

# **RELIGION AND NATIONALISM**

*or: God, the Nation and the State*

Vladimir Moss

© Copyright, Vladimir Moss, 2000: All Rights Reserved

CONTENTS

<u>INTRODUCTION</u>	3
<u>LECTURE 1: A MODEL OF MAN IN SOCIETY</u>	4
<u>LECTURE 2: SATANOCRACY AND THEOCRACY: BABYLON AND ISRAEL</u>	14
<u>LECTURE 3: THEOCRACY REBORN: THE IMPERIAL CHURCH</u>	24
<u>LECTURE 4: THEOCRACY, TRUE AND FALSE: PAPAL ROME, ISLAM AND RUSSIA</u>	34
<u>LECTURE 5: ANTI-THEOCRACY: THE PROTESTANT AND DEMOCRATIC REVOLUTIONS</u>	44
<u>LECTURE 6: ANTI-THEOCRACY: THE NATIONALIST REVOLUTIONS</u>	54
<u>LECTURE 7. SATANOCRACY REBORN: THE JEWISH-RUSSIAN REVOLUTION (I)</u>	63
<u>LECTURE 8. SATANOCRACY REBORN: THE JEWISH-RUSSIAN REVOLUTION (II)</u>	75
<u>LECTURE 9. THE DEMOCRATIC IDEA</u>	85
<u>LECTURE 10: THE NATIONAL IDEA</u>	95
<u>LECTURE 11: THE RUSSIAN IDEA</u>	106
<u>LECTURE 12: THE KINGSHIP OF GOD</u>	118
<u>APPENDIX: THE NATIONS, NATIONALISM AND THE RUSSIAN IDEA</u>	127

## INTRODUCTION

This book is an expanded version of a series of lectures I gave in the psychological faculty of the University of Sofia, Bulgaria, in the spring of 1994. It represents a theory of society, and vision of world history, based on the teachings of the Orthodox Christian faith. I should like to thank my translators and students for the patience with which they absorbed my often difficult thoughts.

*Sofia, Bulgaria.  
May 2/15, 1994.  
St. Athanasius the Great.  
St. Boris-Michael,  
Enlightener of Bulgaria.*

## LECTURE 1: A MODEL OF MAN IN SOCIETY

*All the nations whom Thou hast made  
shall come and shall worship before  
Thee, O Lord, and shall glorify Thy name.*  
Psalm 85.8.

There are two phenomena which modern, liberal, scientific-rationalist theoreticians of man and society find most difficult to accommodate within their theories and whose irruptions into the life even of "advanced", i.e. western nations have more than once upset their most cherished predictions.

One of these is religion, dismissed by the philosophers of the eighteenth-century enlightenment as superstition, a relic from ignorant, tradition-bound societies, and by those of the nineteenth- and twentieth-century revolution as "opium of the people", a psychological release for the materially oppressed classes. And yet neither the spread of education nor the increase of material prosperity in our century appears to have destroyed the popularity of religion. True, traditional Christianity has been in sharp decline (though it is now enjoying a revival of sorts in Eastern Europe); but the other two monotheistic religions, Islam and Judaism, are as powerful as ever, while both old- and new-age paganism has penetrated deep into the consciousness of such technologically advanced regions as North America.

The other phenomenon that appears to defy rationalist explanations is nationalism. It is easy to dismiss this as pathological, "caused," in Sir Isaiah Berlin's phrase, "by wounds, some form of collective humiliation".<sup>1</sup> And yet the extraordinary, unparalleled abundance of nationalist movements in our time, when the vast increase in communications, the inter-connectedness of the world economy and the global nature of so many of our problems appear to indicate the need for ever more internationalist solutions and ideologies, makes such explanations seem partial and simplistic.

Perhaps we should admit the possibility that religion and nationalism are less pathological, more "normal" and universal elements of the human condition than we supposed. Such a recognition is fairly widespread now; there are few universities or institutions of higher education in which comparative religion is not taught or respect for individual national cultures is not advocated. Indeed, ecumenism and national self-determination are among the dogmas of the modern intellectual orthodoxy.

However, a closer examination of this orthodoxy reveals that, far from truly accommodating religion and nationalism, it has attempted to neutralize their force by denying their real nature. Thus it is assumed from the outset

---

<sup>1</sup> Berlin, "The Bent Twig: On the Rise of Nationalism", in *The Crooked Timber of Humanity*, London: John Murry, p. 245.

that no single religion can be true in toto or to a greater degree than any other. The claims of any or every religion to constitute the truth are brushed aside. The contradictions between religions are glossed over, their similarities exaggerated, their barbaric elements (from the point of view of humanist orthodoxy) denied. In general, religions are viewed not so much as objective statements of truth (or as attempted such statements), but rather as suits which can be tailored to the individual requirement of the buyer. In other words, religion is still viewed as opium for the people; the difference is only that opium is now given a higher rather than a lower value (for it satisfies a permanent, and not a passing need), and greater stress is laid on the wide range of opiums available to satisfy every kind of religious consumer.

In the same way, national self-determination is regarded as good only when it suits the interests of that cartel of nations which calls itself "the international community". Thus the nationalisms of the smaller countries of the former Soviet Union were encouraged so long they were seen as contributing to the dissolution of the evil (albeit internationalist) empire. But Russian nationalism is seen as bad because it might lead to the reconstitution of that empire. Again, Irish nationalism is seen as good in the context of removing the last vestiges of British colonialism from the island of Ireland. But in the context of the European community, all such nationalisms are seen as unmitigated evils - with the exception, of course, of European nationalism itself, which is expressed fairly regularly in favour of a small group of the richest West European nations and against the interests of other international blocs, such as Africa or East Europe.

It seems, therefore, that with regard to the vitally important realms of religion and nationalism, superficiality, double-talk and double standards are the rule rather than the exception. But this is all the more reason to attempt a fundamental examination of the place of religion and nationalism in relation to each other and other human needs and activities. Such a review is the aim of this series of lectures.

\*

In order to obtain an over-view of our subject, it will be useful to describe a very general model or analogy of the relations between religion and nationalism. We shall not attempt at this stage to justify the model in detail, nor to draw out its limitations and implications; this task will be left to the main body of lectures. In this introductory lecture we shall limit ourselves to describing the general model in its main outlines.

Now a very ancient, Christian model of man as an individual human being divides him into three parts or spheres: the spirit, the soul and the body. The spirit, roughly speaking, is the guiding and controlling principle in man, the part which, on the one hand, is most akin to God and relates to Him most directly, and on the other, unites the lower spheres of the soul and body into a single, harmonious entity. The soul, roughly speaking, is the sphere of the

higher emotions and intellectual life of man as existing in relative independence from the spirit and the body. And the body is the sphere of the lower emotions and biological life of man. Much of Christian ascetic and psychological literature is devoted to describing the disorders that arise when the spirit no longer controls the soul and the body, and to the struggle that is required in order to restore man's original spiritual harmony.

By analogy with this tripartite model of man as an individual, we may construct a tripartite model of man as a social being existing in groups or collectives as large as a nation. Just as the highest guiding principle of man as an individual is his spirit, so the highest guiding principle of man as a social being is his religion, which is nothing else than the spiritual life of man in its social, collective dimension. And just as the sphere of man's higher emotions and intellectual life is his soul, so the sphere of his social emotions and thoughts is his nation. Thus patriotism or national feeling may be defined as the complex of emotions and thoughts associated with man as a member of society. And finally, just as man as an individual is not complete without his body, with which he comes into contact with the physical world, so man in society comes into contact with other societies first of all through the body of society, the state.

Corresponding to the tripartite structure of the spirit, the soul and the body, we therefore have another tripartite structure of religion, the nation and the state. Thus a society may be described as an individual human being writ large. Its spirit is its religion, its soul is its national feeling or idea, and its body is its state structure.

The etymological meaning of the word "religion" corresponds well with this model. For the Latin word religio means "binding together", and the religion of a society, like the spirit of a man, is that which binds its constituent parts together. Religion in this sense need not involve a belief in God; the materialist ideology of Marxism-Leninism, for example, can be described as the religion that bound the socialist societies of Eastern Europe and the Far East together. Of course, it is another question whether this kind of religion can really bind a society together for long, and whether in fact it ultimately destroys society just as the cult of the flesh ultimately destroys the individual man. But for the purposes of this discussion, we shall include under the term "religion" any organized faith or ideology that serves to bind together, however unnaturally and temporarily, the citizens of that society in a common aim and movement.

The soul or national idea of a society is clearly closely bound up with its spiritual faith or religion. Sometimes the link is so strong that it is felt that a person cannot belong to the nation unless he also confesses the faith of that nation. A clear example is Old Testament Israel in its peak period from Moses to Solomon, when "Israel" referred both to a faith and to the people confessing that faith. A modern example is Saudi Arabia, whose internal identity and external foreign policy are, or were, almost completely dependent on its status

as the guardian of the Islamic holy places and the Muslim faith. Another important example is "Holy Russia" from the fourteenth to the seventeenth centuries, when to be Russian meant necessarily to be Orthodox Christian.

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

For the soul of a nation is tied up in certain very specific and unique ways with its history, its geography, its climate, and the physical and psychological make-up of its members. Thus for an Englishman, regardless of his faith or the faith of his country at any particular time, his Englishness involves what might be called a specifically geographical element - the feeling of belonging to the island which Shakespeare compared to "a silvery stone set in a silvery sea"; and this element may contribute to what other nations see as the Englishman's reserved, self-contained, insular nature. On the other hand, the expansiveness and tendency to extremism that characterizes the Russians in their own and others' estimation, may be conditioned by the limitless flat steppes of their homeland (or, as the anthropologist Geoffrey Gower has speculated, it may be a reaction to their habit of rearing their children by tightly wrapping them in swaddling clothes).

In some nations, the spiritual element in its national feeling is so weak as to be almost non-existent. But since man cannot exist without some guiding principle, the spiritual vacuum thus created will be filled by the deification of the nation itself, or of the state or leader in which its national life is temporarily incarnate - that is, in nationalism or totalitarian statism. In pagan societies the tendency towards statism is expressed especially in the deification of the king. Hence the god-kings and emperors of Ancient Egypt, Babylon and Rome. In Western, post-Christian societies, this tendency finds a less religious expression, as in Napoleonic France or Nazi Germany - although the tendency to deify the leader is never far absent even in western nationalist societies.

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

However, even when men have agreed that the main purpose of life is to satisfy material, bodily needs, and that the best instrument to this end is the secular, pluralist, multi- or inter-national, democratic state, they still remain essentially spiritual beings whose spiritual and emotional nature cannot be satisfied by bread alone. Therefore the builders of modern western societies have provided them with something else: circuses. For whereas the religious societies of the past spent vast sums on the construction of cathedrals or temples or mosques, and the nationalist societies of more recent times spent equally vast sums on the construction of the thrones and palaces of their god-kings, modern democratic societies spend substantial (but comparatively much smaller) sums on the construction of sports halls and stadia, cinemas and concert-halls. Here the need to worship something or someone greater than oneself - a sports team or a rock star - can be satisfied; and here nationalist passions can be expressed and defused in comparative safety. Moreover, there can even be substantial financial and technological "spin-offs" for the state involved, as the recent fierce competition for the holding of Olympics 2000 demonstrates.

\*

This, briefly, is the model of collective man that I shall be working with - man as a religio-socio-political being. Now corresponding to this analysis of man into a religious spirit, a national soul and a political body, we may analyze human societies into three basic types: theocracy - that is, those societies in which the religious element is dominant, monarchy - that is, those societies in which the national element is dominant, and democracy - that is, those societies in which the political element is dominant. Probably no society is a perfect exemplar of any of these types or categories, and most societies fall somewhere in the middle between two or more of them.

I shall argue that a society in which the material, bodily principle is dominant - that is, in which the satisfaction of material needs is seen, explicitly or implicitly, as the main purpose of life - will naturally tend towards a democratic form of government. In a democratic society, identity of world-view among all its members is seen as neither possible nor desirable; hence the emphasis on polytheism (in ancient societies) or pluralism (in modern societies) and unfettered freedom of speech and press. The only thing which everybody must agree on in a democratic society is that everyone should be allowed to pursue his ideal of personal happiness without the religious or national ideals of others being imposed on him. In a democratic society the rights of the individual to free self-expression are paramount, with restrictions only on open incitement to racism or murder. At the same time, state institutions are highly developed in order to satisfy these needs and rights of the individual citizens.

In a monarchy something more is required of the citizen: loyalty to the historic tradition of the nation that is incarnate in the institution of the monarchy, if not in the person of the monarch himself. Implicit here is the



notion that the continued existence of the state has a value over and above its ability to give its citizens life and a minimum level of material comfort. It has value also as conserving the traditions and memory of the nation as a whole; and the hereditary monarchy is both one of those traditions and the guarantor of their continuity. Democrats often judge monarchies negatively for their lack of democratic liberties. They forget that for a convinced monarchist the loss of such liberties (and not all monarchies are anti-libertarian) is a small price to pay for those national and religious traditions which, as he sees it, only monarchy can guarantee. Moreover, the preservation of tradition which monarchists value so highly may be seen as not only compatible with democracy, but the only real support of democracy, if the "demos" is defined as embracing not only the present generation of the nation, but all previous generations. For tradition is the historical memory of the people as a whole, the embodiment of the consensus of all its generations.

A theocracy sets itself a still higher goal: to incarnate the will of God in the life of the State. While material and national goals are not ignored, they are subordinated to the overriding purpose of doing the will of God. In theocracies there is a close alliance between political and religious authority. True theocracies have been rare in history - we think of Ancient Israel, Byzantium and Russia at their peak - but their historical importance cannot be exaggerated. Theocracy is often monarchical in form, but should not be confused with national monarchy.

The problem is, of course, that a theocracy may distort the will of God to such an extent that it ceases to be theocratic and can, in extreme cases, become satanocratic. Since the interpretation of the will of God is the sphere of religion, it is a religious question whether, and to what extent, a society is truly theocratic or satanocratic. However, I believe that even from a secular, political or sociological point of view, it is necessary to make some such distinction - between satanocracy, on the one hand, and theocracy, monarchy and democracy, on the other, - otherwise gross errors of analysis will ensue (for example: the common error among western analysts of identifying the Soviet satanocratic regime as the continuation or reincarnation of the Tsarist theocratic one).

One of the major aims of this series of lectures will be to define satanocracy and identify its appearance in history.

\*

Finally, I should like to say a few words about the methodology of this series of lectures.

In a previous series of lectures I argued that man as an individual cannot be understood by purely empirical means. Man is a spiritual being, which means that he is not only an object of science, but also the creator of science. Moreover, he participates in other activities, such as art and religion, which

transcend science. Above all, he is free - and science cannot cope with the concept of freedom. For science is the placing of objects in a causal nexus which is determined according to the laws that science discovers. As Richard Pipes writes: "The study of mankind differs fundamentally from the study of nature, in part because the observer is identical with the object observed and in part because, unlike molecules and cells, human beings have values and objectives that preclude their being analyzed in a value-free, unteleological manner. Thus the investigation of social and political organizations calls for a methodology closer to that employed in history and even literature."<sup>2</sup>

If man as an individual cannot be understood by purely empirical means, a fortiori he cannot be understood in this way as a collective being. For to assert that man as an individual is free but as a member of a collective is unfree is to say that on entering society man loses his essentially spiritual nature. This is counter both to the common experience of mankind and to recent trends in psychology, which suggest that personhood is inconceivable outside society.

Of course, there are some forms of society which tend to suppress personhood. East Europeans know better than most how the state, when ruled by an anti-personal ideology such as communism, can crush the individual spirit and depersonalize men in general. But these cases are generally recognized as deformations. It is not living in society as such that depersonalizes, but the anti-personal ideology to which society submits itself. Society may depersonalize a man; but it can also enormously enrich him, making him a partaker of the riches of civilization which no man on his own can invent.

Indeed, it is the failure to recognize that man is free even when doing routine things or as a member of a collective that accounts for many of the predictive failures of the social sciences. Thus economists try to discover the laws that govern economic behaviour, forgetting that whatever predictable pressures men may be under when they come to the market-place, the act of buying or selling is still a free act. Again, we may be able to predict how most people will act when brought up in a Stalinist society; but no science can or ever will be able to predict those men who, counter to "common sense" or what appears to be in their own interest, choose to oppose the system in the name of God or some ethical principle.

Alexander Solzhenitsyn has argued strongly in favour of the thesis that ethical categories and judgements which are characteristically applied to individual people can and should be applied also to whole societies. He writes: "In accordance with our human nature we naturally judge in the following way: we apply ordinary individual human estimates and measures to larger social phenomena and associations of people - right to whole nations

---

<sup>2</sup> Pipes, R. Book Review in *Foreign Affairs*, January/February, 1995, p. 160.

and states. And we can find many such metaphors in various authors of various ages.

"However, social sciences forbid such metaphoric transfers - and the newer the science the more strictly they forbid them. They consider to be serious and scientific only those investigations of societies and states in which the governing methods are economic, statistical, demographical, ideological, (two levels lower) geographical, or (with some suspicion) psychological. And they consider it quite provincial to judge the life of a state by ethical standards.

"But meanwhile, people who live in social accumulations by no means cease to be people, and even in the midst of these accumulations they do not lose the same basic human instincts and feelings - the whole spectre of them that we all know. They only allow them to grow coarse, and sometimes restrain them, at others let them loose. And it is difficult to understand this arrogant coarseness in the contemporary direction of the social sciences: why should the estimates and demands which are so obligatory and so applicable to separate people, families, small circles and personal relationships - why should they be immediately and categorically rejected and forbidden on transfer to associations made up of thousands and millions of people?..

"Such a transfer is completely natural from the religious point of view: human society cannot be freed from the laws and demands which constitute the aim and meaning of separate individual lives. But even without any religious support this transfer is easily and naturally awaited. It is very human: to apply our mental estimates - noble, ignoble, bold, cowardly, hypocritical, false, cruel, magnanimous, just, unjust - to the greatest social events or human organizations, right up to states and the UNO... Moreover, even extreme economic materialists write in this way, for they remain human nevertheless. And it is evident that those feelings which most arouse people in a given society and precisely those feelings which the whole society clothes itself in at a given moment, becoming the moral character of the whole society. And if nothing good will spread through the society, it will annihilate itself or become animal-like from the triumph of the evil instincts, whatever direction the arrow of great economic laws points in.

"And it has always been evident to everyone, even the unlearned, that we cannot escape looking at social phenomena in the categories of the individual mental life and individual ethics, and that to look at them in this way is extremely fruitful..."<sup>3</sup>

To some, this recognition that the categories of individual mental life are applicable to nations and states may seem like a flight from reason. However, we must remember that there is one established discipline which has always

---

<sup>3</sup> Solzhenitsyn, A. "Raskayaniye i samoorganicheniye kak kategorii national'noj zhizni", in *Iz-pod Glyb*, Paris: YMCA Press, 1974 (in Russian).

judged its subject-matter in this way - I mean history. And while history is not usually classed as a science, it is an eminently rational discipline. Indeed, history is the only discipline which approaches nations and states in an objective, rational manner without leaving out of consideration the human dimension of its subject. That is why the approach adopted in this series of lectures is a historical one.

Thus it seems a fairly safe generalization to say that almost every historical society has had some kind of religion, some form of national feeling, and some kind of governmental structure. These three elements are discernible in societies of all levels of complexity, from the nomadic societies consisting, in essence, of one extended family, to our modern super-states consisting of hundreds of millions of people. False prophets such as Marx may have predicted the death of God, or the abolition of nationalism, or the withering away of the state. But religion, nationalism and statehood are with us still, even in the late twentieth century. Perhaps it is reasonable to suppose, therefore, that these elements are ineradicable parts of man in his collective aspect.

A more difficult problem to resolve is the relationship between these elements. There are two main hypotheses here, which we may call idealism and materialism. Idealism affirms that, in accordance with his spiritual nature as an individual, man in his collective aspect is governed primarily by his world-view, his ideology, his religion, and that even the material forms of his civilization, whose function would appear to be strictly utilitarian, are the expression, to a significant degree, of his spiritual outlook. Materialism, on the other hand, affirms that ideology and religion are merely superficial "superstructures", to use the Marxist term, which serve and express the fundamentally materialist and economic substructures of society; so that in a society whose material needs are satisfied there will be no need or place for religious faith or nationalist fervour.

Now the question whether man can live by bread (or bread and circuses) alone is a large one, which I cannot begin to answer adequately here. I wish only to note that a study of history can dispel certain illusions which hinder our understanding of this question. Thus in relation to the materialist hypothesis, historians of the twentieth century will note that the first societies founded explicitly on atheism and materialism were actually among the most fiercely ideological in history, which would tend to suggest that ideology is much more than an inessential "superstructure".

My approach, therefore, to the subject of these lectures will be as follows. I shall hypothesize that man in his collective aspect is made up of religion, nationality and statehood, these three elements having a similar relationship to each other to the relationship between spirit, soul and body in the individual man. In connection with this basic hypothesis, I shall analyse human societies into three basic types: theocracy, monarchy and democracy, with a fourth type, satanocracy, that imitates and feeds on, but is ultimately

bent on destroying, the basic three types. I propose to develop and validate this hypothesis in the context of a study of history on a very broad scale. However, since I lack the scholarship of historians such as Toynbee<sup>4</sup>, who was able to make generalizations from a deep knowledge of historical societies throughout the world, I will restrict myself to what I know best and what I consider to be the most important section or stream of history, that centred spiritually on the Judaeo-Christian (and especially Orthodox Christian) tradition, and geographically on the continent of Europe, with only occasional references to other civilizations in other parts of the world.

Although, by restricting myself in this way, I will undoubtedly open myself to the criticism that my generalizations are not truly universal, it is nevertheless my hope and belief that all the major forms of relationship between religion, nationality and statehood will become clearer in this context. The philosophical viewpoint from which I shall approach these lectures is Orthodox Christianity, which I consider to be the only worldview capable of encompassing the full depth of the relationship between religion, the nation and the state. Thus my main authorities will be Orthodox writers from the earliest times to the twentieth century.

However, I shall not ignore non-Orthodox currents of thought. And when I come to the twentieth century, I shall compare in detail the Orthodox and non-Orthodox approaches to the analysis of the major theocratic, monarchical, democratic and satanocratic societies of the twentieth century. In particular, I intend to go into some depth into the debate over the political writings of Alexander Solzhenitsyn.

In the next lecture I propose to examine the history of the earliest theocracy, Ancient Israel, in its struggle with the earliest satanocracies, those of Ancient Babylon and Egypt.

---

<sup>4</sup> Toynbee, Sir Arnold, *A Study of History*, Oxford University Press, 1947.

## LECTURE 2: SATANOCRACY AND THEOCRACY: BABYLON AND ISRAEL

*Thou shalt love the Lord thy God  
with all thy heart, and with all  
thy soul, and with all thy mind.*  
Matthew 22.37.

It is a striking fact, which should have embarrassed Karl Marx greatly, that totalitarian regimes of the communist type have not only existed for thousands of years but are probably the oldest type of urban civilization known to historians and archaeologists. Thus the Bible and archaeological science agree in ascribing the birth of urban civilization on a large scale to the Middle East, and in particular to that part of the Fertile Crescent which in ancient times was called Sumeria and which is at present southern Iraq and Kuwait. And the civilization that flourished in this part of the world some three to four thousand years before Christ was from a religious point of view polytheist, and from a political point of view what we would now call totalitarian but which I would prefer to call satanocratic.

According to Jewish tradition enshrined in the Book of Genesis and some commentaries on it, paganism arose in this region, being associated with the hunter Nimrod, whose name means "let us rebel".<sup>5</sup> This paganism seems to have involved the worship of a whole host of gods, the chief of whom was called Marduk. The great spring festival of Marduk took place at Babylon, at the splendid temple with ascending steps which is called in the Bible the Tower of Babel.<sup>6</sup>

The first-century Jewish historian Flavius Josephus writes: "Now it was Nimrod who excited them to such an affront and contempt of God; he was the grandson of Ham, the son of Noah, a bold man, and of great strength of hand. He persuaded them not to ascribe it to God, as if it were through his means that they were happy, but to believe that it was their own courage that procured their happiness. He also gradually changed the government into tyranny, seeing no other method of turning men from the fear of God, but to bring them into a constant dependence on his own power."<sup>7</sup>

---

<sup>5</sup> The Jerusalem Targum explains: "He was powerful in hunting and in wickedness before the Lord, for he was a hunter of the sons of men, and he said to them, 'Depart from the judgement of the Lord, and adhere to the judgement of Nimrod!' Therefore it is said: 'As Nimrod is the strong one, strong in hunting, and in wickedness before the Lord.'" The Targum of Jonathan tells us: "From the foundation of the world none was ever found like Nimrod, powerful in hunting, and in rebellions against the Lord." The Chaldee paraphrase of I Chronicles 1.10 reads: "Cush begat Nimrod, who began to prevail in wickedness, for he shed innocent blood, and rebelled against Jehovah." These and other relevant quotations are cited from "*Babylon the Great has fallen!*", New York: Watchtower Bible & Tract Society, 1963, p. 21-22.

<sup>6</sup> Smart, N., *The Religious Experience of Mankind*, London: Fontana, 1971, p. 298.

<sup>7</sup> Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, book 1, chapter 4, paragraph 2.

The will of the gods was discovered, according to the Sumerians, through astrology. "They believed," writes Smart, "that they could predict not merely by earthly methods of divination, but also by a study of the stars and of planets and the moon".<sup>8</sup> One of the purposes of the temples or towers or ziggurats, whose impressive remains can still be seen in the Iraqi desert, may well have been as platforms from which to observe the signs of the zodiac in the sky.

According to *Genesis*, God destroyed the most important of these temples, the Tower of Babel, divided the languages of its builders so that they could not understand each other, and scattered them in different directions across the face of the earth. This explains both the existence of different nations speaking different languages and the fact that, at least in the earliest phase of their existence, all nations known to anthropologists have been pagan.<sup>9</sup>

By the end of the third millenium B.C., most of present-day Iraq was united under the rule of what is known as the third Ur dynasty, from its capital city - Ur. Shafarevich has shown that the political and economic life of this state was purely totalitarian in character: "Archaeologists have discovered a huge quantity of cuneiform tablets which express the economic life of that time. From them we know that the basis of the economy remained the temple households. However, they had completely lost their independence and had been turned into cells of a single state economy. Their managers were appointed by the king, they presented detailed accounts to the capital, and they were controlled by the king's inspectors. Groups of workers were often transferred from one household to another.

"The workers occupied in agriculture, men, women and children, were divided into parties led by inspectors. They worked all the year round, from one field to another, receiving seeds, tools and working animals from the temple and state warehouses. In the same way, they came to the warehouses for food in parties with their bosses leading them. The family was not seen as an economic unit; food was handed out not to the head of the family, but to each worker - more often, even, to the head of the party. In some documents they talk about men, in others - of women, in others - of children, in others - of orphans. Apparently, for this category of workers there could be no question of owning property or of using definite plots of land...

"In the towns there existed state workshops, with particularly large ones in the capital, Ur. The workers received tools, raw materials and semi-finished products from the state. The output of these workshops went into state warehouses. The craftsmen, like the agricultural workers, were divided into parties headed by observers. They received their food in accordance with lists from state warehouses.

---

<sup>8</sup> Smart, *op. cit.*, p. 299.

<sup>9</sup> Morris, H.M. *The Genesis Record*, Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Book House, 1976.

"The workers occupied in agriculture and manufacture figure in the accounts as workers of full strength, 2/3rds strength, and 1/6th strength. On this depended the norms of their food. There were also norms of work, on the fulfilment of which also depended the amount of rations the workers received. The households presented lists of dead, sick and absentees from work (with indication of the reasons for their truancy). The workers could be transferred from one field to another, from one workshop to another, sometimes - from one town into another. The agricultural workers were sent to accessory work in workshops, and the craftsmen - to agricultural work or barge-hauling. The unfree condition of large sections of the population is underlined by the large number of documents concerning flight. Information concerning flights (with names of relatives) is provided - and not only of a barber or a shepherd's son, but also of the son of a priest or priest... A picture of the life of the workers is unveiled by regular information concerning mortality... In one document we are told that in one party in one year there died 10% of the workers, in another - 14%, in a third - 28%. Mortality was especially great among women and children..."<sup>10</sup>

Thus here, over two thousand years before Christ, we find all the major elements of twentieth-century communism - the annihilation of private property and the family, slave-labour, gulags, the complete control of all political, economic and religious life by an omnipotent state. Even the cult of personality is here. Thus we know that the kings of Babylon were identified with the god Marduk.<sup>11</sup>

Similar systems seem to have been in vogue in other "civilized" parts of the ancient world - in Egypt, in China, and, somewhat later, in Peru. Thus Alexeyev writes: "The cult of the god-king was confessed by nations of completely different cultures. Nevertheless, at its base there lies a specific religious-philosophical world-view which is the same despite the differences of epochs, nations and cultural conditions of existence. The presupposition of this world-view is an axiom that received perhaps its most distinct formulation in the religion of the Assyro-Babylonians. The Assyro-Babylonians believed that the whole of earthly existence corresponds to heavenly existence and that every phenomenon of this world, beginning from the smallest and ending with the greatest, must be considered to be a reflection of heavenly processes. The whole Babylonian world-view, all their philosophy, astrology and magic rested on the recognition of this axiom. In application to politics it meant that .. the earthly king was as it were a copy of the heavenly king, an incarnation of divinity, an earthly god."<sup>12</sup>

---

<sup>10</sup> Shafarevich, I., "Sotzializm", in *Iz-Pod Glyb*, Paris: YMCA Press, 1974, pp. 36-37 (in Russian).

<sup>11</sup> Shafarevich, I., *Sotzializm kak yavleniye mirovoj istorii*, Paris: YMCA Press, 1977 (in Russian); Smart, *op. cit.*, p. 299.

<sup>12</sup> Alexeyev, N.N., "Khristianstvo i Ideya Monarkhiya", *Put'*, no. 6, January, 1927, p. 660 (in Russian).



The first, surprising conclusion of our historical survey, therefore, is that the first mode of organization of civilized society known to man is totalitarianism. We call such a system totalitarian because it controls, or attempts to control, the whole of man - his religious, national, political, economic and personal life. Only this early kind of totalitarianism did not go with atheism, but rather with polytheism, the main god of the totalitarian pantheon being the ruler of the state.

We shall also call such a system satanocratic; for just as satan is traditionally understood as the spirit who rebels against, and tries to take the place of God in the universe as a whole, so the ruler in the satanocratic state takes the place of God in the life of the people.

\*

It was in reaction to this proto-communist, satanocratic state that the first real theocracy arose - that of the Hebrews, whose name comes from that of the forefather of Abraham, Eber. The distinguishing mark of the Hebrew nation was not any linguistic or racial characteristics, but its faith. It took its origin from a direct call by God to Abraham to leave the Sumerian satanocracy; for according to Genesis, God appeared to Abraham and told him to leave his homeland, "Ur of the Chaldees", and go into a land which God had promised him.

The God of Abraham was different from the other gods of polytheism in several ways. First, He revealed Himself as completely transcendent to the material world, being worshipped neither in idols nor in the material world as a whole, but rather as the spiritual, immaterial Creator of the material world. Secondly, He did not reveal Himself to all, nor could anyone acquire faith in Him by his own efforts, but He revealed Himself only to those with whom He chose to enter into communion - Abraham, first of all. Thirdly, He was a jealous God Who required that His followers worship Him alone, as being the only true God. This was contrary to the custom in the pagan world, where ecumenism was the vogue - that is, all the gods, whoever they were and wherever they were worshipped, were considered true.

The nation of the Hebrews, therefore, was founded on an exclusively religious - and religiously exclusive - principle. In Ur, and the other proto-communist states of the ancient world, the governing principle of life was not religion, still less the nation, but the state. Or rather, its governing principle was a religion of the state as incarnate in its ruler; for everything, including religious worship, was subordinated to the needs of the state, and to the will of the leader of the state, the god-king.

But Israel - which means "he who sees God" - was founded upon a rejection of this idolatry of the state and its leader, and an exclusive subordination to the will of the God of Abraham, Who could in no way be identified with any man or state or material thing whatsoever. Therefore the criterion for

membership of the nation of Israel was neither race (for the Israelites were not clearly distinguished racially from the other Semitic tribes of the Fertile Crescent, at any rate at the beginning), nor citizenship of a certain state, nor residence in a certain geographical region (for it was not until 500 years after Abraham that the Israelites conquered Palestine), but belief in the God of Israel - the God Who revealed Himself to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob - and acceptance of the rite of circumcision.

In the time of Moses, the nation of Israel was again living under a satanocratic regime - this time, Pharaonic Egypt. And God again called them out of the satanocracy - this time, through Moses. In this way Israel's theocratic nature was reaffirmed.

During the life of Moses, a third important element besides faith and circumcision was added to the life of Israel: the law.

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 hierarchy. Since their migration to Egypt in the time of Joseph, they had multiplied and become a nation of several 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.

For these reasons among others, the law was given by God to Moses on Mount Sinai. It is important to realize that it was given by God, not invented by man. Thus even the beginnings of Israel's organization as a state were developed under the direct inspiration of God.

A major part of the Mosaic law concerned the institution of 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. 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.

However, it is important to realize that there was no radical separation of powers in the modern sense. Israel was a theocratic state ruled directly by God, Who revealed His will through His chosen servants Moses and Aaron. The Church, the nation and the State were not three different entities or organizations, but three different aspects of a single organism, the whole of which was subject to God alone.

That is why it was so important that the leader should be chosen by God. In the time of the judges, this seems always to have been the case; for when an emergency arose God sent His Spirit upon a man chosen by Him (cf. Judges 6.34), and the people, recognizing this, then elected him as their judge (cf. Judges 11.11). And if there was no emergency, or if the people were not worthy of a God-chosen leader, then God did not send His Spirit and no judge was elected; so that "every man did that which was right in his own eyes" (Judges 21.25). In other words, there was anarchy. The lesson was clear: for God's people there are only two possible forms of government: theocracy or anarchy - that is, no government at all.

The unity of Israel was therefore religious, not political - or rather, it was religio-political. It was created by the history of deliverance from the satanocracies of Babylon and Egypt and maintained by a continuing allegiance to God - the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God Who appeared to Moses and Joshua, - as their only King. That is why, when the people offered to make Gideon and his descendants kings in a kind of hereditary dynasty, he refused, saying: "the Lord shall rule over you" (Judges 8.23).

Early Israel before the kings was therefore not a kingdom - or rather, it was a kingdom whose king was God alone. It had rulers, but these rulers were neither hereditary monarchs nor like presidents or prime ministers, who are elected to serve the will of the people. They were charismatic leaders who were elected because they served the will of God alone.

\*

However, the Israelites clamoured for a different kind of king, one who would judge them, as they declared to the Prophet Samuel, "like all the nations." And this desire for a non-theocratic king amounted to apostasy in the eyes of the Lord, the only true King of Israel. Since this transition from theocracy to monarchy marked a very important turning-point, not only in the history of Israel, but of civilization in general, it is worth looking at it a little more closely.

According to the Bible account, the Lord said to Samuel: "Listen to the voice of the people in all that they say to you; for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me, that I should rule over them... Now therefore listen to their voice. However, protest solemnly to them, and show them the manner of the king that shall reign over them" (I Kings 8.4-9).

And then Samuel painted for them the image of a harsh, totalitarian ruler of the kind that was common in Egypt and Babylonia and the other pagan nations round about. These kings, as well as having total political control over their subjects, were often worshipped by them as gods; so that "kingship" as that was understood in the Middle East meant both the loss of political

freedom and alienation from the true and living God. As the subsequent history of Israel shows, God in His mercy did not always send such totalitarian rulers upon His people, and the best of the kings, such as David, Josiah and Hezekiah, were in the spirit and tradition of the judges - kings who were in obedience to the King of kings and Lord of lords. Nevertheless, since the kingship was introduced into Israel from a desire to imitate the pagans, it was a retrograde step in the history of the people of God. For it represented the introduction of a second, worldly principle of allegiance into what had been a society bound together by religious bonds alone, a "schism in the soul" which, although seemingly inevitable in the context of the times - a severe defeat at the hands of the Philistines, and the loss of the ark, - meant the loss for ever of that pristine purity and simplicity which had characterized Israel up to then.

It is important to realize that the worldly principle was introduced because the religious principle had failed, or grown weak. For the history of the kings begins with the corruption of the priests, the sons of Eli, who were in possession of the ark at the time of its capture. Thus the kings' subsequent oppression of the people is ultimately ascribeable to the failure of the spiritual leaders...

And yet everything seemed to go well at first. Samuel anointed as king Saul, who, when possessed by the Spirit of the Lord, defeated both the enemies of Israel, the Ammonites and the Philistines. But the schism which had been introduced into the life of the nation began to express itself also in the life of their king, with tragic consequences...

First, before a major battle with the Philistines, the king made a sacrifice to the Lord without waiting for Samuel. For this sin, which was an invasion of the Church's sphere by the king, Samuel prophesied that the kingdom would be taken away from Saul and given to a man after God's heart. Then Saul spared Agag, the king of the Amalekites, together with the best of his livestock, instead of killing them all, as God had commanded. The excuse which Saul gave for this sin is significant: "because I listened to the voice of the people" (I Kings 15.20). In other words, he abdicated his God-given authority and became a democrat, listening to the people rather than to God. And Samuel said: "Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, the Lord also shall reject thee from being king over Israel" (I Kings 15.23) - and shortly after, he anointed David as king in his place.

By modern standards, and by the standards of most of the later kings of Israel, Saul's sins were small. However, they must be understood in the context of the previous history of Israel, in which neither Moses nor Joshua, nor any of the judges (with the possible exception of Samson), had disobeyed the command of the Lord. Moreover, a seemingly minor disobedience by the leader of the people has major consequences for the people themselves, which is why Samuel said: "To obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness as

iniquity and idolatry" (I Kings 15.22-23). These words also contained a prophecy; for, just before his last battle at Mount Gilboa, Saul consulted a witch at Endor, asking her to call up the spirit of the dead Samuel. In fitting punishment for this sin, Samuel appeared to him from beyond the grave and prophesied his destruction, thereby depriving his last hours of any hope.

The falling away of Saul led directly to the first major schism in the history of Israel. For after Saul's death, the northern tribes supported the claim of Saul's surviving son to the throne, while the southern tribes supported David. Although David suppressed this rebellion, and although, for David's sake, the Lord did not allow a schism during the reign of his son Solomon, it erupted again and became permanent after Solomon's death...

The reigns of David and Solomon are sometimes considered to be the peak of the theocratic kingdom of Israel. As we have seen, this is a misconception, because theocracy actually ended in the reign of Saul. In fact, from the time of Saul the original theocratic unity of Israel was divided into a theocratic Church and a non-theocratic, monarchical State. Of course, the links between Church and State were close, especially under such a God-fearing man as David. And it was the Church which found and consecrated the king. Nevertheless, the division was there and would widen with time. Thus we can trace the beginnings of the division of Church and State to the fall of theocracy.

\*

Even after the foundation of the monarchy, God kept recalling His people to their theocratic origins in various ways.

One was the building of the Temple in Jerusalem. Now Jerusalem was unique in that it was the only major city of Israel which had not been apportioned to any of the twelve tribes of Israel when David and his men conquered it. It was therefore, in a sense, "above politics" - and an ideal place in which to place the centre of religious worship in the Temple. Thus when Solomon built and consecrated the Temple, he was emphasizing that the heart of the nation's life, to which the kingship itself ascribed its legitimacy, was God and His Church. And by himself taking a leading part in the consecration, he was declaring that while the State was formally separate from the Church, it served the same, fundamentally theocratic aims as the Church.

Secondly, when the kingdom was divided in the time of Solomon's son Rehoboam, and the ten northern tribes broke away, choosing a former servant of Solomon's, Jeroboam, as their king, the centre of religious worship for both kingdoms remained the Temple at Jerusalem. This was particularly emphasized by the prophets of God who arose in the northern kingdom, such as Elijah and Elisha, Amos and Hosea. It was as if they were saying: even if

politically divided, Israel as a religious, theocratic society can never be divided.

Nevertheless, the political schism also engendered a religious schism. For Jeroboam reasoned that if the people of his kingdom continued to go up to the Temple in Jerusalem to pray, as the Law commanded, they would soon kill him and go over to Rehoboam. So he set up two golden calves, one in Bethel and the other in Dan, and said: "behold your gods, O Israel, which brought you up out of the land of Egypt" (III Kings 12.28). "And this thing became a sin," writes the Biblical chronicler; "for the people went to worship before the one [golden calf], which was at Dan." And he built a rival temple to the Temple in Jerusalem, "and made priests of the lowest of the people, which were not of the sons of Levi" (III Kings 12.30-31).

Thirdly, when the people in both the northern kingdom of Israel and the southern kingdom of Judah refused to heed the warnings of the prophets, and continued to worship false gods at rival temples, God employed a third, more drastic method. He exiled the people, destroying both their temples and their independent political life. Thus in 712 the Assyrian King Shalmaneser conquered the northern kingdom of Israel and deported the people, who lost their religious and national identity for ever; and in 586 the Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar conquered the southern kingdom of Judah, destroyed the Temple at Jerusalem, and deported the people to Babylon.

In this way the theocratic people who had declined into religious apostasy were delivered into the hands of the same satanocracy from which God had delivered them in the time of Abraham.

However, a people that has been deprived of its freedom and political institutions in this way, still has its memory - and it can still recover its faith. And this is what happened to Judah in exile, just as it happened later to the Balkan nations under the Turkish yoke and is happening in modern times to the Russian people under the Soviet yoke. Sitting beside the waters of Babylon, the Jewish people wept and remembered... And gradually faith in the providence of God, Who had delivered Abraham out of Ur, and Moses out of the hand of the Egyptians, was rekindled in their hearts. And then God delivered them a third time out of the satanocratic regime and restored them to Jerusalem under the leadership of the High-Priest Joshua and the Prince of the Davidic line Zerubbabel.

But in spite of having some measure of political freedom, Israel was never restored to the kingdom it had been under David and Solomon. And gradually the religious leaders began to acquire a greater and greater political role. Only this did not mean that the people were becoming more religious and Israel was returning to its originally theocratic nature. Rather, it meant that the Church was becoming more politicized, more and more the servant of the frustrated nationalist ambitions of the people. In the next lecture we shall see how, after Israel had finally abandoned its theocratic principles, the

theocratic ideal was inherited and realized by "the new Israel", the Church of Christ...

### LECTURE 3: THEOCRACY REBORN: THE IMPERIAL CHURCH

*There are two supreme gifts which God, in His love for mankind, has granted from on high: the priesthood and the imperial dignity. The first serves Divine things, while the latter directs and administers human affairs. Both, however, proceed from the same origin and adorn the life of mankind.*  
Emperor Justinian the Great, Novella 6.

In the last lecture we traced the history of the first satanocracy, Sumeria-Babylonia, and the first theocracy, Israel, until the exile of the Jews to Babylon and their decline into a clergy-dominated minor kingdom. From now on the main concern of Israel (or rather, Judah, as the kingdom, was called) was to defend its national independence first from the Greek kingdom of Antiochus Epiphanes and then from the Romans under Pompey. History records that while the Jews heroically cast off the yoke of Antiochus in the time of the Maccabees, they finally succumbed to the power of the Romans, becoming an integral, if always troublesome and rebellious, part of the Roman empire.

Now the pagan Greeks and Romans are associated in our minds with the introduction of a new form of society which we call: democratic republicanism. I do not want to discuss democracy in detail until we come to modern times. However, it will not be out of place at this point to mention some of the major characteristics of Greco-Roman democracy:-

1. Democracy arose as a protest against, and rejection of, kingship. The phrase "Draconian laws" refers to the severe legislation of an early Greek king, Draco; and in the eyes of democrats all royal laws tend to be Draconian and unjust. They are seen to be unjust, not because they necessarily oppress the people more than democratic laws, but because they are passed without the consent or participation of the whole people. For power, according to the democratic theory, comes from below, not from above; it belongs by right to the people, the demos, not to the king or his regents. This represented a radical break from the view common throughout the Middle East that the king was, if not actually a god, at any rate invested with power by the gods and therefore had a quasi-divine authority.

2. As the Russian Slavophile Alexei Khomyakov pointed out, the rise of ancient democracy coincided with a decline in religion. Not that the gods did not continue to be worshipped, but man was seen as being capable of opposing the gods and even, perhaps, of being more right than they (e.g. in Aeschylus' Prometheus Bound). Scepticism about the existence of the gods



came to be permitted (after Socrates); and from the fourth century B.C. philosophy and art began to acquire a certain independence from religion.

3. Democracy in both Greece and Rome coexisted with the institution of slavery on a large scale and with the rejection of women's equality with men. Democracy in the ancient world therefore did not mean egalitarianism. Nor was it incompatible with both racism (Greeks versus barbarians) and imperialism. Thus the height of Athenian democracy coincided with the barbaric conquest of Melos and was succeeded by the despotic Greek empire of Alexander the Great; while Roman republicanism passed almost imperceptibly into the Roman empire. And both these empires then became tainted with emperor-worship on the eastern, satanocratic model.

4. Even after having been transformed into an imperialist tyranny, the Roman empire preserved the fiction that it was founded on democratic principles. Thus the emperor still retained the title of elected consul, and preserved a quasi-democratic senate in being. Moreover, a degree of religious and intellectual freedom was permitted so long as the authority of the emperor (and, sometimes, his divinity) was acknowledged.

5. However, Greco-Roman democracy (both real and quasi-) remained an inveterate enemy, not only of Israelite theocracy, but also of the neo-Israelite theocracy of the Christian Church. And this not only because theocracy represents a completely contradictory theory of the nature and sanction of political power. Theocracy also represents faith in an absolute truth that is binding on all, as opposed to the weary ecumenist relativism of the Greco-Romans (cf. Pilate's "What is truth?" (John 18.38)).

Now it has often been said that European civilization is built on the twin foundations of Greco-Roman culture, which, as we have seen, was polytheist and democratic in spirit, and the Christian Church, which was - and is - a monotheist, theocratic society. The contradiction is obvious, so we would expect a protracted battle between the two principles - which is in fact what took place in the first three centuries of the Christian era. Nevertheless, from the time of Constantine a certain reconciliation and even fusion was achieved. The Greco-Roman empire became Christian, without ceasing to be a both Greco-Roman and imperial. In the rest of this lecture I propose to examine how this extraordinary, paradoxical union, - which lasted, in some parts of Europe, until the twentieth century, - took place.

\*

The reconciliation between Greco-Roman culture and the Church was made possible through a very wise and far-seeing compromise on the part of the Church, which goes back to the famous words of Christ: "Give unto Caesar what is Caesar's, and unto God what is God's" (Matthew 22.21; 17.27). While insisting that the ultimate authority in all spheres, including politics, is God, the Church allowed that the Roman emperor had been granted authority

by God (Romans 13.1; I Timothy 2.2), and that he should be obeyed in all matters that did not directly conflict with the commandments of God. This meant in practice that the Christians were the most loyal subjects of the emperor throughout the first three centuries. Unlike the Jews, who were constantly stirring up rebellions, the Christians did not rebel or demand any rights; they conscientiously fulfilled the duty of military service, and paid their taxes. Only when asked to offer incense to the statue of the emperor did they refuse, even to the point of torture and death.

The Apostle Paul described the function of the Roman emperor as "he who restrains" the coming of the Antichrist (II Thessalonians 2.7). In other words, the Roman empire was an institution blessed by God for the suppression of gross crime and the maintenance of a stable social framework in which the Church could spread her influence. When the Roman empire and all monarchical authority falls, the Church taught, there will come a period of democracy and anarchy, which will pave the way for the final satanocracy of world history, the reign of the Antichrist. Of course, it was wrong that the emperor did not worship the true God and encouraged idolatry. Nevertheless, insofar as he fulfilled his major function of preserving law and social order, he was to be honoured and obeyed and prayed for.

The situation changed when the Emperor Constantine accepted Christ and Christianity as the official religion of the empire. Now that the emperor was a son of the Church, the Church could expect much more from him. Now he not only preserved a stable social framework: he also protected the Church from external enemies, built churches, passed laws that were Christian in spirit, convened councils against heretics, and promoted missionary work.

Can we say that the Christian Roman empire founded by Constantine at Constantinople was a theocracy? Not in the strict sense of the word; for in the Christian understanding the only true theocracy was the Church, which remained a spiritual, not a political kingdom - "My Kingdom is not of this world," (John 18.36), said Christ. The empire, by becoming Christian, entered into the sphere of the Church's influence and became sanctified by the Church. It became an ally of the Church, as it were an external wall around the Church, protecting her from external evil. But the empire was not the Body of Christ; it was not the ark of salvation; and the promise of Christ to the Church - that she would prevail against the gates of hell (Matthew 16.18) - did not apply to the empire, which was always understood by Christians to be mortal.

St. Photius the Great, the patriarch of Constantinople in the ninth century, compared the relationship of the Church and the empire to that between the soul and the body. The Church is the soul of the body politic; she is immortal, and gives life to the whole organism. The body exists in order to serve the soul, and to help her in her actions in the world. The body can and will die; and at that moment the Church will again be on her own without political support, like a soul without its body. Of course, that is an unnatural,

undesirable and even apocalyptic situation; but throughout the 1100-year history of the Byzantine empire, as also throughout the history of its successor, the Russian empire, it was always clearly recognized that the empire, unlike the Church, would one day die.

In this clear separation between Church and State, the Christian empire differed from other societies which have been called theocratic, such as Islam. Thus, according to Smart, Islam "demands institutions which cover the whole life of the community. There is nothing in Islam... corresponding to the Church. There is no place for a special institution within society devoted to the ends of the faith. For it is the whole of society which is devoted to the ends of the faith."<sup>13</sup> Now in the Christian empire at its height, the whole of society was no less "devoted to the ends of the faith" than in Islam. However, unlike in Islam, the clear separation between the Kingdom of God and the kingdom of this world - at least until the Second Coming of Christ (Revelation 11.15) - was never lost...

\*

Now this judgement has been disputed by several, especially Western scholars, who have accused the Orthodox Byzantine and Russian empires (and smaller Orthodox kingdoms, such as Georgia, Bulgaria and Serbia) of having been essentially caesaropapist in spirit and structure - that is, of having allowed the emperors to rule the Church and make her in essence a department of the State. As a westerner who has become Orthodox and made the study of Orthodoxy his life's work, I should like to record my view that this opinion of western scholars is based on a misunderstanding of the inner nature of the Orthodox East. And since this misunderstanding is an important one which continues to influence western attitudes to Eastern Europe, and especially Russia, to the present day, I should like, in the rest of this lecture, to make one or two historical points about Church-State relations in the Orthodox monarchies.

Now it is certainly true that the Byzantine emperors did not confine themselves to purely political matters. As we have seen, they convened church councils, punished heretics, passed Christian laws, built churches and encouraged Christian missionary work. However, the victory of the Church over the pagan Roman persecutors had been too decisive for any Christian, not least the newly-converted Christian emperor, to consider that the Church should ever be in subjection to any worldly power. At the same time the authority of the institution of kingship had been increased, and acquired a semi-sacred character as reflecting and reinforcing the authority of God. The Roman empire was seen as the providential creation of God for the furtherance and strengthening of His rule on earth; and if some of the emperors even after Constantine persecuted the Christian faith, this was not seen as outweighing the major benefits that the empire brought, rooted as

---

<sup>13</sup> Smart, *op. cit.*, p. 538.

they were in both the unity of God and the constitution of man made in the image of God.

Thus Bishop Eusebius of Nicomedia wrote in his eulogy to Constantine in 335: "The kingdom with which he [Constantine] is invested is an image of the heavenly one. He looks up to see the archetypal pattern and guides those whom He rules below in accordance with that pattern. The example of monarchical rule there is a source of strength to him. This is something granted to man alone of the creatures of the earth by the universal King. The basic principle of kingly authority is the establishment of a single source of authority to which everything is subject. Monarchy is superior to every other constitution and form of government. For polyarchy, where everyone competes on equal terms, is really anarchy and discord. This is why there is one God, not two or three or even more. Polytheism is strictly atheism. There is one King, and His Word and royal law are one."<sup>14</sup>

Now the idea that monarchy is the natural form of government because it reflects, and draws attention to, the monarchy of God, is a new concept of great importance in the history of ideas. As we have seen, neither the satanocracies of the Middle East, nor the Roman empire, were based on this idea. This was the case, first, because none of these societies believed, as the Christians did, in a single God and Creator. And secondly because, as often as not, they identified the king with god, so that no higher principle or source of authority above the king or emperor was recognized, whereas in the Christian empire both emperor and patriarch were considered bound by, and subject to, the will of God as expressed in Apostolic Tradition. The Greco-Roman democracies developed into empires, not because they suddenly became converted to the idea of monarchy, but because when their territories expanded the only way to consolidate control of these territories was found to be a centralized, imperial form of government.

The idea that monarchy is the natural form of government has been developed in modern times especially by Russian Slavophile thinkers. They argue that the monarchical principle is found throughout nature and at all levels of human society. Thus monarchy in the State is simply the expression, on a larger scale, of the same principle that is found in the family, in the school, in the tribe, etc.

Thus Tuskarev writes: "The cell of the State is the family. In the family the father is the head by nature, while the son is subject to him; the authority of the father is not the result of elections in the family, but is entrusted to him naturally by the law of God (Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow). Just as from the extended family of the tribe there arises the people, so out of the family headed by one man there arises tsarist autocracy. Both the familial and the

---

<sup>14</sup> Eusebius, *Oration in Honour of Constantine on the Thirtieth Anniversary of his Reign*; translated in Marice Wiles & Mark Santer, *Documents in Early Christian Thought*, Cambridge University Press, 1977, pp. 233-234.

monarchical organization are established by God for the earthly existence of the sinful, fallen man. The first-created man, living in living communion with God, was not subject to anyone besides God, and was the lord of irrational creation. But when man sinned, destroying the Divine hierarchy of submission and falling away from God, he became the servant of sin and the devil, and as a consequence of this became subject to a man like himself. The sinful will of man requires submission for the restraint of his destructive activity. This Divine ordinance has in view only the good of man - the limitation of the spread of evil. And history itself shows that whatever the inadequacies of monarchies, they bear no comparison with that evil that revolutions and anarchies have brought to the peoples.

"Monarchical administration has been established by God in accordance with His likeness. 'God being One established the authority of one person; as Almighty - autocratic authority; as Eternal - hereditary authority' (Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow). Such is monarchy in general, independent of its spiritual content; being established in accordance with the likeness of God, it already has an educational religious significance. Christian monarchy was formed and developed under the immediate leadership and grace-filled sanctification of the Church of Christ, and for that reason has a special spiritual content.

"The Church, like monarchical statehood, is also established by God, although it is incomparably higher by virtue of its Divino-human nature. Therefore there could be no contradiction of principle between them, and from the time of Constantine the Great they together the common work of God on the earth. After the conversion of Constantine, the emperor, in his own words, began to fulfil the functions of 'bishop (in Greek: 'overseer') of the external affairs of the Church', while monarchical statehood itself became 'the external defence of the Church'.<sup>15</sup>

Nor did the emperor take this role upon himself of his own will: the Church entrusted it to him, seeing in the Christian empire the natural ally and protector of the Church.

Thus the Fathers of the First Ecumenical Council in 325 welcomed the Emperor Constantine with the following words: "Blessed is God, Who has chosen you as king of the earth, having by your hand destroyed the worship of idols and through you bestowed peace upon the hearts of the faithful... On this teaching of the Trinity, your Majesty, is established the greatness of your piety. Preserve it for us whole and unshaken, so that none of the heretics, having penetrated into the Church, might subject our faith to mockery... Your Majesty, command that Arius should depart from his error and rise no longer against the apostolic teaching. Or if he remains obstinate in his impiety, drive him out of the Orthodox Church."

---

<sup>15</sup> Tuskarev, A., *Tserkov' o Gosudarstve*, Staritsa, 1992, (pp. 9-10) (in Russian).

As Tuskarev observes, "this is a clear recognition of the divine election of Constantine as the external defender of the Church, who is obliged to work with her in preserving the right faith, and in correspondence with the conciliar sentence is empowered to drive heretics out of the Church."<sup>16</sup>

On the other hand, when the emperor sinned, either against the faith or morally, the Church used her spiritual authority to rebuke him - and very often her authority was decisive in changing the emperor's behaviour. Thus Theodosius the Great, one of the most powerful men ever to wear the purple, was forbidden to enter the Church by St. Ambrose of Milan until he had repented of murder. When Theodosius said that King David had committed both murder and adultery, Ambrose replied: "As you imitated him in his transgressions, imitate him in his repentance."<sup>17</sup>

Again, in the fifth century St. John Chrysostom rebuked the empress, and in the eighth and ninth centuries several patriarchs refused to obey the iconoclast emperors. Again, in the Russian empire, Metropolitan Philip of Moscow defied Tsar Ivan the Terrible; Patriarch Nikon of Moscow defied Tsar Mikhail Alexeyevich; St. Mitrophan of Voronezh defied Peter the Great; and Metropolitan Arseny of Yaroslavl defied Catherine the Great. Perhaps the most striking example comes in modern times, already after the fall of the Russian empire in 1918, when Patriarch Tikhon and the Local Council of the Russian Church anathematized the Bolshevik government, calling them "outcasts of humanity" and forbidding Christians to recognize them.

Of course, there are also examples of cowardice and betrayal in the Church leadership, when an evil or heretical emperor was allowed to impose unchristian measures on both the empire and the Church. But these exceptions to the rule should not be allowed to obscure the normal situation in the Orthodox East in the 1600 years from Constantine the Great to Tsar Nicolas II. This normal situation was one of cooperation or "symphony" (to use the Emperor Justinian's word) between Church and State, emperor and patriarch, based on a common recognition of the following principles:-

1. The purpose of life on earth is to serve God and save one's soul, and one is saved through confessing the Orthodox Faith in Christ and in obedience to the Body of Christ, the Orthodox Church.

2. The purpose of the empire is to protect and strengthen the Orthodox Faith and Church, just as the purpose of the body is to protect the soul and carry out its will.

3. The empire will be strong as long as it fulfils this purpose, but will fall when it no longer fulfils this purpose. At that moment the body will die, and the soul, freed from what has now become its prison, will enter the wilderness

---

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, (p. 75).

<sup>17</sup> *Vita Paulini*.

condition which the prophets of God have prophesied will be the condition of the Church at the end of time (Revelation 12).

Professor Kartashev has developed this comparison of the relationship between Church and State to that between soul and body: "This likeness demonstrates the irrationality and indeterminacy of the boundary line between the spheres of Church and State, just as the simple but real fact of the single but at the same time double nature of man is similarly irrational. In Orthodoxy this comparison links the symphony between Church and kingdom to Orthodox anthropology. The combination of the kingdom 'of this world' with the Kingdom of God which is 'not of this world' is recognized by Orthodoxy not as an absurdity (as it seems to western rationalism), but as the consequence of the Incarnation, where the two natures in Christ exist without merging and without division, i.e. as an irrational but in the highest degree real union of the poles of being...

"The hierarchy of the relationships between spirit and flesh, and therefore also of the Church and the State, has its foundation in the creation itself. Just as the body must be the obedient and perfect instrument of the spirit, so the State is ideally thought of as the obedient and perfect instrument of the Church, for it is she that knows and reveals to mankind its higher spiritual aims, pointing the way to the attainment of the Kingdom of God. In this sense the Church is always theocratic, for to her have been opened and handed over the means of the power of God over the hearts of men. She is the ideal active principle, and the role of the State in comparison with her is secondary. The Church leads the State and the people, for she knows where she is going. The Orthodox State freely submits to this leadership. But just as in the individual person the harmony of spirit and flesh has been destroyed by the original sin, so is it in the relationship between the Church and the State. Hence it is practically difficult to carry out the task of Church-State symphony in the sinful world. Just as the individual Christian commits many sins, great and small, on his way to holiness, so the people united in the Christian State suffer many falls on the way to symphony. Deviations from the norm are linked with violations of the hierarchical submission of the flesh to the spirit, the State to the Church. But these sins and failures cannot overthrow the system of the symphony of Church and State in its essence."<sup>18</sup>

\*

Now while this analogy of Church and State to soul and body is certainly illuminating, it has, like all analogies of spiritual things, certain limitations. It illumines some aspects of the reality while obscuring others. In the concluding part of this lecture, therefore, I shall point out some of the ways in which the reality of Church-State relations in the Orthodox empire did not correspond to this ideal model.

---

<sup>18</sup> Kartashev, A. *Svataya Rus' i Puti Rossii*, Paris, 1956, quoted in Tuskarev, op. cit., pp. 34, 35.

The first important qualification that must be made is that there were times in the history of the Orthodox empire when the body disobeyed the soul, or at any rate imposed its will counter to the will of the soul, and this was pleasing to God and for the ultimate strengthening of the Church.

A clear example is Byzantium in the mid-fifth century, when very many of the bishops were heretics, the spiritual quality of the emperors was in general higher than that of the bishops, and the emperors (such as Saints Marcian and Pulcheria) were particularly active in the convening of councils, in the punishment of heretics and in the appointment of new bishops to replace the heretics. Western critics have seen in the history of Byzantium in this period a clear proof of the alleged "caesaropapism" of the Orthodox empire. However, in this judgement they fail to understand the dual function of the emperor, who was not only the head of the secular government, but also the Divinely chosen and anointed representative of the lay principle in the Church.

For the sacrament of the anointing of emperors was no mere "rubber-stamping" of the legitimacy of the secular power by the Church. It bestowed upon the emperor a special grace and a special rank (considered by some to have been equivalent to that of deacon), not above, still less against the Church, but in and for the Church. This grace was especially related to the defence of the Orthodox Faith; for the defence of the Faith is considered in Orthodoxy to be the responsibility of laity as well as clergy, and the emperor as the "first layman" of the empire had a special responsibility to lead the laity in the defence of the faith when the clergy began to falter.

This explains the prominent role of the emperor in the election of patriarchs, which has so scandalized western advocates of the separation of Church and State. In the early Church the laity had always had a part in the election of bishops. However, as the Church grew, these episcopal elections became rowdy and at times violent events. Therefore the Church, always zealous to preserve good order, had forbidden elections by the mob, and had entrusted to the emperor the task of representing the lay element in elections. Of course, there was a utilitarian motive here, in that the patriarch was more likely to be successful if he was approved by the emperor. However, the primary motive was spiritual, being based on the sacramental role of the emperor as the Church's first layman. And that is why Church writers, such as St. Isidore of Pelusium, not only did not bewail the emperor's alleged "interference" in Church affairs when the clergy faltered, but openly praised it.<sup>19</sup>

A second important qualification that must be made to the soul-body model of Church-State relations is that while the Church throughout the world is one, there never was one single Christian State. For besides the major Christian empire, whether Byzantine or Russian, there existed smaller independent Orthodox kingdoms which only temporarily came within the

---

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Tuskarev, *op. cit.*, pp. 76-77.



orbit of the major empires, such as Georgia, Bulgaria, Serbia and England (until the eleventh century). Each of these kingdoms had a "symphonic" pattern of Church-State relationships modelled on the Byzantine "symphony", but their rulers and nations were independent of the major empire.

Within the Empire, however, there was only one Christian people, the people of the Romans, and Greeks and Latins, Semites and Slavs were all equal members of this commonwealth. And this international quality of the Empire was underlined by the fact that the emperors came from a wide variety of nations. Thus Constantine was a Roman crowned in Britain, Justinian the Great was probably a Slav, Leo the iconoclast was an Armenian. It was only when the unity of the Faith was lost that nationalism made its appearance. Thus during the Monophysite and Monothelite controversies of the fifth to seventh centuries, the Eastern, non-Greek part of the Empire, being motivated by nationalist, anti-Greek, as well as anti-Orthodox considerations, split away and was very soon swallowed up by Islam.

On the other hand, where there was unity in the Orthodox Faith, even peoples outside the empire felt a kinship with it and revered its holiness. Thus in the fifth century the leader of the Christian Britons, Ambrosius Aurelianus, called himself "the last of the Romans", although Britain was no longer part of the empire. Again, the Serbs and Bulgars who tried to conquer Constantinople still called it Tsarigrad, "the city of the King", and did not dispute that it was the centre of Christendom. Again, until the fall of Constantinople in 1453, the great princes of Kiev looked to the emperor in Constantinople as their elder brother, even though their own kingdom was both independent of, and much larger than, the Empire. This unity of diverse peoples in veneration of the Orthodox Empire must be seen as one of the most remarkable phenomena of history, and a proof that nations can coexist in one State in submission to a supra-national ideal.

## LECTURE 4: THEOCRACY, TRUE AND FALSE: PAPAL ROME, ISLAM AND RUSSIA

*Since the First Rome fell through the  
Apollinarian heresy, and the Second  
Rome, which is Constantinople, is  
held by the infidel Turks, so thy  
great Russian kingdom, most pious  
Tsar, is the Third Rome...*

Ecumenical Patriarch Jeremiah II (1589).

In the seventh century, at a time of crisis in the Orthodox Christian Empire, a rival empire, and a rival concept of the relationship between religious and political power, arose in the East - Islam. In the eleventh century, a second rival empire arose in the West - the Roman Catholic papacy. Catholicism is strikingly similar to Islam in its theocratic and internationalist conception of politics and society. The main difference between the two conceptions lies in Catholicism's emphasis on a central, infallible source of theocratic power on earth - the papacy. In this lecture, I propose to compare the Islamic and Catholic conceptions, and examine how they contrasted, and came into conflict with, the reincarnation of the Orthodox doctrine in the new empire of Holy Russia.

Miloslavskaya and Miloslavsky write: "At the base of the socio-political doctrine [of Islam] lies the idea that society must be ruled by the commands of Allah, and not by the laws of men, since Allah is the only source of power. People are only conductors of the divine will, whose realization is the basic function of earthly power. The second fundamental thesis declares that the caliphate's secular and spiritual powers (the sultanate and the imamate) are indivisible."<sup>20</sup>

Thus, as was pointed out in the third lecture, there is no separation between secular and religious power in Islam corresponding to the separation between Church and State that we find in Orthodox Christianity. Whereas the Orthodox Church forbids bishops and priests to engage in political activity and receive political posts, since this involves being subject to two masters (Apostolic Canons 30, 81), the sight of imams at the head of Islamic states has become familiar to us since the Islamic revolution led by Ayatollah Khomeini in Iran. And although there has never been a time, since the early caliphates, when all Muslims have been united under one religio-political power, the ideal of such a unity remains a powerful force in the Islamic world.

---

<sup>20</sup> Miloslavskaya, T.P., Miloslavsky, G.V., "Kontsepsiya 'islamskogo yedinstva' i intergratsionnije protsessy v 'musul'manskom mirye'", in *Islam i Problemy Natsionalizma*, Moscow: "Nauka", 1986, (p. 12) (in Russian).

This ideal is considered compatible with nationalism of a limited kind. Thus according to the theory of "Islamic nationalism" love of one's country is a step on the way to the love of Allah, and the liberation of one's country is a step on the way to the liberation and unity of all Muslims. Thus Hassan Al-Banna, one of the ideologists of the "Muslim Brothers" movement, considered that Islamic unity should proceed by the following stages: the establishment of unity among the Muslims of Egypt; the establishment of unity among the Muslims of the Nile Valley (Egypt and Sudan); the establishment of Arabic unity on the basis of Islam; and finally, the establishment of the unity of all Muslims.

According to the "Muslim Brothers" the distinctive Islamic path of development, which sets the Muslim world apart from the rest of humanity, consists in an increasing cultural, political and economic cooperation between Muslim countries, which should be followed by the formation of a "union of Islamic nations" under the caliphate and the election of an imam who would be seen as the "means of unification" of the Islamic world.<sup>21</sup> This religio-political leader who will unite all Muslims is reminiscent of the religio-political leadership of the Pope in Catholicism. Only the Pope, of course, already exists as the unquestioned head of Catholicism, whereas such a centre of unity is only a wished-for ideal in the Muslim world.

The Muslim attitude towards other nations is consistent with its theocratic concept of the Muslim nation united by faith in Islam alone. When the Muslims conquered the Middle East and large parts of Europe and Africa, they organized and governed their religious minorities according to the *milet* system, "*milet*" being the Persian word for "nation". For, as Runciman writes, "a man's nationality was identified by his faith. He belonged to the Orthodox *milet*, or the Jacobite *milet*, or the Samaritan *milet*, or whatever *milet* it might be. The Muslims were prepared to tolerate sects belonging to the People of the Book, that is to say, Christians and Jews and, illogically, Zoroastrians, but they were not prepared to give them full citizenship in the Muslim state. Each minority sect was therefore treated as an autonomous unit, allowed to retain its own laws and customs in all matters that concerned its members alone. In their dealings with the Muslims and in matters concerning security and order the members of the *milet* had to abide by the laws and regulations of the Muslim state."<sup>22</sup>

Since nationality is defined by religion in the Muslim understanding, it was only natural that non-Muslims could not be citizens of the Muslim nation, nor (normally) officials in the Muslim state. The religious minorities therefore formed sub-nations and sub-states governed by their own sub-rulers. Thus the Orthodox Christian minority was called the *Rum millet*, or "Roman nation", and was governed, under the ultimate authority of the Turkish

---

<sup>21</sup> Miroslavskaya and Miroslavsky, *op. cit.*, pp. 15-16.

<sup>22</sup> Runciman, Sir Steven, *The Orthodox Churches and the Secular State*, Oxford University Press, 1971, pp. 27-28.

Sultan, by the Patriarch of Constantinople. In this way the patriarch became not only the religious leader, but also the political ruler, or ethnarch, of all the Orthodox Christians of the Ottoman empire - Greeks, Bulgars, Serbs, Romanians, etc. Further east, the patriarchs of Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem still retained religious authority over their mainly Coptic and Arabic flocks; but in Turkish eyes they, too, were led and represented by the patriarch of Constantinople.

This system created problems for the Orthodox insofar as canon law forbade bishops from taking up positions of political leadership. Moreover, the patriarchs were obliged to pay ever-increasing bribes in order to be confirmed by the Sultan, which made them simoniacs according to the strict letter of the law. Nor was the influence of the ethnarch system confined to the boundaries of the Ottoman empire. In areas such as Montenegro, where Turkish power never established a firm grip, the Orthodox were led for several generations by Prince-Bishops. Only in Russia, where rulers such as the Novgorodian Prince Alexander Nevsky retained some autonomy under Mongol suzerainty, did the traditional Orthodox system of Church-State relations remain more or less intact.

However, there were advantages to this uncanonical situation. The idea that all Orthodox Christians were one nation was fully in accord with Orthodox teaching, and the Orthodox needed reminding of it. For centuries before the Turkish and Mongol conquests, Orthodox had been fighting each other as if they were not all one Blood in Christ: Bulgars and Serbs fought with Greeks for the throne in Constantinople, and the Russian princedoms fought with each for the title of Grand Prince. The Muslim conquests suppressed these nationalist rivalries and pushed the Orthodox together. Only when Turkish power waned in the nineteenth century did these rivalries reemerge - with disastrous consequences for the Orthodox world.

\*

It is usual to consider Catholicism to be a kind of Christianity, whereas Islam is a completely different religion. However, some Orthodox writers have considered Islam to be a Christian heresy; and certainly, in the field of political thought it is more useful to consider both Islam and Catholicism as reactions to, and deviations from, the Orthodox Christian ideal of separation but "symphony" between Church and State. For both Rome and Ravenna, on the one hand, and Damascus, Jerusalem and Alexandria, on the other, were cities of the Orthodox Christian Empire which rebelled against, or were forcibly removed from, their allegiance to the Orthodox emperor. And their new rulers were therefore concerned to distinguish themselves, politically as well as religiously, from the ancien regime. Thus in both regions, the change of regime was accompanied, not only by a change of dominant religion and race - Catholicism and the Franks in the West, Islam and the Arabs in the East - but also by a change in political ideology.

Indeed, in the case of the West, the change in political ideology preceded the change in religion; for already well over two centuries before the schism between the Roman papacy and the Eastern Orthodox Church, which took place in 1054, a political schism between the "Holy Roman Empire" of the West and the Eastern Orthodox Empire had been created.

The new empire was born on Christmas Day, 800, when Pope Leo III crowned Charlemagne as "Holy Roman Emperor" in Rome. This was not simply the birth of another Christian kingdom, but a direct challenge to the authority of the Eastern Roman Empire and the latter's claim to be the only Christian empire. From now on there would be two kingdoms claiming to be the one and only Christian Roman empire.

This came at a particularly vulnerable point in Byzantine history. For from a political point of view, the empire's suzerainty over Italy, which had been re-established by Justinian, was now more nominal than real; and the presence of a woman, Irene, on the throne of Constantine was seen by many as a sign of weakness. From a religious point of view, moreover, the Eastern empire had been weakened by decades of iconoclasm, during which period the see of Rome had remained - almost alone among the patriarchates - faithful to Orthodoxy.

And indeed, it must be acknowledged that this crisis in East-West relations was not caused primarily by Rome. At least until the enthronement of Pope Nicolas I in the mid-ninth century, Rome remained faithful both to the ideal of a single Christian Roman empire centred in Constantinople, and to the Orthodox Faith. The real impulse both to rebellion in the body politic and to heresy in the Church came from the Frankish empire of Charlemagne, which at its greatest extent ruled most of Western Europe except for some southern regions of Spain and Italy, the British Isles and Scandinavia.

The crisis was the more important in that, in both East and West, the theocratic ideal of the indivisibility of the Church and the Christian Roman empire had taken deep root. It was considered inconceivable, to Greek and Latin alike, that there could be two Christian Roman empires, any more than there could be two Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Churches. For the empire was understood to be that support of the Church which would "restrain", in St. Paul's words, the appearance of the Antichrist.

The traditional position was expressed by an eleventh-century chronicler of Salerno as follows: "The men about the court of Charles the Great called him Emperor because he wore a precious crown upon his head. But in truth, no one should be called Emperor save the man who presides over the Roman - that is, the Constantinopolitan kingdom."<sup>23</sup> Charlemagne, on the other hand,

---

<sup>23</sup> Quoted in Chamberlin, R., *Charlemagne, Emperor of the Western World*, London: Grafton books, 1986, p. 52.

considered that the East Romans were neither truly Orthodox nor Roman.<sup>24</sup> Moreover, the Pope in Rome was too loyal in dogmatic matters to the position of the Eastern Church. So it was left to him, as the only truly Orthodox and Roman ruler, to assume the leadership of the Christian world.

If such a view had taken root throughout the West, then the first schism between Rome and Constantinople might have taken place half a century earlier, and with its centre in Aachen rather than Rome. However, moderate Popes such as Leo III and Leo IV maintained the Orthodox confession of faith and the ecumenical understanding of Romanism. Moreover, by the providence of God the Frankish empire declined in strength after Charlemagne's death, and after the battle of Fontenoy in 841 it began to disintegrate; while the Eastern Roman empire, after finally throwing off the shackles of iconoclasm and celebrating the Triumph of Orthodoxy in 842, entered upon perhaps the most glorious period of its existence...

But then, in 858, the Romans elected the first truly Papist Pope, Nicolas I. He proceeded to put the Frankish policies into effect - except that he now in effect took Charlemagne's place as emperor and heresiarch. Thus he tried to change the Church's teaching on the Holy Spirit by inserting an extra word, the Filioque, into the Roman Creed, claimed the eastern provinces of Sicily and Bulgaria for the Roman patriarchate, persuaded the Bulgarians to expel the Greek preachers from their midst as heretics, and declared invalid the election of St. Photius the Great to the patriarchate of Constantinople.

Moreover, in 865 he declared that the Roman papacy had authority "over all the earth, that is, over every Church". This claim, which had no foundation in Holy Scripture or the Tradition of the Church, and was supported only by forgeries (the Donation of Constantine and Pseudo-Isidorean Decretals), was strenuously rejected by the patriarchate of Constantinople and the other patriarchates of the East. It amounted to a completely new and unOrthodox doctrine of authority in the Church.

Some two centuries later, this totalitarian doctrine of authority in the Church was complemented by a doctrine of authority in the State, according to which the Roman Pope, as the Vicar of Christ and successor of the Apostle Peter, is the source of all authority on earth, both secular and religious. This new teaching was already clearly expressed officially and with breathtaking arrogance in the first Lateran council of 1076: "The pope can be judged by no one; the Roman Church has never erred and never will err till the end of time; the Roman Church was founded by Christ alone; the pope alone can depose and restore bishops; he alone can make new laws, set up new bishoprics, and divide old ones; he alone can translate bishops; he alone can call general councils and authorize canon law; he alone can revise his judgements; he

---

<sup>24</sup> Romanides, J.S., *Franks, Romans, Feudalism, and Doctrine*, Brookline, Mass.: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 1986.

alone can use the imperial insignia; he can depose emperors; he can absolve subjects from their allegiance; all princes should kiss his feet; his legates, even though in inferior orders, have precedence over all bishops; an appeal to the papal court inhibits judgement by all inferior courts; a duly ordained pope is undoubtedly made a saint by the merits of St. Peter."<sup>25</sup>

In this way was born, or reborn, the classically pagan idea of the divine priest-king, having supreme authority in both Church and State, over both the souls and the bodies of men. From now on, the Popes were not simply religious leaders, but also secular kings, possessing lands and armies and even fighting in them - to the horror of Byzantine writers such as Anna Comnena. Thus, as Dostoyevsky pointed out, Catholicism represents a reincarnation of the emperor-worship of the pagan Roman empire, the Pope combining in his person the roles of emperor and pontifex maximus.

The totalitarian pretensions of the medieval papacy gave birth to long and bitter conflicts between Church and State in several western states. It was only to be expected that secular rulers would not lightly hand over all their power to the Pope. Thus a prolonged struggle for power took place between Pope Gregory VII and the German Holy Roman Emperor Henry IV, and there were further struggles between the Popes and King John of England and King Philip the Fair of France.

The Crusades were the logical expression of the new theory of papal power. Since the Eastern Orthodox Christians had refused to accept papal jurisdiction, and had anathematized the papacy in 1054, the Pope felt justified in launching the Crusades to bring "the schismatic Romans" to heel. Thus, although ostensibly aimed at the liberation of the Eastern Christian lands from the Muslim yoke, the practical effect of the Crusades was to devastate Orthodox Christianity in these lands and to replace the Muslim yoke by the much crueller yoke of the Latins. Latin kingdoms and patriarchates were set up in Jerusalem, Syria, Cyprus and Constantinople; and a determined, but unsuccessful, effort was made to conquer Western Russia. The horrific sacking and destruction of Constantinople by the soldiers of the Fourth Crusade in 1204 set the seal to this process, and made the schism between Orthodox and Western Christianity permanent.

Since the sacking of Constantinople, by far the greatest city of the civilized world, had disturbed even some western minds, it was necessary for the Popes to provide some doctrinal justification for it. This was duly forthcoming at the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215, which declared that it was lawful to kill heretics. Then came the "two swords" theory, according to which God had entrusted the Popes with the swords both of ecclesiastical and of political power. For, according to the bull Unam Sanctam of 1302, submission to the Pope in all things was held to be absolutely necessary for the salvation

---

<sup>25</sup> Quoted in Southern, R.W., *Western Society and the Church in the Middle Ages*, Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.1970, p. 102.

for every creature on earth. It is doubtful whether any rulers in history, not excluding even the totalitarian dictators of the twentieth century, have made such extravagant claims to power as did the medieval popes - and their claims have never been officially denied by the papacy to the present day.

The story of how the Western Europeans gradually - and only partially - liberated themselves from the papal yoke, and evolved a new theory of Church-State relations, is the subject of the next lecture. In the remainder of this lecture I wish to return to how the other eastern theocracies reacted to this threat. In particular, I wish to examine how the new power of Tsarist Russia came to the rescue of the ancient Orthodox world.

\*

Now the fall of Constantinople in 1453 was undoubtedly one of the greatest tragedies in Christian history. Nevertheless, like all acts of Divine Providence, it contained hidden blessings. We have already mentioned one of these: the Muslims' inclusion of all their subject Orthodox Christians into one Rum millet under the Patriarch of Constantinople served to suppress the nationalist rivalries which had done so much to damage the empire in earlier centuries. This blessing proved to be especially fertile in Russia, where the Mongol yoke destroyed forever the petty Russian principalities and forced the Russians to unite into a stable centralized state under the leadership of Moscow. The Muscovite state succeeded in overcoming fissiparous tendencies (with the partial exception of Ukrainian separatism, which was largely a creature of Polish-papist power), and became the core of the great empire of "the Third Rome" which took over the mantle of the Second or "New Rome", Constantinople, until 1917.

A second blessing hidden in the fall of Constantinople was that it installed over the southern Orthodox lands a power capable of resisting the rising power of the papacy - Ottoman Turkey. At Florence in 1439, only a few years before the conquest, the Orthodox emperor and patriarchs had, with sinking hearts - in fact, the patriarch of Constantinople died of a heart attack immediately after - signed an ecclesiastical union with the papacy in order to secure the support of papal troops against the Turks. That support did not come, and in any case the people, led by St. Mark, metropolitan of Ephesus, rejected the union with Rome. However, six months before the conquest, the Pope had been commemorated for the first time at the Liturgy in Hagia Sophia in Constantinople, and many had seen in this the direct cause of God's abandonment of the city to the Turks. But God's wrath was mixed with mercy: the new rulers of the city refused to give free access to papist influence in their empire. So the union of Rome was annulled (in a council held in Constantinople in 1480), and for the next few centuries the Orthodox had in the Sultan a powerful ally against the spread of papist influence, which, after the founding of the Jesuit order in 1540, became increasingly powerful and militant. Hence the saying: "Better the Sultan's turban than the Pope's tiara".



Russia, too, was determined to limit the spread of papism. Thus when the Greek metropolitan of Kiev, Isidore, returned to Russia after the signing the union with the papacy in Florence, the Russian Church and people united behind their Grand-Prince in throwing Isidore out (he went to Rome, where he was given a cardinal's hat and the task of imposing the unia on his fellow Greeks in Constantinople). But this put the Russians in a delicate position: what was now to be the relationship of their Church to the patriarchate of Constantinople, of which, in spite of her enormously greater size, she was only a metropolitan province, but which had now (albeit temporarily) fallen away from the Orthodox Faith through union with Rome?

They solved the problem by electing their own metropolitan, the Russian St. Jonah, to the metropolitanate of Kiev, and quietly, without unduly offending their Greek mentors, creating an autocephalous Church of Russia. In 1589, this autocephaly was officially confirmed by Patriarch Jeremiah II of Constantinople, and the Russian Church became the youngest and most junior - but politically and numerically the most powerful - of the patriarchates. In the same year, Jeremiah, with the support of the other patriarchs, confirmed the Tsar of Moscow as Emperor of the Third Rome and the protector of all the Orthodox Christians throughout the world.

Now this proclamation of Moscow as the Third Rome has been reviled by democrats ever since as the cloak for Russian, and even Soviet imperialism, so it is worthy examining it a little more closely.

First, it must be remembered, as Ulyanov has pointed out<sup>26</sup>, that Muscovy in the sixteenth century had not yet won control even over all the Russian lands, a good half of them being still under the control of Poland-Lithuania - which also had its own Orthodox metropolitan who was not in obedience to the Muscovite metropolitan, but to the Patriarch of Constantinople. This meant that, for several centuries, the Muscovite grand-princes and tsars saw as their main task the building up of a *national* kingdom embracing "all the Russias"; and the idea of Moscow as the protector of all Orthodox Christendom by virtue of its position as "the Third Rome" (an idea that was originally imported into Russia by monks from the Balkans) did not receive any intensive development until the reign of Alexander II in the nineteenth century. However, the seeds for that development were laid at this time, in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries, and as the Muscovite state gradually grew and became stronger, the mission entrusted by Divine Providence to her gradually became clearer.

Secondly, the handing over to Moscow of the mantle of Byzantium was natural insofar as Russia was the only independent Orthodox kingdom. As Patriarch Jeremiah said to the Tsar after enthroning the first patriarch of Moscow: "Since the First Rome fell through the Apollinarian heresy, and the

---

<sup>26</sup> Ulyanov, N., "Kompleks Filofeya", *Voprosy Filosofii*, no. 4, 1994, pp. 152-162 (in Russian).

Second Rome, which is Constantinople, is held by infidel Turks, so thy great Russian kingdom, most pious Tsar... is the Third Rome... and thou alone under heaven art Christian Emperor for all Christians in the world."<sup>27</sup> In other words, since the previous empires had fallen, unless the ideal of the one Christian Empire was to die forever, Russia would have to take their place.

History shows that the Russia was well able to take on this burden, for which she had been prepared by a long process under the guidance of Divine Providence. In 1380, under the inspired leadership of St. Sergius of Radonezh, the Russians had defeated the Mongols for the first time at the battle of Kulikovo; and from this time their society became so thoroughly imbued by religion as to merit the title "Holy Russia". By the end of the fifteenth century Moscovy was completely independent of the Golden Horde, and by 1589 the Tatar capital of Kazan had been conquered by the Orthodox. So Russia had proved her credentials as the only Orthodox power capable of defeating the conqueror of Byzantium. Two centuries later, Siberia, the Caucasus and Southern Russia were in Orthodox hands; and in 1877 the Russian Armies, having liberated Romania and Bulgaria, were at the gates of Constantinople, where they were stopped, not by the might of the by now thoroughly demoralized Turks, but by the threats of the Western powers to intervene on the side of the Muslims...

In relation to the other, still more dangerous enemy of Orthodoxy, the Old Rome of Papism, the Third Rome also proved herself worthy. Thus during the disastrous thirteenth century, when it looked as if Old Rome might completely swallow up the Orthodox world, the only significant Orthodox victories had been those of the Russian prince Alexander Nevsky against the Teutonic Knights. Again, when all the Orthodox patriarchs signed the union with Rome in 1439, the Russian Church alone had refused to give up her birthright for a mess of Roman pottage. During the sixteenth century Russia held her own against the rising power of Catholic Poland-Lithuania; and even after the Poles had conquered Moscow and installed the papist false Dmitri on the throne of the Orthodox tsars, the Third Rome was not dead. From the Volga town of Nizhni-Novgorod an army of national liberation was assembled which drove the Poles out of Moscow in 1612. During the following centuries, Russian armies successfully went onto the offensive against Poland, and also defeated the armies of Sweden, Prussia and Napoleonic France, planting the Orthodox standard in the heart of the western apostasy, Paris. Finally, after stopping an alliance of Western and Muslim powers in the Crimean war, the Russian Empire died in a self-sacrificial war to defend Orthodox Serbia against the predations of Catholic Austria-Hungary and Protestant Germany in 1914-17.

In all these wars, it must be stressed, Russia forcibly conquered and annexed no territory belonging to other Orthodox peoples (with the possible exceptions of Bessarabia). Thus her "imperialism", if we can call it that, was

---

<sup>27</sup> Quoted in Runciman, *op. cit.*, p. 51.

religious, rather than nationalistic; her major aim was the defence and spread of Orthodox Christianity, not Russianism. Moreover, the consequent success of Russian missionaries from Siberia to Alaska, from Japan to Persia, shows that the Russian empire was a true servant of the God Who said: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations..." (Matthew 28.19).

Of course, no empire has ever been completely free of mercenary or self-serving or nationalistic motives; and there were periods, especially in the eighteenth century, when the Russian state resembled contemporary western absolutist models, such as the France of Louis XIV, more than the traditional "symphonic" model of Orthodox Church-State relations. Nevertheless, taken as a whole over the period 1453 to 1917, the Russian empire can claim to have served God more than either nation or state, in accordance with the mission entrusted to it as the Third Rome by the Ecumenical Patriarch in 1589. At a time when the pseudo-theocracies of Catholicism and Islam threatened to carry all before them, Russia protected the true theocracy of the Orthodox Church and died in the process of defending her. The debt that all true Christians owe to her has become more evident with every passing year. For since her death, the pseudo-theocracies of Papal Rome and Islam have increased in power, while Orthodox Christianity has entered into the most catastrophic decline in her history...

In the next lecture, I propose to examine the deeper causes of this decline - the emergence in the West, and the acceptance in the East, of a theory of man in society which radically rejects all theocratic, and even monarchic kinds of government, and which led directly to the establishment of the most fearsome satanocratic regime in the history of mankind.

## LECTURE 5: ANTI-THEOCRACY: THE PROTESTANT AND DEMOCRATIC REVOLUTIONS

*We have no king, because we feared not  
the Lord.*  
Hosea 10.3.

The pretensions of the papacy to absolute power in both Church and State were bound to meet with opposition. In the last lecture we noted the opposition offered by some western rulers, who wished to defend their patrimony, and, more importantly, by the Orthodox Church of the East, which defended the Gospel teaching on the true nature and relationship of priestly and secular power. In this lecture I wish to return to the west, and to the doctrinal alternative to papism evolved by western thinkers which has become the philosophical basis of modern western civilization.

\*

The essence of papism consists in the elevation of the opinion of one man to a position of unique authority over the voice of the whole Church as expressed consistently and in conciliar form over centuries. The essence of what came to be known as Protestantism consists in the rejection of the authority of this one man and the elevation of the opinion of another man in his place. In the early stages of Protestantism this alternative authority was usually the king, who thereby became both religious and the secular ruler of his country. As time passed, however, the authority of the king came under as strong attack as that of the Pope, and the final authority was recognized to be every individual mind or the majority of individual minds - two incompatible criteria, whose incompatibility, however, was not immediately realized. Thus the papocaesarism of the Middle Ages begat the caesaropapism of the Reformation, which in turn begat the atomistic democratism of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

This development is perhaps most clearly seen in the history of England. After the bloody, papist-inspired Norman conquest of 1066-70, which destroyed the Orthodox civilization of England, the new king, William the Conqueror, proceeded to protect his conquest from Pope Gregory VII by establishing complete control over both Church and State. Since the Pope was not at this time powerful enough to sponsor a second invasion of England, he tolerated the situation for the time being. Thus in England there was established the first truly totalitarian state on European soil. It did not last - already with Magna Carta in 1216 it was effectively dead; but it established a precedent and constituted a warning.

It was also in England that the first true Protestant, John Wyclif, appeared. In De Christo et Adversario Suo (1383) he pointed to the antichristian nature

of the Pope's pretensions, and to the Orthodox Greeks as being the only faithful heirs of True Christianity. Unfortunately for the West, however, this eastward-looking Protestantism was not destined to survive.

The rebellion of Wyclif and his Lollards against the authority of the papist church was accompanied by the rebellion of Watt Tylor against the authority of the king - a combination which was to be repeated many times in the history of the Protestant Reformation. But Wyclif himself supported the authority of the king against the peasant revolutionaries. The Lollard movement in England gave birth in the next generation to the Hussite movement in Bohemia, in which the link between Protestantism in the Church and the Revolution in the State becomes clearer. Thus the followers of Huss declared that for true Christians their ruler could only be God. From this it followed that all men were free and equal. "All must be brothers to each other and no one must be subject to another." For this reason taxation and royal power had to be eliminated, along with every mark of inequality.<sup>28</sup>

It was over a century, however, before this revolutionary spirit took root in other parts of Western Europe. The early Reformers, while rejecting the hierarchical principle in general, had little time for democracy, being concerned either to bolster the power of the secular rulers against the Pope (Luther) or to establish their own despotic power over their congregation (Calvin was nicknamed "the Pope of Geneva"). In England, too, the beginning of the Reformation was accompanied by a temporary strengthening of the secular power, as King Henry VIII placed himself as the head of the English Church so as not to submit to the Pope's ruling on his divorce. However, his power was never as absolute as William the Conqueror's had been, and from the beginning parliament had a say in the affairs of the Anglican Church. This power increased under his successors, and finally the king was deposed and executed and parliament reigned *de facto*, if not *de jure* supreme in both Church and State - a situation that did not change even after the restoration of the monarchy in 1688.

The foundations of English parliamentarianism, which was destined to have such a profound influence on the history of the world, lay in the Protestantism of the Puritans and Congregationalists. The founder of the Congregationalists, Robert Brown, expressed the basis of his doctrine as follows: "True Christians unite into societies of believers which submit, by means of a voluntary agreement with God, to the dominion of God the Saviour, and keep the Divine law in sacred communion." Each Presbyterian community was completely independent in all respects: in matters of faith, in the election of clergy, in rites, etc. The communities were united by friendship, and nothing more. Since the clergy had no sacramental functions and were elected by laymen, they had no real authority over their congregations.

---

<sup>28</sup> Alexeyev, N.N. "Ideya 'Zemnogo Grada' v Khristianskoj vyerochenii", *Put'*, N 5, October-November, 1926, p. 566 (in Russian).

On being persecuted in England, the Puritans fled to America, where the democratic structure of their communities became the basis of the federal structure of the United States of America. They claimed that their theocratic democratism corresponded to the practice of the early Church, and especially to the structure of ancient Israel, with its distrust of all monarchical power. For God had allowed Samuel to anoint the first king, Saul, only on sufferance, and the prophets are full of denunciations of the evil deeds of the kings.

This claim was supported by Lopukhin, who wrote: "On examining the structure of the Mosaic State, one is involuntarily struck by its similarity to the organization of the state structure in the United States of Northern America." "The tribes in their administrative independence correspond exactly to the states, each of which is a democratic republic." The Senate and Congress "correspond exactly to the two higher groups of representatives in the Mosaic State - the 12 and 70 elders." "After settling in Palestine, the Israelites first (in the time of the Judges) established a union republic, in which the independence of the separate tribes was carried through to the extent of independent states."<sup>29</sup> In Lopukhin's opinion, the only real difference between the Old Testament State and the United States consisted in the latter's possession of presidential power.

However, the Protestant attempts to base their democratic structures on the Bible were misguided. First, although ancient Israel was indeed a theocracy, and not a monarchy, as such it was an embryonic form, not of the State, but of the Church; for only the Church can be said to have God alone as its Head. The confusion between Church and State was possible in the case of ancient Israel, which represents a very early, embryonic and unrepeatable stage in the history of the people of God. But from the time of the Israelite kings, through the New Testament period and into modern times, the difference, if not always complete separation, between Church and State (whether Christian or non-Christian) is a fact that cannot be argued against. Christ recognized it - hence His famous words about giving to God what is God's and to Caesar what is Caesar's. Caesar was a king, and neither Christ nor the Apostles either deny or criticize that fact; for in essence they had nothing to say about the kingdoms of the world, as being in the hands of the devil, "the ruler of this world" (John 12.31) and "the god of this age" (II Corinthians 4.4). For all their instructions were directed towards the creation of the Church, the Kingdom which is not of this world and which follows quite different laws from those which obtain in this age.

Secondly, the Church in any case not a democracy. It is a Kingdom, the Kingdom of God on earth; and even if we abstract God's Kingship from a consideration of its structure, the element of monarchical hierarchy is very pronounced. For just as the 12 and 70 elders of the Mosaic Church were not

---

<sup>29</sup> Lopukhin, A.P., *Zakonodatel'stvo Moiseya*, Saint Petersburg, 1888, p. 233; quoted in Alexeyev, *op. cit.*, p. 557.

elected by the people, but were appointed by Moses, so the 12 and 70 Apostles of the New Testament Church were not elected by the believers, but were appointed by Christ Himself. And even though the successors of the Apostles, the Bishops, are in principle chosen by election, it is not their election which makes them bishops, but their consecration by other bishops - a function that cannot be performed by laymen. Nor can a bishop be removed except by other bishops - and that not for any reasons, but only if it can be proved that he has broken the Law of God. Indeed, if one examines the structure of the Orthodox Church since apostolic times, it resembles the federal structure of the Presbyterians or United States only in not having a single head on earth; for each diocese is like a mini-kingdom, and each bishop is like a king, being a regent of the King of heaven. And this is God's appointed order for the Church in both the Old and New Testaments.

Nor do the Biblical words about the royal priesthood of all Christians (I Peter 2.9) provide a sound basis for Protestant democratism. For, as Nikolai Berdyaev writes: "This [universal royal priesthood] by no means implies a denial of the significance of the hierarchical principle in history, as various sectarians would have it. One can come to the universal royal priesthood only by the hierarchical path of the Church. Indeed, the Kingdom of God itself is hierarchical. And the universal royal priesthood is not a denial of the hierarchical structure of existence."<sup>30</sup>

However, the mistakenness of the Protestants' attempts to base their democratic, anti-hierarchical structures on the Bible does not mean that the opposite structure favoured by some Catholic and Protestant rulers - the absolute monarchy of, for example, Louis XIV of France - was any more justified. Absolute monarchy implies an independence of the Church, to the extent of a denial of her claims and even attempts to make her a department of State, which cannot be accepted by the Church. Whether the legitimacy of the State is considered to be the will of the people or the will of one man ("L'etat, c'est moi," as Louis XIV said), in either the case the result is a deification of the State on the model of the ancient pagan monarchies that is contrary to Christianity. Thus when Hegel called the State "the divine idea on earth", he was reexpressing the Confucian conception of the State as the reflection of the impersonal heavenly order which rules the world and man. For, as Alexeyev writes, "for Confucius, as for Hegel, the State is 'the highest form of objective morality', than which there is nothing higher".<sup>31</sup>

The Church's attitude towards State structures is neither democratic nor absolutist, but based on the following principles:-

1. The only eternal and absolutely legitimate kingdom is the Kingdom of God, whose incarnation on earth is not the State, but the Church.

---

<sup>30</sup> Berdyaev, N. , "Tsarstvo Bozhiye i Tsarstvo Kesarya", *Put'*, September, N 1, September, 1925, p. 44 (in Russian).

<sup>31</sup> Alexeyev, N.N., "Khristianstvo i Ideya Monarkhiya", *Put'*, N 6, January, 1927, p. 660 (in Russian).

2. The nature of the Church is unique and *sui generis*, being on the one hand a Kingdom whose King is Christ, and on the other an assembly of free citizens constituted by "the law of liberty" (James 1.25), in which everyone is a "royal priest" who serves the King in liberty and love.

3. It is not the task of earthly States to imitate the Church, which is inimitable, but to serve her by providing an external wall against the cruder, external forms of evil. The Bible does not exclude any state structure from serving in this role, provided it truly has the power to guard against evil, which is why St. Paul said, "there is no power which is not of God", while making the important qualification that real powers are those that "are not a terror to good works but to evil" (Romans 13.1,3). At the same time, there is no doubt that, historically speaking, the state structure which has best served this function has been the Orthodox autocracy. For autocracy does not seek legitimacy from the will of one man or the people as a whole, but rather from God. And it does not - in theory, at any rate - seek to subject the Church to personal or political ends, but rather places itself in subjection to the Church.

For "what is the essence," asks Berdyaev, "of the religious idea of the [Orthodox] autocracy, and in what does it differ from absolutism? There are no rights to power, but only obligations of power. The power of the tsar is by no means absolute, unrestricted power. It is autocratic because its source is not the will of the people and it is not restricted by the people. But it is restricted by the Church and by Christian righteousness; it is spiritually subject to the Church; it serves not its own will, but the will of God. The tsar must not have his own will, but he must serve the will of God. The tsar and the people are bound together by one and the same faith, by one and the same subjection to the Church and the righteousness of God. Autocracy presupposes a wide national social basis living its own self-sufficient life; it does not signify the suppression of the people's life. Autocracy is justified only if the people has beliefs which sanction the power of the tsar. It cannot be an external violence inflicted on the people. The tsar is autocratic only if he is a truly Orthodox tsar. The defective Orthodoxy of Peter the Great and his inclination towards Protestantism made him an absolute, and not an autocratic monarch. Absolute monarchy is a child of humanism... In absolutism the tsar is not a servant of the Church. A sign of absolute monarchy is the subjection of the Church to the State. That is what happened to the Catholic Church under Louis XIV. Absolutism always develops a bureaucracy and suppresses the social life of the people."<sup>32</sup>

That is why the absolutism of Louis XIV gave birth to the anarchism of the French revolution, which went much further than either the English or the American revolutions in putting the principles of Renaissance humanism and the Protestant Reformation into political and social practice. These principles can be summed up as follows. Man, not God, is the centre of the universe

---

<sup>32</sup> Berdyaev, *op. cit.*, pp. 39-40.



(which is like saying that the earth, rather than the sun, is the centre of the solar system). As such, he is master of his own destiny and can work out his own truth. Therefore the criterion of truth is not Divine Revelation, or the authority of the Church, but man's own mind, as revealed individually in science and collectively in democratic decision-making.

The English and American revolutions had gone only part of the way to incarnating these principles; for while undermining the authority of popes and kings, they had not tried to undermine the principle of Divine Revelation as such, and still called on God to help and sanctify their efforts. But the French removed even this last barrier to complete "freedom"; taking their cue from Voltaire's Ecrazez l'infame (i.e. Jesus Christ), they set up the worship of the goddess Reason instead of Christ. They not only killed the king; they also killed, or attempted to kill, belief in the King of kings, God Himself.

However, the results of this consistent atheism were too horrific to contemplate for long. Europeans and Americans saw in practice the truth of Dostoyevsky's words, "if there is no God, then everything is permitted" - and recoiled. No society can live for long on an unrestrained diet of negation and destruction; so reaction set in. The heir of the French revolution, Napoleon, made himself into an absolute monarch on the model of the hated French kings, and even had himself crowned by the Pope. And after his defeat the monarchies and churches of old Europe were back in power.

But their victory was superficial and temporary. The monarchies had been restored, but with severely curtailed powers which were constantly being further eroded. The churches, too, were re-established, but at the price of paying lip service to the ideals of the revolution. The slogan "Freedom, equality and brotherhood" lived on as a self-evident ideal. And the horrific consequences of its real-life incarnation were forgotten.

\*

Only in Russia, during the nineteenth century, was the real nature of what was happening in Europe understood. And this was not surprising; for Russia was the only State in Europe in which the principles of truly Christian statehood were still alive. True, there had been some inclination towards absolutism, first in the reign of Ivan the Terrible in the sixteenth century and again in the reigns of Peter the Great and Catherine the Great in the eighteenth century. But the Romanov tsars of the seventeenth century had restored the balance between Church and State which Ivan had threatened to destroy; and the tsars of the nineteenth century performed a similar task in gradually coming closer to the Church and restoring her to her rightful place as the conscience of the state and the nation. And the best Russian writers, even while recognizing and criticizing the distortions that still remained, were generous in their appreciation of this.

One of these writers was the poet and diplomat Fyodor Tyutchev. In the revolutionary year of 1848, in an essay entitled "Russia and the revolution", he wrote: "There have long existed only two real powers in Europe - the revolution and Russia. Between them there can be no talks, no treaty; the existence of the one is the equivalent of the death of the other! On the outcome of the struggle which has arisen between them, the greatest battle the world has ever seen, will depend for many centuries to come the whole political and religious future of mankind.

"... Russia, first of all, is the Christian empire; the Russian people is Christian not only by dint of the Orthodoxy of its convictions, but also thanks to something more intimate than convictions. It is Christian by dint of its capacity for self-rejection and self-sacrifice which constitutes as it were the basis of its moral nature. The revolution is above all the enemy of Christianity! The soul of the revolution is its antichristian feeling: this is its special, distinctive characteristic. Those changes in form which it has undergone in the interim, those slogans which it has acquired by turns, even its violence and crimes - these are secondary and incidental. But the one thing in it which is not so is the antichristian feeling which inspires it, and which (this has to be admitted) has given it its threatening lordship over the world. He who does not understand this is no more than a blind man present at the spectacle which the world presents to him.

"The human I, wishing to depend only on itself, not recognizing and not accepting any other law besides its own will - in a word, the human I, taking the place of God, - does not, of course, constitute something new among men. But such it has become when raised to the status of a political and social right, and when it strives, by virtue of this right, to rule society. This is the new phenomenon which acquired the name of the French revolution in 1789."<sup>33</sup>

Since 1789 and 1815, in Tyutchev's opinion, the revolution had by no means retreated. It had become less violent only because priests and rulers and society in general had inwardly submitted to it, whatever mask they might place on their apostasy. And the moment the Catholic Church offered real resistance, he said, it would be persecuted to the end - you can count on the revolution to remain faithful to itself!

Therefore the revolution of February, 1848, wrote Tyutchev, "rendered this great service to the world, that it had overthrown the stilted scaffolding of illusions concealing reality. Even the least penetrating minds have probably understood by now that the history of Europe in the last 33 years has been nothing other than a prolonged mystification. And what implacable light has suddenly illumined the whole of this past, which is so recent and yet already so distant from us! Who, for example, would not admit now that an absurd pretension was expressed in that wisdom of our age which naively imagined

---

<sup>33</sup> Tyutchev, F.I., *Politicheskiye Stat'i*, Paris: YMCA Press, 1976, pp. 32, 33-34 (in Russian).

it had succeeded in suppressing the revolution by constitutional means, muzzling its terrible energy by means of a legal formula? After all that has happened, who can doubt any longer that from that minute when the revolutionary principle entered into the blood of society, all these concessions, all these conciliatory formulas are nothing else than narcotic drugs which can, perhaps, put the sick man to sleep for a time, but are not able to prevent the further development of the illness itself?"<sup>34</sup>

Tyutchev saw the roots of the Socialist revolution in the rebellion of the Roman papacy against the Orthodox Church. In an essay entitled "Russia and the Roman question" (1849) he wrote: "The revolution, which is nothing other than the apotheosis of the same human I reaching its greatest flowering, has hastened to recognize Gregory VII and Luther as its own, welcoming them as its two glorious predecessors. Blood kinship has begun to speak in it, and it has accepted the one, despite his Christian beliefs, and almost deified the other, although he was a pope.

"But if the evident likeness linking the three members of this row together constitutes the basis of the historical life of the West, then the starting-point of this link must necessarily be recognized to be that deep distortion which the Christian principle was subjected to through the order imposed on it by Rome. In the course of centuries the western church, under the shadow of Rome, has almost completely lost that appearance it had at the starting-point. It has ceased to be, amidst the great society of man, the society of believers freely united in spirit and in truth under the law of Christ: it has become a political organization, a political power, a state within a state. Truth to tell, during the whole course of the Middle Ages the church in the West was nothing other than a colony of Rome planted in a conquered land.

"This order which dragged the church into the dust of earthly interests created for it, so to speak, a fatal destiny: by incarnating the divine principle in a weak and passing body it inoculated it with all the infirmities and lusts of the flesh. From this order there arose for the Roman church the fateful necessity of war, material war - a necessity which, for an institution such as the church, is equivalent to indisputable condemnation. From this order there was born that battle of claims and that rivalry of interests which necessarily led to the embittered battle between the first priest and the empire, to that truly godless and sacrilegious duel, which, continuing throughout the Middle Ages, dealt a mortal wound to the very principle of authority in the West. This is the source of all those excesses and violence which have accumulated in the course of centuries, so as to underpin that material power without which, in Rome's opinion, it cannot do without in order to preserve the unity of the church, and which, however, finally led, as was to be expected, to the smashing of that imagined unity to smithereens. For it is impossible to deny that the explosion of the Reformation in the 16th century was at its root only the reaction of Christian feeling which had built up for too long against the

---

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 35-36.

power of the Church, but which in many respects was a power only in name. But since Rome had for so long tried to put itself between the Universal Church [of Orthodoxy] and the West, the leaders of the Reformation, instead of bringing their complaints before a higher court and lawful power, preferred to appeal to the court of their personal conscience, that is, they made themselves judges in their own case. This is that rock of stumbling on which the Reformation of the 16th century was crushed. That (this is not said to offend the wise teachers of the West) is the true and only cause of the fact that the reform movement, Christian in its root, went off course and finally arrived at a denial of the authority of the Church, and consequently, of the very principle of all authority. Through this breach, which Protestantism made, so to speak, without knowing it, there thereafter burst the antichristian principle into western society...

"The first French revolution is remembered in world history precisely because it provided the initiative, so to speak, in bringing the antichristian idea to governmental power over political society."<sup>35</sup>

The logical connection between Romanism, Protestantism and Socialism was noticed not only by Tyutchev, but also by the Slavophiles Khomyakov and Kireyevsky, and by the novelist Dostoyevsky. Thus Dostoyevsky wrote: "Present-day French Socialism .. is nothing but the truest and most direct continuation of the Catholic idea, its fullest, most final consequence which has been evolved through centuries... French Socialism is nothing else than the compulsory union of mankind - an idea which dates back to ancient Rome and which was fully expressed in Catholicism."

For, as Prince Myshkin says in The Idiot, "[Socialism] too, like its brother atheism, was begotten of despair, in opposition to Catholicism as a moral force, in order to replace the lost moral power of religion, to quench the spiritual thirst of parched humanity, and save it not by Christ, but also by violence! This, too, is freedom by violence. This, too, is union through the sword and blood. 'Don't dare to believe in God! Don't dare to have property! Don't dare to have a personality of your own! Fraternite ou la mort! Two million heads!'"

In The Devils, one character even prophesies (taking up an idea originally voiced by Tyutchev) that the Pope will lead the revolution; for as the author says in another place, "Catholicism will tell the people that Christ also preached everything that the Socialists are preaching to them. Again it will pervert and sell them Christ as it has sold Him so many times in the past." Today's Catholic "liberation theology" might be judged a fulfilment of this prophecy!

In Dostoyevsky's last great novel, The Brothers Karamazov, the leading proponent of Socialist ideas is significantly portrayed as a Catholic Inquisitor.

---

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., pp. 57-59, 60.

Catholicism led to Socialism, the argument goes, because, after his disillusionment with the papal system, Western man could not be satisfied with the atomic individualism of the sects and democracies that replaced it, but still yearned for that sense of the brotherhood of all men in obedience to one Omnipotent Father that Catholicism provided, albeit in a false and perverted form. "For the chief concern of these miserable creatures," says the Inquisitor, "is not only to find something that I or someone else can worship, but to find something that all believe in and worship, and the absolutely essential thing is that they should do so all together. It is this need for universal worship that is the chief torment of every man individually and of mankind as a whole from the beginning of time. For the sake of that universal worship they have put each other to the sword..."

And so these Russian thinkers who lived and worked long before the Russian revolution both saw it coming and perceived its causes in the history of the western apostasy from Orthodoxy. Frank put it well: "Socialism is at the same time the culmination and the overthrow of liberal democracy. It is ruled by the same basic motive that rules the whole modern era: to make man and mankind the true master of his life, to present him with the possibility of ordering his own destiny on his own authority..."

"Socialism is the last stride in the great rebellion of mankind and at the same time the result of its total exhaustion - the complete spiritual impoverishment of the prodigal son in the long centuries of his wandering far from his father's home and wealth."<sup>36</sup>

---

<sup>36</sup> Frank, S.L., "Religioznoye-Istoricheskoye Znachenie Russkoy Revolyutsii", *Po Storonu i Po Pravu*, Paris: YMCA Press (in Russian).

## LECTURE 6: ANTI-THEOCRACY: THE NATIONALIST REVOLUTIONS

*There is neither Jew nor Greek, there  
is neither slave nor free, there is  
neither male nor female; for you are  
all one in Christ Jesus.*  
Galatians 3.28.

The French revolution was not only the most famous anti-monarchist revolution before 1917 and the first specifically socialist and anti-Christian revolution. It was also the origin of a whole series of nationalist revolutions, which, from our present perspective towards the end of the twentieth century, look as if they may prove to be as long-lasting and virulent as their socialist brethren. In this lecture I propose to examine the nationalist revolutions of the nineteenth century which, no less than the socialist revolutions, prepared the way for the satanocracies of the twentieth century.

\*

It was only to be expected that the assertion of the individual I in the French revolution would also give an impulse to the assertion of the collective I - the nation. If freedom and equality were the rights of individual men, why not of men in their collective, national personality? The brotherhood of nations could wait until the collective, national I had been liberated.

This sentiment was especially strong, of course, among those nations which had been oppressed and made to feel inferior to others - the Germans, the Poles and the Balkan nations suffering under the Turkish yoke. The German poet Herder had argued against French universalism, and in favour of the unique value of individual national cultures. But "under the impact of the French revolutionary and Napoleonic invasions," writes Isaiah Berlin, "cultural or spiritual autonomy, for which Herder had originally pleaded, turned into embittered and aggressive nationalist self-assertion.

"... Nationalism is an inflamed condition of national consciousness which can be, and has on occasion been, tolerant and peaceful. It usually seems to be caused by wounds, some form of collective humiliation. It may be that this happened in German lands because they had remained on the edges of the great renaissance of western Europe. The late sixteenth century, a great creative age, far from spent even in Italy, the culture of which had risen to an unparalleled height a hundred years before, was marked by an immense upsurge of creative activity in France, in England, in Spain, in the Low Countries. German towns and principalities, both those dominated by the imperial power of Vienna and those outside it, were by comparison profoundly provincial. They excelled only in architecture and, perhaps, Protestant theology. The terrible devastation of the Thirty Years War

doubtless made this cultural gap even wider. To be the object of contempt or patronising tolerance on the part of proud neighbours is one of the most traumatic experiences that individuals or societies can suffer. The response, as often as not, is pathological exaggeration of one's real or imaginary virtues, and resentment and hostility towards the proud, the happy, the successful. This, indeed, characterised much German feeling about the west, more especially about France, in the eighteenth century.

"The French dominated the western world, politically, culturally, militarily. The humiliated and defeated Germans, particularly the traditional, religious, economically backward East Prussians, bullied by French officials imported by Frederick the Great, responded, like the bent twig of the poet Schiller's theory, by lashing back and refusing to accept their alleged inferiority. They discovered in themselves qualities far superior to those of their tormentors. They contrasted their own deep, inner life of the spirit, their own profound humility, their selfless pursuit of true values - simple, noble, sublime - with the rich, worldly, successful, superficial, smooth, heartless, morally empty French. This mood rose to fever pitch during the national resistance to Napoleon, and was indeed the original exemplar of the reaction of many a backward, exploited, or at any rate patronised society, which, resentful of the apparent inferiority of its status, reacted by turning to real or imaginary triumphs and glories in the past, or enviable attributes of its own national or cultural character. Those who cannot boast of great political, military or economic achievements, or a magnificent tradition of art or thought, seek comfort and strength in the notion of the free and creative life of the spirit within them, uncorrupted by the vices of power or sophistication.

"There is much of this in the writings of the German romantics, and, after them, of the Russian Slavophiles, and many an awakener of the national spirit in central Europe, Poland, the Balkans, Asia, Africa."<sup>37</sup>

\*

While Berlin's explanation of the rise of nationalism is undoubtedly true in part, it fails to take account of the fact that nationalism is not always a pathological phenomenon, and has sometimes contributed to the saving of a nation, not only in the political sense, but even in the spiritual sense. Or perhaps we should reserve the term "nationalism" for the pathological phenomenon described by Berlin, while using another term - "patriotism", "love of country" (?) - for the positive phenomenon to which we now wish to draw attention. In practice the dividing line between the two phenomena may be hard to draw, but - like the distinction between lust and love - it needs to be drawn.

When the Russian Emperor Nicolas I approved of the slogan "Orthodoxy, Autocracy, Narodnost", he was referring by "narodnost" to the positive kind

---

<sup>37</sup> Berlin, *op. cit.*, pp. 245-247.

of nationalism or love of country. Narodnost was linked to Orthodoxy, in the minds of Nicholas and the Slavophiles, because it was subject to Orthodoxy and exalted the nation, not for its own sake and not in opposition to other Orthodox nations, but as the bearer of one aspect of the Divine idea of nationhood. The aim of national self-consciousness, according to this conception, was "the attainment in the destiny and spirit of the people of that 'which God thinks of it in eternity', as Vladimir Solovyov put it".<sup>38</sup>

We shall be returning to this conception of the nation and nationalism in a later lecture. For the moment I want to point to another, paradoxical aspect of nationalism, which is the major obstacle it presents to the aims of socialism. This is paradoxical because, as we have seen, the French revolution was both profoundly socialist in nature and is commonly thought to have been the mother of modern nationalism. And yet, as Lenin, that true heir of the French revolution said, "the aim of socialism is not only the annihilation of the dividedness of humanity into small states and isolated nations, not only the drawing together of the nations, but also their fusion" - i.e. their destruction.<sup>39</sup> Or, as Dostoyevsky wrote, "socialism deprives the national principle of its individuality, undermining the very foundations of nationality".<sup>40</sup>

The paradox that socialism both incites nationalism and destroys the nation is one aspect of the general paradox of the socialist revolution, that while preaching freedom it practises slavery, while proclaiming inequality it creates inequality, and while dreaming of brotherhood it incites fratricidal war. In the same way, the French revolution proclaimed the freedom and equality of all nations; but its first appearance on the international arena was in the form of Napoleonic imperialism, which strove to destroy the freedom of all the nations of Europe. And paradoxically, it was autocratic Russia, the conqueror of Napoleon, which, despite its reputation as "the prison of the nations", guaranteed the survival of the nations of the West, and their freedom from totalitarianism, for at least another century.

The truth is that the revolution, while inciting the passions for personal and national freedom in order to destroy the old church and state structures, was aimed at the destruction of all freedom and individuality, both personal and national. Only Russia saw this clearly and only Russia had, moreover, the power to back up her words with deeds. That is why the propaganda of all "progressive" Europe was directed primarily against her.

And that is why the most characteristic war of nineteenth-century Europe was the Crimean war, in which Catholic France, Protestant England and Mohammedan Turkey invaded Orthodox Russia. For why should Christian countries unite with a Mohammedan despot against the saviour of Christian Europe in 1812? Because these "Christian" countries, in addition to their

---

<sup>38</sup> Borisov, V., "Natsional'noye vozrozhdeniye i natsiya-lichnost", in Solzhenitsyn, A. (ed.), *Iz-Pod Glyb*. Paris: YMCA Press, 1974, p. 208.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 202.

<sup>40</sup> Dostoyevsky, F.M., *The Diary of a Writer*. Haslemere: Ianmead, 1984, p. 738.



instinctive dislike of Orthodoxy, saw in Russia the only effective pillar against the corrosive spirit of the democratic-socialist revolution, to which they had already, as Tyutchev clearly saw, inwardly submitted.

Russia's role was similar with regard to the Balkan nations of Eastern Europe as they languished under the Turkish yoke. Her pressure on Turkey prevented the worst excesses of the Mohammedans, and her armies helped to liberate Serbia, Bulgaria and Romania. The Western nations, on the other hand, in spite of their democratic propaganda, were determined to preserve the power of Turkey as a counterweight to that of Russia, even if this meant the continued subjection of the Eastern Orthodox nations.

\*

However, there was a dark side to Balkan nationalism which began to manifest itself especially in the early nineteenth century. Before that, all the Orthodox nations in the Turkish empire had been subsumed under a single Rum millet, or "Roman nation", which was defined by religious allegiance rather than ethnic affiliation. This had the providential effect of reminding the Orthodox nations of what held them together, and that they were Orthodox brothers in Christ before they were Greeks or Serbs or Bulgarians.

But the ideas of the French revolution found expression in national liberation movements in various parts of the Balkans, which succeeded in liberating a large part of the Greek lands from the Turkish yoke in 1821, but which also led to divisions among the Orthodox. The problems were of two major kinds. The first was that the Ecumenical Patriarch recognized the Turkish sultan as the legitimate secular ruler, and therefore could not recognize the revolution of his compatriots against this ruler. On the other hand, the hierarchs in the liberated areas recognized the revolution. This led to a split in the Greek Church which was not healed until 1852. The second problem was that as each Orthodox nation liberated itself from the Turks it demanded a restoration of its own autocephalous Church. This led to the schism of the Bulgarian Church from Constantinople in 1872.

The opposing views among the Greeks with regard to the revolution were especially incarnate in two hierarchs who came from the same village of Dhimitsana in the Peloponnese: the Hieromartyr Patriarch Grigorios V of Constantinople, and Metropolitan Germanos of Old Patras. When Alexander Ypsilantis raised the standard of revolt by crossing from Russia into Turkish-occupied Romania with a small band of Greeks in 1821, a simultaneous rebellion took place in the Peloponnese under the leadership of Metropolitan Germanos and eight other bishops. Ypsilantis' force was soon crushed, for it was repudiated by both the Russian Tsar and the Romanian peasants. But Germanos' campaign prospered, in spite of the deaths of five of the bishops in prison; and soon the south of Greece and the islands of Hydra, Spetsae and Poros were in Greek hands.

At this point the frightened Turks put pressure on Patriarch Grigorios and his Synod to anathematize the insurgents, which they did. Some have argued that the patriarch secretly repudiated this anathema and sympathized with the insurgents; which is why the Turks, suspecting him of treachery, hanged him on April 10. However, the evidence does not support this view. The patriarch had always refused to join the philiki hetairia, the secret, masonic-style society to which most of the insurgents (including Germanos) belonged. Moreover, the righteousness of his character precludes the possibility that he could have been plotting against a government to which he had sworn allegiance and for which he prayed in the Divine Liturgy.

The patriarch's true attitude of the Church to the revolution was probably expressed in a work called *Paternal Teaching* which appeared in 1789, and which, according to Frazee, "was signed by Anthimos of Jerusalem but was probably the work of the later Patriarch Gregorios V. The document is a polemic against revolutionary ideas, calling on the Christians 'to note how brilliantly our Lord, infinite in mercy and all-wise, protects intact the holy and Orthodox Faith of the devout, and preserves all things'. It warns that the devil is constantly at work raising up evil plans; among them is the idea of liberty, which appears to be so good, but is only there to deceive the people. The document points out that [the struggle for] political freedom is contrary to the Scriptural command to obey authority, that it results in the impoverishment of the people, in murder and robbery. The sultan is the protector of Christian life in the Ottoman Empire; to oppose him is to oppose God."<sup>41</sup>

Certainly, the Greeks had to pay a heavy price for the political freedom they gained. After the martyrdom of Patriarch Grigorios, the Turks ran amok in Constantinople, killing many Greeks and causing heavy damage to the churches; and there were further pogroms in Smyrna, Adrianople, Crete and especially Chios, which had been occupied by the revolutionaries and where in reprisal tens of thousands were killed or sold into slavery. When the new patriarch, Eugenios, again anathematized the insurgents, twenty-eight bishops and almost a thousand priests in free Greece in turn anathematized the patriarch, calling him a Judas and a wolf in sheep's clothing, and ceasing to commemorate him in the Liturgy. As for the new State of Greece, it "looked to the west," writes Frazee, "the west of the American and French Revolutions, rather than to the old idea of an Orthodox community as it had functioned under the Ottomans. The emotions of the times did not let men see it; Orthodoxy and Greek nationality were still identified, but the winds were blowing against the dominant position of the Church in the life of the individual and the nation..."<sup>42</sup>

Although the schism between the Church of Greece and the Ecumenical Patriarchate was healed in 1852, the flame of Greek nationalism was by no

---

<sup>41</sup> Frazee, C., *The Orthodox Church and Independent Greece 1821-1853*, Cambridge University Press, 1969, p. 8.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 48.

means quenched, but continued to be fed by the "Great Idea" of the restoration of the Byzantine Empire. Moreover, this nationalism was directed not only against the Mohammedan Turks, but also against the other Orthodox nationalities. Thus the non-Greek lands of Syria and Palestine, Bulgaria, Romania, Serbia and Albania were subjected to a policy of hellenization by the Ecumenical Patriarchate, whereby native autocephalous hierarchies were repressed, and Greek metropolitans celebrating the Liturgy only in Greek were imposed on non-Greek-speaking Arabic, Slavic and Romanian populations.

This process had already begun in the eighteenth century, when the increasing power of Greek Phanariote merchants (especially in Romania, where the voevodes were Greek princes under Turkish sovereignty), and the privileged position of the Constantinopolitan patriarch in the Turkish millet system of government, spread Greek influence throughout the Balkans. Thus in September, 1766, the Serbian patriarchate of Pec was suppressed, and in January 1767 the Bulgarian Church was absorbed with the forced retirement of the archbishop of Ochrid. However, the ability of the Constantinopolitan patriarchate to impose its will in this way was limited, during the next century, by two factors: the gradual liberation of these non-Greek areas from Turkish rule, and the influence of the Russian Church.

These limitations can most clearly be seen in the controversial question of the Bulgarian schism. Already in 1860, before the liberation of their country by the Russian armies in 1877-78, the Bulgars had succeeded in obtaining the status of a millet, and therefore the right to have an autocephalous Church independent of the patriarch of Constantinople. In 1870, however, the Bulgars, not content with having an autocephalous Church for the territory of Bulgaria, with the active cooperation of the Turkish government, set up a bishop in Constantinople with the title of Exarch, who was to have jurisdiction over all the Bulgars in Turkey itself. This undoubtedly uncanonical act was resisted with fury by Patriarch Anthimos VI, who convened a great Synod in Constantinople in 1872 and excommunicated the Bulgarian exarch and all those with him, branding them not only as schismatics but also as heretics, their heresy being the newly-defined one of phyletism, that is, nationalism, the invasion of the national principle into the affairs of the Ecumenical Church. Hierarchs of the Antiochian and Alexandrian patriarchates were present at this council, but Patriarch Kyrill of Jerusalem refused to sign its decision, and the Russian and Romanian Churches continued to provide holy chrism to the Bulgarians.<sup>43</sup>

Now such a condemnation of nationalism was certainly both timely and canonical. However, for many the conciliar condemnation of nationalism carried little weight because it came from the patriarchate which they

---

<sup>43</sup> Kosev, D. "Bor'ba za samostoyatel'na natsionalna tserkva", in *Istoria na Belgariya*, Sofia: Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, 1987, vol. 6, pp. 124-188 (in Bulgarian); Ivanov-Trinadtsaty, Fr. German "Novij podkhod k greko-bolgarskomu raskolu 1872 goda", *Russkoye Vozrozhdeniye*, 1987, I, pp. 193-200 (in Russian).

considered the first sinner in this respect. The conflict was therefore not resolved, although the mediation of the Russian Church, which remained in communion with both sides, somewhat softened it.

At the same time, while it is possible to argue over which was the more guilty party in this case, there can be no doubt that the eruption of nationalist passion into Church life which this episode highlighted represented a weakening of the religious principle in the life of the Balkan Orthodox and a strengthening of the lower, material and fallen principles of personal and national egoism. As the Russian philosopher Vladimir Solovyov (1885) wrote with regard to the Bulgarian schism: "Once the principle of nationality is introduced into the Church as the main and overriding principle, once the Church is recognized to be an attribute of the people, it naturally follows that the State power that rules the people must also rule the Church that belongs to the people. The national Church is necessarily subject to the national government, and in such a case a special church authority can exist only for show..."<sup>44</sup>

\*

The problems of nineteenth-century Balkan nationalism bring into sharp focus the main problem of the relationship between religion and nationalism which is the main subject of these lectures. On the one hand, there can be no doubt that most monotheist religions, and especially Christianity, claim to represent a principle that is higher than the nation, which unites men regardless of their race, in which "there is neither Jew nor Greek" (Galatians 3.28). Although the Church was planted in the soil of a religion which was closely linked to one nation, that of the Jews, from the beginning it proclaimed its universal, ecumenical character, its status as a new and peculiar nation in which all men from all the old nations could be reborn as equals, this equality being based on the fact that every Christian is adopted as a son of God the Father in Christ. On the other hand, there can also be no doubt that in its historical incarnation, Christianity became associated and closely entwined with particular nationalities and cultures - especially the Jews, the Greeks and the Russians - which have both been profoundly influenced by the Church and have in turn influenced her, not in her deepest "soul", but in her "flesh", its visible, incarnate appearance. Moreover, at critical times in her history - the period of the Turkish yoke is the clearest example - this close relationship between the Church and the nation has worked for their mutual benefit, the Church sustaining the nation, and national feeling sustaining the Church.

The nineteenth century was critical in that it marked the point when this relationship began to break down, when national feeling threatened to rule

---

<sup>44</sup> Solovyov, V., *Golos Moskvy*, 14 March, 1885; quoted in S. Fomin, *Rossiia pered Vtorym Prishestviyem*, Sergiev Posad, 1993 (in Russian).

and divide the Church. As the famous theologian Glubokovsky wrote in 1914: "Greek nationalism historically merged with Orthodoxy and protected it by its own self-preservation, while it in its turn found a spiritual basis for its own distinctiveness. Orthodoxy and Hellenism were united in a close mutuality, which is why the first began to be qualified by the second. And Christian Hellenism realized and developed this union precisely in a nationalist spirit. The religious aspect was a factor in national strivings and was subjected to it, and it was not only the Phanariots [the inhabitants of Greek Constantinople] who made it serve pan-hellenic dreams. These dreams were entwined into the religious, Orthodox element and gave it its colouring, enduing the Byzantine patriarch with the status and rights of "ethnarch" for all the Christian peoples of the East, and revering him as the living and animated image of Christ (Matthew Blastaris, in his 14th century *Syntagma*, 8). As a result, the whole superiority of the spiritual-Christian element belonged to Hellenism, and could be apprehended by others only through Hellenism. In this respect the enlightened Grigorios Byzantios (or Byzantijsky, born in Constantinople, metropolitan of Chios from 1860, of Heraklion in 1888) categorically declared that 'the mission of Hellenism is divine and universal'. From this source come the age-old and unceasing claims of Hellenism to exclusive leadership in Orthodoxy, as its possessor and distributor. According to the words of the first reply (in May, 1576) to the Tübingen theologians of the Constantinopolitan patriarch Jeremiah II (+1595), who spoke in the capacity of 'successor of Christ' (introduction), the Greek 'holy Church of God is the mother of the Churches, and, by the grace of God, she holds the first place in knowledge. She boasts without reproach in the purity of her apostolic and patristic decrees, and, while being new, is old in Orthodoxy, and is placed at the head', which is why 'every Christian church must celebrate the Liturgy exactly as she [the Greco-Constantinopolitan Church] does (chapter 13). Constantinople always displayed tendencies towards Church absolutism in Orthodoxy and was by no means well-disposed towards the development of autonomous national Churches, having difficulty in recognizing them even in their hierarchical equality. Byzantine-Constantinopolitan Hellenism has done nothing to strengthen national Christian distinctiveness in the Eastern patriarchates and has defended its own governmental-hierarchical hegemony by all means, fighting against the national independence of Damascus (Antioch) and Jerusalem. At the end of the 16th century Constantinople by no means fully accepted the independence of the Russian Church and was not completely reconciled to Greek autocephaly (from the middle of the 19th century), while in relation to the Bulgarian Church they extended their nationalist intolerance to the extent of an ecclesiastical schism, declaring her (in 1872) in all her parts to be 'in schism'. It is a matter of great wonder that the champions of extreme nationalism in the ecclesiastical sphere should then (in 1872) have recognized national-ecclesiastical strivings to be impermissible in others and even labelled them 'phyletism', a new-fangled heresy."<sup>45</sup>

---

<sup>45</sup> Glubokovsky, N.N., "Pravoslaviye po yego sushchestvu", *Tserkov' i Vremya*, 1991, pp. 5-6 (in Russian).

Of course, nationalism was by no means confined to the Greeks among the Orthodox nations. It was highly developed among all the Balkan Orthodox. In Russia, on the other hand, under the influence of socialist propaganda the educated classes displayed a no less dangerous "anti-nationalism", a tendency to denigrate Russia and exalt the virtues of everything western and European.

It was probably only among the Russian peasantry that a truly Orthodox nationalism still remained. Superficially, the Russian Orthodox nationalism of the muzhiks seemed little different from the Greek Orthodox nationalism of the Patriarchate of Constantinople, in that the muzhiks tended to identify Orthodoxy with Russianness just as the Phanariots identified Orthodoxy with Hellenism. However, there was an important difference, in that for the muzhiks an Orthodox of any nation was ipso facto "Russian", whereas for the Greeks "Hellenism" was defined by blood and race rather than religion.

As Archbishop Anthony (Khrapovitsky) wrote in 1916: "If you take away Orthodoxy from our Russian people and our Russian life, as Dostoyevsky justly observed, nothing specifically Russian will remain. In vain have people begun to talk about some kind of national Russian Church: such a Church does not exist, only an ecclesiastical nationality exists, our ecclesiastical people (and to some extent even our ecclesiastical society), which is recognized as our own and native only to the extent that it is in agreement with the Church and her teaching, and which does not recognize the Russian Stundists as Russian, but sees no difference between itself and foreign Orthodox - Greeks, Arabs and Serbs. Tell our peasant: 'Do not curse the Jews, you know - the All-Holy Mother of God and all the Apostles were Jews'. And what will he reply? 'That's not true,' he will say. 'They lived at a time when the Jews were Russians.' He knows very well that the Apostles did not speak Russian, that the Russians did not exist at that time, but he wants to express a true thought, namely, that at that time the Jews who believed in Christ were of that same faith and Church with which the Russian people has now been merged and from which the contemporary Jews and their ancestors who were disobedient to the Lord have fallen away."<sup>46</sup>

However, this mention of the Jews and the Russians immediately takes us forward to the enormous cataclysm that was to take place in the next year of 1917, in which the Jews and the Russians were the main actors, although, of course the Russian-Jewish revolution of 1917 was of vital significance for all nations. And in it all the themes that we have discussed in the previous lectures came together with an explosive force whose nature and ramifications have still not been fully worked out or understood. It is to the nature of this event, therefore, that not only the next lecture but also all the remaining lectures of this series will be dedicated.

---

<sup>46</sup> Khrapovitsky, "Chej dolzhen byt' Konstantinopol'", quoted in S. Fomin, *op. cit.*, p. 203.

## LECTURE 7. SATANOCRACY REBORN: THE JEWISH- RUSSIAN REVOLUTION (I)

*The high-priests and the Pharisees took counsel and said: What shall we do? This Man does many miracles. If we let Him go on thus, everyone will believe in Him, and the Romans will come and destroy both our holy place and our nation.*  
John 11.47-48.

On November 9, 1917, the London Times reported two events one above the other in the same column of newsprint: the Bolshevik revolution in Petrograd, and the British Foreign Secretary Lord Balfour's promise of a homeland to the Jews in Palestine. Outwardly, the two events seemed to the unbeliever to have no relation to each other; the fact that they happened at exactly the same time, and under the leadership of men from the same race and class and locality - the Jewish intelligentsia of Western Russia and Poland - seemed no more than a coincidence. To the believing eye, however, they were two aspects, in two geographical areas, of one and the same event - the event called in the Gospel "the beginning of sorrows" (Matthew 24.8), in the epistles of St. Paul - "the removal of him that restraineth" (II Thessalonians 2.7), and in the Apocalypse of St. John - "the releasing of the beast from the abyss" (Revelation 20.3).

If we look at the event from its Jewish aspect, which is what I shall attempt to do in this lecture, it looks like the triumph of a purely national movement - Zionism. From the Russian aspect, on the other hand, it looks like a purely political-social coup motivated by a purely secular vision of world history - Marxism-Leninism. In truth, however, Zionism and Marxism-Leninism are two aspects of a movement which is neither nationalist nor political in essence, but religious - or rather, demonic.

\*

The nationalist roots of this phenomenon go back to the first century A.D. and the life of Christ, when the leaders of the Jews became filled with a nationalist passion which expressed itself in a hatred for the Gentiles, on the one hand, and an unquenchable desire to be delivered from the yoke of the Romans at any cost, on the other. In an article entitled "Christ the Saviour and the Jewish Revolution", Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) of Kiev demonstrated in detail how the Pharisees' passion to establish an independent Jewish kingdom was the prime motive for their killing of Christ, Who stood for the establishment of a quite different, spiritual Kingdom, in which men of all nations could take part and which could not be established by political,

revolutionary action. The Pharisees hypocritically concealed their real motives by charging Christ before the Roman procurator Pilate as a revolutionary against Roman power, and by their proclaiming: "We have no king but Caesar" (John 19.15). Having killed Christ and excommunicated the Church of Christ, which represented the fulfilment of the universal theocratic ideal of Israel, the Pharisees incited the Jews to rebel against Roman power in 66-70. The result was a disastrous defeat, the destruction of the Temple and the city of Jerusalem, the crucifixion and death of over one million Jews, and the exile of the remainder throughout the world. The Jews rebelled again some fifty years later, and were again defeated, putting an end to the prospect of an independent Jewish kingdom for many centuries.<sup>47</sup>

However, Jewish nationalism not only did not die, but even became more intense. This fact is explained by the establishment, after the destruction of Jerusalem, of a Pharisaic, Rabbinic-controlled government-in-exile, centred in Babylon, which exerted a very tight control over all the Jews of the diaspora. This government-in-exile ruled on the basis of the Babylonian Talmud, a code of laws compiled in Babylon in about 500 A.D.

In order to understand the further history of the Jews it is necessary to say something about the Talmud.

As is well-known, the major difference between the Talmudic Jews and the Christians is in their teaching on who and what the Messiah prophesied by the Old Testament is. For Christians it is quite clear that all the Old Testament prophecies about the Messiah were fulfilled with complete accuracy in Jesus Christ, and that Christ is God Himself Who became man in order to save all men, and not only the Jews, by calling them into His spiritual Kingdom. For the Jews, on the other hand, the Messiah has not yet come, and when he will come he will be a world ruler who will make the Jews the dominant nation of the world. This teaching was already dominant among the Jews at the time of Christ, and was the main reasoning why they rejected Christ. But by the time the Talmud had been written, an extra twist had been given to the Jewish doctrine of the Messiah. The Messiah was now not only a world ruler who would make the Jews the dominant nation of the world. "The Messiah," according to the Talmud, "is without metaphor the Jewish people"...

The attitude of the Jewish religion towards Jesus Christ is openly vicious. In the Talmud, the Midrash and the medieval Toledoth Jeshua, He is described as a "liar", an "imposter" and a "bastard", a "sorcerer", a "dog" and a "child of lust". He is supposed to have been born illegitimately of Mary, a hairdresser's wife, and a Roman soldier called Panthera, and to have practised black magic. Mention of the name of Jesus is prohibited in Jewish households.

---

<sup>47</sup> Khrapovitsky, "Christ the Savior and the Jewish Revolution", *Orthodox Life*, vol. 35, no. 4, July-August, 1988, pp. 11-31.



In 1631, as Reed recounts, a Synod of Rabbis meeting in Poland tried to censor these passages in the Talmud because of the embarrassment they were causing. The decree read: "We enjoin you, under pain of excommunication major, to print nothing in future editions, whether of the Mishna or of the Gemara, which relates whether for good or for evil to the acts of Jesus the Nazarene, and to substitute instead a circle like this: O, which will warn the rabbis and schoolmasters to teach the young these passages only viva voce. By means of this precaution the savants among the Nazarenes will have no further pretext to attack us on this subject."<sup>48</sup> In the twentieth century, however, these passages have been restored in the Hebrew editions of the Talmud...

The Talmud is equally vicious in its condemnation of all Gentiles, and especially Christians. Thus it defines Gentiles as those "whose flesh is as the flesh of asses and whose issue is like the issue of horses"! Again, the Talmud decreed that a lost article could be returned to its owner if he was "a brother or a neighbour", but not if he was a Gentile. The words, "Blessed art Thou, Who has not made me a Gentile" are recited daily...

"The Jew who sells to a Gentile landed property bordering on the land of another Jew is to be excommunicated. A Gentile cannot be trusted as witness in a criminal or civil suit because he could not be depended on to keep his word like a Jew. A Jew testifying in a petty Gentile civil court as a single witness against a Jew must be excommunicated. Adultery committed with a non-Jewish woman is not adultery 'for the heathen have no lawfully wedded wife, they are not really their wives'. The Gentiles are as such precluded from admission to a future world..."<sup>49</sup>

\*

It is obvious that a nation with a law like this will both hate all other nations and will be feared and hated by them. And that has been the law of Jewish history.

That the early Christians were savagely persecuted by the Jews is evident from The Acts of the Apostles and the early Christian historians. And it should be remembered that even where it was Gentile pagans who executed the Christians, it was very often the Jews who incited them to it. This was the case with St. Paul and many of the first disciples.

St. Justin, in his discussion with the Rabbi Tryphon, remarked that the Jews attacked Christ and sowed suspicions against Christians and righteous men. "You say that Christ taught His disciples to commit disgraceful crimes," he writes.<sup>50</sup> St. Justin was killed in one of the persecutions against Christians.

---

<sup>48</sup> Reed, D., *The Controversy of Zion*, Durban, S.A.: Dolphin Press, 1978, p. 90.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 91.

<sup>50</sup> St. Justin, *Dialogue with Trypho*, 17.

In 150 A.D. there was a Jewish rebellion in Cyrenaica and Cyprus, which spread from there to Egypt and Syria. Up to 240,000 people were killed by the Jews in Cyrenaica and 100,000 Greeks in Cyprus.

The Jews continued to create rebellions against the Roman empire when it became Christian. Because of this they were expelled from certain parts of Constantinople by the Emperors Theodosius II and Justin II. The Rabbis used to repeat the following words daily: "The descendants of Jacob will rule over the city, overthrowing its foundations."

In 614 A.D., the Byzantine emperor had to abandon Jerusalem because of the common action of the secret Jewish government and the Persians. When the Byzantine army had left, 90,000 Christians were slaughtered by the Jews. (Antonopoulos, 1979, pp. 36-37). However, when the Byzantines under the Emperor Heraclius reconquered Jerusalem in 628, many Jews converted, whether genuinely or by pretence, to Christianity.

It was not only Christian governments which had to fear Jewish revolutionary activity.

"In the 11th century," writes Antonopoulos, "the Caliphs of Baghdad, being disturbed by the continuous increase in the power of the Jews, set upon them. Many Jewish teaching academies were destroyed, many Rabbis were expelled from Babylon and the leader of the exile, Hezekiah, was killed. The Jews began to leave Babylonia and some established themselves in Arabia while others headed towards the West, especially Spain and France. The traces of the Jewish leader in exile are lost for some time and reappear in the 15th century in Constantinople. The existence of the secret Jewish government in Constantinople appears to have played a significant role in the fall of Constantinople in 1453..."<sup>51</sup>

\*

During the Middle Ages the chief centres of Jewish population were Spain and Portugal, on the one hand, and the kingdom of Khazaria, on the Volga, on the other.

The Jews first came in large numbers into the Iberian peninsula in the seventh century, in the wake of the all-conquering Islamic armies. There, as in Jerusalem in 614, they made common cause with the Mohammedans against the Christians, and often betrayed the Christians into the hands of the Mohammedans. For this they were given control of the towns of Cordova, Granada, Malaga, Toledo and many others.

But as, during the following centuries, the pendulum began gradually to swing from the Moors back to the Spaniards, the Jews again (as in Jerusalem

---

<sup>51</sup> Antonopoulos, I.E., *Synomosia kai Agape*, Athens, 1979, pp. 37-38 (in Greek).

in 628) changed sides. Many of them converted to Christianity. However, since the Talmud allowed Jews to feign conversion, the Marranos were not trusted, in spite of the fact that the Spanish kings usually made them their finance ministers. And so, after the reconquest of Spain, the stored-up feelings of resentment against the Jews finally broke out, and in 1492 the Jews were expelled from Spain and in 1496 from Portugal.<sup>52</sup>

The Jews who were expelled from the Iberian peninsula settled mainly in other parts of Western Europe; they came to be known as the Sephardim.

The other main branch of modern Jewry, the Ashkenazi, are descended from the Jews of Khazaria. This mysterious kingdom, inhabited by a people of Tatar or Turkic-Mongolian race, converted to Judaism in about 679. For the five centuries or so of their independent existence they lived peaceably enough, and were fairly tolerant of the Christians and Mohammedans in their midst.

However, during the early thirteenth century the Khazars, already weakened by other incursions, were overwhelmed by the Mongol hordes led by Ghengiz Khan. This catastrophe propelled Khazar offshoots westwards, to Kievan Russia, Romania, Hungary and especially to Poland-Lithuania, where by the seventeenth century they formed about five percent of the population. This was a fateful development. For the resettled Khazarian Jews of Poland, the Ashkenazi, as they were called, began to develop into a less tolerant and more characteristically Judaic nation than their forefathers'. It is from them that the majority of the leaders both of the Bolsheviks of Russia in the early years of the revolution and of the Zionists of Israel have sprung...

Koestler, himself a Hungarian Jew, writes that the Khazars were branching out "long before the destruction of the Khazar state by the Mongols - as the ancient Hebrew nation had started branching into the Diaspora long before the destruction of Jerusalem. Ethnically, the Semitic tribes on the waters of the Jordan and the Turko-Khazar tribes on the Volga were of course 'miles apart', but they had at least two important formative factors in common. Each lived at a focal junction where the great trade routes connecting east and west, north and south intersect; a circumstance which predisposed them to become nations of traders, of enterprising travellers, or 'rootless cosmopolitans' - as hostile propaganda has unaffectionately labelled them. But at the same time their exclusive religion fostered a tendency to keep to themselves and stick together, to establish their own communities with their own places of worship, schools, residential quarters and ghettos (originally self-imposed) in whatever town or country they settled. This rare combination of wanderlust and ghetto-mentality, reinforced by Messianic hopes and chosen-race pride, both ancient Israelites and medieval Khazars shared - even though the latter traced their descent not to Shem but to Japeth."<sup>53</sup>

---

<sup>52</sup> Reed, *op. cit.*, p. 114.

<sup>53</sup> Koestler, A., *The Thirteenth Tribe*, London: Pan Books, 1980, pp. 125-26.

The danger posed by the Khazarian Jews was demonstrated by the way in which they nearly overthrew the Russian Christian state in the late fifteenth century. The plot of the "Judaizers" was led by a Kievan Jewish kabbalist called Scharia and two Lithuanian Jews called Schmoila Schariavy and Moses Hapush. Posing as Christians, they succeeded in suborning two Novgorodian priests called Alexei and Dionisy, who in turn converted the daughter-in-law of the Muscovite Grand-Prince, Helen, the archimandrite of the monastery of St. Simon, Zossima, and Theodore Kuritsyn, first secretary of the Boyar Duma. Soon the Judaizers were so confident in their power that during the Divine Liturgy Archpriest Alexis danced behind the altar and insulted the cross. And when, on the death of Metropolitan Gerontius, Alexei succeeded in having Archimandrite Zossimas nominated as metropolitan, "the whole Russian Church," as General Nechvolodov writes, "had at her head a Judaizer, and the immediate entourage of the sovereign, those whom he loved, were also Judaizers."<sup>54</sup>

The conspiracy of the Judaizers was finally crushed by the decisive actions of Archbishop Gennadius of Novgorod and St. Joseph of Volotsk. However, coming at the same time as the expulsion of the Jews from the Iberian peninsula, it demonstrated how great a threat the Rabbinic- and Talmud-controlled Jewish diaspora posed to all Gentile governments, not least because the Jews had no compunction in pretending to be Christians and even accepting baptism if this furthered their designs.

And so when the Russian state conquered large parts of Poland in the late eighteenth century, the "Pale of Settlement" was formed to limit the movement of Jews in the empire. Karaite Jews, however, - those who rejected the Talmud - were exempted from all restrictions. This showed that the restrictions on the Jews were not motivated by racial considerations, but by religious ones - specifically, by the Talmud's hatred of all non-Jews and clear incitement to deceive and destroy Christians.

\*

But while the Jews of the East were being restricted in their movements, those of the West were achieving their first great victory - the French Revolution, which led, under Napoleon, to their full emancipation.

The Jews were a major force in the French revolution, as represented by such figures as the occultists Saint-Germain and Cagliostro, the kabbalists Martines Pasqually and Jacob Frank, and especially the mysterious Dr. Ernst Falk, who was known as "the Chief of the Jews" and who exerted a great influence over the arch-conspirator and head of the Grand Orient, the Duke of Orleans. The Jews were determined to reap the fruits of the revolution which they had done so much to bring about. Their aim was social and political

---

<sup>54</sup> Nechvolodov, A., *L'Empereur Nicolas II et les Juifs*, Paris, 1924, p. 183 (in French).

emancipation - that "liberty, equality and fraternity" which they always denied, according to their own laws, to the Gentile Christians.

In the two years before the crucial debate on September 27, 1791, fourteen attempts were made to give the Jew civic equality and thirty-five major speeches were given by several orators, among them Mirabeau and Robespierre. At first there was opposition. But finally, through bribes and the threat of force, they attained their end.

If the French revolution gave the Jews their first great political victory, Napoleon gave them their second. On May 22, 1799, Napoleon's Paris Moniteur published the following report, penned from Constantinople on April 17: "Buonaparte has published a proclamation in which he invites all the Jews of Asia and Africa to come and place themselves under his flag in order to re-establish ancient Jerusalem. He has already armed a great number and their battalions are threatening Aleppo."

This was not the first time that the Jews had persuaded a Gentile ruler to restore them to Jerusalem. In the fourth century the Roman emperor Julian the Apostate allowed the Jews to return and to start rebuilding the Temple. However, fire came out from the foundations and black crosses appeared on the workers' garments, forcing them to abandon the enterprise.

And the Jews were to be thwarted again. For British sea-power prevented Napoleon from reaching Jerusalem and making himself, as it was reported, king of the Jews. The Jews would have to wait another century before another Gentile power - this time, the British - again offered them to return to Zion.

Napoleon had another idea, however, which appeared at first hostile to the Jews but in the end benefitted them greatly. In 1806, after he had received many complaints against the use by the Jews of their new-found freedom, he decided on an extraordinary act: to convene the Jewish Sanhedrin in order to receive clear and unambiguous answers to the following questions: did the Jewish law permit mixed marriages; did the Jews regard Frenchmen as foreigners or as brothers; did they regard France as their native country the laws of which they were bound to obey; did the Judaic law draw any distinction between Jewish and Christian debtors?

The Jews received the news that Napoleon was to convene the Sanhedrin with unbounded joy. They were even ready to recognize Napoleon as the Messiah. And when the Sanhedrin convened it reassured him that "our dogmas are consistent with the civil laws under which we live, and do not separate us at all from the society of men..."

Now that the Jews had denied any suggestion that they formed a nation within nations, the way was open for their recognition and emancipation by other European nations. Thus England emancipated the Jews in 1849 and 1857; Denmark, in 1849; Austro-Hungary, in 1867; Germany, in 1869 and 1871;

Italy, in 1860 and 1870; Switzerland, in 1869 and 1874; Bulgaria and Serbia, in 1878 and 1879. The only nations who did not emancipate their Jewish populations were, significantly, Spain and Portugal, on the one hand, and Russia and Romania, on the other.

However, the leopard did not change its spots. First, the emancipation of the Jews was accompanied by an upsurge of Jewish-led revolutionary activity throughout continental Europe. Thus the British Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli, himself a Christian Jew, warned strongly against the revolutionary activities of his compatriots.

Secondly, the Jews did not restrain their money-lending activities, as Napoleon had pleaded with them to do. On the contrary, only one year after the convening of the Great Sanhedrin, Napoleon was forced to adopt repressive measures against their financial excesses. And as the nineteenth century progressed, the financial power of the Jews, symbolized especially by the name of Rothschild, grew inexorably.

Thirdly, as emancipation led to the assimilation of large numbers of Jews into Gentile Christian society, a movement grew up in reaction to it, whose aim was to preserve the exclusive and anti-Gentile character of traditional Judaism by separating the Jews into a national homeland. This movement, Zionism, received its official launch in a Congress held at Basle in 1897 under the presidency of Dr. Theodor Herzl. That Zionism's aims were not merely nationalist, but Talmudist and imperialist in character, was shown by the words of a Dr. Mandelstam at the second Congress in 1898: "The Jews energetically reject the idea of fusion with other nationalities and cling firmly to their historical hope, i.e., of world empire."<sup>55</sup> And in conjunction with the financial power of mainly Sephardic Jewish bankers, and the subversive force of the mainly Ashkenazi Jewish revolutionaries, Zionism was to have a truly world-wide impact on the politics of the twentieth century...

\*

Turning now to Russia, we may note that by 1914 there were about seven million Jews in the Russian empire - the largest non-Slavic ethnic minority. Most of them lived in the Pale of Settlement - the area comprising roughly Eastern Poland, Lithuania, the Western Ukraine and Bessarabia, where Russian conquest or annexation since the late eighteenth century had originally found them. Russian law, very loosely observed, confined them to this area, but on religious, not racial grounds: Karaite Jews, who did not accept the Talmud, the Mountain Jews of the Caucasus, who were strongly tainted with paganism, and Jews who became Christians of any denomination, were given equal rights with the rest of the population.

---

<sup>55</sup> Quoted in Reed, *op. cit.*, p. 94.

Moreover, permission to live outside the Pale was given to various categories of Jews: Siberian colonists, domestic servants, artisans, university graduates (one-fifth of the students of Kharkov university were Jews), businessmen, industrialists, bankers and others. This meant that in spite of the discriminatory laws there were considerable colonies of Jews throughout the empire and even in the capital. And it enabled them to play a prominent role in the cultural and commercial life of pre-revolutionary Russia, Jews making up a third of Russia's total trading community.

However, the considerable opportunities thus presented to Jews in the Russian empire were not to the liking of the traditionalist, Talmud- and Rabbi-dominated Jews of Western Russia. For them, Christians and Christian society were unclean and despicable. "The eminent Jewish-Russian lawyer, Genrikh Sliozberg," write Fitzlyon and Browning, "never forgot the 'real grief' of his family and relations when they discovered that his father had sent him to a Russian grammar school. His school uniform they found particularly irritating, sinful even. It was, they thought, 'an apostate's garb', and his mother and grandmother cried bitterly every time they saw him in it." Again, "the Russian-Jewish revolutionary, Lev Deutsch, writing in 1923, clearly remembered the time when the Jews 'considered it sinful to learn Russian, and its use was allowed only if absolutely essential and, of course, only for speaking to Christians (the goyim)."<sup>56</sup>

It was in this fanatical atmosphere that Communist and Zionist propaganda made inroads into Jewish youth; and, as Chaim Weitzmann recalled in his Autobiography, zealots of both types were to be found in his own family, being united only in their hatred of Orthodox Russia...

Such sentiments were bound to lead to a reaction on the part of the surrounding population. Moreover, as Dostoyevsky indignantly wrote, Jewish money-lenders exploited the poor peasants who wished to buy their freedom after Alexander II's emancipation of the serfs in 1861. The government tried to help with generous, low-interest, 50-year loans, and on several occasions cancelled the debts outright; but the remaining need was filled less generous Jews, who stepped in with much tougher, high-interest loans.

This led, at the beginning of the twentieth century, to the famous pogroms, in which several hundred Jews in the Ukraine were killed by an angry peasantry. The Russian Church and State immediately condemned these killings, but the Jewish and Socialist press took this as their opportunity to whip up a vast campaign against Russia, both at home and abroad. The rich Sephardic Jews of the West, and especially America, gave every help to their poorer Ashkenazi brothers in the East.

---

<sup>56</sup> Fitzalyon and Browning, *Before the Revolution*, Harmondsworth:Penguin, 1977, p. 46.

The revolution, when it came, was in two stages. The first stage, that of the February revolution which toppled the Tsar, was largely the work of Gentile Masons such as the right-wing Guchkov and the left-wing Kerensky, Nekrasov and Tereshchenko - the triumvirate which virtually ruled Russia from July to October, 1917. Freemasonry is a religion founded in London in 1717 whose basic idea is the union of all religious believers around the task of rebuilding the Temple of Solomon in Jerusalem. As such, it is often, and rightly, seen as a Gentile version of Talmudic Judaism. When the Bolsheviki took power in October, Kerensky and his Masonic colleagues fled to France, where they set up lodges under the aegis of the Grand Orient - the same lodge which had begun the French revolution.<sup>57</sup>

The October revolution was a very different affair, and the work mainly of Jews. Its basic cell of government, the Soviet, was invented by the Jew Lev Bronstein (Trotsky) during the abortive revolution of 1905. And its senior leadership was made up almost entirely of Jews and non-Russians. This was reported by the British government's White Paper of 1919 and by the Dutch ambassador at Saint Petersburg.

In February, 1920, Winston Churchill wrote: "It would almost seem as if the Gospel of Christ and the gospel of anti-Christ were designed to originate among the same people; and that this mystic and mysterious race had been chosen for the supreme manifestations, both of the Divine and the diabolical... From the days of 'Spartacus' Weishaupt to those of Karl Marx, and down to Trotsky (Russia), Bela Kun (Hungary), Rosa Luxembourg (Germany) and Emma Goldman (United States), this worldwide conspiracy for the overthrow of civilization and for the reconstitution of society on the basis of arrested development, of envious malevolence and impossible equality, has been steadily growing. It played, as a modern writer, Mrs. Nesta Webster, has so ably shown, a definitely recognizable part in the tragedy of the French Revolution. It has been the mainspring of every subversive movement during the nineteenth century; and now at last this band of extraordinary personalities from the underworld of the great cities of Europe and America have gripped the Russian people by the hair of their heads and have become practically the undisputed masters of that enormous empire. There is no need to exaggerate the part played in the creation of Bolshevism and in the bringing about of the Russian Revolution by these international and for the most part atheistical Jews. It is certainly a very great one; it probably outweighs all others."<sup>58</sup>

Reed (1978) has proved this point by some statistics: "The Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party, which wielded the supreme power, contained 3 Russians (including Lenin) and 9 Jews. The next body in importance, the Central Committee of the Executive Commission (or secret police) comprized 42 Jews and 19 Russians, Letts, Georgians and others. The

<sup>57</sup> Katkov, G., *Fevral'skaya Revolyutsiya*, Paris, 1984, pp. 175-82 (in Russian).

<sup>58</sup> Quoted in Reed, *op. cit.*, pp. 272-3.



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>59</sup> The situation was no different outside the two capitals, as was demonstrated in a book written by D. Petrovsky in 1931 in Paris entitled La Russie sous les Juifs. And the killing of the Tsar in Ekaterinburg was entrusted to the Jews Yakov Sverdlov and Yakov Yurovsky...

Even the "pro-Semite" historian Richard Pipes admits: "Jews undeniably played in the Bolshevik Party and the early Soviet apparatus a role disproportionate to their share of the population. The number of Jews active in Communism in Russia and abroad was striking: in Hungary, for example, they furnished 95 percent of the leading figures in Bela Kun's dictatorship. They also were disproportionately represented among Communists in Germany and Austria during the revolutionary upheavals there in 1918-23, and in the apparatus of the Communist International."<sup>60</sup>

Of course, the Jewish Bolsheviks were not religious Jews, and were in fact as opposed to Talmudic Judaism as any other segment of the population. Moreover, as Pipes points out, "the results of the elections to the Constituent Assembly indicate that Bolshevik support came not from the region of Jewish concentration, the old Pale of Settlement, but from the armed forces and the cities of Great Russia, which had hardly any Jews".<sup>61</sup> So blame for the Russian revolution must fall on Russians as well as Jews; and in fact hardly any of the constituent nations of the Russian empire can claim to have played no part in the catastrophe. Nevertheless, the extraordinary prominence of Jews in the revolution is a fact that must be related, at least in part, to the traditionally anti-Russian and anti-Christian attitude of Jewish culture. Moreover, so complete was the Jewish domination of Russia as a result of the revolution that it is really a misnomer to speak about the "Russian" revolution; it should more accurately be called the anti-Russian, or Russian-Jewish revolution...

Indeed, the Russian revolution may be regarded as one branch of that general triumph of Jewish power which we observe in the twentieth century in both East and West, in both Russia and America and Israel. It is as if, by God's permission and for the chastisement of the sins of many nations, there arose in the Pale of Settlement an avenging horde that swept away the last major restraining power and ushered in the era of the Apocalypse. For, as Chaim Weitzmann, the first president of Israel, showed in his Autobiography<sup>62</sup>, the atheist Bolshevik Jews and the theist Zionist Jews came

---

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 274.

<sup>60</sup> Pipes, R., *Russian under the Bolsheviks, 1919-1924*, London: Fontana, 1994, pp. 112-13.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, (p. 113).

<sup>62</sup> Weitzmann, C., *Trial and Error: The Autobiography of Chaim Weitzmann*, New York: Harper, 1949.

from the same milieu, often the very same families; so that his mother was able to witness her sons' triumph both in Bolshevik Moscow and Zionist Jerusalem...

In conclusion, we may say that while nationalism has probably existed in some form since the beginning of human history, it acquired its first religious and as it were institutionalized form in the Jewish diaspora after the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D., and achieved its most devastating triumph in the Jewish-Russian revolution of 1917. Born out of national and political defeat, Talmudic Judaism made of the desire for national and political rehabilitation a religion in which the central place of worship was not God but a nation. For, as Rabbi Solomon Goldman has written, "God is absorbed in the nationalism of Israel..."<sup>63</sup>

---

<sup>63</sup> Quoted in Reed, *op. cit.*, p. 48.

## LECTURE 8. SATANOCRACY REBORN: THE JEWISH- RUSSIAN REVOLUTION (II)

*My people have committed two evils:  
they have forsaken Me, the fountain of  
living waters, and hewed out cisterns  
for themselves, broken cisterns, that  
can hold no water.  
Jeremiah 2.13*

In the previous lectures, we have interpreted world history - or at any rate, that part of world history concentrated in the Middle East and Europe - in terms of a perennial struggle between two irreconcilable religio-political principles: theocracy and satanocracy.

Theocracy denotes the type of society in which the whole of the life of the people, including politics, is devoted primarily to the service of God, Who is seen as the true King of kings and Lord of lords. Strictly speaking, a true theocracy can only be the Kingdom of God on earth, which is the Church. However, in view of the fall of man, and the consequent necessity of fighting wars and indulging in other such unspiritual activities, theocratic societies from the time of the kings of Israel have created a kind of division of labour between the Church, on the one hand, which occupies itself more or less exclusively with spiritual matters, and the Crown, on the other, which occupies itself with more material matters - although Church and Crown are not seen as opposing principles but as supporting each other in a "symphony of powers", like soul and body.

Satanocracy, by contrast, abolishes the distinction between Church and State and subordinates society in all its spheres to the will of the earthly ruler, who is recognized to be the incarnation of a god (as in Ancient Babylonia and Egypt) or of an impersonal heavenly order (as in Ancient China and the Platonic philosophies) or, more dynamically, of the March of History (as in Hegelianism and Marxism-Leninism). "Pure" satanocracies have been rare since Christ, largely because of the power of the Orthodox Christian theocratic ideal. But that ideal has come to be undermined by, on the one hand, pseudo-theocracies such as Papism and Islam, and on the other, by anti-theocratic theories which have deceitfully pretended to be compatible with true theism, such as Protestant democracy and Jewish nationalism. Finally, after a "trial run" in the French revolution, a "pure" satanocracy came to power in 1917 on the ruins of the Russian theocracy. This satanocracy combined elements of all the previous satanocracies and pseudo- and anti-theocracies: the totalitarianism and individualist man-worship of the ancient pagan monarchies and Papism; the fatalist determinism of Islam; the collectivist people-worship of the Protestant democracies; and the Jewish and other kinds of nationalism.

We have examined the Jewish element in the revolution in the last lecture: in this one, it is time to examine its more philosophical elements.

\*

Of course, even when we examine the more philosophical elements in the revolution, it is difficult to avoid the Jewish element which is so closely entwined with it. And this is not only because so many of the theorists of the revolution, such as Marx, Bakunin and Trotsky, were Jews. As Bertrand Russell pointed out, many elements of the Marxist system are reminiscent of Judaism: the striving for the promised land on earth and in time (communism and the withering away of the state); the division of the peoples of the world into the chosen people (the proletariat) and the goyim (the exploiting classes), and the hatred incited against the latter; and the cult of the false Messiah (the infallible leader or party).<sup>64</sup>

Utopianism is certainly at the heart of the philosophical system of Marxism-Leninism. Shafarevich has traced examples of utopian thought and statehood in many epochs and geographical regions, and has concluded that it is always (a) totalitarian in structure, and (b) guided by a kind of death-wish which results in the physical and spiritual death of the people.<sup>65</sup> Under the name of "chiliasm" or "millenarianism", utopianism was one of the earliest Christian heresies (with, as we might now expect, a strongly Jewish colouring). It was officially condemned at the Second Ecumenical Council in Constantinople in 381, at which time the following words were added to the Nicene Creed in order to exclude it: "Whose Kingdom shall have no end." For the heresy of chiliasm essentially amounted to the belief that Christ Himself will come to earth before the Last Judgement in order to install His Kingdom physically for a period of a thousand years. But the Church rejected this, teaching that the true Kingdom of Christ will come only after the Judgement, and that it will then be a spiritual Kingdom that is "not of this world" and "has no end". We can enter the Kingdom of God partially before the Judgement, but only in and through the Church, which is not, and can never be, a sensually apprehended, temporal kingdom.

Utopianism is based not only on a heretical eschatology, but also on a false anthropology that denies the fall of man. For utopia on earth is possible only on the assumption that the men who live in the utopia are sinless and passionless, being governed only by perfect love and humility. To suppose that any class of men, once delivered from injustice and poverty, will automatically behave like angels, is a myth. Still more mythical is the idea that the kingdom of love and brotherhood can be ushered in by hatred and fratricidal war. The means do not justify the ends; and the employment of evil means leads unfailingly to evil ends.

---

<sup>64</sup> Russell, *A History of Western Philosophy*, London: Allen Unwin, 1947.

<sup>65</sup> Shafarevich, *Sotsializm kak Yaoleniye Mirovoj Istorii*, op. cit.

For, as Solzhenitsyn has said, the line between good and evil passes, not between classes or nations, but down the middle of each human heart. Therefore the final triumph of good over evil is possible only through the purification of the human heart, every human heart. And that is a spiritual task which is accomplished by spiritual, not material or political means.

This brings us to a still deeper flaw of utopianism - its materialism. For while the heresy of chiliasm at any rate recognized the existence of God and the spiritual nature of man, utopianism reduces everything to the blind determinism of insensate matter. For the ancient heretics, utopia could only be introduced by God, and was awarded to the righteous in response to the right use of their freewill. For the moderns, there is neither God nor freewill - but utopia will come in any case, as the result of the iron laws of necessity. And this fatalistic faith both gives the revolution its frightening power - for men acquire extraordinary self-confidence when they know that they must win in the end - and guarantees its terrifying cruelty - for without freewill there is no responsibility, and, as Dostoyevsky said, "if there is no God, everything is permitted".

"Cosmic possession," writes Fr. George Florovsky, " - that is how we can define the utopian experience. The feelings of unqualified dependence, of complete determination from without and full immersion and inclusion into the universal order define utopianism's estimate of itself and the world. Man feels himself to be an 'organic pin', a link in some all-embracing chain - he feels that he is unambiguously, irretrievably forged into one whole with the cosmos...

"From an actor and creator, consciously willing and choosing, and for that reason bearing the risk of responsibility for his self-definition, man is turned into a thing, into a needle, by which someone sews something. In the organic all-unity there is no place for action - here only movement is possible... There is no place for the act, no place for the exploit (podvig)."<sup>66</sup>

Through its utopianism, the revolution merges the personalities of its adherents into an elemental, all-embracing process to which they surrender their freedom and personality. And through its class-warfare and anti-patriotism, it destroys those last strongholds of personal and collective freedom that stand in the way of its final victory. But what is such a "victory", if there is no supreme victor to whom to give the spoils, no personal cause and leader of the victory of the proletariat? That is why the revolution was incomplete until it had found its god, why the personal "modesty" of Lenin had to be "corrected" by the "all-wise" Stalin, why the logical conclusion of the democratic and socialist revolution of February, 1917 was not only the one-party state of Lenin but the one-man rule of Stalin - a rule far more absolute

---

<sup>66</sup> Florovsky, G., "Metaphysicheskkiye predposylkiya utopizma", *Put'*, June-July, 1926, p. 30 (in Russian).

and terrible than that of any of the kings that the revolution had removed and killed.

In The Brothers Karamazov Dostoyevsky clearly saw this need for universal worship that lies at the heart of the revolution. And he traced its origin to the worship of the infallible Pope of heretical Rome and, still further back, to the worship of the imperator-pontifex maximus of pagan Rome. Deep in the soul of man, as St. Augustine pointed out, there is a God-shaped hole; and if that hole is not filled by the worship of the true God, it will be filled by the worship of a false god; and to that god, man will give himself totally. Thus recently, after the funeral of the dictator of the Ivory Coast (who built the world's largest church on the model of St. Peter's in Rome), a young man, beside himself with grief, threw himself into the crocodile-infested waters of the moat round the dictator's palace. This shows how the need for absolute worship and total self-sacrifice is as alive now, in our materialist and democratic age, as it has ever been, and why no theory of man or society which fails to take this into account will ever succeed or bring forth good fruit.

\*

In 1983, in his speech accepting the Templeton prize for Religion in London, Alexander Solzhenitsyn indicated the fundamental cause of the revolution: hatred of God. "Within the philosophical system of Marx and Lenin, and at the heart of their psychology," he said, "hatred of God is the principal driving force, more fundamental than all their political and economic pretensions. Militant atheism is not merely incidental or marginal to communist policy; it is not a side-effect, but the central pivot..."<sup>67</sup>

In support of this thesis, we may cite Lenin himself. First, in a letter to Gorky in 1913: "Every religious idea, every idea of a god, even flirting with the idea of God is unutterable vileness of the most dangerous kind".<sup>68</sup> Secondly, in his address to the Third All-Russian congress of the Union of Russian Youth in October, 1920: "In what sense do we reject morality and ethics? In the sense in which it is preached by the bourgeoisie, which has derived this morality from the commandments of God. Of course, as regards God, we say that we do not believe in Him, and we very well know that it was in the name of God that the clergy used to speak, that the landowners spoke, that the bourgeoisie spoke, so as to promote their exploitative interests. Or.. they derived morality from idealistic or semi-idealistic phrases, which always came down to something very similar to the commandments of God. All such morality which is taken from extra-human, extra-class conceptions, we reject. We say that it is a deception, that it is a swindle, that it is oppression of the minds of the workers and peasants in the interests of the landowners

---

<sup>67</sup> Solzhenitsyn, A., Templeton Address, *Russkaya Mysl'*, no. 3465, 19 May, 1983, p. 6 (in Russian).

<sup>68</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works*, vol. 17, pp. 81-86 (n Russian).

and capitalists. We say that our morality is entirely subject to the interests of the class struggle of the proletariat. Our morality derives from the interests of the class struggle of the proletariat."<sup>69</sup>

Almost all tyrants in history, even while committing their evil deeds, have tried to justify them by reference to the will of God or some system of absolute values. Lenin was the first major exception to this rule. And he proved the sincerity of his words by initiating the most terrible persecution of the Church in history, with many millions of martyrs.

The Church was not slow to react. On January 19, 1918, Patriarch Tikhon issued his famous anathema against the Bolsheviks. The significance of this anathema lies not so much in its casting out of the Bolsheviks themselves (all those who deny God are subject to anathema, that is, separation from God, for that very denial), as in the command to the faithful: "I adjure all of you who are faithful children of the Orthodox Church of Christ not to commune with such outcasts of the human race in any matter whatsoever; 'cast out the wicked from among you' (1 Corinthians 5.13)." In other words, the Bolshevik government was 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. 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).

When the decree was read to the the Local Council of the Russian Church which was then meeting in Moscow, it was enthusiastically endorsed by it: "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

---

<sup>69</sup> Ibid., vol. 41, p. 309.

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>70</sup>

For the ten years between 1917 and 1927, the Orthodox Church was the only organized force opposing Communism within Russia and the Soviet Union. She opposed not only the destruction of the churches and the killing of Christians, but also the nationalization of the land and the secularization of society generally. After the killing of the Tsar and the defeat of the White armies, therefore, the communists turned their attention to the Church as their most serious enemy. Thus in a long letter to the Politburo marked "Top Secret. No Copies to be Made" and dated February 22, 1922, Lenin demanded that the communists "wage a decisive and merciless war with the black-hundreds clergy and crush their opposition with such cruelty that they will not forget it for many decades... The more members of the reactionary bourgeoisie we manage to shoot, the better."

However, the martyrdom of the Church only increased her prestige in society, and it soon became clear to the communists that a different tactic was needed. At a meeting of the Politburo in April, it was decided to create a false, "Soviet church" which would oppose the patriarchate while remaining loyal to the government and Communism. Thus was created the so-called "Living Church", which was led by what Trotsky called "loyal and progressive elements in the clergy" and which at one point - with the very significant help of the KGB - won control of two-thirds of the churches in Russia and Siberia. The importance of this victory was fully appreciated by Trotsky, who in a letter to Lenin dated May 27, 1922, called it "the most profound spiritual revolution in the Russian people". Lenin commented: "True! A thousand times true!"<sup>71</sup>

However, the rejoicing of Lenin and Trotsky was premature, for the "Living Church", after an initial success, was rejected by the majority of the Orthodox. So it was decided that another, more subtle variation on the theme of the "Living Church" was needed. The communists' chance came after the death of Patriarch Tikhon (probably by poisoning) in 1925.

The successor of the patriarch until a council could be convened was Metropolitan Peter of Krutitsa. The communists tried to force him to compromise with Soviet power, but he refused and was exiled to Northern Siberia, where he died in 1937. His deputy, however, Metropolitan Sergius of Nizhni-Novgorod, was more flexible. In July, 1927, he agreed to recognize Soviet power, calling the joys of the Soviet fatherland the Church's joys and its sorrows the Church's sorrows. This document, obviously dictated by the Soviets, elicited a rebellion in the Church. Most of the senior bishops and very

---

<sup>70</sup> "Iz sobraniya Tsentral'nogo gosudarstvennogo arkhiva Oktyabr'skoj revolyutsii: listovka byez vykhodnykh dannyx, pod N 1011", *Nauka i religiya*, 1989, no. 4 (in Russian).

<sup>71</sup> N.A. "Nye bo vragom Tvoim tajnu povyem..." *Vyestnik Germanskoj Eparkhii Russkoj Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi za Granitsej*, 1992, no. 1, p. 17 (in Russian).



many priests and laity rejected both it and Sergius. However, Sergius placed all his opponents under ban, which gave the KGB the excuse they needed to imprison and torture them. The opponents of Metropolitan Sergius were forced to flee into the catacombs, and there they formed what became known as the Catacomb Church, which exists to this day. Meanwhile, Sergius, with the full support of the KGB, formed what is now known as the Moscow Patriarchate, becoming its first patriarch in 1943. This church became an obedient tool of Soviet power in all things, justifying all its evil and condemning all its opponents.

After the Second World War, the other Orthodox Churches of Eastern Europe, with the exception of the Greek Church, came under the control of the Moscow Patriarchate and therefore of the communists. In this way the last and most powerful enemy of Communism was silenced. Or rather, the true opponents of Communism continued to exist, but only in an underground, catacomb situation.

At the orders of the communists, the official churches of Eastern Europe praised communism, condemned capitalism, took control of the World Council of Churches and created a new kind of religion which has been called "ecocommunion", which is a justification of the revolution, not only in political and social life, but also in the Church.<sup>72</sup> Only since the fall of Communism in 1989-91 has the full extent of the communist domination and infiltration of the Church been revealed. It is now known, for example, that the patriarchs and most of the senior bishops of Russia, Romania, Bulgaria and Serbia are all agents of the secret police of their countries.<sup>73</sup>

\*

The story of the triumph of Communism in Russia is the clearest example so far in history of the transformation of a theocratic state into a satanocracy. However, many continue to argue that there is an essential continuity between Tsarist Russia and Soviet Russia, that Lenin and Stalin were simply continuing in the tradition of Ivan the Terrible and Peter the Great. In the last part of this lecture, we shall briefly examine this argument.

Now we may concede that there is indeed some kinship between Ivan the Terrible and Peter the Great, on the one hand, and Lenin and Stalin, on the other. However, that kinship does not consist in autocracy or monarchy as such, as westernizers presume. The kinship lies in their common arrogance towards the Church, the other pillar of the Orthodox symphony of powers. Ivan tended to believe that he was the head of the Church as well as the State, which is why he ordered the execution of Metropolitan Philip of Moscow, who rebuked him for his crimes. And Peter abolished the patriarchate

<sup>72</sup> See Moss, V., "Ecucommunism", *Living Orthodoxy*, XI, 65, 1989, pp. 13-18; "The Restoration of Romanity", *Orthodox Life*, July-August, 1992.

<sup>73</sup> Potapov, V., "*Molchanijem predayotsa Bog*", Moscow: Isikhiya, 1992, pp. 36-39 (in Russian).

altogether, making the Church a department of the State. Lenin, by separating the Church and the State, appeared to be reversing Peter's work; but in fact his aim was to annihilate the Church completely. He did not succeed; but Stalin succeeded in making the official Moscow Patriarchate an obedient mouthpiece of communist propaganda.

These facts, however, do not prove that Soviet totalitarianism is simply a development of Russian tsarism, still less that there is something in the Russian soul that naturally gives birth to totalitarian regimes.

For if we compare, for example, the twenty years of the last Tsar's reign with the first twenty years after the revolution, we see an almost complete contrast, and not only in relation to religion. Thus the last twenty years of Tsarist rule saw a rapidly expanding economy, based on free market principles in both industry and (after Stolypin's reforms) agriculture; a rapidly developing system of general health care and education, with an excellent system of higher education accessible to all nationalities, including Jews; a very small police force whose power did not extend beyond the main towns; a relatively small prison population (12,000 at its maximum, in 1912), with excellent conditions for exiles such as Lenin and Stalin; a highly developed legal system; freedom of speech and the press (after 1905); and a nationalities policy which, while far from perfect (especially in relation to the Poles), was greatly superior to its internationalist successor, as the present plethora of national conflicts in the former Soviet Union, most of which are the direct outcome of Soviet policy, demonstrate. On the other hand, the first twenty years of Soviet rule saw a catastrophic decline in living standards owing to an economy based on State control of all the means of production; the highest rate of mortality from unnatural causes in the history of mankind (estimates for the whole Soviet period to 1956, approximately 70 million); an enormous police force controlling every aspect of the citizens' lives; an enormous prison and camp population (about 12,000,000 at any one time in the late thirties and forties) living in conditions of appalling brutality; the complete breakdown of normal legal protections and rights; the corruption of the whole of education by the systematic lie; the complete suppression of freedom of speech and the press; the suppression of all nationalities and religions, especially the Russians and the Orthodox.

We are surely, therefore, justified in considering that the change in name between Russia and the Soviet Union signified a radical break in the life of the nation. At the time, almost everybody, on both sides of the ideological divide, agreed that such a break had indeed taken place; it is only in the West, and in western-influenced departments in Eastern Europe, that the idea has been propagated that Soviet totalitarianism is somehow a continuation of Russian Tsarism. This myth has been exploded with withering power, admirable logic and exhaustive documentation by Alexander Solzhenitsyn, for which he has quite unjustly been accused of being a "Great Russian chauvinist"; and it is to

Solzhenitsyn's works that I refer those interested for a more detailed discussion of this question.<sup>74</sup>

---

<sup>74</sup>Some of the flavour of Solzhenitsyn's argument can be gained from the following extract from his 1980 article, "Having the courage to see". In it he attacks the thesis, put forward by a Professor Tucker, "that the Stalinist period of the Communist leviathan was created by a borrowing from the 16th and 18th centuries of Russian history":-

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

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

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

"Is this ancient Russian tradition really: Communist subversive activity activity throughout the world, the system of economic sabotage, ideological corruption, terror and revolutions?

In my remaining lectures, however, I want to return to the theoretical discussion of the relationship between theocracy, satanocracy, monarchy and democracy - but with the help, again, of the writings of Solzhenitsyn.

---

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

"From the fact that Communism is an international phenomenon does it follow that all national traits or circumstances are completely excluded? Not at all, for Communism has to work on living earth, in the midst of a concrete people, and willy-nilly has to use its language (distorting it for its own ends). In China they persecute wall-posters, in the USSR - samizdat. The Russian urban population was forcibly expelled to work in the potato fields, and the Cuban - to work in the sugar plantations. In the USSR the population was annihilated by exile into the tundra, and in Cambodia - into the jungle. In Yugoslavia the manoeuvre was performed in one way: Tito successfully carried out mass killings in 1945, - and then dressed up in sheep's clothing so as to get Western aid. Ceausescu won his share of independence in foreign affairs in a virtuoso manner - but through the strengthening of the internal totalitarian spirit by more than 100%. According to East German Communism it is clear that the country must not be united, but according to North Korean it is equally clear that it must... Is it not clear to all that neither in Estonia, nor in Poland, nor in Mongolia and nowhere at any time has Communism served the national interests? Communist governments are not squeamish about making an addition to Communist propaganda - why not make clever use of nationalism? But does that mean that 'Communism is different in every country'? No, it is identical everywhere: everywhere it is totalitarian, everywhere it suppresses the personality, the conscience, and even annihilates life, everywhere it uses ideological terror and everywhere it is aggressive: the final goal of world Communism, of all kinds of Communism - is to seize the whole planet, including America..." (Solzhenitsyn, A. "Imyet' Muzhestvo Vidyet'", *Russkoye Vozrozhdeniye*, (IV), no. 12, 1980, pp.13-14 (in Russian).)

## LECTURE 9. THE DEMOCRATIC IDEA

*Every kingdom divided against itself  
is brought to desolation, and every city  
or house divided against itself will not stand*  
Matthew 12.25.

If we look around us today, in 1994, then it would seem as if one socio-politico-religious doctrine has conquered everywhere: democracy, human rights, anti-nationalism, free-market economics and religious indifference (ecumenism). There are still a few dictators; but very few who advocate dictatorship or absolute monarchy as such. There are still some highly nationalist, even racist regimes; but none - with the important exception of Israel - where a form of racism has the status of a state religion. There are still at least two communist countries - North Korea and China - where democracy and human rights are regularly trampled on; but China, at any rate, has a flourishing semi-capitalist economy. Only in the Muslim countries do we see an alternative doctrine of human society fervently and widely expressed; and the ideal of the Orthodox Theocracy lives on, albeit as a distinctly minority belief, in some Orthodox countries, notably Russia.

These three world-views, which we may call Democracy, Islam and Orthodoxy for short, are essentially the same three world-views which Vladimir Solovyov, in an article entitled "Three Forces", identified as incarnating the three basic forces which have determined the whole of world history. Solovyov characterized Islam as being under the dominating influence of what he called the first force, and which he defined as "the striving to subject humanity in all its spheres and at every level of its life to one supreme principle which in its exclusive unity strives to mix and confuse the whole variety of private forms, to suppress the independence of the person and the freedom of private life." Democracy he characterized as being under the dominating influence of the second force, which he defined as "the striving to destroy the stronghold of dead unity, to give freedom everywhere to private forms of life, freedom to the person and his activity; ... the extreme expression of this force is general egoism and anarchy and a multitude of separate individuals without an inner bond." The third force, which Solovyov believed was incarnate especially in the Slavic world, is defined as "giving a positive content to the two other forces, freeing them from their exclusivity, and reconciling the unity of the higher principle with the free multiplicity of private forms and elements."<sup>75</sup> In this lecture I propose to look in more detail at Solovyov's second force, as incarnate in Western Democracy.

\*

---

<sup>75</sup> Solovyov, V., "Tri Sily", reprinted in *Novy Mir*, N 1, 1989, pp. 198-199 (in Russian).

"Every sphere of activity," writes Solovyov, "every form of life in the West, keeping aloof and separate from the others, strives in its separation to achieve an absolute significance, excluding all the rest, and to become the one for all. Instead of that, however, in accordance with the unfailing law of ultimate existence, it comes in its isolation to powerlessness and nothingness; and in taking over a sphere that is foreign to it, it loses power over its own. Thus the western church, having separated from the state, but assuming to itself the significance of a state in this separation, has herself become an ecclesiastical state, and ends up by losing all power both over the state and over society. In exactly the same way, the state, on being separated both from the church and the people, and having assumed to itself an absolute significance in its exclusive centralization, is finally deprived of all independence, and is turned into.. the executive tool of the people's voting, while the people or zemstvo itself, rising up both against the church and against the state, falls apart into warring classes and then must finally fall apart into warring individuals, too. The social organism of the West, having separated from the beginning into private organisms that are hostile to each other, must finally split up into its final elements, into the atoms of society, that is, individual people; and corporative, caste egoism must be translated into personal egoism."<sup>76</sup>

The history of the world in the century since these words were written fully bears out their truth. The widening and deepening of democracy has coincided with a catastrophic increase in the atomization of society on all levels. Thus the existentialist term "alienation" has with justice been used to describe a common condition of democratic, especially urban democratic man. Now it is a question whether democracy causes atomization, or is simply one of its manifestations, the true cause being the falling away of European man from the true faith following the primary act of self-assertive atomism - the rebellion of the Pope. However, what is clear is that the institution of party warfare in democratic politics has not checked, but has rather strengthened the warfare between individuals that we see all around us, in the rise of crime and selfishness of all kinds.

This fact is most clearly illustrated by the history of Russian democracy in 1917. Thus none of the democratic leaders of the Provisional Government, from Milyukov to Lvov to Kerensky, offered any real opposition to the revolution, but rather claimed that they were acting by its authority. Indeed, Novgorodtsev writes: "Prince Lvov, Kerensky and Lenin were bound together by an unbroken bond. Prince Lvov was as guilty of Kerensky as Kerensky was of Lenin. If we compare these three actors of the revolution, who each in turn led the revolutionary power, in their relationship to the evil principle of civil enmity and inner dissolution, we can represent this relationship as follows. The system of guileless non-resistance to evil, which was applied by Prince Lvov as a system of ruling the state, with Kerensky was transformed into a system of pandering to evil camouflaged by phrases about 'the revolutionary leap' and the good of the state, while with Lenin it was

---

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, (pp. 200-201).

transformed into a system of openly serving evil clothed in the form of merciless class warfare and the destruction of all those displeasing to the authorities. Each of the three mentioned persons had his utopian dreams, and history dealt with all of them in the same way: it turned their dreams into nothing and made of them playthings of the blind elements. The one who most appealed to mass instincts and passions acquired the firmest power over the masses. In conditions of general anarchy the path to power and despotism was most open to the worst demagoguery. Hence it turned out that the legalized anarchy of Prince Lvov and Kerensky naturally and inevitably gave way to the demagogic despotism of Lenin."<sup>77</sup>

The truth of the historical law that democracy leads to anarchy which leads to despotism was demonstrated once again in 1933, when democratic Germany, rocked by conditions of general anarchy, voted Hitler into power. And we have already seen how the English revolution ushered in the dictatorship of Cromwell, and the French revolution - that of the Jacobins and Napoleon. So Lenin had history on his side when, in an address to American trade unionists in 1920, he mocked those western democrats who recognized the legitimacy of the revolutions of 1642 and 1789, but not that of 1917: if the first two were democratic, so was the third, which differed from the first two only in its greater consistency with the principles they all shared, and in the degree of its bloody despotism.

\*

Of course, democracy and communism are traditionally thought to be opposing principles; and if we compare Soviet Russia and America between the years 1917 and 1991, there are indeed large superficial differences. However, both societies were born of the same historical philosophical process - the anti-Orthodox and anti-monarchical revolution of the West; both societies have been exploited and dominated by the Jews (Zionist Sephardic Jews in America, Bolshevik Ashkenazi Jews in Russia); and both societies, as is becoming clearer by the hour, are descending into the atomistic chaos and hatred that is the ultimate end of the revolution. The reason for the superficial differences between these societies is the fact that they emphasized two mutually contradictory principles arising out of the same democratic world-view - human rights and the will of the people.

Thus Berdyaev wrote: "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,

---

<sup>77</sup> Novgorodtsev, P., "Vostanovleniye svyatyn", *Put'*, N 4, June-July, 1926, p. 44 (in Russian).

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."<sup>78</sup>

American democracy emphasizes human rights - that is, the will of the individual over the will of the people as a whole. The Soviet Union, on the other hand, emphasized the opposite - the will of the collective over the will of the individual. Of course, this collective will in fact turned into the will of a small clique and even of a single man. Nevertheless, it is only partly true to say that communism was imposed on the Soviet masses. Even if the masses did not know what their choice was leading to, by their actions they effectively put Lenin in power.

It is this close philosophical kinship between Western democracy and Soviet communism which explains the paradoxical pandering of the western democracies to Soviet communism for most of the period 1917-1991. When the Tsar fell in February, 1917, all the western democracies rejoiced and hastened to recognize the new regime, although the Tsar had close relations with the ruling families of Europe, he had been a faithful ally of the West during the war against Germany and it was obvious that his fall was not in the West's military interests. This attitude may be explained partly by the fact that the leaders of the West and of the new Russian democracy were almost all Freemasons. However, this is only a partial explanation; for when Lenin came to power in October, 1917, and declared his absolute hostility to all the institutions of the West, including Freemasonry, the West's attitude did not change radically. True, British, American, French and Japanese armies did intervene on the side of the Whites in the Russian civil war. But this effort was half-hearted, and the armies were withdrawn even when they were on the point of victory. In the years that followed all the western democracies recognized the Soviet Union, even though its tyrannical essence was clear for all to see. Indeed, western trade with Stalin during the 1930s was a key element in the build-up of the Soviet Union's industrial capacity. And even when Stalin was starving 14 million Ukrainian peasants to death during the first Five-Year Plan, socialist-minded western journalists turned a blind eye.

The phenomenon of western collusion with Bolshevism has been well analyzed by Richard Pipes: "The affinities between liberalism and revolutionary socialism.. derive from the fact that both ideologies believe that mankind, being entirely shaped by sensory perceptions (that is, devoid of inborn ideas and values), can attain moral perfection through the restructuring of its environment. Their disagreement is over the means toward that end, liberals preferring to reach it gradually and peacefully, through legislation and education, while radicals prefer a sudden and violent destruction of the existing order. Psychologically, liberals feel defensive toward genuine radicals, who are bolder and prepared to take greater risks:

---

<sup>78</sup> Berdyaev, N., "Religioznye osnovy obshchestvennosti", *Put'*, N 1, September, 1925, p. 13 (in Russian).



the liberal can never quite rid himself of the guilty feeling that while he talks the radical acts. Liberals, therefore, are predisposed to defend revolutionary radicalism and, if necessary, to help it, even as they reject its methods. The attitude of Western liberals toward Communist Russia did not much differ from that of Russian democratic socialists toward Bolshevism before and after 1917 - an attitude distinguished by intellectual and psychological schizophrenia, which greatly contributed to Lenin's triumph. Russian socialists in emigration perpetuated it. While urging Western socialists to condemn the Communist 'terroristic party dictatorship', they nevertheless insisted that it was the 'duty of workers throughout the world to throw their full weight into the struggle against attempts by the imperialist powers to intervene in the internal affairs of Russia.'<sup>79</sup>

When Hitler's Germany invaded Poland in 1939, Britain and France immediately declared war on her. However, when the Soviet Union, as Germany's ally, swallowed up the other half of Poland as well as the Baltic States and Bessarabia, the reaction was far less decisive. And when Hitler invaded the Soviet Union in 1941, the British and Americans hastened to enter into alliance with it. Even Churchill, who had been the most anti-communist British politician after the First World War, shook hands with Stalin; while Roosevelt affectionately called him "Uncle Joe". There followed the shameful pacts of Teheran, Yalta and Potsdam, which effectively handed over half of Europe (and hundreds of thousands of anti-communist Russians) to the communists - including Poland, for whose sake Britain had first entered the war, and Yugoslavia, whose lawful king lived in London and whose people had put up such a strong resistance to Nazism.

It was only the beginning of the Cold War, the blockade of Berlin and especially the Korean war which finally made the West wake up to the real nature of the Soviet threat. In 1949, the West created a military alliance against the Soviet Union, NATO; and there can be no doubt that if the West had used its enormous technological, demographic and economic superiority over the Soviet bloc in a determined manner, communism could have fallen - or at least been halted. However, western intellectuals continued to have a sneaking admiration for the Soviets while despising their own system; and the sufferings of the millions under the Soviet yoke elicited little sympathy from the western capitalists, interested as they were only in preserving their comforts. And so international Communism continued to make enormous strides while the West slept: China, North Korea, Vietnam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Yemen, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Guinea, Afghanistan, Angola, Cuba, Nicaragua... After the American defeat in Vietnam, the West's determination to fight Communism, already weak, collapsed almost entirely. "Detente" now became the order of the day; and in spite of the overwhelming evidence for the fact that wherever Communism comes rivers of blood flow, friendship between communists and capitalists flourished, just as George Orwell had prophesied in his novel 1984. The Queen of England gave a state

---

<sup>79</sup> Pipes, R., *Russia under the Bolsheviks, 1919-1924*, London: Fontana, 1994, p. 202.

banquet for Ceaucescu; the Soviets gained ideological control even over such bodies as the World Council of Churches; and at Red China's insistence democratic Taiwan was thrown out of the United Nations. As late as the early 1980s, when the Soviet Union was intensifying its repression of Christians and dissidents, President Reagan's accurate description of it as "the evil empire" was met with widespread scorn by western intellectuals.

Nor was this simply the result of the fear of nuclear war. Democratic socialism was, and is, deeply embedded in the ideological consciousness of the West, and had penetrated into the churches and political parties, the media, schools and institutes of higher education. In accordance with this ideology, the communist states were considered to be pursuing essentially the same ideals as the West. And if these ideals were not always attained, this was not considered the fault of socialism as such, but rather of the relics of Russia's pre-communist, Tsarist past - or to the innate servility of the Russian people. What the Soviet bloc needed was not a complete change of mind, but just some more human rights and political parties.

\*

In 1974, when detente was at its height, the great Russian writer Alexander Solzhenitsyn was exiled to the West. As a proven campaigner for human rights in the Soviet Union, he was expected to confirm the West's image of itself as the upholder and defender of human rights and democratic freedoms. And so he was given a hero's welcome.

However, admiration quickly turned to disillusion when he proceeded, not only to attack the Soviet Union for its lack of freedom, but also to criticize the West for its feeble resistance to Communism and abuse of its freedom. Very soon he was being labelled, even by some of his compatriots, as an anti-democrat and Great Russian chauvinist<sup>80</sup>, although both charges are demonstrably false<sup>81</sup>; and by the 1980s his voice was hardly heard any more. However, in the rest of this lecture I should like to examine his views on democracy in more detail; for his vast knowledge of Russian history and brilliant, incisive argumentation, as well as the present critical state of Russian democracy, make his writings as relevant as ever.

The first point that needs to be made is that, for all his criticisms of the West, Solzhenitsyn draws no sign of equality between the capitalist West and the communist East. The West is distinctly superior, in his view, because (a) it is free as opposed to the East's tyranny, and (b) it has a framework of law as opposed to the East's essential lawlessness. Censorship is condemned by Solzhenitsyn; he values the traditional freedoms guaranteed by a stable and enforced code of laws, no less than any western liberal. Moreover, he is

---

<sup>80</sup> Sinyavsky, A., "Solzhenitsyn kak ustroitel' novogo yedinomysliya", *Sintaksis*, 1985, pp. 16-32 (in Russian).

<sup>81</sup> Shturman, D., *Gorodu i Miru*, New York: Tretya Vol'na, 1988 (in Russian).

grateful to the West for the support it offered him and other dissidents. And if he criticizes the West, it is the criticism of a friend offered with a constructive aim - that of the strengthening of the West against its deadly rival in the East.

At the same time, clear philosophical differences emerge between Solzhenitsyn and his western interlocutors, and first of all in relation to the supreme value of the West - freedom.

For Solzhenitsyn, freedom is valuable and indeed necessary, but not as an end in itself. Rather, he sees it as a means to a higher end - moral perfection. And when he sees freedom being used to undermine rather than to support that higher end, he waxes eloquently scornful, as in his 1976 speech on receiving the "Freedom Fund" prize: "Freedom! - to forcibly defile postboxes and the eyes, ears and brains of people with commercial rubbish, and television programmes in which it is impossible to see any coherent sense. Freedom! - to impose information on people without taking into account their right not to receive it, their right to mental relaxation. Freedom! - to spit in the eyes and souls of those passing by advertisements. Freedom! - of publishers and cinema producers to poison the young generation with corrupt abominations. Freedom! - for adolescents between the ages of 14 and 18 to get drunk on leisure and pleasure instead of concentrated study and spiritual growth. Freedom! - for young adults to seek idleness and live at the expense of society. Freedom! - for strikers, to the extent of allowing them to deprive all the other citizens of a normal life, work, movement, water and food. Freedom! - for justifying speeches, when the lawyer himself knows that the accused is guilty. Freedom! - to raise the juridical right of insurance to such a degree that even charity could be reduced to extortion. Freedom! - for casual, trite pens to irresponsibly slide along the surface of any question in their haste to form public opinion. Freedom! - for the collection of gossip, when a journalist in his own interests spares neither his father nor his Fatherland. Freedom! - to publicize the defence secrets of one's country for personal political ends. Freedom! - for a businessman to make any deal, however many people it may reduce to misery or even if it would betray his own country. Freedom! - for political leaders to lightmindedly carry out what the voter wants today, and not what from a longer-term perspective will protect him from evil and danger. Freedom! - for terrorists to escape punishment, pity for them as a death sentence for the whole of the rest of society. Freedom! - for whole states to parasitically extort help from others, and not to work to build their own economy. Freedom! - as indifference to the trampling of the freedom of others far from us. Freedom! - even not to defend one's own freedom, as long as someone else risks his life."<sup>82</sup>

Solzhenitsyn did not mention what is probably the greatest evil consequence of freedom in present-day democratic Russia, even more than in the West - the rise of organized crime. On March 27, 1994, James Woolsey, General Director of the CIA, told a senate foreign committee that the

---

<sup>82</sup> Quoted in Shturman, *op. cit.*, p. 156.

pervasiveness of Russian organised crime, fostered by the freedoms and restraint of security forces necessary for democratic reform, has contributed to the popular backlash against Yeltsin's policies and bolstered support for right wing nationalist Vladimir Zhirinovskiy. Organized crime not only threatens all personal and commercial freedoms: it even threatens the life of the planet insofar as it includes potential trafficking in nuclear weapons.<sup>83</sup>

The only real defence of freedom against its own worst consequences - including, as in Russia in 1917 and Germany in 1933, a descent into a worse tyranny than that of any hereditary monarch - is a good set of laws and an effective system for enforcing them. However, democracy guarantees neither the one nor the other. For a good set of laws depends on the wisdom and morality of the lawmakers - and democratic lawmakers are elected to follow the will of their constituents, not the objective good of the country. And effective enforcement presupposes a generally high respect for the law in the population as a whole - a condition which is notably lacking in most democratic societies today. In any case, according to Solzhenitsyn, western democratic legalism has become, to a dangerous and debilitating degree, an end in itself. Every conflict is solved according to the letter of the law, and voluntary self-restraint is considered out of the question. It is not enough to have a wonderful system of laws and every democratic freedom. If the people are selfish, then life will still be hell.

Pluralism, freedom of speech and the press and democratic elections are all fine, says Solzhenitsyn, but they only make the choice possible: they do not tell us what to choose. The decision of the majority is no guarantee against "misdirection"; fascists, communists, nationalists and unprincipled demagogues are frequently voted in by majorities. Even in an established democracy major decisions can be swung by the vote of a small, but determined and selfish minority which holds the balance of power and can therefore impose its will on the majority.

In an article entitled "The Pluralists", Solzhenitsyn writes: "They [the pluralists] seem to regard pluralism as somehow the supreme attainment of history, the supreme intellectual good, the supreme value of modern Western life. This principle is often formulated as follows: 'the more different opinions, the better' - the important thing being that no one should seriously insist on the truth of his own.

"But can pluralism claim to be a principle valuable in itself, and indeed one of the loftiest? It is strange that mere plurality should be elevated to such a high status... The Washington Post once published a letter from an American, responding to my Harvard speech. 'It is difficult to believe,' he wrote, 'that diversity for its own sake is the highest aim of mankind. Respect for diversity makes no sense unless diversity helps us attain some higher goal.'

---

<sup>83</sup> Woolsey, in *Balkan News*, May 1-7, 1994, p. 2.

"Of course, variety adds colour to life. We yearn for it. We cannot imagine life without it. But if diversity becomes the highest principle, then there can be no universal human values, and making one's own values the yardstick of another person's opinions is ignorant and brutal. If there is no right and wrong, what restraints remain? If there is no universal basis for it there can be no morality. 'Pluralism' as a principle degenerates into indifference, superficiality, it spills over into relativism, into tolerance of the absurd, into a pluralism of errors and lies. You may show off your ideas, but must say nothing with conviction. To be too sure that you are right is indecent. So people wander like babes in the wood. That is why the Western world today is defenceless; paralysed by its inability any longer to distinguish between true and false positions, between manifest Good and manifest Evil, by the centrifugal chaos of ideas, by the entropy of thought. 'Let's have as many views as possible - just as long as they're all different!' But if a hundred mules all pull different ways the result is no movement at all.

"In the whole universal flux there is one truth - God's truth, and, consciously or not, we all long to draw near to this truth and touch it. A great diversity of opinions has some sense if we make it our first concern to compare them so as to discover and renounce our mistakes. To discover the true way of looking at things, come as close as we can to God's truth, and not just collect as many 'different' views as we can."<sup>84</sup>

Thus just as Western democratic pluralism would not save the West from Soviet totalitarianism, so Russia would not be delivered from the same totalitarianism by simply trying to make it more democratic. Solzhenitsyn did not believe that there was any realistic path of transition to a democratic republic without creating a number of nationalist wars - a judgement which we can now see to have been prophetically true. A multi-party democracy in Russia would be "merely be a melancholy repetition of 1917". For the failure of Russian democracy in 1917 was not the result simply of the immaturity of Russian democratic institutions, but rather of a fundamental flaw in the basic theory and spirit of democracy. Communism itself springs, not from traditional authoritarian systems, which, for all their faults, still recognized the authority of God above them, but from "the crisis of democracy, from the failure of irreligious humanism".

There are, of course, defects and dangers in the traditional systems, but "authoritarian regimes as such are not frightening - only those which are answerable to no one and nothing. The autocrats of earlier, religious ages, though their power was ostensibly unlimited, felt themselves responsible before God and their own consciences. The autocrats of our own time are dangerous precisely because it is difficult to find higher values which would bind them."<sup>85</sup>

---

<sup>84</sup> Solzhenitsyn, A., "Our Pluralists", *Survey*, vol. 29, no. 2 (125), 1985, pp. 1-2.

<sup>85</sup> See Kelley, D.R., *The Solzhenitsyn-Sakharov Dialogue*, London: Greenwood Press, 1982, pp. 75-87; also the dialogue on monarchism in Solzhenitsyn, *Oktyabr' Shestnadtsatogo*, Paris: YMCA Press, 1984, chapters 25-27 (in Russian).

All these ideas are developed with great power in Solzhenitsyn's vast novel about the revolution, The Red Wheel, which may be described as the War and Peace of the twentieth-century novel. In it all levels of pre-revolutionary Russian society, from the Tsar and his ministers to the politicians, the soldiers and the peasants are warmly but penetratingly described. And if no one emerges without blame, it is clearly on the westernizing liberals and revolutionaries, who acted in the name of democracy, that the main guilt falls.

\*

Now it is from an optimistic point of view, the point of view of a convinced democrat, that Solzhenitsyn describes the defects of modern democracy - the licence to which its liberty leads, its cowardice in defence of its own values, its tendency to anarchy and hence, ultimately, to despotism. That is, he believes that democracy can remedy its own defects. And yet these defects are so penetratingly described and appear so radical, and the response to Solzhenitsyn's appeals have been so feeble and uncomprehending, that it is hard not to wonder whether democracy can really right its wrongs, and whether in fact it is a fundamentally unsound and unstable system which is doomed to destruction.

Democracy is in essence "a mechanism for the satisfaction of the demands of the consumer-voter".<sup>86</sup> The problem is, that in the absence of a higher religious or national ideal - and very few democracies, whether ancient or modern, have had any such ideal - the demands of the consumer-voter are bound to be multiple, contradictory, changeable, fallen, materialistic and egoistical. Thus the tendency to atomization and self-destruction is built into the very base of democracy like a relentlessly ticking time-bomb. In the next lecture I shall ask the question whether the injection of a higher national ideal can halt this process and defuse this time-bomb. And as a basis for my discussion I shall again be turning to the ideas of Solzhenitsyn and other Russian writers.

---

<sup>86</sup> Shturman, op. cit., p. 165.

## LECTURE 10: THE NATIONAL IDEA

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

In the last lecture, I indicated that democracy is doomed unless it can yoke itself to a higher national or religious ideal which will unite its warring contradictions in a new synthesis. A kingdom which is divided and riven apart by many warring wills cannot stand; the "free" pursuit of material ends only leads to society's inner dissolution and desolation. On the other hand, the imposition on this multiplicity of wills of a single "will of the people" will likewise lead to atomization and death, as the universal experience of peoples subjected to Communism has proved. The concept of the "will of the people" can be life-giving and not death-dealing only if it has an idealistic content which can be shown to be the expression of something or someone greater than the will of any single individual, however charismatic, or single social group, however large. Such a will cannot simply be the expression of the opinion of the majority at any one time, for two reasons. First because truth and justice are not necessarily with the majority, so that fulfilling the will of the majority (even in a peaceful way, without the use of bloodshed or violence) not only violates the "democratic rights" of the minority, who feel they cannot abandon their views or submit to the majority simply because it is the majority, but also runs counter to the interests of the majority itself. And secondly because the majority changes its opinions with time, so that what seemed a self-evident truth at one time is considered to be a most dangerous lie at another, as is witnessed by the recent sharp changes in all the western democracies' attitudes towards homosexuality.

The only "will of the people" that can command the free and abiding subjection of every member of society is one that is felt to be the will, not of "the people" in the sense of a greater or smaller number of individuals who are alive at present, but of "the people" in the sense of a single mystical organism composed of all the members of society both in the present and throughout its historical past. This is the will of the people in the sense of the nation, and its expression in general conceptual terms may be called the national idea. In this lecture I propose to examine the concepts of the nation and the national idea, and to consider to what extent, and in what circumstances, a national idea can truly lift a nation out of the Scylla of materialistic democracy without falling into the Charybdis of chauvinist nationalism.

In a previous lecture I cited the views of Vladimir Solovyov and Vadim Borisov to the effect that a nation can be considered as in all significant respects like an individual person. According to these writers, a nation has a concrete position in time and space, and, linked with this, several idiosyncratic physical and psychological characteristics which distinguish it from every other nation. And it has a unique "spirit" which expresses "the idea that God has of it in eternity".

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

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

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

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

"Between a person and a nation there is the deepest similarity - in the mystical nature of the uncreatedness of both the one and the other. And there are no human reasons why, in allowing ourselves to evaluate the changeability of the one, we forbid it for the other."<sup>87</sup>

---

<sup>87</sup> Solzhenitsyn, in Shturman, *op. cit.*, pp. 327, 333-334.



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

"All the metaphysical characteristics of a people are structured around conciliarity. Conciliarity is not the mechanical sum of individuals, but their free unity. A people is a conciliar unity of eternal human souls... It is the idea of the Creator concerning their common mission and the responsible thought of eternal souls concerning the unity of their historical calling."<sup>88</sup>

Even with this qualification, however, there are limits to the extent we can talk about nations as persons. While persons have eternal souls, this can be said of nations only in a metaphorical sense. For, as Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow says, "for earthly kingdoms and peoples their kingly and popular existence can only have an earthly character".<sup>89</sup> Again, Shturman<sup>90</sup> points out that, however much individual people change, each still has one mind and one conscience (unless he is schizophrenic). A nation, however, is composed of many people with often sharply differing aims and outlooks.

A still more serious criticism of the nation-person metaphor is that while a nation can be judged, and its members can be said to have a collective responsibility for the nation's actions, in the final analysis it is only individual people that are brought before the judgement seat of God. Thus a good man can free himself from responsibility for the crimes of his nation by refusing to take part in them and condemning them, like the Germans who refused to accept Nazism - or the Jews who refused to mock Christ. And in the same way an evil man can deprive himself of the honour due to his membership of a great nation by his betrayal of its noble ideals, like the Orthodox Greeks who converted to Islam - or the Orthodox Slavs who joined the revolution.

And this raises the very difficult question: assuming that there is a sense, albeit metaphorical, in which a nation does have a unique spirit or soul, how are we to define it? Or, if a definition is impossible - for, as Aksyuchits says, "just as a person cannot be simply defined, but only described, so is it with a nation"<sup>91</sup> - how are we to describe it, at any rate approximately? Or, if it cannot even be described, but only be "felt", how are we to distinguish a true apprehension of the nation's soul from a false one?

---

<sup>88</sup> Aksyuchits, V. "O sovremennykh natsional'nykh problemakh", *Posev*, March-April, 1990, N 2, pp. 111-112 (in Russian).

<sup>89</sup> Metropolitan Philaret, *Collected Works*, volume II (in Russian).

<sup>90</sup> Shturman, *op. cit.*, p. 334.

<sup>91</sup> Aksyuchits, *op. cit.*, p. 111.

\*

In order to answer these questions, I propose briefly examining several criteria of nationhood, both spiritual ones like the religion of a nation, and more concrete ones, such as blood, land and language.

In an article written in 1970, and entitled "Three Attitudes to the Homeland", the Russian Slavophile Vladimir Osipov proposes the following set of criteria: "What is a nation? Faith, blood, language and the land. Religion, and even a certain complex of rites, are a part - indeed, the most important part - of the spirit of a nation. An individual person can get by without religion. But without religion, an individual nation cannot survive as a nation... A people disintegrates literally before one's eyes when faith in God disintegrates..."<sup>92</sup>

Here we find the religious approach to the problem of nationalism - the importance importance attached to the faith of the nation - that is characteristic of almost all Russian writers. It is not that the call of blood, language and land are not felt by Russians - especially the latter. But the strength of the Orthodox Christian tradition in defining the Russians' consciousness of themselves and of others remains strong, even after 70 years of atheist and internationalist socialist propaganda. And this tradition declares that blood, after all, is not a defining quality of nations (especially in such a racially mixed nation as Russia) - and in any case, as the Apostle Paul said, God "hath made of one blood all nations of men" (Acts 17.26). As for language and land, they change and develop without the essential spirit of a country changing - although there is no doubt that a deep knowledge of the language and living contact with the land has an important role in keeping the spirit of a nation alive.

Aksyuchits echoes this judgement: "The positivist definitions of a people - for example, common origin (blood), language, territory, economic structure, culture, state unity - do not embrace the concept of that mysterious unity which is the people, the nation. All such definitions are only partial. They cannot, for example, explain the existence of such a people as the Jews, who in the thousands of years of their existence have become mixed in blood<sup>93</sup>, have changed their language and culture, have not had a common territory, or economic structure, or their own statehood, but have nevertheless been fully preserved as a people."<sup>94</sup>

The example of the Jews is indeed instructive, and there can be little doubt that the only major bond holding them together as a nation since the destruction of their statehood in 70 A.D. has been their faith. However, it is also instructive to note that when the Jewish leaders felt that the identity of

---

<sup>92</sup> Quoted in Walters, P., "A New Creed for Russians?", *Religion in Communist Lands*, vol. 3, no. 4, 1976.

<sup>93</sup> According to Koestler (op. cit.), they are not even mainly Semitic any longer.

<sup>94</sup> Aksyuchits, op. cit., p. 111.

their nation was being threatened through assimilation with the European nations in the nineteenth century, they founded the Zionist movement at Basel in 1897 with the explicit aim of bolstering the Jewish identity by a return to the land of Israel.<sup>95</sup> Since then, moreover, it has been felt necessary to resurrect the Hebrew language - and to make common blood a condition of citizenship in the state of Israel.

So while a nation can exist by faith alone, this faith is strengthened by its association with a specific territorial, linguistic and genetic inheritance (however artificially these associations may be constructed or reconstructed).

This intermingling of spirit and flesh in the self-definition of a nation has much to do with the kind of state structure it eventually adopts. A truly theocratic people may be strong enough in its allegiance to its heavenly Homeland to exist without a homeland or state on earth; for they "confess that they are strangers and pilgrims on the earth" and seek "a better country, that is, an heavenly" (Hebrews 11.13,16). However, once settled in a certain place, they will naturally tend to establish a monarchical state structure; for monarchy, and especially hereditary monarchy, is both an expression and a guarantor of continuity with the past. Nor is such traditionalism a matter just of preserving some quaint old habits and customs. Insofar as the faith which expresses the spirit of the nation is a historical one - "the faith of our Fathers", - and bound up with certain specific historical events, such as the Resurrection of Christ or the Conversion of St. Constantine, the history of the nation will be to a large extent the history of that faith in that land, and the keeping of historical memory will be both an expression of that faith and a means of keeping it alive in the people.

However, as a nation begins to lose its faith, the keeping of the traditions, and the preservation of the spiritual unity of the nation in and through the traditions, will come to seem less important than the fulfilling of the needs of the individual citizens. And at that point, as has happened in the history of almost all the European nations, the opportunity arises for an anti-monarchical, democratic revolution. For democracy, as we have seen, is oriented to the needs of the individual as opposed to society as a whole, and of the individual as a materialistic consumer as opposed to the individual as a member of the people of God.

An interesting "halfway-house" in this connection is represented by the constitutional monarchies of nations such as England.

Now England was for several centuries before the Norman Conquest of 1066, a traditional hereditary monarchy of the Orthodox type. Her kings were crowned by the Church and revered, as in Byzantium and Russia, as the Anointed of God, disobedience to whom was considered a sin, not only against the state, but also against the faith (see the tenth-century Abbot

---

<sup>95</sup> Reed, D., *The Controversy of Zion*, Durban, SA: Dolphin Press, 1978.

Aelfric's *Catholic Homily on Palm Sunday*). However, "apparently as the result of one day's fighting" in 1066, writes the historian R.H.C. Davis, "England received a new royal dynasty, a new aristocracy, a virtually new Church, a new art, a new architecture and a new language".<sup>96</sup> This break in the national traditions, and therefore the national self-awareness of the English, was so radical that until recently English schoolchildren were taught English history beginning from 1066 - as if the thousand or so years of Orthodox Christian history before that were of no significance. Together with the other traditions, the tradition concerning the monarchy also suffered. Although the king continued to be crowned by the Church, the idea of the holiness of the monarchy was gradually lost. In 1215 the powers of the monarchy were limited by the Magna Carta to take account of the interests of the nobility; and further limitations followed. However, in the sixteenth century Shakespeare still had a strong feeling for it, as we can see in his play, *Richard II*; and even today, centuries after the democratic revolution deprived the monarchy of any real power or sanction, the English still have an instinctive veneration for the institution. This witnesses to a kind of schizophrenia in the English soul. For while the dominant faith of the English is undoubtedly democratic and materialistic, the monarchy still serves as a link with that past when England had a different faith - and was in effect a different nation...

In some nations, the faith that expresses the national idea is so bound up with a certain historical tradition, territory and way of life that when these are taken away, the faith, too, dies. We see this particularly in some modern pagan nations, who, when deprived of their traditions by the invasion of western civilization, have begun to die, and not only as nations, but even physically, as individuals. This shows that not only individuals, but also nations, live by faith; and the survival of the nation will depend to a large extent on the quality of the faith, and on the particular relationship of spirit and flesh that it represents.

\*

Let us now turn to the question whether the national idea can unite and exalt a nation while avoiding the excesses of nationalism. In order to answer this question, it will be useful to divide national ideas into three main categories: (1) universalist-messianic, (2) chauvinist-nationalist and (3) relativist-antinationalist.

1. Universalist Messianism. Berdyaev writes: "The messianic consciousness is not a nationalistic consciousness; it is deeply opposed to nationalism. It is a universalist consciousness. The messianic consciousness has its roots in the religious consciousness of the Hebrew people, in Israel's experience of her God-chosenness and uniqueness. The messianic consciousness of the chosen people of God, the people in whom the Messiah must appear and through

---

<sup>96</sup> Davis, R.H.C., *The Normans and their Myth*, London: Thames & Hudson, 1976, p. 103.

whom the world must be saved. The God-chosen people is the messiah among peoples, the only people with a messianic calling and predestination. All the other peoples are lower peoples, no chosen, peoples with an ordinary, non-mystical destiny. All the people have their calling, their purpose in the world, but only one people can be chosen for a messianic aim. The people with a messianic consciousness and purpose is also one, as the Messiah is one. The messianic consciousness is global and super-national. In this it has analogies with the Roman empire, which was also universal and super-national, like Old Hebrew messianism. This messianic consciousness of the Hebrews, which was global in its claims, was justified by the fact that the Messiah appeared in the people's depths, although He was rejected by them...<sup>97</sup>

So far we can agree with Berdyaev. But he goes on to say: "But after the appearance of Christ, messianism in the Old Hebrew sense of the word becomes impossible for the Christian world. For the Christian there is neither Jew nor Greek. There cannot be one chosen people in the Christian world."<sup>98</sup>

We can agree with this only in the sense that strictly speaking the only God-chosen people is the multi-national people of the Church, so that messianism in the strict sense can only be the messianism of the Church.

In a weaker sense, however, every nation that bears the Messiah, the Christ, within itself, can become messianic for the nations around it. In this sense "messianic" becomes close to "missionary". And in this sense some nations have been especially messianic. In the beginning it was the Jews, in the persons of the Apostles, who brought the Messiah, Christ, to the pagan peoples. Later, this function passed to the Greeks - for the Eastern Christian world, and to the Romans - for the Western Christian world. Finally, after the fall of Old Rome to papism, and of the new Rome, Constantinople, to the Turks, the title of messianic nation, "the Third Rome", passed to Russia, which carried the message of Christ not only throughout the vast territory of what became the Russian empire, but also beyond its bounds to Alaska, China, Japan and Persia, and, in our century, throughout the countries of the diaspora.

In a still weaker and wider sense, every nation that considers that it possesses - whether rightly or wrongly - a universal truth, and which strives to share this supposed truth with other nations, can be called messianic. In this sense the Muslim nations, and in particular the Arabs, can be called messianic. Also the Soviet "nation" and the western nations.

Of course, "messianism" has become a dirty word in modern parlance, having become associated with the idea of forcible conversion and the inquisition. But it is important to separate the reasonable - and indeed,

---

<sup>97</sup> Berdyaev, N., *Sud'ba Rossii*, Moscow: "Sovietsky Pisatel", 1990 (in Russian).

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 26.

obviously true - idea at the root of messianism, viz. that there are universal truths which all nations should know, from practices that in essence have nothing to do with it. For it is obviously true that if an idea has validity and importance for all men, then it should be communicated to all men. Thus if Christ is indeed the Saviour of the world, the whole world should know about it; and it is natural and right that those in possession of this truth should not selfishly, to the detriment both of themselves and others, keep it to themselves, but should help, in one way or another, to spread the truth abroad. Forcible conversion, however, is obviously an illegitimate form of messianism or missionary work; for spiritual ideas can only be communicated by spiritual means, and the faith of a man who has been forced to believe by physical means will be hypocritical and shallow - in a word, unreal.

Some form of messianism is characteristic of all nations that have a universalist element in their national idea. And this is true even of the modern western nations, imbued though they are with ecumenist relativism. Thus the West is very messianic in its spreading of the gospel of democracy, human rights, the free market and scientific and technological progress. These are values which, the West believes, all nations should have as part of their national ideas. And if they do not, then the West is prepared to apply sanctions to them. These are usually of an economic kind, such as the withdrawal of the status of "most favoured trading nation", but they may sometimes involve the use of armed force. Thus the messianism of the British empire in the nineteenth century, which involved the spreading of the values of Anglican Christian civilization by means of colonialism, "the white man's burden", has evolved into the messianism of the western post-Christian civilization of the twentieth century, a new "burden" which has involved fighting wars "to keep the world safe for democracy".

The main rival to the democratic messianism of the West has been the communist messianism of the East. As we have seen, western democracy has been curiously half-hearted in its resistance to communism, probably because it subconsciously recognized the common philosophical root of the two messianisms. Now, with the collapse of communism, the West sees its main rival in Islamic messianism - and perhaps still more in a revival of Russian Orthodox messianism, which it wrongly sees as having been at the root of Soviet communism, and which it wrongly labels as a kind of chauvinist nationalism.

2. Chauvinist nationalism. When a nation forgets the universalist dimension of its national idea, turns in on itself, and begins to worship, not its God, but itself, then its national idea has become chauvinist.

The classic example of the degeneration of a universalist messianic nation into a chauvinist nationalist one is the history of the Jews after Christ. In the Old Testament, the faith of the Jews, though necessarily turned in on itself in order to protect itself from the pagan nations surrounding them, contained the seeds of a truly universalist faith. Thus the Canaanite Rahab and the

Moabite Ruth were admitted into the faith and nation of the Jews; and by the time of Christ there was a large Greek-speaking diaspora who were spreading the faith of the Jews through the Greco-Roman world and winning converts such as the Roman centurion Cornelius (Acts 11). However, the sect of the Pharisees, which came to dominate Jewry, was interested only in converts to the cause of Jewish nationalism; which is why Christ said of them: "You travel land and sea to win one proselyte, and when he is won, you make him twice as much a son of hell as yourselves" (Matthew 23.15). It was the Pharisees who incited the people to crucify Christ because He preached a different kind of spiritual and universalist Kingdom. And after His death the Jews became possessed by an egoistical, chauvinist spirit that hated other nations to such an extent that this hatred became enshrined officially in their new religion of the Talmud, so that, as Rabbi Solomon Goldman put it, "God is absorbed in the nationalism of Israel."<sup>99</sup>

Chauvinist nationalism began to be a serious disease for all the European nations after the French Revolution of 1789. For it was that revolution that placed the nation as the supreme depository of value in its "Universal Declaration of Human Rights". The Orthodox nations were far from immune to this scourge, as Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) noted in 1929 at the consecration of Bishop Nicholas of London – although he made an exception for the Russians: "While remaining a Christian and a Russian patriot you will, of course, be far from that sinful chauvinism which now afflicts all peoples calling themselves, even alas, Orthodox peoples.

"We can boldly assert that only the Russian people, in the person of its best representatives, is able to combine an oecumenical, universal love with patriotism, and regards these two exalted concepts not as mutually exclusive, imposing limits one on the other, but as interpenetrating and complementing each other."<sup>100</sup>

In the twentieth century, chauvinist nationalism has been incarnate especially in Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany; and most recently attention has been drawn to the chauvinism of the Serbs and Croats.

The present conflict in Bosnia is particularly instructive, because here we see three nations distinguished, neither by blood nor by language - nor even, until the break-up of Yugoslavia and the beginning of "ethnic cleansing", by statehood or territory. Historically they came to see themselves as different only because they had different faiths. And yet these faiths - Orthodoxy, Catholicism and Islam - are all universalist and anti-nationalist in essence. In conflict with each other in this region, however, they have each acquired a chauvinist, nationalist character.

---

<sup>99</sup> Quoted in Reed, op. cit., p. 48.

<sup>100</sup> Khrapovitsky, in Protodeacon Christopher Birchall, *Embassy, Emigrants and Englishmen: The Three Hundred Year History of a Russian Orthodox Church in London*, Jordanville, N.Y.: Holy Trinity Publications, 2014, p. 255.

3. Relativist antinationalism. A further degradation of the national idea consists in the assertion that neither one's own nation, nor any other, has a universal truth which the other nations should accept. Moreover, the national idea of every nation is considered essentially equal in value to any other - provided it is neither chauvinist-nationalist nor universalist-messianist. This relativist, and in effect anti-national idea of the national idea is the equivalent, in international politics, of the idea of democracy in national politics, and of ecumenism in religion. All three conceptions are based on an indifference to, if not outright denial of, universal truth and absolute values. And the motivation of each is the desire to find a mechanism and a formula for achieving peace, peace at all costs: peace between the conflicting interests of different classes and individuals in democracy, peace between the conflicting interests and values of different nations in anti-nationalism, and peace between the conflicting claims of different religions in ecumenism. But peace that is bought at too high a price may end in a still worse war. And if that price is the denial of the existence of any absolute truth or values, then we should say, with St. Gregory the Theologian: "Better war than a peace that separates from God."

The antinationalism of the West is often presented as in fact a form of internationalism, not imposed, like the pseudo-internationalism of the Soviet Union, but voluntary, like the European Union or the United Nations. However, this "voluntary" surrender by many nations of their sovereignty is in fact very often dictated by economic pressures coming from the richer western countries; for nations which want to protect their uncompetitive industries from foreign competition are accused of being nationalists, and are threatened with exclusion from the international market. Thus when the fiercely nationalist Greek Prime Minister Andreas Papandreu was recently asked why he had changed his economic views, he replied: "Because reality has changed. Now there is an international market."<sup>101</sup> But when these weaker countries, as in East Europe today, open up their economies to foreign competition, they are inevitably taken over by "King Dollar" and effectively lose their independence. Even stronger nations such as Britain feel their identities coming under threat from the European Union, while mighty America fears the economic domination of Japan.

Thus the "internationalism" of the West is in fact a kind of war against the nation, an attempt to eliminate the category of the nation from human life. True, it has achieved some notable successes, as in the recent downfall of apartheid in South Africa. However, it is doubtful whether this successful campaign - largely achieved through a financial boycott by the Chase Manhattan Bank<sup>102</sup> - can create love between the races, as opposed to the removal of some forms of political discrimination between them.

---

<sup>101</sup> Papandreu, in *Newsweek*, May 9, 1994, p. 60.

<sup>102</sup> *Newsweek*, May 9, 1994, p. 4.



Moreover, just as in the doctrine of democracy there is an inherent conflict between the concepts of "human rights" and "the will of the people", so in the international arena there is a contradiction between the principles of internationalism and national self-determination. Sometimes, as in Western Europe today, the former principle is applied, with the result that completely different countries, such as Germany and Greece, are forced into artificial super-nations to the detriment of the traditions and identity of the economically weaker nation. At other times, as in the former Soviet Union today, unitary states are divided and subdivided along ethnic lines, until a multitude of tiny, warring, economically unviable states is obtained. In some places, for the sake of internationalism, countries with long and stable independent national traditions are forced into unnatural unions with each other. In others, for the sake of national self-determination, countries which are united by religion, language, race, culture and statehood are artificially forced apart.

Like sexuality, patriotism, the love of one's country, is a fact of social human nature which cannot be denied or repressed by forcing into an internationalist straitjacket without risking its breaking out again - probably in a perverted, chauvinist form, as in the former Yugoslavia. However, it can be purified, sublimated and coexist with other patriotisms by submission to a super-national, universalist faith. The vital question then is: what faith is capable of uniting the nations without suppressing them? What national idea has such compelling grace and power that it can be recognized by all nations as of super-national validity? In the next lecture, I shall examine in some detail one nation, Russia's, attempt to answer these questions, and in so doing, find its own soul.

## LECTURE 11: THE RUSSIAN IDEA

*For Zion's sake I will not keep silent,  
and for Jerusalem' sake I will not rest,  
until her vindication goes forth as  
brightness, and her salvation as a  
shining torch.*  
Isaiah 62.1

For better and for worse, Russia has been at the centre of world history throughout the twentieth century; and in this period she has passed through all the socio-political formations that we have discussed in this course of lectures - theocracy and democracy, communism and capitalism, nationalism and internationalism. Thus the experience of the Russian people in the recent past has been very great, just as the effect of her choice of destiny in the future will probably be very great, too - and not only for herself but also for the whole world. In this lecture, therefore, I propose to try and attempt to answer the question: what is the Russian "soul", the essential nature of "the Russian idea" which has remained unchanged through all the permutations of the centuries, and especially our century? In so doing I hope not only to answer a question which is of great importance for all of us. I also hope to provide a basis for an answer to the question which I posed at the beginning of the last lecture but left unanswered because of lack of time: how are we to distinguish a true apprehension of a nation's soul from a false one?

\*

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

Of course, historians are fond of pointing to vestiges of paganism in Russia well after the Baptism. But the exceptions prove the rule: whatever other temptations Russia had to endure, a full-scale return to paganism was not one of them - until the critical turning-point of 1917. Paganism in Russia was

comparatively weak, disorganized and, above all, provincial; which is why it was no match for the superior civilization and universalist grace and power of the Christian Gospel, supported as it was both by the political power and charisma of St. Vladimir and by the spiritual power of the Byzantine Church at its height.

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

First, the speed and completeness with which the Baptism of Russia unified all the widely-scattered and hitherto disunited tribes of the Eastern Slavs, Finno-Ungrians and others goes some of the way to explaining why religion, the spiritual realm, is, and continues to be, so important in the Russian land, as opposed to the more worldly and material factors which have served to unite other nations and which have therefore played a greater role in their subsequent development. On the other hand, the great importance which St. Vladimir played in the Baptism - for it was indeed a conversion of the people "from the top down" - laid the foundations for the very powerful development of a centralized State in Russia, and the close links between the monarchy and the Church - closer, probably, than in any other Christian nation. Thus in the Russian soul, spirituality and statehood, the Cross and the Crown, are not felt to be the opposites that they have tended to become in the West; for it was the Crown, in the person of St. Vladimir, that won Russia for the Cross, and the Russian people have continued to see in the will of the Tsar the expression of the will of God.

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

"It is not at all like that with us in Russia: our Tsar is the representative of the will of God, and not the people's will. His will is sacred for us, as the will of the Anointed of God; we love him because we love God. If the Tsar gives

us glory and prosperity, we receive it from him as a Mercy of God. But if we are overtaken by humiliation and poverty, we bear them with meekness and humility, as a heavenly punishment for our iniquities, and never do we falter in our love for, and devotion to, the Tsar, as long as they proceed from our Orthodox religious convictions, our love and devotion to God."<sup>103</sup>

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

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

On the other hand, no nation, in the Russians' opinion - and in this author's opinion, they have been right in this conviction, at least until the revolution - has so thoroughly absorbed the Christian Gospel as the Russians. In spite of sins and falls, to which every Christian nation has succumbed, the Russians have exceeded their foreign teachers in their devotion to Christ, as is witnessed by the extraordinary abundance of their saints and martyrs - not least in the Soviet period. And for this reason the Russians have reason to be proud of their country.

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

---

<sup>103</sup> Schema-Archimandrite Barsonuphius (Plikhankov), *Kelejnye Zapiski*, Moscow, 1990, p. 44 (in Russian). It is this relationship between the Tsar and the people that explains the indifference of Russians to the idea of a constitution limiting the monarchy or "protecting" the people. As Dostoyevsky put it (cited in Lossky, N.O. (1994) *Bog i mirovoye zlo*, Moscow: "Respublika", 1994, pp. 234-35): "Our constitution is mutual love. Of the Monarch for the people and of the people for the Monarch."

St. Hermogenes, patriarch of Moscow, led to the restoration of the monarchy under the Romanov dynasty which survived until the revolution. Finally, a still steeper decline in spirituality led to the revolution and the collapse of the Russian state, from which devastating blow the Russian people has not yet recovered.

If we examine the second, universality-nationalism anomaly, we see a similar pattern. Generally speaking, the Kievan period may be described as broadly universalist, the Muscovite period increasingly nationalist, and the Petersburg period again universalist. But as long as the dominant religion and ethos of the state and people remained Orthodox Christianity, the poles of this antimony were kept in balance, and extremists, such as the anti-national universalist Socialists or the anti-universalist nationalist Old Believers, remained on the borders of society.

\*

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

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

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

The revolution therefore presented, as Solzhenitsyn has well argued, an almost complete break in the history and spiritual identity of the Russian nation. Far from being a logical continuation of the Russian idea, it was a complete denial of that idea. So what the Mongols in the 13th century, the Judaizers in the 15th, the Poles in the 17th, the reforms of Peter the Great in

the 18th and the invasion of Napoleon in the 19th centuries had failed to achieve, was achieved by Lenin and Stalin.

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

The main critic of "National Bolshevism" in the Gorbachev period, Alexander Yanov, argued that all Russian nationalism, whether religious or irreligious, was irremediably inclined towards authoritarianism, and that all Russian regimes since Ivan the Terrible, including those of Lenin and Stalin, were simply phases (reform, counter-reform or stagnation) of a single, cyclically recurring authoritarian idea, which he called "the Russian idea". Soviet society under Gorbachev, said Yanov, was going through a reform phase of the cycle, which, if encouraged and not allowed, as on all previous occasions, to stagnate, might lead to a breaking of the cycle altogether and the introduction of "real" civilization, i.e. Western-style democracy, into Russia. If, on the other hand, this anti-Western, anti-semitic (as he claimed) Russian nationalism were allowed to triumph, this would represent a turning of the cycle towards counter-reform, i.e. the transformation and revitalization of the Soviet State into a neo-Fascist monster. For the sake of the peace of the world, said Yanov, this must be prevented.<sup>104</sup>

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

---

<sup>104</sup> Yanov, A., *The Russian Challenge*, Oxford: Blackwells, 1987, chapters 2-4.

their claiming that their essentially Soviet "spirituality" is a continuation and incarnation of "the Russian idea".<sup>105</sup>

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

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

At the same time he recognized at the time he was writing - the early 1970s - that the national element in the Russian religious-national movement was more important than the religious: "I know the soul of the contemporary Russian: the national principle is at the moment more clear and alive for him than the religious principle. Hence patriotism, national self-consciousness and self-respect provide at the moment the only reliable bridge to moral, cultural and biological salvation."<sup>106</sup>

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

Of course, the existence of such extreme and perverted forms of Russian nationalism as the society *Pamyat'* and the party of Vladimir Zhirinovskiy indicates that at least a part of the Russian national movement has remained incorrigibly chauvinist. Moreover, the official Russian Orthodox Church, the Moscow Patriarchate, is still led by KGB agents from the Brezhnev era whose opportunism and lack of real spirituality is proven.<sup>107</sup> Just as these hierarchs enthusiastically embraced "Leninist norms" and "Soviet patriotism" in the 1970s and 80s, and then democracy and westernism in the early 1990s, so now they are quite capable of changing again into Zhirinovskiy-type Russian nationalists. And if the majority of the Russian Orthodox people follow them, the outlook is indeed bleak. For then we shall see the emergence of an unholy alliance between a National Bolshevik state and a "Soviet Orthodox" Church which will be a cruel caricature of true Russian theocracy.

---

<sup>105</sup> See Aksyuchits, V., "Zapadniki i Pochvenniki Segodnya", *Vestnik Khristianskogo Informatsionnogo Tsentra*, no. 30, September 22, 1989 (in Russian).

<sup>106</sup> Quoted in Walters, *op. cit.*

<sup>107</sup> Potapov, Protopriest V., "*Molchaniyem predayotsa Bog*", Moscow: Isikhiya, 1992 (in Russian).

If, however, such a caricature does come to power, it is not likely to last long, but will be destroyed as its expansionist plans come up against the power of stronger nations, such as China or America. And then, through the prayers of the millions of new martyrs of the Soviet period, a resurrection of the true Russian idea will take place. In the meantime, the social basis for this resurrection can be prepared by a gradual national-religious regeneration of Russian society from below, under the leadership, not of the Moscow Patriarchate, but of the Russian Catacomb Church.

Such a regeneration of society could proceed as indicated by the Kartashev: "Through the Christian transfiguration of the 'inner man', by itself, gradually and imperceptibly, the whole environment in which the spiritually renewed Christian lives and acts - society, culture, the State - will be transfigured. The latter live and develop according to their own natural laws, which are exterior for Christianity, but can be subjected to its influences and, if only to a certain degree, transfigured. In the last analysis they are impenetrable for Christianity, for they are foreign by their nature. They are categories, not of a spiritual, but of a cosmic, order. The Lord opposed Himself to 'this world', and the apostle of love commanded us 'not to love this world'. The category 'society' is of 'this world', and for that reason the Christian heart must not cleave to it. Social life is a certain mechanism of the concatenation of personalities and is fatally subject to a certain mechanical conformity with law, which is foreign to the kingdom of spiritual freedom - that is, the Christian religion, the Church. Being a true member of this mystical society, the individual Christian, and through him the whole Church, is 'spiritually-automatically', inwardly, imperceptibly enlightening, exalting and transfiguring external, sinful society. All other methods except this, which goes from the depths of the personal transfiguration of the spirit, are non-Christian methods. In certain propitious circumstances they are acceptable for the Christian conscience, in others they are perceived by it as foreign and even directly antichristian."<sup>108</sup>

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

"Being at the bottom of a historical funnel, we as a fact of our lives have acquired the possibility of seeing in the past of Russia not only a series of errors and vices, but also the image of a renewed, transfigured Russia, and the contours of that ideal which the Russian people was giving birth to in torments, and to which it was striving in spite of all sins and falls. There were

---

<sup>108</sup> Kartashev, A., "Lichnoye i Obshestvennoye Spaseniye vo Khriste", *Russkoye Vozrozhdeniye*, 1984 (II), no. 26, pp. 26-34 (in Russian).



moments in the history of Russia when the Russian idea shone forth with an unfading light - this was the light, above all, of Russian sanctity. There were periods when the idea of a national calling was eclipsed and consigned to oblivion. But it was never cut off entirely, but was enriched by the tragic experience of history. And this unbroken line is the line of our life, it is the ordinance of God concerning the Russian people from generation to generation. And only the living spirit of this theandric ordinance, only the assimilation of the Russian idea gives us as a people and each one of us as a personality the possibility of holding out, surviving and transfiguring our lives..."<sup>109</sup>

This truly Christian Russian nationalism is found especially in the Catacomb Church. For example, during the 1970s the great wonderworker nicknamed the "Tsar of Mordovia", Hieromonk Mikhail Yershov, after half a century in the Soviet camps and psychiatric torture-hospitals still retained a burning faith in the resurrection of Russia. Thus Yeveny Vagin wrote: "All of the True Orthodox to one degree or another are characterized by a feeling of national and spiritual exaltation. This is especially to be felt in the 'Testament' of M.V. Yershov, published in *Russian Life* (July 7, 1977). All members of this Church, even the 'uneducated', are characterized by a special suffering over the fate of Russia, which is placed by them in the center of all the world's events (this is often interpreted in a very original way, always in apocalyptic, eschatological tones). Their 'Russianness' is not set aggressively against other nations and peoples, but is accepted inwardly and in confidential conversations, as a sign of a 'special chosenness'. I have often heard in their midst the old proverb applied to the fate of Russia: 'Whom the Lord loves more, He makes to suffer more.'..."<sup>110</sup>

\*

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

Of course, the answer to this question does not depend only on the nature of the Russian idea, but also on the natures of the other national ideas. And even if the answer to the question may be "no" in a particular instance, we should not assume that the fault must lie with the Russian idea. Thus the Jewish idea, as we have seen, is in essence hostile to the ideas of all other nations, being in essence chauvinist and racist. Again, the Chinese idea is similar in essence to the ideas of the ancient pagan satanocracies, and is now allied with the definitely satanic idea of Communism. Even the American

---

<sup>109</sup> Aksyuchits, V., "Russkaya Ideya", *Vybor*, no. 3, pp. 191-192 (in Russian).

<sup>110</sup> Quoted in Andreyev, I., *Russia's Catacomb Saints*, Platina: St. Herman of Alaska Brotherhood, 1982, p. 562.

idea, in spite of the altruistic assertions of successive presidents, is felt by many nations as a threat to their own national identity.<sup>111</sup>

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

The universalist aspect of the Russian idea was expressed with special fervour by Dostoyevsky. Lossky describes it as follows: "In 1861, in the journal *Vremya*, Dostoyevsky wrote that the basic striving of Russian people is 'universal spiritual reconciliation'. 'The Russian idea will become in time a synthesis of all those ideas which Europe has for so long and with such stubbornness been working out in its separate nationalities.' The western peoples strive to 'find the universal ideal by their own efforts, and for that reason they are all together harming themselves and their own work.' 'The idea of universality is being more and more erased among them. In each of them it acquires a different aspect, loses its lustre and receives in its creation a new form. The bond of Christianity, which up to now has united them, is losing its power with every day.' On the contrary, in the Russian character 'there especially comes to the fore the capacity for pan-synthesis, the capacity for pan-reconciliation, pan-humanity.' '[The Russian character] becomes used to all and gets on with all. It sympathizes with every human nationality, blood and soil without distinction. It finds and slowly admits reasonableness in everything that has at any rate something of pan-human interest.' In the greatest Russian poet Pushkin this 'Russian ideal - pan-wholeness, pan-reconciliation, pan-humanity' was incarnate most perfectly. It is precisely the Russians, thinks Dostoyevsky, who will place a beginning to 'the pan-reconciliation of the peoples' and 'the renewal of people on true Christian principles' (*Diary of a Writer*, June, 1876). The eastern ideal, that is, the ideal of Russian Orthodoxy, is 'first the spiritual union of humanity in Christ, and then, be virtue of this spiritual union of all in Christ, and undoubtedly flowing from it - a correct state and social union' (*Diary of a Writer*, May-June, 1877). Such an ideal is the application of the principle of *sobornost* formulated by Khomyakov not only in relation to the structure of the Church, but also to the structure of the State, to the structure of the economic and even international organization of humanity."<sup>112</sup>

Is the Russian idea expansionist? Insofar as all universalisms have an implicitly messianic character, as we have seen, it is spiritually expansionist - that is, it seeks to communicate the truth of its own idea to other nations. But spiritual expansionism is a process of peaceful persuasion, and entails physical expansionism only in certain circumstances. With the exception of

---

<sup>111</sup> Kissinger, H. "Russian and American Interests after the Cold War," in Sestanovich, S. (ed.) *Rethinking Russia's National Interests*, Washington, D.C.: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1994, pp. 4-5.

<sup>112</sup> Lossky, *op. cit.*

Bessarabia in 1812, Russia (as opposed to the Soviet Union) has never forcibly annexed other Orthodox nations to herself. The recovery of Ukraine and Belorussia from the late seventeenth century constituted the reabsorption of lands that had originally been part of Rus'; and the annexation of Georgia in 1801 took place only after the repeated requests of Georgian princes over the course of more than two centuries. As for the liberation of Romania, Bulgaria and Serbia in the late nineteenth century was just that - a liberation, not an annexation.

As regards non-Orthodox nations, the situation is more complex. Russia first began to expand eastwards in the sixteenth century, and this took place partly through the peaceful colonization of sparsely inhabited areas, as in the Russian north and Siberia, and partly through military conquest, as in Ivan the Terrible's conquest of Kazan. However, it must be remembered that the wars against the Tatars were wars against the former conquerors of Russia herself, and the Golden Horde continued for many centuries to be a threat to the existence of Russia both physically and spiritually. With regard to the West - to the Poles, the Swedes, the French and the Germans - Russia's wars have almost always been defensive in character, involving the recapture of Russian lands with large Russian populations whose spiritual and physical identity was most definitely under the most serious threat. Only very rarely has Russia embarked upon a purely offensive war; and as Henry Kissinger has remarked, "Russia has exhibited a curious phenomenon: almost every offensive war that it has fought has ended badly, and every defensive war victoriously - a paradox."<sup>113</sup> A paradox, yes; but one with a clear explanation: when Russia has fought in defense of her Orthodox Christian idea, the Lord has given her victory, withdrawing His support only when she has betrayed that idea.

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

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

---

<sup>113</sup> Kissinger, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

and will always be tempted to undertake a jihad or "holy war" against the Orthodox Christian theocracy.

Secondly, there is an inherent conflict between the Russian idea and the chauvinist ideas of certain western states, such as the Baltic states and Ukraine, on the one hand, and the democratic ideas of other western states, such as America, on the other. In the former case, large Russian minorities (over 25 million all told) feel under threat, and almost any kind of Russian regime, including the present democratic one, will feel obliged to protect their interests.<sup>114</sup> The problem is exacerbated by the use which the universalist Catholic idea of the Vatican is making of these chauvinisms in order to drive out Russian Orthodoxy - in Western Ukraine, Orthodoxy has already been almost completely destroyed. As regards the democratic states, these have both supported the chauvinist states against Russia, and have themselves contributed further to the disintegration and polarization of Russian society by encouraging the premature introduction of the atomizing processes of the free market and unrestrained party warfare. And in the wake of the American capitalists have come the no less dangerous hordes of American Protestant evangelists with their openly anti-Orthodox message.

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

In his famous "Pushkin speech", Dostoyevsky emphasized the "proclivity for universal susceptibility and all-reconciliation" of the Russian soul<sup>115</sup>, as opposed to the narrow egoism of the non-Orthodox European nations. This judgement has been mocked by many, of various nations, who prefer to see in Russia the precise opposite. However, as a westerner by blood and education who has become Russian Orthodox by faith, I believe that Dostoyevsky's judgement is correct and contains a challenge, not only for Russians who might wish to distort the Russian idea in a western or chauvinist direction, but also for the West.

This challenge might be formulated as follows: If you truly want a true, and not a false peace, and a real, and not an illusory harmony of nations, then you have nothing to fear from Russia becoming herself once again. On the contrary, since the Russian idea is universal and true, being in essence the

---

<sup>114</sup> Stankevich, S. (1994), "Towards a New 'National Idea'", in Sestanovich, S. (ed.), *Rethinking Russia's National Interests*, Washington, D.C.: Center for Strategic and International Studies.

<sup>115</sup> Dostoyevsky, *op. cit.*, p. 961.

idea that the Creator and King of the nations has for all the nations, you should embrace it yourselves!

For the Orthodox Christian idea, which has become the Russian idea, can also become the Jewish, and the American, and the Chinese idea, with each nation bringing its own physical and psychological individuality and talents to the service of every other nation, and the King of the nations, Christ God. For of His One Kingdom and Nation on earth, the Orthodox Church, the Lord says: "Your gates shall be open continually; day and night they shall not be shut; that men may bring to you the wealth of the nations, with their kings led in procession. For the nation and kingdom that will not serve you shall perish; those nations shall be utterly laid waste..." (Isaiah 60.11-12).

## LECTURE 12: THE KINGSHIP OF GOD

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

Revelation 11.15

When the Christian enters the Church in Holy Baptism, He promises to worship Christ "as King and as God". By using both words, "King" and "God", the Church emphasizes that there is no sphere of human life - not even politics - which is not subject to the sovereignty of Christ, our King and our God. Thus there is no valid distinction between a private morality that is subject to the commandments of God and a public morality which follows other principles. Even if Christ's Kingdom is "not of this world", "this world" was made by Christ and will ultimately be subject to Christ. And even when we give to Caesar what is Caesar's, we do not forget that Caesar receives his power from God and will finally be judged by God.

In this series of lectures, I have made the assumption that God exists, that He is the absolute and autocratic King of the universe, and that Christ is both King and God. Some of you who have listened to these lectures may not agree with this basic assumption; but I hope you will have agreed with the logic of my argument if this basic assumption is accepted. In this final lecture, I wish to summarize the main steps in my argument, to show that history, even in its most contradictory reversals, has a meaning and coherence in the light of the Kingship of Christ, and thereby to provide a further argument for the truth of my basic assumption.

\*

If God exists, then the ideal society is the one in which the whole life of society is subordinated, as far as possible, to the commandments of God - that is, a theocratic society. At the dawn of history, there was considerable consensus on this point: the only argument was about who or what God was, and therefore what His commandments were. God revealed His nature and His commandments most clearly to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, to Moses, Joshua and David, and to the Old Testament Prophets; so the first true theocracy was the theocracy of Ancient Israel. And the successor of this theocracy is "the Israel of God" (Galatians 6.16), the Orthodox Church. The other ancient societies did not know the true God, or His commandments. They worshipped sticks and stones, planets and animals and men, and, behind all these - the devil, whose commandments they obeyed. So the earliest pagan civilizations can be called satanocratic societies.

Since the kingdom of Satan is divided, the history of the satanocratic societies has been, and always will be, a history of wars, both civil and

national. But the wars within Satan's kingdom pale into insignificance in comparison with the wars between Satan's kingdom and God's Kingdom, between theocracy and satanocracy. Indeed, if there is anything that can unite Satan's kingdom, albeit temporarily, it is the war against Christ. For "why did the Gentiles rage, and the people imagine vain things? The kings of the earth set themselves in array, and the rulers were gathered together, against the Lord and against His Christ" (Psalm 2.2-3).

In his war against the Kingdom of Christ, Satan changes form many times, sometimes appearing as an angel of light. In the socio-political sphere, this involves adopting a variety of political structures and ideologies at different times. Now Satan's preferred political structure is undoubtedly the totalitarian autocracy, in which everything is subordinated to the will of the king, pharaoh or commissar, who is worshipped as a god. This is satanocracy *par excellence*, and appeared in ancient times in Babylon, Egypt and Old Rome, and in modern times in the Soviet Union. At the end of time it will reach its apotheosis in the reign of the Antichrist.

However, Satan has also perfected another political structure which, while appearing to be the antithesis of totalitarian autocracy, actually serves the same ultimate ends. This is democracy. Now democracy as a mechanism for electing rulers, whether political or ecclesiastical, is by no means satanic, and is found both in the Old Testament theocracy (Judges 11.11) and in the New (Acts 6.3-5). But as a theory of legitimacy, - that is, as the theory that rulers are given their power ultimately by the people, and not by God, - it is counter to Divine revelation. Revelation declares that all power comes from God, and quite clearly favours monarchy as the natural form of government, because most monarchical regimes recognize the Monarchy of God and seek the blessing of His Church; whereas the rise of democracy - for example, in England in 1642, in France in 1789, and in Russia in February, 1917, - is always accompanied by a violent attack on the very principle of monarchy, if not in the Church, then at any rate in the State, and if not in heaven, then at any rate on earth.

Thus democratic government should not be confused with democratic ideology. "They are two quite different concepts. Democratic government allows the people to constitute a certain determining factor in government and even, at times, directly or indirectly, to choose the leader of the nation. Democratic ideology, on the other hand, insists that the authority to govern belongs to the people. That is an abominable heresy, for all power and authority to govern belongs to God. Even when a leader is elected (legally) his authority to govern, once elected, comes from God. As God shares with the human parent His own power to create pro-creating, the head of a State shares in or collaborates in God's power to govern. That is why the monarch is monarch "by the grace of God". It is for this reason that the Christian

Orthodox obey and honour the legitimate authority, in so far as that authority does not order anything in contradiction to moral law."<sup>116</sup>

In his war against theocracy, Satan likes to alternate satanocratic regimes with democratic ones. In the satanocratic phase of the onslaught, He tries to destroy the people of God by physical means - or force them to bow down to his rule through the fear of death. However, even the most powerful satanocratic regimes come to weaken under the burden of their inner contradictions. And built into human nature there are forces and safeguards that mutely oppose the totalitarian claims of the ruler. Among these are the love of truth and freedom, the love of one's country, even sexual love (see Orwell's 1984 and Zamyatin's We, in which sexual love is definitely a "counter-revolutionary" force rivalling the love of "Big Brother").

It is at this point that Satan removes the totalitarian stick and introduces the democratic carrot - any "truth" that may catch one's fancy, the most unbridled "freedoms" of all kinds, love of one's country or hatred of it - whichever one prefers, and as much sex, and in as many forms, as the "art" of the times can stimulate. Democracy destroys the nation just as surely as totalitarianism; it is trial by pleasure rather than by pain. In some ways it is still more dangerous; for while fear and pain can sober up the soul and put it on its guard, pleasure puts its defence mechanisms to sleep.

\*

Ranged against both satanocracy and democracy is theocracy. Christian theocracy was first established by St. Constantine the Great, constituting a transformation and regeneration of the old pagan Roman satanocracy by the power of Christ. For the leaven of Roman Christianity, working from below, lightened the dough of Roman pagan society and transformed its most pivotal and anti-Christian element, the worship of the imperator-pontifex maximus, into the Christian system of the "symphony" of the autonomous powers of the Church and the State under the supreme lordship of the King of kings and Supreme High Priest, Jesus Christ.

Then the Orthodox emperors, in the Spirit of Christ and for the sake of the salvation of all their subjects, introduced a Christian system of laws whose basic principle was that it should in no way conflict with the laws of the Church, but should rather support them. The unity of the State was a reflection of, and inspired by, the deeper unity of the Church, the whole being the earthly incarnation of the supercelestial unity of men and angels in the Kingdom of God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Just as God ruled His Kingdom in heaven, so His servants, the bishops and the emperor, ruled his Kingdom on earth as icons of His celestial authority; so that His will should be done "on earth as it is in heaven".

---

<sup>116</sup> "A Hieromonk of the Orient", quoted in Moss, "The Restoration of Romanity", op. cit.



The Emperor Justinian expressed this vision in his Novella VI (535) as follows: "There are two greatest gifts which God, in his love for man, has granted from on high: the priesthood and the imperial dignity. The first serves divine things, while the latter directs and administers human affairs; both, however, proceed from the same origin and adorn the life of mankind. Hence, nothing should be such a source of care to the emperors as the dignity of the priests, since it is for their (imperial) welfare that they constantly implore God. For if the priesthood is in every way free from blame and possesses access to God, and if the emperors administer equitably and judiciously the State entrusted to their care, general harmony (*symphonia tis agathe*) will result, and whatever is beneficial will be bestowed upon the human race."<sup>117</sup>

This vision depends critically on the belief that the Autocracy, no less than the Church, is directed by the Providence of God. As Pope John II wrote to Justinian in 533: "'The King's heart is in the hand of God and He directs it as He pleases' (Proverbs 21.1). There lies the foundation of your Empire and the endurance of your rule. For the peace of the Church and the unity of religion raise their originator to the highest place and sustain him there in happiness and peace. God's power will never fail him who protects the Church against the evil and stain of division, for it is written: 'When a righteous King sits on the throne, no evil will befall him' (Proverbs 20.8)."<sup>118</sup>

The symphony of powers can work as long as the majority of the population is truly Christian and therefore wants it to work. It tends to break down when: (a) a significant part of the population believes differently and is prepared to resort to revolutionary action to destroy it (e.g. the Monophysite Semites, Copts and Armenians in sixth- and seventh-century Byzantium, or the Jews and Poles in nineteenth-century Russia); (b) the ruling class itself is infected with heresy (e.g. the iconoclast emperors in eighth- and ninth-century Byzantium, or the aristocrats and educated classes in nineteenth-century Russia); or (c) the empire is conquered from outside because of a betrayal on the part of one or the other of the pillars of society (e.g. the fall of Constantinople in 1453 because of the false council of Florence-Ferrara, or the fall of Russia because of the forced abdication of the Tsar). This is the pattern of Christian society that has clearly been favoured by Divine Providence for the salvation of the Christian race; for the great majority of Orthodox Christians until 1917 lived either in the Byzantine or Russian empires, or in one of the smaller kingdoms, such as Orthodox (i.e. pre-schism) England or Spain, Serbia or Georgia, which were modelled on the Byzantine model.

Now just as secular democracy and Nazi fascism are patterns of society based on a philosophy of life, so is the Christian symphony of powers. This philosophy is based on the premise that the real ruler of the world and

---

<sup>117</sup> St. Justinian, quoted in Gerostergios, A., *Justinian the Great: the Emperor and Saint*, Belmont, Mass.: Institute for Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies, 1982, p. 88.

<sup>118</sup> Pope John II, in Gerostergios, *op. cit.*, p. 69.

everything in it is God. That part of the world which acknowledges this rule is the Church of Christ; the rest are, consciously or unconsciously, rebels against God (Matthew 22.1-14). Ideally, therefore, as the seventeenth-century Patriarch Nikon of Moscow saw with particular clarity, Christian society should tend towards identification with the Church, in which everything is subordinated to God's rule through the hierarchy, and the aim of everything is the salvation of souls.

However, this identity between Christian society and the Church can only be approximated on this earth, never fully achieved. In practice, there have always been, and always will be, matters which are outside the canonical jurisdiction of bishops, such as the administration of non-Christians, the conduct of wars and the collection of taxes. These belong to Caesar; they are affairs of the State, not of the Church.

Nevertheless, if God's rule is recognized to be truly universal, then politics, too, must be, if not formally subordinated to His Kingdom, the Church, at any rate brought into relation to it and influenced by it. In other words, there can and should be such a thing as Christian politics. And this becomes a realistic ideal if Caesar himself is a Christian and a faithful son of the Church.

It is fashionable in the West to favour the disestablishment of the Church from the State. The principal reason given for this is that it makes the Church free from political pressure and able to carry on her own affairs without interference and undistracted by worldly concerns. This aim is indeed a laudable one. However, the argument fails to take into account the fact that nature abhors a vacuum, so that the disestablishment of the Church will unfailingly lead to the establishment of some other institution or philosophy in her place - Masonry, for example, or secular humanism, or nationalism. For the disestablishment of the Church from the State also entails the disestablishment of the State from the Church; if the State is not governed by Christian principles, it will inevitably come to be governed by antichristian principles. Eventually, deprived of the sanctifying influence of the Church, it will turn against the Church. And then the Church, instead of freeing herself from politics, will find herself having to resist a determined invasion of her realm by politicians, as has happened in all Orthodox countries since 1453 and especially since 1917.

The solution, therefore, is to preserve the relative autonomy of the two realms without legislating for their absolute independence. For the relationship between the Church and the State is like that between the soul and the body - distinct substances which are meant to work together through the Spirit, even if sin has damaged that cooperation. Just as the soul is the life, the guiding principle of the body, so is the Church of the State. The Church sets the standards and the essentially other-worldly goals of the whole of society, provides the motivating force and legitimizes and sanctifies its political institutions. The State, on the other hand, protects the Church against

external foes and provides her with essential material assistance, especially in the spheres of education and welfare.

If, however, the State renounces Orthodoxy, the Church can withdraw her legitimization, as she did when the All-Russian Council anathematized Soviet power in 1918. The purpose of this is to preserve the soul of society alive by preserving its communion with the heavenly world intact, even while the body, the political covering, dies. Then the Church enters the condition of isolation symbolized by the woman fleeing into the wilderness in Revelation 12. But such a condition is unnatural and apocalyptic; it betokens the spiritual death of the world, its burning up at the Second Coming of Christ and its replacement by "a new heaven and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells" (II Peter 3.13). Indeed, St. Paul indicated the removal of "him that restrains" (II Thessalonians 2.7) - lawful monarchical power - as the signal for the coming of the Antichrist.

The period since 1917 has been precisely the period following the breakdown of lawful monarchical government, first in Russia and then successively in each of the Orthodox Balkan States. The True Church, in all of these countries (with the partial exception of Greece, although here, too, the True Orthodox have been outlawed at times), has fled into the wilderness, while the false Church has remained wedded to the rotting corpse of the now definitely antichristian State. The fall of Communism presents the Orthodox with an opportunity unparalleled since 1914 to repent of their sins and unite on the basis of their age-old holy traditions, of which the Orthodox monarchy is one of the most important.

\*

This is the vision of society provided by the Orthodox Christian faith, a vision whose aim is the integration of society in the Kingdom of Christ God. It comprises three basic elements corresponding to the three levels of the social organism: (1) its religious spirit, (2) its national soul, and (3) its political body. Let us look briefly at each level.

1. Religious Spirit. It is obvious that no society can enter the Kingdom of God and receive His blessing if it does not believe in God and strive to fulfil His commandments. Therefore the religion of society - and the correctness and vitality of that religion - are the most essential conditions of its ultimate survival and happiness. For it is the Lord Who "makes nations great, and destroys them: He enlarges nations, and leads them away." (Job 12.23).

In our time, Satan has challenged this conception in two major ways.

First, he has provided a whole array of false religions, false spirits, with which to lead the nations astray - Islam for a vast swathe of countries in the Middle East, Asia and Africa, Marxism-Leninism for an equally large number of countries in Europe, Africa, Latin America and Northern Asia, and

Buddhism and Hinduism for a smaller number of countries in southern Asia. It may seem surprising that I have numbered Marxism-Leninism among the religions. But, as I indicated in my introductory lecture, Marxism has most of the criteria of a religion: it constitutes a principle higher than the individual nation or state which binds all the citizens together and whose observance is considered of the first importance to the survival and happiness of the society. And although Marxism teaches that ideology is merely a super-structure based on a deeper sub-structure of material, economic laws, in practice it is a spiritual reality - an evil spirit - the controls the whole material, economic and cultural life of society. Among the false religions Satan has introduced must also be included the nationalist religions, such as Zionism-Judaism, which exalt an individual nation to a godlike, super-national status, and which in fact substitute the nation for God.

Secondly, he has introduced the apparently antithetical concept that it doesn't matter what one believes, provided everyone is at peace with everyone else and tolerates everyone else's beliefs. This is the concept of ecumenism, otherwise known as the principle of religious pluralism.<sup>119</sup> Ecumenism is the dominant ideology of the democratic nations of the West, and is in fact the religious aspect of the democratic ideology. Just as, according to the democratic ideology, political power should not rest forever in the hands of one man or dynasty, but should be alternated between different parties reflecting the prevailing majority opinion, so according to ecumenism, religious truth should not be considered the exclusive preserve of one religion, but should be considered to be distributed among all religions - or rather, to be the lowest common denominator extracted from the sum of all religious beliefs. The only difference between democratism in politics and ecumenism in religion is that whereas democratism encourages all-out war between the parties, even if the differences between them are not so great, ecumenism demands peace and no argument between the religions, even though the differences between them are enormous.

Ecumenism has reached such extremes that, for example, in 1991, at the General Assembly of the World Council of Churches in Canberra, all the Christian delegates were asked to pass through a purifying smoke uniting them with Aborigine paganism - to which they agreed! In previous centuries, many thousands of martyrs gave their lives rather than say or do such things; but in twentieth-century ecumenism such things are even considered virtuous.

The ultimate consequence of this indifference to truth is the loss of faith in the existence of truth itself. If all religions are true, in spite of the most manifest and glaring contradictions between them, why should any religion

---

<sup>119</sup> Perepelkina, L., *Ekumenizm - put' vvyedushchij k pogibeli*, Holy Trinity Monastery, Jordanville, 1992 (in Russian); Alexiev, Archimandrite Seraphim, Yazadzhiev, Archimandrite Sergei, *Pochemu pravoslavnomu khristianinu nyelzya byt' ekumenistom*, Saint Petersburg, 1992 (in Russian).

be true? Thus ecumenism ultimately leads to atheism - which is, of course, the reason why Satan has introduced it.

*2. National Soul.* The soul of a nation is its feeling about itself, its national calling and destiny. This feeling may be subordinated to a larger, super-national religion or ideology; or on the other hand, it may become quasi-autonomous. I have already mentioned the religion of Zionism-Judaism, which exalts the nation of the Jews to godlike status and makes of Jewish nationalism a religion. Judaism is, of course, the oldest and most extreme form of nationalism, and the struggle between the Jews and the Christian nations whom it despises has already led to the shedding of oceans of Christian blood - most recently in the Russian revolution, which was essentially, as we have seen, the Jewish-Russian revolution. But even less extreme forms of nationalism have been extraordinarily destructive, as we see in Bosnia today, or, most recently, in Ruanda, where over half a million people have died in tribal wars.

Satan stirs up wars between nations, as he stirs up quarrels between individual people. But in our time he has also resorted to the opposite tactic - the withering away of nations in such levelling conglomerates as the Soviet Union and the European Union. So the healthy love of one's country in obedience to a super-national ideal, as we find in the Orthodox theocracies, is replaced either by a nationalist idolatry of one's own nation and hatred of others, or by a cosmopolitan indifference to all national individualities - another fruit of the democratic ideology.

The Orthodox ideal of the relationship between nations has been described by Fr. George Metallinos when writing about the Byzantine empire: "A great number of peoples made up the autocracy but without any 'ethnic' differentiation between them. The whole racial amalgam lived and moved in a single civilization (apart from some particularities) - the Greek, and it had a single cohesive spiritual power - Orthodoxy, which was at the same time the ideology of the oikoumene-autocracy. The citizens of the autocracy were Romans politically, Greeks culturally and Orthodox Christians spiritually. Through Orthodoxy the old relationship of rulers and ruled was replaced by the sovereign bond of brotherhood. Thus the 'holy race' of the New Testament (I Peter 2.9) became a reality as the 'race of the Romans', that is, of the Orthodox citizens of the autocracy of the New Rome."<sup>120</sup>

Of course, the reality of the Byzantine and Russian empires did not always live up this ideal. Nevertheless, their achievements here were much greater than has been generally recognized; and the ideal of a multi-national empire in the service of Christ was a true and noble one, steering a middle course between the extremes of nationalism and cosmopolitanism. For Orthodox "Romanity" (Greek Ρωμαϊσσύνη) is the only philosophy of the nation which

---

<sup>120</sup> Metallinos, Fr. G., "Apo ti Romaiki oikoumenikotita ston Ethnistiko Patriotismo", *Exodos*, 1991, Athens, p. 38 (in Greek).

recognizes both the ineradicability of the national principle and its fallen egoism, and which offers a vision in which its egoism can be purified in a super-national unity.

*3. Political Body.* If a society acquires Orthodox Christianity as its religious spirit, and Orthodox Romanity as its national soul, it will naturally tend towards an Orthodox autocracy as its political body. For only this body is capable of defending and nurturing this spirit and this soul. And the proof of this is that just as Orthodoxy flourished so long as the Orthodox empire flourished, so it has declined in this century, as the last Orthodox autocracies have been destroyed.

For the convinced Orthodox believer, therefore, his first prayer for his society must be for the restoration of the Orthodox autocracy. And this will certainly happen, through the prayers of the millions of new martyrs who have shed their blood in defence of this ideal in this century, beginning with Tsar-Martyr Nicolas II of Russia. For, as the prophecies indicate, there will be a final resurrection of the Russian theocracy before the end which will lead to a rekindling of Orthodoxy throughout the world.

It is interesting to note, however, that the last truly Orthodox autocracy was not that of Tsar Nicolas II of Russia, but that of King Boris III of Bulgaria, and that the clearest remaining symbol of the symphony between Church and State that is the foundation of Orthodox autocracy is to be found in Sofia's Alexander Nevsky cathedral - in the thrones, placed side by side, for king and patriarch. It was Alexander Nevsky who said: "God is not in power, but in righteousness". And it was King Boris who said: "Every true social order is based on the moral order".<sup>121</sup>

These words are true above all for the Orthodox autocracy, which is based, not on the satanic power of totalitarianism, nor on the moral and dogmatic relativism of democracy, but on the moral righteousness and absolute truth of the Orthodox Christian faith.

---

<sup>121</sup> Quoted in Tsankov, Protopriest S. , "Pokoynij Tsar Boris, kak religiozno-nravstvennaya lichnost'", *Pravoslavnaya Rus'*, N 18 (1495), 15/28 September, 1993, p. 15 (in Russian).

## APPENDIX: THE NATIONS, NATIONALISM AND THE RUSSIAN IDEA

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

By the end of the twentieth century, it looked as if national hatred had replaced ideological hatred as the major passion tearing mankind apart. Whether in the former Yugoslavia or the former Soviet Union, in Somalia or Ruanda or East Timor, it was wars between tribes, nationalist wars, that were making rivers of blood flow and causing "the international community" to despair. And international organizations seemed powerless to stop them.

Characteristic was the remark of Jacques Delors, president of the European Commission and one of the leading internationalists of the time: "I have lived through two humiliating moments in my life. The first was when I was 15 and the Germans invaded France. I saw the population fleeing before the enemy, including soldiers on bicycles whose only thought was to save their own skin. I swore then that such a thing must never happen again. But the same thing is happening again today, in Bosnia. I am ashamed, dishonored. Soon I will turn 69. One day I will die, and I will have done nothing to stop all that."

However, instead of wringing our hands, we should take sober note why it is that, in an age of unparalleled international cooperation and gigantic efforts to overcome national antagonisms - the age of the League of Nations and the United Nations, of the Soviet Union and the European Union - everything seemed to be falling apart and nationalism in its evil mode was as virulent as ever. It is obvious that the world-view on which these grand schemes were based was false, that it had not penetrated to the mystery of the nation and the nature of nationalism. Their intentions may have been good (in some cases), but the experience of the twentieth century showed - and the experience of the first two decades of the twenty-first century has not disproved the contention - that such good intentions only lead to hell - hell on earth and hell in the life to come.

One of the major lessons to be drawn from the collapse of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia is that nationalism is a force that cannot be indefinitely suppressed, nor made to wither away. Leaders who ignore it usually end up by being swept away by it. Moreover, this is a lesson for democratic leaders no less than for communist dictators; for simply providing every citizen of a multinational state with a vote and certain human rights does not remove the potential for ethnic conflict. Only very few democratic states have successfully solved the problem of nationalism; the exceptions, like Switzerland, are better described as confederations of relatively homogeneous territorial nation states. As Michael Lind points out, even such highly civilized democracies as Canada and Belgium are threatened with disintegration by nationalistic demands for self-determination, while the United States, Russia and China, all have serious ethnic problems.

On the other hand, a strict application of the principle of national self-determination will not solve the problem. It is not simply that the oppressed minority in the larger unpartitioned state often becomes the oppressing majority in the smaller partitioned state; or that many nations, once independent, are too small to be economically viable; or that some ethnically homogeneous nations are completely surrounded by larger nations, as Tatarstan is surrounded by Russia. Perhaps the strongest argument against self-determination is that the ethnic populations in most modern States are so mixed up that the attempt to separate them is practically impossible or is necessarily accompanied by enormous hardships and even war. Thus the idea of creating an ethnically homogeneous state for the Kurds is opposed by all the states in the region, while the idea of partitioning, say, Latvia between the Latvians and the Russians, is extremely problematic.

Like sexuality in individual psychology, nationalism in social psychology must be contained without being suppressed, recognized without being incited or pandered to. And again like sexuality, nationalism must be recognized as a force that is vital for the perpetuation of the race. Thus Anne Applebaum writes: "Western diplomats should be interested in the Central European right and in healthy nationalist movements elsewhere in Eastern Europe. Not all 'nationalist' or even 'patriotic' emotion is necessarily a symptom of antidemocratic tendencies. Nor is it all extraneous to the progress of reform. The quality of the civil servants, diplomats, and soldiers in Central Europe, for example, will depend largely on whether Central European politicians manage to revive national pride, given that salaries in the public sector will remain low. One of the few emotions that can keep a good Slovak scientist in Slovakia, or a talented Ukrainian entrepreneur in Ukraine, is patriotism."

We could do with more enlightened patriotism; for it is the excess of benighted nationalism that is the real worry in international politics today. Nationalism should be purified and sublimated, not only to the level of



enlightened patriotism, but to a higher, supra-national level which will allow the expression of national feelings without leading to international conflicts. The question is: how?

Historically speaking, the only force, apart from force of arms, that has been capable of holding different nations together in one state for long periods of time has been *religion*. The Latin root of the word "religion" means "binding together", and there can be no doubt that universalist religions such as Confucianism in China, or Islam in the Middle East, or Orthodox Christianity in Eastern Europe have had a measure of success in binding together multi-national empires. Of course, religion can also divide; but it is important to understand the difference between religious and nationalistic conflicts.

Religious and ideological conflicts are, in general, conflicts about truth and falsehood, right and wrong. As such, they are at least theoretically capable of resolution by rational means, by discussion and argument, by the conversion of one side to the opinion of the other. Nationalist conflicts, on the other hand, are based on emotional ties and sympathies which are much more difficult to change. Of course, points of fact or morality are often hotly debated in nationalist conflicts - the justice of this or that change of boundaries, for example, or the agent of this or that murder or bombing. But it is a characteristic of nationalist conflicts that even when the facts are clear, the antagonists still cannot come to an agreement because the cause of the conflict actually has very little to do with truth or justice, but rather with the simple fact that the two nations *hate each other*, or, at any rate, feel the other nation to be so different, so *strange*, that real cooperation is considered impossible.

The tragedy is that in most cases religious conflicts have become mixed up with nationalist ones in a manner that is very difficult to disentangle. Sometimes this is the fault of the religion, in that it consists of little more than an intellectual underpinning of nationalist prejudices. All religions that believe in a super-race are of this kind. Again, many pagan religions serve the purpose of exalting a particular territory in the minds of its inhabitants, assuring them that this territory is the object of particular favour by one, if not all the gods. Hence the ancient cults of Athene of the Athenians, or "Diana of the Ephesians" - or of Jerusalem in contemporary Judaism.

But even universalist religions tend to become associated with those nations or regions that first embraced them or embraced them most ardently. Thus although Orthodox Christianity is a faith in which "there is neither Greek nor Jew", it came to be called "the Greek faith" because of the great importance of the Byzantine empire as the cradle of Orthodox civilization. Later, however, when the centre of power in the Orthodox world shifted northwards, the peasants of the Russian empire tended to use the words "Russian" and "Orthodox" as synonyms, so that, for

example, Christ was "the Russian God" and the Apostles were "Russian" (although the peasants certainly understood that they were ethnically Jews), while a Russian who fell away from Orthodoxy would cease to be "Russian" and might well (if he became a Marxist) be classified as a Jew.

These changes in linguistic practice are not necessarily evidence of the degradation of a universalist religion into nationalism. In many cases, they are rather an almost inevitable consequence of the fact that universalist religions acquire particular national incarnations and become particularly associated with those incarnations. Conversely, national identity and character are very profoundly affected by the religion or ideology which the nation adopts.

Indeed, Solzhenitsyn and others have argued that religious, ideological and cultural criteria of national identity are much more important than purely genetic ones; and this idea, which would have seemed simply common sense in earlier, more religious and less nationalist times, has much to commend it today. First, very few people in today's world, especially in Europe, have no mixed blood or can be called genetically "pure", so that the idea of classifying people along genetic lines is scientifically useless even if it were not morally dubious. Secondly, the attempt to look at nations from a purely genetic standpoint means completely to misunderstand the nature of those nations whose continuing strong identity over the centuries is unlikely to have been the result of genetic inheritance, but is almost certainly the result of a commonly held *faith* - the Jews, for example. And thirdly, many nationalist prejudices and potential conflicts could be defused if the wrath of those who have these prejudices could be diverted from what they see as the offending *genetic* nation to the offending *ideological* nation.

What would be the consequences of defining nations primarily in terms of their religious, ideological and cultural allegiances rather than in terms of their genetic inheritance? First, if accepted on a wide scale, it would help to defuse nationalist conflicts between nations that are ideologically and culturally close. It has been pointed out that relations between democratic states are usually harmonious; but the same could probably be argued with regard to relations between many other states that share other religions or ideologies.

Secondly, it should warn us against being too optimistic with regard to the resolution of differences between genetically similar, but ideologically disparate, states, such as Communist Korea and Democratic Korea, or Catholic Croatia and Orthodox Serbia. Genetic kinship actually appears to increase the depth of the differences in these cases, as if the fact that a man of a different ideological nation is related to one by blood makes his crime blacker and more unforgiveable. A lessening of ideological intensity, as in Western Europe after the Wars of Religion, or the imposition of a third ideology upon the other two, as when Communism was imposed upon

Croatian Catholicism and Serbian Orthodoxy, may help to control the conflict temporarily. But no permanent cessation of hostilities can be envisaged until the different genetic nations become one nation religiously or ideologically. Moreover, the nations must become ideologically one not by imposition but by genuine conversion.

Thirdly, the definition of nations in terms of their ideologies rather than their genetic inheritance should focus our attention primarily on the vital task of finding the best ideology and defending it by all the intellectual and spiritual means at our disposal. The West forms a single ideological nation, its ideology being the belief in democracy, human rights and a free-market economy. This ideology has had a remarkable success in recent years, but its failures are also becoming more glaring and obvious in the eyes of those who hold different ideologies, such as Islam. We have mentioned one of its weaknesses: its failure to control nationalism. Another weakness is the moral corruption of its leaders and the lack of respect in which they are held in most democratic (not to mention non-democratic) countries. A third is its failure to provide any higher or deeper spiritual goal for its citizens than the provision of material goods on a fairly egalitarian basis. If democracy is the best ideology, then it must be the primary task of democrats to defend their ideology against these attacks, and to show that these weaknesses are unreal, or real but corrigible within the democratic framework. But in spite of the huge prestige gained by their victory over Communism in 1989-91, they have singularly failed in that task...

Perhaps the gravest weakness of democracy, and the root cause why it seems to fail in relation to the strongest nationalisms and non-democratic religions, is that it tends to underestimate the importance of ideology. Indeed, democracy may be defined as the ideology that ideology does not ultimately matter, but only the will of the majority, however radically that that will may change over time. Thus democracy does not claim for itself that it embodies the ultimate truth about God, man and the universe; it only says that if the citizens of a state have differing views about God, man and the universe, and about how their different views should be embodied in law, they should simply vote on it, and accept the will of the majority... Of course, it is part of the democratic ideology that the will of the minority should be "respected". But in practice it is not, especially in recent times: it is a paradox of contemporary liberal democracy that while preaching the maximum of "freedom", it is often extremely intolerant of those who do not believe in their "freedom" - for example, in sexual matters.

In any case, it is obvious that questions of truth cannot be decided by a vote. Nor, if the matter is important, and the ethnic and religious minorities strong-willed, will a majority vote ever settle the matter for the minorities. For why should what they see to be the will of God, or of the nation as expressed by the traditions passed down from all past generations, be overthrown by a single vote in the present?

For example, Judith Miller writes about two influential leaders of modern Islam: "for both Turabi and Fadlallah, the Western notion of democracy is alien: to Islam, rule is a prerogative not of the people, but of God, who appointed the prophet, who, in turn, prescribed the general precepts of governance in God's own words, the Koran. For both men, no parliamentary majority, however large, can nullify God's laws as codified in Islamic law."

A similar position is taken by Orthodox Christian nationalists, for whom democratic majorities have no validity if they involve the breaking up of the historic Orthodox nation or the permitting of phenomena such as pornography or abortion or homosexuality, which are contrary to the Gospel of Christ.

Some democrats have argued that the only way to eliminate some of the most serious nationalist conflicts is to include both nations in one "super-nation" - with the important proviso, however, that both nations should have voted for entrance into the new "super-nation" by lawfully elected majorities. Thus the elimination of the rivalry between France and Germany was seen as the main justification for the creation of the European Union by some of its founders. Whether the peace was preserved in Europe after 1945 more by the EU, or by NATO and the American army, is a moot point - but it cannot be denied that, at least in the early days, the preservation of the Common European Market created an important motive for keeping the peace.

However, it is dangerous to believe that nationalism as such can be cured by abolishing the nations and merging them into some artificial kind of super-nation. The former Soviet Union is a vivid example of this fallacy. The Bolsheviki first tried to use and incite national feeling in order to destroy the multi-national empire of Russia. Then they tried to impose their own brand of anti-nationalism on all the nations of the former empire, suppressing the old nationalisms in favour of a new "Soviet patriotism". But the old nationalisms were not destroyed; and once the dead hand of Bolshevism was removed they emerged in a still more virulent form.

The European Union was created in a less crude, more consensual way. But just as you cannot "buck the market", so you cannot "buck human nature" and its need to belong to larger bodies and communities. The old nationalisms show no sign of dying; and in traditionally insular countries, such as Britain, or traditionally Catholic ones, such as Poland, or traditionally Orthodox ones, such as Greece, attempts to force them into an unnatural union with other nations with quite different traditions appear to be increasing centrifugal tendencies.

The problem with the creation of "super-nations" like the European Union is that the decision of a member-nation to "pool" its sovereignty in

that of the larger nation is irreversible, which immediately puts it in a different and far more controversial category than the majority of reversible democratic decisions. Take the decision of Sweden to join the European Union, which was based on the "yes" vote by a narrow majority of the Swedish electorate. The Swedish government declared beforehand that the decision of this poll would be final, whichever way it meant. This is understandable in view of the fact that the legislation effecting entry into the European Union is binding on successive national governments. But is this really democratic? Why should the decision of the electorate in November, 1994 be more binding than one at an earlier or later time, especially when the consequences are so important and imponderable in the long term? Why should the Swedes be able to change their mind on all other issues, including the composition of their national government, but not on this one? If the powers of national vetoes continue to be whittled down, and Europe turns out to be a bureaucratic monster passing legislation which is consistently opposed by the majority of the Swedish electorate as being counter to Swedish interests, why should Sweden not be allowed to pull out? Can national self-determination ever be finally bargained away? Is it not, according to the principles of democracy, an irreducible right, like the right to practise one's religion?

Most recently, of course, it is the British who have reversed the decision they made over forty years ago to join the European Union. The emotional intensity of this debate has revealed that it is not the economic arguments, still less the question whether Britain outside the EU might enter into war with the EU, that are the most important factors here, but three different types of *nationalism*: (i) British, as expressed by the vote of the great majority of the English people outside London to leave the EU, (ii) European, as expressed by the vote of the great majority of Londoners and the intellectual elites to remain in the EU, and (iii) Scottish, as expressed by the majority of Scots to remain in the EU and not in the United Kingdom. This demonstrates two important and apparently conflicting facts. First, that the full union between England and Scotland, which goes back to 1707 and has proved to be one of the most successful unions in political history, is still fragile. And secondly, that the partial union between Britain and the EU, which goes back only forty years, has already created a new kind of nationalism, a European nationalism, that has seriously undermined the old, British one.

Two related factors are important in the understanding of this phenomenon: the rapid decline of religion in recent years, which undermines belief not only in God but also in tradition and in the importance of the past allegiances; and an increase in materialism. The whole of the West - indeed, the whole of mankind - has become more individualist than before, with the result that old allegiances have dissolved and new relationships created on the basis, essentially, of money alone. So those with strong economic ties to Europe will vote for Europe, generally speaking; while sentimental and cultural ties with "the old

country" will count for less with them.

But this works in the opposite direction, too: as trade becomes more international, trading blocs become less important, and a European identity becomes less strong. The rapidly increasing individualism and atomization of mankind is undermining *all* nationalisms. However, this brings us back to the psychological need to belong, which is the basis of nationalism: feeling alone in an increasingly atomized world, men will seek to join some nation – and the smaller and older sovereign nations are just as attractive, if not more so, than the big new “super-nations” in satisfying the need to belong to a community.

One thing is clear: democracy alone is not sufficient to bind the nations together if they are both very large and very diverse in language, culture and religion. There must be something stronger which makes the sub-nations or individual nations feel that they truly belong to the super-nation, which has its own individuality and ideology. In other words, the super-nations must be unions in spirit and truth, and not only in budget contributions and ballot-boxes. The greatest task facing the Western nations today is the finding of that spirit and truth. Otherwise they will succumb to the combined onslaught of disgruntled ethnic minorities from within and determined religious majorities from without.

\*

What do the Holy Scriptures teach us about nations and nationalism?

Holy Scripture recognizes only two nations or races in the strict sense of the word: the race of fallen mankind, which derives its origin from the first Adam, and the race of redeemed mankind, which derives its origin from the last Adam, Christ. The race of fallen mankind lost its original unity as a consequence of sin - the sin of paganism in particular, and the building of the Tower of Babel. In order to check the spread of sin, God separated the nations both geographically and linguistically. However, the memory of their original unity was never lost. That they were and are of one blood is asserted by the Apostle Paul in his sermon to the Athenians: "God made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of their dwelling." (Acts 17.26).

Nationalism contradicts this primordial fact of the original unity of mankind in Adam. Since we are all originally one, no man or race of men is *essentially* higher or lower than any other. For as the Apostles Paul and Barnabas said to the pagans of Lystra who wanted to make them gods: "We also are men with the same nature as you" (Acts 14.15; cf. James 5.17).

At Pentecost, our original unity was restored by our receiving the Holy Spirit, which transplanted us, as it were, onto a new root - Christ; for "we

hear [the word of God], each in our own language in which we were born" (Acts 2.8). From a physical, genetic point of view, there is no difference between the two races, but from the spiritual point of view the difference is enormous. In a word, fallen mankind has lost the Spirit of God, the only true Spirit of unity (Genesis 6.3), whereas redeemed mankind has been born again "of water and the Spirit" (John 3.5).

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

At the same time, national differences continue to exist and play a role in the mystery of God's Providence. This is particularly emphasized by the Apostle Paul in his words on the relationship between the Jews and the Gentiles (Romans 9-11). The Jews, he says, have been cut off from the race of redeemed mankind, while the Gentiles have been grafted in. However, this position can be reversed, so there is no reason for "anti-semitism" - "do not be haughty, but fear" (Romans 11.20).

Thus the Christians, both Jews and Gentiles, are "a chosen race, a holy priesthood, a holy nation, a people whom he has gained" (I Peter 2.9). Indeed, there is an important sense in which the Christians are *the only* true nation, the only nation that will endure forever; for "you [when you were pagans] were once not a people, but now are the people of God, and you did not seek after mercy but now have received mercy" (I Peter 2.10). As the Lord said through the Prophet Hosea: "I shall call [those who were] not My people and [those who did] not receive mercy [I shall call a people] having received mercy, and it will be in the place where it was said, 'You are not My people', there they will be called the sons of the living God" (1.9, 2.24; cf. Romans 9.25-26).

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

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

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

The Russian parliamentarian and philosopher Viktor Aksiuchits echoes this judgement: "The positivist definitions of a people - for example, common origin (blood), language, territory, economic structure, culture, state unity - do not embrace the concept of that mysterious unity which is the people, the nation. All such definitions are only partial. They cannot, for example, explain the existence of such a people as the Jews, who in the thousands of years of their existence have become mixed in blood, have changed their language and culture, have not had a common territory, or economic structure, or their own statehood, but have nevertheless been fully preserved as a people."

The example of the Jews is indeed instructive, and there can be little doubt that the only major bond holding them together as a nation since the destruction of their statehood in 70 A.D. has been their faith. This faith is a nationalistic faith - as Kartashev writes, "Judaism established itself on a primordial, ethnically closed-in-on-itself nationalism of the blood". But while blood alone cannot hold a nation together, *faith* in blood, even though it must be a false faith, can give a nation a terribly powerful - and powerfully terrible - strength and unity, as the whole history of the Jews since Christ has demonstrated. When faith begins to weaken, however, a nation resorts to other means, such as land, language and blood, to hold itself together. Thus when the Jewish leaders felt that the identity of their nation was being threatened through assimilation with the European nations in the nineteenth century, they founded the Zionist movement in 1897 with the explicit aim of strengthening the Jewish identity by a return to the land of Israel. Since then, moreover, it has been felt necessary to resurrect the Hebrew language and to make common blood a condition of citizenship in the state of Israel.

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



preserve a nation's memory and therefore its sense of who and what it is. Democracy, on the other hand, usually begins with a revolution that denies the validity and sanctity of the pre-revolutionary past. Moreover, every new democratic government comes to power on the promise of doing better than its inadequate predecessor; so the emphasis is on constant change and renewal - "permanent revolution".

Now since faith is so important in defining a nation's identity, a change of faith can mean the death of one nation and the birth of another, even when genetic, linguistic and territorial ties have not been broken.

Thus in a real sense the Jewish nation died when it killed Christ. And Holy Scripture affirms that anti-Christian Jews are not true Jews (cf. Romans 2.28; Revelation 2.9). And so the return of the Jews to Christ will indeed be, as the Apostle Paul says, "life from the dead" (Romans 11.15), the resurrection of the true spiritual identity of the Jewish people.

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

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

Together with the other English Orthodox traditions, the tradition of the monarchy also suffered damage after the Norman Conquest. Although the king continued to be crowned by the Church, the idea of the holiness of the monarchy was gradually lost. In 1216 the powers of the monarchy were

limited by the *Magna Carta* to take account of the interests of the nobility; and further limitations followed. However, in the 16th century Shakespeare still had a strong feeling for it, as we can see in his play, *Richard II*; and even today, centuries after the "glorious" revolution of 1688 deprived the monarchy of any real power or sanction by making it constitutional, the English still have an instinctive veneration for the institution. This witnesses to a kind of schizophrenia in the English soul. For while the dominant faith of the English is undoubtedly democratic and materialistic, the monarchy still serves as a link with that past when England had a different faith - and was in effect a different nation...

Another instructive, and still more complex example is Greece. Before their conversion to Christ, the Greeks had already had a long and complex existence as a nation. At first they lived in a multitude of independent city-states, each with his own god, such as Athene of Athens and "Diana of the Ephesians". But in spite of their political and religious divisions, the Greeks always felt their unity as a nation; and the distinction between Greeks and Barbarians is a very ancient one. Only the Jews and the Chinese, among the very ancient nations, have a similarly clear, ethnocentric view of the universe.

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

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

However, when Constantinople, the New Rome, fell in 1453, and especially after the liberation of Greece in 1821, the Greeks started redefining themselves again as Hellenes, and began to look back to their

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

\*

From this discussion, we can see that a nation is in many ways like a person. Like a person, each nation can be said to have a spirit, a soul and a body. Its "spirit" is that which unites it with God and unites it with all other nations that are in God - what Vladimir Soloviev called "the idea that God has of it in eternity". Since only the Orthodox Christian nations are united with God, only they can be said to be spiritual in this sense: the other nations are united in spirit to other gods, such as the god of Islam or of the god of revolutionary nationalism or internationalism, or Mammon...

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

At the same time, there are important differences, even in very religious societies, between the Church (in Christian societies) and society or the nation in general. One of these differences, as Fr. Stefan Krasovitsky points out, is that "the nucleus of society is the family, whereas the nucleus of the Church is the person. Within the Church a person is united with other persons without any loss of his individuality, for this unity takes place in the Super-Person (Divine Person) of Jesus Christ... [As to so-called 'human rights',] they are provided (in the conditions of a morally healthy society) within the family in accordance with the familial status of each member of this unit of society. So a normal society should defend, not 'human rights'... but *the rights of the family*, defending them from suppression and

destruction."

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

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

In some nations, the spiritual element in its national feeling is so weak as to be almost non-existent. But since man cannot exist without some guiding principle, the spiritual vacuum thus created will be filled by the deification of the nation itself, or of the state or leader in which its national life is temporarily incarnate - that is, in nationalism or totalitarian statism. In pagan societies the tendency towards statism is expressed especially in the deification of the king. Hence the god-kings and emperors of Ancient Egypt, Babylon and Rome. In Western, post-Christian societies, this tendency finds a less religious but still powerful expression, as in Fascist Italy or Nazi Germany.

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

However, even when men have agreed that the main purpose of life is to satisfy material, bodily needs, and that the best instrument to this end is

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

Thus just as in an individual person the weakening of the spirit inevitably leads to the domination of the flesh, so is it in the life of nations. When the soul of the nation ceases to worship God in the spirit, it worships either its own soul or its own body. This is the origin both of nationalism and of democratism, in which "the pursuit of happiness" - psychological and material happiness - becomes the constitutional foundation of society. It follows that to say of nationalism that it is "caused by wounds, some form of collective humiliation" is misleading. For it implies that the excesses of fallen nationalism are purely psychological in nature and can be cured by some kind of "collective therapy"; whereas the roots of the disease are spiritual and come from a loss of faith. Just as the fire of fallen desire is kindled when the fire of the Holy Spirit is quenched in the individual soul, so the fire of nationalism is kindled when the fire of love for God and the truth is weakened.

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

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

The view that a nation is a person and therefore eternal in all significant respects was expressed by Alexander Solzhenitsyn: "Recently it has become fashionable to speak of the levelling of nations, and the disappearance of peoples in the melting-pot of contemporary civilization. I do not agree with this, but to discuss it is a separate question, and at this

point I think it fitting to say only that the disappearance of nations would impoverish us no less than if all individual people were assimilated into one character, one person. Nations are the wealth of humanity, its social personalities; the smallest of them bears its own special traits, and hides within itself a special facet of the Divine plan...

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

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

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

"Between a person and a nation there is the deepest similarity - in the mystical nature of the uncreatedness of both the one and the other. And there are no human reasons why, in allowing ourselves to evaluate the changeability of the one, we forbid it for the other."

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

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

Even with this qualification, however, there are limits to the extent we can talk about nations as persons. Thus while persons have eternal souls, this can be said of nations only in a metaphorical sense. For, as Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow says, "for earthly kingdoms and peoples their kingly and popular existence can only have an earthly character". Again, as Dora Shturman points out, however much individual people change, each still has one mind and one conscience (unless he is schizophrenic). A nation, however, is composed of many people with often sharply differing aims and outlooks.

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

We may wonder, moreover, whether every nation is called to an eternal destiny. In the Old Testament the Lord "destroyed seven nations in the land of Canaan" (Acts 13.19), demanding of King Saul the complete extirpation of the Amalekites (he disobeyed in obedience to "the voice of the people" and was removed from his throne). The Assyrians were another example of a nation that rises and falls so rapidly that it seems as if their only purpose is to chastize the people of God and then disappear once this purpose is accomplished (for "shall the axe vaunt itself over Him Who hews it?" (Isaiah 10.15)). That is perhaps why Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow explicitly denied that the nation has an eternal, heavenly destiny.

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

Even those Orthodox nations which have over the centuries evolved a collective personality that can be termed essentially Christian and therefore eternal by nature have to struggle to preserve that personality to the end. Thus "the glory that was Greece" will remain a phrase in the past mode if the Greeks exchange the truly "great idea" (megali idea) of Christian Rome for the petty nationalism of a neo-pagan Greece. And

Serbia will become "greater" only in the territorial sense if she abandons the universalist vision of St. Savva.

\*

Let us now look a little more closely at what the West sees as the "problem" of Russian nationalism.

Since there can be no solution to any national problem unless there is an understanding of the nation in question, we must first try and penetrate to the mystery of the Russian national identity. And this is no easy task if we look only at Russia in this century; for in our century Russia has passed from theocracy to democracy to satanocracy to democracy again, from multi-national empire to anti-national anti-empire to nation-state. And yet from a longer historical viewpoint the perplexities disappear. "The Russian idea" is clear - it is Orthodoxy. For the Russians are sharply distinguished from other great Christian nations, such as the Greeks and the Romans, by the fact that almost their entire history has been Orthodox Christian. And this has been a great advantage for them in defining themselves; for whereas, as we have seen, the Greeks have often had a problem in deciding which is more essentially Greek - their pagan past or their Christian past, for the Russians there has been no contest: at least until 1917, the Russian soul was an Orthodox Christian one. It is as if the pagan Russian past had not existed: it was an obscure period of "pre-history" swallowed up in the blinding light of the primal act of her true history - her baptism at the hands of the enlightener of Russia, the holy Great-Prince Vladimir.

Vladimir himself, by his dramatic and complete conversion from savage, lustful paganism to self-sacrificial Christianity, symbolized the rebirth that had taken place in the Russian soul. This was no tentative, half-hearted conversion, but a complete change of spirit; and so it was with the Russian people as a whole. Thus whatever other temptations Russia has had to endure since her Baptism in 988, a full-scale return to paganism was not one of them - until the critical turning-point of 1917. Paganism in Russia was comparatively weak, disorganized and, above all, provincial. It was no match for the superior civilization and universalist grace and power of the Christian Gospel, supported as it was both by the political power and charisma of St. Vladimir and by the spiritual power of the Great Church of Constantinople at her height.

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

First, the speed and completeness with which the Baptism of Russia unified all the widely-scattered and hitherto disunited tribes of the Eastern Slavs, Finno-Ungrians and others goes some of the way to explaining why religion, the spiritual realm, is, and continues to be, so important in the



Russian land, as opposed to the more worldly and material factors which have served to unite other nations and which have therefore played a greater role in their subsequent development. It was religion that united the Russian land. Only religion could have united the Russian land. Only religion will reunite the Russian land. Therefore it is in terms of religion that Russians see themselves and their relationship to other nations. In a perverse kind of way, this is true even of the Soviet period, when Russia seemed to lose her religion. For it was then as if the Apostle Paul returned to being the persecutor Saul without losing his burning zeal for religion.

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

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

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

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

A second antimony in the Russian soul which is largely explained by the history of the Baptism of Russia is the contrast between the Russians' great receptiveness to foreigners and foreign ideas, on the one hand, and their great pride in their own country, on the other. For, on the one hand, the Baptism of Russia came from outside; Russia received its faith, literature and almost its entire civilization from the hands of Greeks and Bulgarians. For, as we have seen, the Christian faith and Christian civilization in Russia did not have to contend with a powerful and highly developed native pagan tradition, as it did in Greece and Rome. Hence the innate respect for foreigners, who brought to Russia almost everything that the Russians treasure in themselves. On the other hand, no nation has more thoroughly absorbed the Christian Gospel than the Russians. In spite of sins and falls, to which every Christian nation has succumbed, the Russians have equalled their foreign teachers in their devotion to Christ, as is witnessed by the extraordinary abundance of their saints and martyrs - not least in the Soviet period, when the Russian Church added many times more martyrs to the Heavenly Church than the 350,000 which, according to the menologia, were acquired by the whole Church from the time of the Apostles.

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

With regard to the second, universality-nationalism antimony, we see a similar pattern. Generally speaking, the Kievan period may be described as broadly universalist, the Muscovite period increasingly nationalist, and the Petersburg period again universalist. But as long as the dominant religion and ethos of the state and people remained Orthodox Christianity, the poles of this antimony were kept in balance, and extremists, such as the anti-national universalist Socialists or the anti-universalist nationalist Old

Ritualists, remained on the borders of society.

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

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

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

The revolution therefore presented, as Solzhenitsyn eloquently argued, an almost complete break in the history and spiritual identity of the Russian nation. Far from being a logical continuation of the Russian idea, as some have argued, it was a complete denial of that idea. So what the Mongols in the 13th century, the Judaizers in the 15th, the Poles in the 16th and 17th, and even the westernizing reforms of Peter the Great in the 18th centuries had failed to achieve was achieved by Lenin and Stalin.

In view of this, it is only natural to regard the revival of Russian national feeling that began in the 1970s and gathered pace under Gorbachev and Yeltsin as a lawful and healthy reaction to the nightmare of the Soviet period, and the only sure and organically based path to the restoration of Russia as the great and civilized nation she was before it. However, there is a view that is widely held both in the West and in Russia that this national-religious renaissance of Russia is in fact the greatest possible threat to the civilized world. According to this view, the nationalisms of the small countries of the former Soviet Union - of the Baltic states, of the Ukraine, of the Caucasian and Central Asian republics -

are only right and natural; but the nationalism of Russia - the nation which suffered most from Communism, while offering the strongest opposition to it - is somehow of a quite different, and much more sinister nature, involving a kind of mixture between Communism and Fascism which has been given the name "National Bolshevism".

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

In 1999 Alexander Dugin's *Absolutnaia Rodina*, "The Absolute Homeland", presaged the birth of this monster. It came in the next year with V.V. Putin, who, after a cautious start has steadily transformed the Russian democracy into an authoritarian, neo-Soviet, neo-Fascist monster, thoroughly earning his nickname of "Putler". As long as there exist people of a basically Soviet mentality whose knowledge of Russian history and true Russian spirituality is meagre, the possibility will exist of their claiming that their essentially Soviet "spirituality" is a continuation and incarnation of "the Russian idea".

But it is a grave mistake to label all Russian nationalists and patriots as "National Bolsheviks", still more to think that the whole of Russian history is simply a recurring cycle of authoritarianism interspersed with brief and insecure periods of relative democracy. And in fact Yanov's thesis was itself an example of the Soviet type of thinking which he claimed to be warning against. For this was precisely the distorted view of Russian history the West began to develop in the nineteenth century, which was taken over by the Russian westernizing liberals. The truth is that the true Russian nationalism is inextricably bound up with Orthodoxy. So the way to avert "National Bolshevism" is to revive the true Russian nationalism - that is, to regenerate Russian Orthodoxy, which, however, is impossible as long as the official Russian Church is in the hands of a KGB patriarch no less Fascist than Putin.

A healthier - and more typical - example of Russian religious nationalism is represented by the thought of Vladimir Osipov. We may

recall that Osipov considered that four elements go to make up a nation - faith, blood, language and land. But he accepted that the most important of these elements was the faith: "Christ and His teachings are in the final analysis more important for me than nationalism."

At the same time he recognized at the time he was writing - over 40 years ago - that the national element in the Russian religious-national movement was more important than the religious: "I know the soul of the contemporary Russian: the national principle is at the moment more clear and alive for him than the religious principle. Hence patriotism, national self-consciousness and self-respect provide at the moment the only reliable bridge to moral, cultural and biological salvation."

But is it really reliable? The emergence and relative stability of Putin's regime since 2000 indicates the opposite. It shows that the revival of "patriotism, national self-consciousness and self-respect", while desirable in themselves, is bound to degenerate into a kind of Fascism unless it is underpinned and inspired by "the religious principle" - True Orthodoxy.

Therefore the first priority is to remove the present "Soviet Orthodox" Church of the Moscow Patriarchate with its KGB hierarchs, its glorification of the Red Army and its whitewashing of the crimes of the Soviet past, together with its conniving at Putin's blasphemous "Communist Christianity". There are signs that a disillusionment with the MP is beginning to take place. But as long as the false church is supported by the false state, its position seems reasonably secure.

It would be different if the state itself suffered some external humiliation or defeat, perhaps in a war against stronger nations such as China or America. And then, through the prayers of the millions of new martyrs of the Soviet period, a resurrection of Holy Russia led by a truly Orthodox Tsar will take place. Of this, as New Hieromartyr John of Latvia, one of the many non-Russians who acquired sanctity as a citizen of Holy Russia, said, "we can and must be convinced".

In the meantime, the social basis for this resurrection can be prepared by a gradual national-religious regeneration of Russian society from below, under the leadership, not of the Moscow Patriarchate, but of the truly Orthodox Church. Alexander Kartashev, Over-Procurator of the Holy Synod under the Provisional Government in 1917, indicated how such a regeneration of society from below could proceed: "Through the Christian transfiguration of the 'inner man', by itself, gradually and imperceptibly, the whole environment in which the spiritually renewed Christian lives and acts - society, culture, the State - will be transfigured. The latter live and develop according to their own natural laws, which are exterior for Christianity, but can be subjected to its influences and, if only to a certain degree, transfigured. In the last analysis they are impenetrable for Christianity, for they are foreign by their nature. They are categories, not

of a spiritual, but of a cosmic, order. The Lord opposed Himself to 'this world', and the apostle of love commanded us 'not to love this world'. The category 'society' is of 'this world', and for that reason the Christian heart must not cleave to it. Social life is a certain mechanism of the concatenation of personalities and is fatally subject to a certain mechanical conformity with law, which is foreign to the kingdom of spiritual freedom - that is, the Christian religion, the Church. Being a true member of this mystical society, the individual Christian, and through him the whole Church, is 'spiritually-automatically', inwardly, imperceptibly enlightening, exalting and transfiguring external, sinful society. All other methods except this, which goes from the depths of the personal transfiguration of the spirit, are non-Christian methods."

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

"Being at the bottom of a historical funnel, we as a fact of our lives have acquired the possibility of seeing in the past of Russia not only a series of errors and vices, but also the image of a renewed, transfigured Russia, and the contours of that ideal which the Russian people was giving birth to in torments, and to which it was striving in spite of all sins and falls. There were moments in the history of Russia when the Russian idea shone forth with an unfading light - this was the light, above all, of Russian sanctity. There were periods when the idea of a national calling was eclipsed and consigned to oblivion. But it was never cut off entirely, but was enriched by the tragic experience of history. And this unbroken line is the line of our life, it is the ordinance of God concerning the Russian people from generation to generation. And only the living spirit of this theandric ordinance, only the assimilation of the Russian idea gives us as a people and each one of us as a personality the possibility of holding out, surviving and transfiguring our lives..."

This truly Christian Russian nationalism is found especially among the holy new martyrs and confessors of Russia. For example, during the 1970s the great wonderworker nicknamed the "Tsar of Mordovia", Hieromonk Michael Yershov, after half a century in the Soviet camps and psychiatric torture-hospitals still retained a burning faith in the resurrection of Russia. And Eugene Vagin, who met Fr. Michael, reported that this faith was common to all the members of his Church: "All members of this Church, even the 'uneducated', are characterized by a special suffering over the fate of Russia, which is placed by them in the center of all the world's events (this is often interpreted in a very original way, always in apocalyptic,

eschatological tones). Their 'Russianness' is not set aggressively against other nations and peoples, but is accepted inwardly and in confidential conversations, as a sign of a 'special chosenness'. I have often heard in their midst the old proverb applied to the fate of Russia: 'Whom the Lord loves more, He makes to suffer more.'..."

This faith in the chosenness of the Russian people by no means implies a blindness to their faults. On the contrary, Russia, in the understanding of the Catacomb Church, is suffering so much now precisely because by her actions she has rejected her great calling. For with a great calling go great responsibilities. Thus the Russian religious philosopher I.A. Ilyin described the true patriotism as follows: "To love one's people and believe in her, to believe that she will overcome all historical trials and will arise from collapse purified and sobered - does not mean to close one's eyes to her weaknesses and imperfections, perhaps even her vices. To accept one's people as the incarnation of the fullest and highest perfection on earth would be pure vainglory, sick nationalist conceit. The real patriot sees not only the spiritual paths of his people, but also her temptations, weaknesses and imperfections. Spiritual love generally is not given to groundless idealization, but sees soberly and with extreme acuteness. To love one's people does not mean to flatter her or hide from her her weak sides, but honourably and courageously criticize them and tirelessly struggle with them."

\*

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

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

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

in its national incarnations, is a universal faith.

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

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

Therefore as long as Russia remains true to her idea, we can expect her to come into conflict with other nations only when that idea is itself under threat. At the present time, however, that idea is not yet incarnate within Russia herself; for neither Putin's "One Russia", nor any of its political contenders, is the true Russia - Holy Russia. But as the true and holy Russia struggles to surface from under the rubble of forces and ideologies alien to herself, we can expect a reaction from her enemies.

First, and most immediately, there is the conflict between the Russian idea and the Muslim idea - two universalisms which have struggled with each other for many centuries and whose radical incompatibility is evident to any unprejudiced observer, however hard Putin may deny it. Conflicts between the present Russian regime and the Muslim world are already present in the Caucasus, in Central Asia, in the Balkans and, especially, in



the Middle East. For the pseudo-theocracy of Islam is expansionist in both the spiritual and physical senses, and will always be tempted to undertake a jihad or "holy war" against the pseudo-Orthodox pseudo-autocracy of contemporary Russia.

Secondly, there is an inherent conflict between the Russian idea and the democratic ideas of other western states, such as the European Union and America. In the former case, Putinist propaganda mocks the LGBT agenda of "Eurosodom", and is working hard to undermine the EU through rightist parties in several countries (Dugin, "Putin's Rasputin", is leading the way here), through the millions of Russian émigré fifth-columnists in the region, through its military intervention in Eastern Ukraine and through its more undercover interference against pro-western governments in Montenegro and Macedonia (while arming an anti-western police force in Bosnia). In the latter case, we see constant anti-Americanism reminiscent of the Soviet era, combined with attempts to subvert and recruit high-ranking American officials (not excluding the president himself), to undermine the petro-dollar and to undermine American power in the Middle East and other parts of the world, not least through the escalation of a new arms race in which Putin now claims to have an "invincible" new type of nuclear weapon.

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

In his famous "Pushkin speech", Dostoyevsky emphasized the "proclivity for universal susceptibility and all-reconciliation" of the Russian soul, as opposed to the narrow egoism of the non-Orthodox European nations. This judgement has been mocked by many, of various nations, who prefer to see in Russia the precise opposite. However, the present writer believes that Dostoyevsky's judgement is correct so long as we distinguish carefully between the Russian nation and the Soviet nation. Moreover, it contains a challenge, not only for Russians who might wish to distort the Russian idea in a democratic or chauvinist direction, but also for the West. This challenge might be formulated as follows. If you truly want a true, and not a false peace, and a real, and not an illusory harmony of nations, then you have nothing to fear from Russia becoming herself once again. On the contrary, since the Russian idea is universal and true, being in essence the same idea that the Creator and King of the nations has for all the nations, you should embrace it yourselves! For the Orthodox

Christian idea, which has become the Russian idea, can also become the Jewish, and the American, and the Chinese idea, with each nation bringing its own physical and psychological individuality and talents to the service of every other nation, and the King of the nations, Christ God. For of His Kingdom and Nation on earth, the Orthodox Church, the Lord says: "Your gates shall be open continually; day and night they shall not be shut; that men may bring to you the wealth of the nations, with their kings led in procession. For the nation and kingdom that will not serve you shall perish; those nations shall be utterly laid waste..." (Isaiah 60.11-12).

*February 17 / March 2, 2018.  
St. Hermogen, Patriarch of Moscow.*

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

Revelation 21.24.