his destruction of Jerusalem in 70, together with the desecration of the temple and the massive killing and exile of the Jewish people. But the point is: all this took place in 66-70, not 33-37!

The prophecy continues: **Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week, and in the middle of the week, My sacrifice and drink-offering will be taken away; and there shall be in the temple the abomination of desolations, and to the end of the time, an end to the desolation shall be appointed.**

Who is the **“he”** in this passage? Let us assume it is Christ, and that the covenant referred to is the new covenant... That Christ confirmed a covenant with many (**“which is shed for you and for many”**) through the institution of the sacrament of His Body and Blood in 33 is of course true. But it was not confirmed only for **“one week”** but until the end of time, until His Second Coming. Nor was it **“taken away”** **“in the middle of the week”** - that is, after three-and-a-half years.

So let us, then, consider another possibility: that the **“he”** in this passage refers to *the Antichrist*, who **“will confirm a covenant with many for one week”**. So his reign lasts for seven years, and begins with a **“covenant”**, an agreement, with his subjects, who are **“many”**. But then, in the middle of his reign, after three-and-a-half years, his

kindness turns to horror and persecution, which lasts for another three-and-a-half years.

In favour of this interpretation is the fact that a climactic three-and-a-half years, or 42 months, or 1260 days, is referred to several times in the Book of Revelation, and that it is identified there by many interpreters with *the second half of the reign of the Antichrist at the end of time*. The Antichrist will reign for "**one week of years**", that is, seven years, the first half of which will be peaceful – although in that first half the "**two witnesses**" of Revelation 11, Enoch and Elijah, will be preaching to the peoples until they are killed by the Antichrist in the middle of that seven-year reign, which sets off a persecution so fierce that "**My sacrifice and drink-offering will be taken away**". "My" here can only mean "God's" true sacrifice – the Sacrifice of the Body and Blood of Christ in the Eucharist. Thus the few Orthodox priests who have remained faithful to God will not be able to celebrate the Eucharist – at least openly. For "the abomination of desolation", according to St. Hippolytus, is the Antichrist, "who announces desolation to the world"; while the **sacrifice** and **oblation** are that "which are now offered to God in every place by the nations" – in other words, the sacrament of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ.<sup>475</sup> Thus, according to the same Father, "the honourable Body and Blood of Christ will not be offered in those days. Public Divine services will be discontinued."<sup>476</sup>

However, Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow, commenting on I Corinthians 11.26, "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 brink 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."<sup>477</sup>

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<sup>475</sup> St. Hippolytus, *Treatise on Christ and Antichrist*, 22. There is a tradition that the last Divine Liturgy on earth will be celebrated on Mount Athos. See Ivan Marchevsky, *An Apocalyptic Perspective on the End of Time in a Patristic Synthesis*, Sophia: "Monarkhichesko-Konservativen Seyuz", 1994, p. 157 and note.

<sup>476</sup> St. Hippolytus, *Treatise on Christ and Antichrist*.

<sup>477</sup> Trepatschko, "The Church of Christ in the Time of the Antichrist", *Orthodox Life*, vol. 41, no. 2, March-April, 1991, p. 40.

Moreover, St. Seraphim of Sarov prophesied: "The monasteries will be destroyed, but at poor Seraphim's in Diveyevo until the very day of the Coming of Christ the bloodless Sacrifice will be performed."<sup>478</sup> And Hieromartyr Nikon of Optina writes: "I will build My Church and the gates of hell will not prevail against it", it says in the Gospel. The Apostle says that the breaking of bread, that is, the sacrament of the Eucharist, will be celebrated until the Second Coming of the Lord. St. Ephraim the Syrian says that there will come a time when the Bloodless Sacrifice will cease. There would appear to be a contradiction here. But no, one must understand it in this way: there will be no open serving in church, but the sacrament of the Eucharist itself will continue until the Second Coming of the Saviour."<sup>479</sup>

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<sup>478</sup> St. Seraphim, in Fomin and Fomina, *Rossia pered Vtorym Prishestviem*, Moscow, 1994, vol.1, p. 318.

<sup>479</sup> St. NiKon, in *Nadezhda*, 8, 1981, Frankfurt, p. 233 (in Russian).

## 44. GLORIFICATION AND REPENTANCE

The two things that man – any man – can do is: glorify God and repent of his sins. Glorification and repentance are the two poles of the human spirit. In glorification he opens his soul in praise and thanksgiving to the greatness of God; in repentance he contemplates with sorrow and bitter tears the baseness of man.

This is not difficult even for an atheist and revolutionary to understand, if not so much in relation to himself, at any in relation to that collective human entity that he worships instead of God. Thus "I had hoped to evoke the soul of Italy," wrote Giovanni Mazzini from exile, "and instead find merely her inanimate corpse." As was written on his tombstone: *O Italia, Quanta Gloria e Quanta Bassezza.*

Gratitude is so deeply innate to the nature of man that hatred of ingratitude must be counted as the most powerful of all his negative emotions. Shakespeare portrayed its force with incomparable power in perhaps the greatest work of literature in western civilization, *King Lear*. In another place he wrote: "I hate ingratitude more in a man than lying, vainness, babbling, drunkenness, or any taint of vice whose strong corruption inhabits our frail blood."

The very least we can do for God is thank Him for creating us, for endowing us with the possibility of entering His Kingdom of eternal glory, and for giving us the opportunity to repent of all those sins that prevent us from entering that glory. There is some truth in the saying: "I have no repentance, so how can I glorify God?" But there is a bigger untruth latent in this truth; for cannot even a sinner thank God for allowing him at any rate one more day of life in order to repent?

A sinner's glorification of God may be tainted and weak because of his sin, but it is a beginning of virtue, which can lead to true and deep repentance in the long run. The road from the one to the other may be shorter than we think... Thus there was a prostitute who was asked by a distraught woman to pray for her dead child, whom she laid at her feet. The prostitute protested that she was unworthy, but, pitying the woman's sorrow and giving in to her persistence, she looked up to heaven, asking forgiveness for her shamelessness in praying from such a state of sin, and prayed for the child – and lo! the child was raised from the dead! Shocked that she had been counted worthy, in spite of her sins, to glorify God in this way, the prostitute repented deeply of her sinful life, thereby glorifying God still more...

We must begin our days with thanksgiving and end our lives with the glorification of God. In this let St. John Chrysostom, that marvellous preacher of repentance, be our guide. As is well known he ended his life with the words: "Glory to Thee, O God, for all things!" Less well known is the prayer with which he began every day: "Glory to Thee, O our God, glory to Thee! Glory to Thee, O Lord our God, Who hast vouchsafed us to behold this day also! Glory to Thee, O Lord our God, Who ever overlookest our sins! Glory to Thee, O All-holy Trinity our God! I venerate Thine indescribable goodness! I hymn Thine unsearchable long-suffering! I thank Thee and glorify Thee for Thine immeasurable mercy, in that though I am

worthy of thousands of punishments and torments, Thou has had mercy and conferred thousands of benefits on me! Glory to Thee, O Lord our God, for all things!

*December 2/15, 2021.*

## 45. THE BABYLONIAN CAPTIVITY

God punished the northern kingdom of Israel for its impiety by sending the Assyrians to destroy it before destroying the instrument of His wrath (Isaiah 10.15), Assyria itself – a pattern that we find throughout history. Thus in 612 Assyria was conquered by Babylon, never to rise again. And in 605, and again in 586, the Lord punished the southern kingdom of Judah for its apostasy by sending Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, to destroy the Temple and exile the people to Babylon. For “the Lord, the God of their fathers, constantly sent to them by His messengers, because He had compassion on His people and on His dwelling place. But they kept mocking the messengers of God, despising His words, and scoffing at His prophets, until the wrath of the Lord rose against His people, until there was no remedy. Therefore He brought up against them the king of the Chaldeans, who slew their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary, and had no compassion on young man or virgin, old man or aged: He gave them all into his hand” (II Chronicles 36.15-16).

The Jews had hoped to rebel against the Babylonians by appealing to the other despotic kingdom of Egypt. But the Prophet Jeremiah rebuked them for their lack of faith. If God wills it, he said, He can deliver the people on His own, without any human helpers, as He delivered Jerusalem from the Assyrians in the time of Hezekiah. However, national independence had become a higher priority for the Jews than the true faith. The only remedy, therefore, was to humble their pride by removing even their last remaining vestige of independence. Therefore, said the Prophet, “bring your necks under the yoke of the king of Babylon, and serve him and live! Why will you die, you and your people, by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence, as the Lord has spoken against the nation that will not serve the king of Babylon... And seek the peace of the city where I have caused you to be carried away captive, and pray to the Lord for it; for in its peace you will have peace...” (Jeremiah 27.12-13, 29.7).

John Barton writes: “We learn from the Murashu tablets (found in what is now southern Iraq) that the Jewish community had established businesses and even a bank, following Jeremiah’s advice to settle down and acclimatize to the Babylonian environment (Jeremiah 29).”<sup>480</sup>

Nebuchadnezzar’s conquest of Jerusalem and carrying away of the Jews to Babylon, writes L.A. Tikhomirov, “was understood by the Jews as a punishment of God for their apostasy and corruption. In Babylonia, therefore, there began a process of repentance and regeneration. But on the other hand a powerful spiritual temptation awaited the Jews. Chaldea at that time had become an advanced country of pagan culture. In respect of religion it preserved all the charms of the magic of ancient Sumeria and Akkad, adding to it the astronomical and astrological science of Assyrian star-gazing, which, as we have seen, were already practiced in Judah in the reign of King Josiah. The three main branches of ‘Chaldean wisdom’ combined a considerable fund of real scientific knowledge with the higher philosophy worked

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<sup>480</sup> Barton, *A History of the Bible*, London: Allen Lane, 2019, p. 31.



out through the ages by the mind of the Assyrio-Babylonians, combined with the teaching of Zoroaster and offshoots of Hinduism. Paganism presented itself before the captives from Jerusalem as a huge intellectual power armed with everything that men could learn and assimilate at that time.

“To this we must add that Babylon had attained the highest level of political might and represented a remarkable system of state structure which was hardly excelled by all the ancient states. A profoundly worked out law guaranteed the inhabitants’ rights, and the Babylonian citizens of other tribes here came upon such perfect civil conditions as they could not even imagine in their native countries. The agriculture, industry and trade of Babylon were at a high level of development. As captives of another tribe, crushed materially and morally, recognizing that they had betrayed their Lord, the Jews came into a country that was striking by its might, glitter, wealth, knowledge, developed philosophical thought – everything by which one nation could influence another. If they ‘sat by the waters of Babylon and wept’, dreaming of revenge on the destroyers of their fatherland, they also could not help being subjected to the influences of Chaldean wisdom.

“They had grown up in the thousand-year conviction of the loftiness of their chosen people, of which there was no equal upon the earth. They remembered amazing examples of the help of the Lord in the past, when He had crushed the enemies of Israel, including the Assyrians themselves. They were filled with determination to raise themselves to the full height of their spirit and their providential mission. On the other hand, they did not have the strength not to submit to the intellectual influence of Babylon. In general, the age of the Babylonian captivity was the source of very complex changes in Israel. In the higher sphere of the spirit prophetic inspirations finally matured to the vision of the nearness of the Messiah. In the conservative layer of teachers of the law there arose a striving to realize that ‘piety of the law’, the falling away from which, as it seemed to all, had elicited the terrible punishments of God. There began the establishment of the text of the law and the collection of tradition; an embryonic form of Talmudic scholarship was born. Beside it, the masses of the people involuntarily imbibed the local pagan beliefs, and the teachings of ‘Chaldean wisdom’ was reflected in the minds of the intelligentsia; there was born the movement that later expressed itself in the form of the Cabbala, which under the shell of supposedly Mosaic tradition developed eastern mysticism of a pantheistic character...”<sup>481</sup>

In His parable of the good figs and the bad figs, the Lord indicated that the Babylonian captivity was for the good of those exiled but for the punishment of those who remained behind: “Like these good figs, so will I acknowledge those who are carried away captive from Judah, whom I have sent out of this place for their own good, into the land of the Chaldeans. For I will set my eyes on them for good, and I will bring them back to this land. I will build them and not pull them down and not pluck them up. Then I will give them a heart to know Me, that I am the Lord, and

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<sup>481</sup> Tikhomirov, *Religio-Filosofskie Osnovy Istorii* (The Religio-Philosophical Foundations of History), Moscow, 1997, pp. 135-136.

they shall be My people, and I will be their God, for they shall return to Me with their whole heart.

“And as the bad figs which cannot be eaten, they are so bad – surely thus says the Lord – so will I give up Zedekiah the king of Judah, his princes, the residue of Jerusalem who remain in this land, and those who dwell in the land of Egypt.” (Jeremiah 24.5-8).

This is a vivid image of how God acts through all the great events of history, demonstrating mercy to some and justice to others. For the good, for those who love God, these events are for their good, however unpleasant they may seem to be (Romans 8.28). But for the evil, they come as wrath and punishment...

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“The Babylonian captivity,” writes Deacon Pavel Serzhantov, “was permitted as a means of punishing the people, as a penance. The time of destruction and punishment came to an end, and the time of creation and repentance began, the time of the mercy of God. The Lord leads His people through severe testing – such trials that it seems to some that God abandoned His people and forgot about them, not sympathizing with their suffering, not paying heed to the lawless invaders. Is this really how we should understand it? No. *For he that toucheth you toucheth the apple of His eye* (Zechariah 2:8).”<sup>482</sup>

Zechariah was not the only prophet sent by God to comfort the suffering Jews. “There was no limit to the grief and despondency of the ancient Jews,” says St. John Maximovich. “Jerusalem was destroyed and they themselves were led away into the Babylonian captivity... *Where are Thine ancient mercies, O Lord, which Thou swarest to David? (Psalm 88:50), they cried out. But now Thou, hast cast off and put us to shame... They that hated us made us spoil for themselves and Thou scatterest us among the nations (Psalm 43:10-12).*”

“But when it seemed that there was no hope for deliverance, the Prophet Ezekiel, who was likewise in captivity, was made worthy of a wondrous vision. And the hand of the Lord came upon me, he says of this. The invisible right hand of the Lord placed him in the midst of a field full of human bones. And the Lord asked him: Son of man, will these bones live? And the Prophet replied: *O Lord God, Thou knowest this.* Then the voice of the Lord commanded the Prophet to say to the bones that the Lord will give to them the spirit of life, clothing them with sinews, flesh, and skin. The Prophet uttered the word of the Lord, a voice resounded, the earth shook, and the bones began to come together, bone to bone, each to its own joint; sinews appeared on them, the flesh grew and became covered with skin, so that the whole field became filled with the bodies of men; only there were no souls in them. And again the Prophet heard the Lord, and at His command he prophesied the word of the Lord, and from the four directions souls flew to them, the spirit of life entered

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<sup>482</sup> Serzhantov, “The Apple of the Almighty’s Eye”, *Orthodox Christianity*, February 21, 2017, <http://orthochristian.com/101230.html>.

into the bodies, they stood up, and the field was filled with an assembly of a multitude of people.

*“And the Lord said, Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel; and they say, Our hope has been lost, we have perished... Behold, I will open your tombs and will bring you up out of your tombs, My people, and I will put My spirit within you and ye shall live, and I will place you upon your own land (Ezekiel 37:1-14).*

“Thus the Lord God revealed to Ezekiel that His promises are steadfast, and that what seems impossible to the human mind is performed by the power of God.

“This vision signified that Israel, after being delivered from captivity, would return to its own land; in a higher sense, it indicated the settlement of the spiritual Israel in the eternal heavenly Kingdom of Christ. At the same time there is prefigured also the future General Resurrection of all the dead.”<sup>483</sup>

Jeremiah prophesied that the Jews would serve the king of Babylon for seventy years, but that then the Lord would punish the king of Babylon and his people for their iniquity (Jeremiah 25.11-12). Everything took place as the prophet had foretold... Thus one night in 539 BC, when Belshazzar (Nabonidus) the son of Nebuchadnezzar, was feasting with his lords, wives and concubines, drinking in the very same holy cups that had been taken by his father from the Temple in Jerusalem. At that point a mysterious hand appeared writing on the wall. The Prophet Daniel was summoned and said: “This is the interpretation of each word. MENE: God has numbered your kingdom and finish it; TEKEL: You have been weighed in the balances, and found wanting. PERES: Your kingdom has been divided and given to the Medes and Persians.” (Daniel 5.26-29)

That very night Babylon was conquered, and Belshazzar killed, by Cyrus II, “the Great”, King of the Medes and Persians, one of the greatest rulers of history, whom the Lord even called “My anointed” (Isaiah 45.1), although he was a pagan.

What does this anointing signify? Saul, David and Solomon had been given a visible anointing that bestowed on them the Holy Spirit. But Cyrus was neither a king of Israel (although he was its overlord), nor did he receive a visible anointing. His case shows that in addition to the visible anointing given in the sacrament of coronation, there is also an invisible anointing.

Thus St. Philaret of Moscow writes: “The name ‘anointed’ is often given by the word of God to kings in relation to the sacred and triumphant anointing which they receive, in accordance with the Divine establishment, on their entering into possession of their kingdom... But it is worthy of especial note that the word of God also calls *anointed* some earthly masters who were never sanctified with a *visible* anointing. Thus Isaiah, announcing the will of God concerning the king of the Persians, says: ‘Thus says the Lord to His anointed one, Cyrus’ (Isaiah 45.1); whereas this pagan king had not yet been born, and, on being born, did not know the God of

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<sup>483</sup> Maximovich, “Will these Human Bones Come to Life?” [The Orthodox Word](#), No. 50, May-June, 1973.

Israel, for which he was previously rebuked by God: 'I girded thee, though thou hast not known Me' (*Isaiah* 45.5). But how then could this same Cyrus at the same time be called *the anointed of God*? God Himself explains this, when He prophesies about him through the same prophet: 'I have raised him up...: he shall build My city, and He shall let go My captives' (*Isaiah* 45.13). Penetrate, O Christian, into the deep mystery of the powers that be! Cyrus is a pagan king; Cyrus does not know the true God; however Cyrus is the *anointed* of the true God. Why? Because God, Who 'creates the future' (*Isaiah* 45.11), has appointed him to carry out His destiny concerning the re-establishment of the chosen people of Israel; *by this Divine thought*, so to speak, *the Spirit anointed him before bringing him into the world*: and Cyrus, although he does not know by whom and for what he has been anointed, is moved by a *hidden anointing*, and carries out the work of the Kingdom of God in a pagan kingdom. How powerful is the anointing of God! How majestic is the anointed one of God! He is the living weapon of God, the power of God proceeds through him into the inhabited world and moves a greater or lesser part of the human race to the great end of its general completion."<sup>484</sup>

Cyrus extended the Persian empire to the east and the west<sup>485</sup>, and practiced a remarkable degree of national and religious toleration for his time.<sup>486</sup>

"Within twenty years," writes Simon Sebag Montefiore, he "had assembled the greatest empire the world had ever seen. He realized that keeping his vast new domain together would require peaceful diplomacy, rather than oppression and violence. So instead of forcing Persian customs and laws on the newly conquered peoples, he set about creating a new concept of world empire, selecting the best elements from different areas to create a better whole. He employed Median advisers, mimicked the dress and cultural influence of the Edamites, and tolerated religious freedom everywhere in return for total political submission. He governed from three capitals: Ecbatana, the Persian capital Pasargadae, and Babylon.

"His reputation was further enhanced by the discovery in the 19<sup>th</sup> century of the 'Cyrus Cylinder', an artefact inscribed with details of Cyrus' conquests and his

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<sup>484</sup> St. Philaret, *Iz Slova v den' koronatsia Imperatora Aleksandra Pavlovicha. Sbornik propovednicheskikh obratstov* (From the Sermon on the Day of the Coronation of the Emperor Alexander Pavlovich. A Collection of Model Sermons). Quoted in "O Meste i Znachenii Tainstva Pomazania na Tsarstvo" ("On the Place and Significance of the Mystery of Anointing to the Kingdom"), *Svecha Pokaiania* (Candle of Repentance) (Tsaritsyn), N 4, February, 2000, p. 15.

<sup>485</sup> Cyrus was one of the great conquerors in history. He began as king of Anshan in southern Iran, ruling over the house of the Achaemenians. "By 550 Cyrus had seized Ecbatana, dethroned Astyages, and taken over the vast Median empire. Scarcely had he done this when he launched upon a series of brilliant campaigns which struck terror far and wide...In 547/6 Cyrus marched against Lydia. Apparently he swept across Upper Mesopotamia en route, removing that area, and probably northern Syria and Cilicia, from Babylonian control. Then, hurdling the Halys in the dead of winter, he attacked the Lydian capital, Sardis by surprise, took it, and incorporated Lydia into his realm. With most of Asia Minor to the Aegean Sea in Cyrus' control", he campaigned "across Hyrcania and Parthia into what is today Afghanistan, and across the steppes beyond the Oxus as far as the Jaxartes. With a few rapid strokes he had created a gigantic empire, far larger than [any] known before" (John Bright, *A History of Israel*, London: SCM Press, 1980, p. 354).

<sup>486</sup> Jaime Alvar Ezquerro, "Dawn of Persia", *National Geographic Magazine*, September/October, 2016, 34.

overthrow of tyranny, and declaring his belief in religious toleration and his opposition to slavery.”<sup>487</sup>

And yet, as we read in both Jeremiah and Ezekiel, even among the exiles, many did not repent and did not return to Jerusalem, staying among the pagans and learning their ways. At the same time, the books of Daniel, Esther and Tobit show how many pious people remained among the Jews in exile.

He immediately freed the Jews and allowed them to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the Temple, declaring: “Thus saith Cyrus, king of Persia, the Lord God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and he hath charged me to build Him an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all His people? His God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and build the house of the Lord God of Israel (he is the God) which is in Jerusalem” (Ezra 1.1-3).

A pious remnant of Jews in Babylon, stirred up by the Prophets Haggai and Zechariah and in accordance with the prophecy of Jeremiah (24.6), returned to Jerusalem under the Davidic Prince Zerubbabel to rebuild the Temple. Work began in 536 BC, with financial help from Cyrus. So the Lord saved the religion and worship of Israel through His anointed king, Cyrus...

Cyrus had such respect for the God of Israel, and in particular for the holy Prophet Daniel, that the Babylonians accused him of “becoming a Jew” (Daniel 12.28 (LXX)), and on witnessing Daniel’s deliverance from the lions’ den, he cried out: “Great art Thou, O Lord God of Daniel, and there is no other beside Thee” (Daniel 12.41).

According to Yuval Noah Harari, it was Cyrus who introduced one of the most important political ideas in history: the idea that an empire can exist for the benefit of *all* its subject peoples, not just the dominant nation. “For the kings of Assyria always remained the kings of Assyria. Even when they claimed to rule the entire world, it was obvious that they were doing it for the greater glory of Assyria, and they were not apologetic about it. Cyrus, on the other hand, claimed not merely to rule the whole world, but to do so for the sake of all people. ‘We are conquering you for your own benefit,’ said the Persians. Cyrus wanted the peoples he subjected to love him and to count themselves lucky to be Persian vassals. The most famous example of Cyrus’ innovative efforts to gain the approbation of a nation living under the thumb of his empire was his command that the Jewish exiles in Babylonia be allowed to return to their Judaeian homeland and rebuild their temple. He even offered them financial assistance. Cyrus did not see himself as a Persian king ruling over Jews – he was also the king of the Jews, and thus responsible for their welfare...

“In contrast with ethnic exclusiveness, imperial ideology from Cyrus onward has tended to be inclusive and all-encompassing. Even though it has often emphasized racial and cultural differences between rulers and ruled, it has still recognized the basic unity of the entire world, the existence of a single set of principles governing all

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<sup>487</sup> Montefiore, *Titans of History*, London: Quercus, 2012, p. 17.

places and times, and the mutual responsibilities of all human beings. Humankind is seen as a large family: the privileges of the parents go hand in hand with responsibility for the children."<sup>488</sup>

Of course, the word "empire" has become associated with evil institutions that were ethnically exclusive – Hitler's empire is the most famous example. Nevertheless, multi-national empires have in general been more universalist in their ideology than smaller groupings centred on the power and glory of a single nation. And this remains the abiding glory of Cyrus the Great, the first non-Jewish "anointed of the Lord".

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The greatest prophet of the Babylonian captivity was Daniel, who won the respect of Nebuchadnezzar by correctly divining and then interpreting the dreams he received from God, for which he was promoted to the post of "chief of magicians" of the Babylonian empire. The interpretations he gave were not flattering to Nebuchadnezzar, for they revealed that God would destroy his kingdom of gold (Babylon), which would be succeeded by the pagan empires of Media-Persia, Macedon and Rome, before Rome would be destroyed by the "stone cut from the mountain", Christ. One of Nebuchadnezzar's dreams that for his pride, and for his refusal to recognize the absolute dominion of God over all earthly kingdoms, he would go mad and live like an ox under the open air, but would eventually recover his sanity when he recognized the dominion of the one true God. As he himself confessed: "At the end of the days, I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted up my eyes to heaven, and my reason returned to me, and I blessed the Most High and praised and honoured Him Who lives forever, for His dominion is an everlasting dominion, and His Kingdom endures from generation to generation; all the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing, and He does according to His will among the hosts of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay His hand, or say to Him, 'What hast Thou done?' At the same time, my reason returned to me, and for the glory of my kingdom, my majesty and splendour returned to me. My counselors and my lords sought me, and I was established in my kingdom, and still more greatness was added to me. Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and honour the King of heaven, for all His works are right and His ways are just, and those who walk in pride He is able to humble." (4.34-47).

A remarkable confession by perhaps the purest example of despotism after Nimrod to the fact that there is a King over all earthly kings...

*December 17/30, 2021.  
Holy Prophet Daniel.*

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<sup>488</sup> Harari, *Sapiens. A Brief History of Mankind*, London: Vintage, 2011, pp. 218, 219.

## 46. SOCIALISM AND FEMINISM

The essence of socialism is *social engineering*, the attempt by education and legislation to remould man made in the image and likeness of God into another, humanist model of perfection, that of the eighteenth-century Enlightenment. The problem is: the attempt to improve man in this way always ends in despising him and even killing him. For as George Bernard Shaw said in his brilliant play *Pygmalion* (1913), "Galatea never does quite like Pygmalion: his relation to her is too godlike to be altogether agreeable."

Moreover, human nature is a stubborn thing; without the grace of God it simply refuses to be changed. And the attempt to change man without God usually makes him worse, not better. This is particularly true of that vital aspect of human nature and human relations that is sexuality. God not only made man in His own image; He made him "male and female" (Genesis 1.26). But from the eighteenth century Enlightenment thinkers and activists tried to construct a model of society in which the difference between men and women would be, if not invisible, at any rate insignificant, unimportant.

In antiquity, relations between men and women were often sinful and contrary to the blueprint of them that God had created, which is of equality of nature but difference of functions. Even a famous philosopher such as Aristotle had such a low estimate of half the human race that he considered that women were *essentially* inferior to men. Women could not take part in democratic government because the directive faculty of reason, while existing in them, was "inoperative".

It has often been asserted, rightly, that Christ treated women as equal to men. He certainly treated them with love and respect and as having a rational faculty that was definitely not "inoperative", as witnessed by his profound conversation with the Samaritan Woman in John 4. But neither He nor His apostles preached any essential change in the social status of women. According to St. Paul, women were not allowed to teach in church, but had to learn at home from their husbands, to whom they remained in obedience; and women were to be saved by carrying out those sex-specific functions that men could not do or not do so well because of their specifically male duty to provide food and defence for the family - namely, giving birth to children and raising them in the fear of God. Only in one important respect did Christianity produce any change to the status quo: sexual sins such as fornication and adultery were, in Christian societies, as serious in men as in women, and correspondingly suffered the same penalties...

The very first legal act of women's "emancipation" known to historians took place at the Synod of Tara (Ireland) in 697, when the Cain Adamnain, or Canon of Adomnan was adopted under the influence of St. Adomnan, Abbot of Iona, which ruled that women, children and clergy should be exempted from participation in war and should be treated by all as non-combatants. The Cain Adamnain established legal rights for women perhaps for the first time in history. But this was not so much an assertion of human rights in the modern sense, as an act of simple kindness; not

so much an attempt at social engineering to remove the social differences between men and women, as a recognition of their essential and ineradicable differences.

Orthodox nations have consistently maintained a conservative position on women's so-called "rights". They have never deemed it necessary or useful to legislate that women should not hold political power, but have only insisted that politics is not women's (or most men's) natural sphere. Such a position does not exclude exceptions. Thus Queen Tamara of Georgia was not only allowed to ascend the throne of Georgia by hereditary right, but was even canonized for exceptionally wise and courageous defence of her country and her faith. But exceptions prove the general rule: Tamara was called "king", not "queen" in the chronicles...

Exactly 1100 years after the Canon of Adomnan, in 1797, women's suffrage was first discussed in the British House of Commons. In 1867 John Stuart Mill and Jacob Bright resurrected the cause, and in 1869 Mills published *The Subjection of Women* (1869), which influenced the creation of feminist organizations – often linked with socialism - in several European countries; the largest of which was the Women's Social and Political Union in Britain, the so-called "suffragettes"<sup>489</sup>. They were so called because their main demand was for universal suffrage, or voting rights for all women as well as men. In 1895 the word "feminist" entered the political vocabulary for the first time.<sup>490</sup>

However, according to Fr. Seraphim Rose, the idea of women's emancipation went back still further, "at least two hundred years. Of course, you can go back even before that, but its present form goes back at least two hundred years, to the forerunners of Karl Marx, the early Socialists. These Socialists were talking about a great new utopian age, which is going to come when all the distinctions of class and race and religion and so forth are abolished. There will be a great new society, they said, when everybody is equal. This idea, of course, was based originally upon Christianity, but it distorted Christianity, and amounted to its opposite."<sup>491</sup>

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The key argument of the liberals and socialists was that women should not be denied the vote because they could do everything that men did, and were already demonstrating their competence in the professions, in the sciences (Marie Curie won the 1911 Nobel Prize for chemistry) and in the arts (especially in literature, where Jane Austen, the Bronte sisters and George Eliot (a woman) were all acknowledged masters (or mistresses) of the art of novel-writing). A woman was even the head of the mighty British Empire – and the empire did not seem to be any the worse for it!

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<sup>489</sup> Richard Evans, *The Pursuit of Power. Europe 1815-1914*, London: Penguin, 2017, p. 538.

<sup>490</sup> Stephen Heffer, *The Age of Decadence*, London: Pan, 2017, p. 709.

<sup>491</sup> <http://orthochristian.com/115475.html>



There were large numbers in favour of Votes for Women, including many members of parliament, so it was an issue that could not be ignored. "Once the argument started to favour the suffragettes, their opponents had to organize. The most notable women's grouping was the Women's National Anti-Suffrage League, founded in July 1908, and chaired by the Countess of Jersey... The women who opposed female suffrage were far from stupid, unlike some of their male comrades. Gertrude Bell, the writer and intrepid traveller, became the League's secretary...

"The League's principal argument was that women should not have the vote because the spheres of men and women, owing to natural causes, are essentially different, and therefore their share in the public management of the State should be different. They also argued that the things upon which the state depended for its existence - 'naval and military power, diplomacy, finance, and the great mining, construction, shipping and transport industries' - were things in which women took no practical part, and as parliament concerned itself greatly with these issues, women should keep out of it. It was also argued that, given women's other duties, and the fact that they could vote in local government, they could not possibly have the energy to participate in national matters too: that the influence they had would be diminished if they took up party politics, because they would be seen to lose their objectivity; that their increased involvement in other aspects of public life was sufficient; that political differenced would intrude into family life. Giving the vote to women inexperienced in politics would be 'fraught with peril to the country'...

"[Liberal leader] Asquith noted in April 1892 that while 'there are some of the best who are strongly in favour of women's suffrage', he believed 'some - I will not say a majority - of the best women... are strongly opposed to it.' He added that as to the great mass of the sex, the only thing that can be asserted with truth is that they are watching with languid and imperturbable indifference the struggle for their own emancipation.' Asquith would maintain his hostility throughout his premiership, by which time some women had become violent militants.

"In the speech he outlined his consistent doctrine. Anti-suffragists were asked: 'whether they will assert that a woman of genius like 'George Eliot' was unfit for the vote which was given to her butler and her footman. But legislation must be framed to deal not with exceptions and portents, but with average cases and normal conditions, and when this question of fitness is raised it is incumbent to realise oneself, and recommend others, that fitness is a relative term. We have not only to ask whether the average woman is fit for the franchise, but, if I may use such an expression, whether the franchise is fit for her.'

"He believed that women's 'natural sphere is not the turmoil and dust of politics, but the circle of social and domestic life', and asserted that the doctrine of democracy demands that we should equalize where inequality exists among things fundamentally alike, but not that we should identify where things are fundamentally unlike.' He squared this with liberalism thus: 'The inequalities which democracy

requires that we should fight against and remove are the unearned privileges and the artificial distinction which man has made, and which man can unmake. They are not those indelible differences of faculty and function by which Nature [i.e. God] herself has given diversity and richness to human society..."<sup>492</sup>

There was much good sense in this speech. But later Asquith had to suffer much – including physical violence – from that part of the suffragette movement which separated from its more moderate, liberal fellows and began to adopt terror tactics. This more violent women's movement, the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU), was founded in 1903 and had strong links with the Independent Labour Party (although by no means all Labour MPs supported them). By contrast, the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies (NUWSS), founded in 1897, was non-violent and non-party political. The difference between the WSPU and the NUWSS was the difference between violent revolutionary socialism and peaceable liberalism. From 1906, under the despotic leadership of Mrs. Emily Pankhurst and her daughter, the WSPU became increasingly violent, smashing windows and throwing firebombs, slashing valuable works of art, chaining themselves to railings, waging assaults on mounted police, carrying out hunger strikes in prison. The climax of this quasi-terrorist campaign came in 1912, when one of their number, Emily Davison, threw herself under the king's horse at the Derby and was killed. These were the female equivalents of the male (and female) revolutionaries of contemporary Russia, and the worst insult they could devise against Prime Minister Asquith was to compare him to Tsar Nicholas II! However, they gradually lost support among supporters of the women's movement as people began to feel and turn away from their revolutionary socialist spirit.

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"When war was declared on 4 August [1914] the suffrage battle was at its height, with little sign that reform would come. Sylvia Pankhurst had opened up a new front in the East End of London, living there and recruiting not just women but as much of the working-class movement as she could. She preached revolution, having learned from methods the Bolsheviks were using in Russia to overthrow an authority that ignored them. Asquith thought it prudent to meet her and a deputation of women from Bromley by Bow, days before Franz Ferdinand was shot in Sarajevo, and to make it clear that his views on the question were susceptible to change. The war accelerated the reform, but it would have been inevitable before it, because of progress in other institutions and in social attitudes.

"As it turned out, it was not revolution, but the war to end all wars that finally secured the women of Britain the vote. The campaign ended two days after war was declared. Women worked as nurses, in munitions factories and in innumerable other callings. Their patriotism was beyond question. As mothers, wives, sisters and daughters, they were bereaved in their hundreds of thousands, and on many fell the responsibility of raising families. Many men – including Asquith – expressed

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<sup>492</sup> Heffer, *op. cit.*, pp. 711-712.

surprise, when the war was under way, at what an enormous contribution women made by taking over jobs in hitherto male preserves so that men could go to the front. When the proposal to enfranchise women was debated at the end of the war this was duly recognised, but there were also signs that the campaign of militancy had had its effect: some surmised, probably rightly, that a refusal to grant the franchise to women after the part they had played in the war would have caused a massive outbreak of civil disobedience, and perhaps on a worse scale than before 1914. Nonetheless, women had proved their point. The vote was given to all of them over thirty in 1918; and on equal basis with men in 1928..."<sup>493</sup>

But another, still more important point had been made: that it was not the Russian autocracy that caused the instability and civil unrest in the Triple Entente countries, and full-scale revolution in Russia itself. The cause in both cases was *revolutionary socialism, hiding under a mask of liberalism* in both countries. Liberalism and democracy, far from being a defence against the revolution, was the Trojan horse which allowed the revolution within the gates...

*December 18/31, 2021.*

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<sup>493</sup> Heffer, *op. cit.*, p. 768.

## 47. AIDS, COVID-19 AND THE TYRANNY OF SCIENCE

The debate over homosexuality was greatly influenced by the outbreak of an epidemic called “Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome “(AIDS), which may or may not have been caused by “Human Immunodeficiency Virus” (HIV). In 1986 Dr. Anthony Fauci, the head of the US government agency NIAID (the National Institute for Allergic and Infectious Diseases), which controlled vast funds for scientific research, insisted that HIV was the cause of AIDS, and that he had found the cure, an extremely toxic and expensive chemical called AZT. Fauci, who was in financial cahoots with Big Pharma, and especially with the British company Wellcome (now Glaxo-Smith-Kline), which manufactured AZT, used his considerable political influence with the regulatory authorities, and his scientific influence with certain corrupt virologists, particularly Dr. Robert Gallo, to prevent the development of other very promising – and far less expensive – treatments of AIDS that did not presume any link with a virus like HIV. This caused a political storm in Congress and among AIDS sufferers and their doctors.

Robert F. Kennedy, the son of the famous president, writes: “The loudest, most influential, and persistent challenge to the thesis that HIV might not be the only cause of AIDS came from Dr. Peter Duesberg, who in 1987 enjoyed a reputation as the world’s most accomplished and insightful retrovirologist. Specifically, Dr. Duesberg accuses Dr. Fauci of committing mass murder with AZT, the deadly chemical concoction that according to Duesberg causes – and never cures – the constellations of immune suppression that we now call “AIDS.” But Duesberg’s critique goes deeper than his revulsion for AZT. Duesberg argues that HIV does not cause AIDS but is simply a “free rider” common to high-risk populations who suffer immune suppression due to environmental exposures. While HIV may be sexually transmittable, Duesberg argues, AIDS is not. Duesberg famously offered to inject himself with HIV-tainted blood “so long as it doesn’t come from Gallo’s lab.” For starters, Duesberg points out that HIV is seen in millions of healthy individuals who never develop AIDS. Conversely, there are thousands of known AIDS cases in patients who are not demonstrably infected with HIV. Dr. Fauci has never been able to explain these phenomena, which are inconsistent with the pathogenesis of any other infectious disease.

“Many other prominent and thoughtful scientists have offered a variety of well-reasoned hypotheses to explain these baffling fissures in the HIV orthodoxy. Most of these alternative conjectures accept that HIV plays a role in the onset of AIDS but argue that there must be other cofactors, a qualifier that Dr. Fauci and a handful of his diehard PIs [Principal Investigators] stubbornly deny.

“Prior to advancing his own theory for the etiology of AIDS, Duesberg methodically laid out the logical flaws in Dr. Fauci’s HIV/AIDS hypothesis in a ground-breaking 1987 article in *Cancer Research*. Dr. Fauci has never answered Duesberg’s common-sense questions.

“In his subsequent book, *Inventing the AIDS Virus*, Duesberg, in 724 riveting pages, expands his dissection of the hypothesis’s flaws and outlines his own explanation for the etiology of AIDS.

“For those subsumed in the theology that HIV is the sole cause of AIDS, Dr. Duesberg’s critiques seem so outlandish that they automatically debase anyone who even considers them. It’s telling, then, to discover how much traction his arguments have among the world’s most thoughtful and brilliant scientists, including many Nobel laureates, perhaps most notably Luc Montagnier, who first isolated HIV. To date, Dr. Fauci has been able to silence but not to answer or to refute Duesberg’s thesis.

“I restate that I take no side in this dispute. It seems undeniable to me that the dissidents have raised legitimate queries that should be researched, debated, and explored. I believe public health officials have a duty to answer these sorts of questions, and I yearn to hear those arguments in an energized debate; Dr. Fauci’s aggressive censorship campaign and his refusal to debate arouse my suspicion and my ire. It brings to mind George R. R. Martin’s observation that entrenched powers remove men’s tongues not to prevent them from telling lies, but to stop them from speaking the truth.

“If any of Dr. Duesberg’s revelations are solid, his story has momentous relevance today—as the removal of his tongue illustrates the capacity of the pharmaceutical cartel, in league with self-interested technocrats, to exaggerate and exploit viral pandemics, to foist toxic and dangerous remedies onto a credulous public, and promote self-serving agendas—even those with terrible outcomes—with the complicity of a fawning and scientifically illiterate media. Duesberg and others charge that by stifling debate and dissent, Dr. Fauci milled public fear into multi-billion-dollar profits for his Pharma partners while expanding his own powers and authoritarian control. The resulting policies, they say, have caused calamity to global economies and public health, and vastly expanded the pool of human suffering.”<sup>494</sup>

Whatever the exact nature and extent of the links between AIDS and homosexual and bisexual behaviours, it was clearly folly for society as a whole to reject the obvious precaution of condemning and abstaining from the disease-transmitting behaviours, such as homosexuality and bisexuality. “As a result,” writes Niall Ferguson, “AIDS has now killed thirty-two million people around the world. At the height of the epidemic, in 2005-6, fifteen years after the death of [gay pop-star] Freddie Mercury, nearly two million people a year were dying of AIDS.

“... HIV/AIDS moved at a snail’s pace contrary to the prophecies of many doomsayers. Why, then, was the national and international response so ineffectual? According to the San Francisco-based journalist Randy Shilts, who himself died of AIDS in 1994, it was because of a systemic failure: in the United States, the medical and public health bodies, federal and private scientific research establishments, the mass media, and the gay community’s leadership all failed to respond in the ways

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<sup>494</sup> Kennedy, *The Real Anthony Fauci*, 2021, pp. 350-351.

they should have"<sup>495</sup> - the most important of which was abstinence from perverted sexual practices and the outright condemning of homosexuality...

By allowing the disease to move at a snail's pace, God was mercifully giving men time to repent and change their behaviour, increasing the fear of God in those whose consciences were not completely seared (I Timothy 4.2). But western society was no longer willing to provide the most effective preventive measure: unequivocal public condemnation of homosexuality and sexual promiscuity in general by opinion-leaders in Church and State. Society (outside some African states) had long ago lost the fear of God, and the fear of eternal damnation unequivocally pronounced by the Word of God for the sin of homosexuality (Romans 1; I Corinthians 6.19).

And now the fear of men – the fear, not only of coming down with the disease, but also of condemning such a popular sin, and of finding oneself isolated and condemned in the court of public opinion – took hold of society...

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The Fauci AIDS scam, and the many other scams and frauds he has been involved in, has culminated in the contemporary covid-19 scam, where, as in the 1980s, a scientific cabal led yet again by Fauci has been allowed to kill millions of people, undermining the world's economy by a mixture of (1) inventing a new virus, (2) banning the use of cheap, simple and well-tested remedies such as ivermectin that could have stopped the epidemic a long time ago, (3) convincing world elites and governments to introduce entirely unsuitable and terribly damaging methods of stopping the spread of the infection, and (4) forcing through a semi-mandatory "vaccine" regime that is a completely novel and untested form of gene therapy which is more dangerous to health than the disease it pretends to cure. But the most serious consequence of the scam is that it constitutes a still more serious assault on liberty and truth than that presented by Soviet power: *the tyranny of science and scientism in the modern age*.

The best-known historical examples of the tyranny of science have been in the totalitarian regimes of Hitler (Aryan eugenics) and Stalin (Marxism, Lysenkoism, Soviet psychiatry). This has led to the false conclusion that true science can flourish only in democratic regimes. But the flourishing of such false theories as Darwinism and Faucian virology precisely in the most democratic of countries shows that free speech can be subverted by ruthless and skilful pseudo-scientific cabals that know how to use the power and money given to them by elected governments, agencies, universities and corporations to gain still more money and power – Faustian Fauci has the biggest salary in the US government, plus huge kickbacks from Big Pharma and those he patronizes).

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<sup>495</sup> Ferguson, *Doom. The Politics of Catastrophe*, London: Allen Lane, 2021, p. 239.

Many true scientists have been appalled at the way in which these cabals have been used by science administrators to suppress free speech and their “heretical” opponents.

The authority given in previous ages to religion has been transferred to science. This is the authority of *certain knowledge*, which in the past was attributed only to God (“let God be true, but every man a liar” (Romans 3.4)) and “the Church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth” (I Timothy 3.15), the only true collective depository of certain knowledge. Individuals, it was believed, could acquire certain knowledge only by belonging to the Church, where they would receive “the faith once given to the saints” (Jude 3), a faith that is not knowledge of transitory, material things but “the substance [the Greek word here is *hypothesis*, understood in a pre-scientific sense] of things hoped for, the evidence [*elegkos*] of things not seen” (Hebrews 11.1).

To the neo-Faustians/Faucians of today, however, real, *certain* knowledge is attributed only to “the scientific consensus”. But “the scientific consensus” is another idol; *certain* knowledge is never given to scientists, whether individually or collectively, who study only transitory, material things through the prism of their fallen, corrupted minds. The best any scientist can do is put forward more or less *uncertain hypotheses*, about which consensus is unattainable or, if attained, irrelevant. For, as novelist and physician Dr. Michael Crichton observed, “Consensus is the business of politics. Science, on the contrary, requires only one investigator who happens to be right, which means that he or she has results that are verifiable by reference to the real world. In science consensus is irrelevant. The greatest scientists in history are great precisely because they broke with the consensus. There is no such thing as consensus science. If it’s consensus, it isn’t science. If it’s science, it isn’t consensus. Period.”<sup>496</sup>

However, the high priests of modern science (as prophesied in Dostoyevsky’s apocalyptic novel, *The Devils*) anoint certain scientists, such as Darwin, or certain scientific administrators, such as Fauci, with the charisma of infallibility, as the oracles of “the scientific consensus”. Following their self-appointed spiritual leaders, the multitudes and the nations and the governments all bow down before the new Babylonian idol with a serpent inside, this repository of many small truths and some very large falsehoods – but never of *certain knowledge*. They do this because they have come to believe in the Lord Chancellor of England Francis Bacon’s famous saying: “*knowledge is power*”.<sup>497</sup> In his utopian novel *New Atlantis* (1627) Bacon envisaged a collective body of scientists taking the place of individual geniuses and having real *power*, a power greater than that of kings and rulers. Now, in our day, his dystopian dream would appear to have come true...

December 30 / January 12, 2021/2022.  
*Apodosis of the Nativity of Christ.*

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<sup>496</sup> Crichton, in Kennedy, *op. cit.*, p. 348.

<sup>497</sup> Bacon, *Meditationes Sacrae*.

